“Culture in the Classroom” was conceived as a teaching aid guide aimed at helping those in the educational front line to become conversant with the concept of culture as defined by the UNESCO. In a country like Paraguay, possessing the invaluable asset of extensive bilingualism where the Guarani Indian language is spoken by a majority of the population regardless of the speakers’ ethnic origin, finding value in an individual’s background is a way to reaffirm self-esteem and to assure persistence in schooling as a threshold to success in life.

The task of helping local culture survive, first, and thrive, later, is made all the more opportune by the onslaught of globalization and its threat of condemning smaller societies mores and customs to oblivion in the wake of mass media indoctrination. The discipline, hence, has become a full fledged academic endeavor although the bibliography is still scarce but growing.

The author seeks to make her contribution available to students and scholars of American and European universities looking at the field as a bona fide subject of academic endeavor, graduate theses and dissertations, and scholarly articles. Heritage, language, music, cuisine, dances and oral traditions appear in this useful teacher’s guide opening up a world of wonder and magic, legends and history.

B.G. de B
I confess that after reading the guide written by Professor Beatriz G. de Bosio I experienced the sensation of reaching a perspective that allows me to analyze from newer and more humane trends the problem of culture in our Latin American countries. Such a focus, in effect, offers a refreshing proposal to enter into the universe of the Social and Human Sciences in Paraguay. An outlook of the analyzed modules provides a synthesis that includes subjects such as identity, culture, heritage, globalization, cultural policies, development, Cultural Mercosur, concluding the vision with a personal analysis of the natural and cultural frameworks of Paraguay. It would seem that its accurate starting point was the belief that, confronted with the ideologies and interests that divide the world, there is one single possible meeting point, and that is the field of culture.

This viewpoint allows culture to gain in familiarity what it loses in mystery.

Without any doubt, Paraguayan culture expresses the national soul of the Paraguayan people. Hence, to reflect it is to immerse oneself into the collective unconscious, integrating into the mystery of its myths and rituals, to have access to its unitary essence, in its joyous diversity, in order to pour its quintessence into educational and cultural policies aimed at the school classroom.

First and foremost, I gladly greet the breath of fresh air represented by the expressions of a culture that, at first, is alive. I bear in mind the concepts of Master Jacques Rigaud, by remembering that the
“cultural label” results at first dissuasive to the general public as well as a harbinger of “distinguished boredom” and “hermetic language”.

Professor Bosio’s work seems to reflect –and celebrate– a culture neither cloistered nor passive, but one alive and creative. A culture that is always “in the making” and that results in the expression of true democracy.

I speak of an open culture that, at the same time, helps to include and transcend the elite culture of minorities as well as mass culture. I speak of culture to live for.

We must highlight the happy orientation of the author and her pedagogical zeal condensed in summaries, generic ideas and homework destined to students. There is something guaranteed for those who are concerned with the eventual aridity of cultural contents: there is neither in the text –nor in the suggestions or exercises– a single reason to get bored. The difference is clear, there is an interest in making others appreciate the traditions, popular culture, music, customs and the tangible and intangible heritage of Paraguay.

It is clear that she is moved by a generous service and didactic spirit as well as the will to animate students and teachers. Precisely, to animate, etymologically means to give life anew, to wake up those sleeping. And the school is the privileged space for the pedagogical revolution of a culture that is alive.

In the footsteps of Rigaud, I have always believed that such a cultural pedagogy must propose but not impose, suggest but not demonstrate and to invite to inner trips. Beatriz G. de Bosio calls us to accompany her in this journey with Paraguayan students and we join it with pleasure: the proposal supposes to return the cultural heritage to the cycle of life.

Dr. Gregorio Recondo
Argentine Center of International Relations
A textbook of clear didactic scope is the one put forth by Beatriz G. de Bosio, whom we knew for her academic output in the field of her specialty, history, although she has been widening the scope of the problems she treats in such open areas as folklore and, in the current case, culture, which would be nothing but a cross reading both synchronically and diachronically, of history as “res gestae”, that once was proposed by Ortega as “the task ahead.”

Frequently in current times, we find a pejorative interpretation of folklore, as mere museum elements and craft of subjects extracted –in G. Vansina’s vision– from oral tradition, and related to such a narrow approach, they venture a definition of culture that identifies it with the “tangible” or material heritage. Beatriz G. de Bosio proposes, on the other hand, an anthropological approach, pointing that there is nothing significant or insignificant in culture thus discarding the ethnocentric bias that relegates popular knowledge as a pre-scientific stage. Within this assertive temperament, the author highlights some parameters which orientate a practical pedagogy in such a field, concluding that:

• culture is no longer deemed as the possession or privilege of a few.

• every culture has intrinsic dignity and value.

• all peoples have the right to develop their culture, and that,
• it is not the State which creates culture, and neither is culture a service of an administration, but the task of social groups which produce it and transmit it.

Afterwards, the teacher/reader is introduced into the subject of cultural identity—a subject distorted in Latin America by both right-wing and left-wing ideologies, using it as a symbol to vindicate issues of dubious authenticity. Here, as presumably expected, the author proposes an historical approach, illustrating the panorama of confrontations by affinities and differences. To the stereotyped cliché of a Guarani nation, Beatriz G. de Bosio asserts that, with the new National Constitution, “Paraguay is a multiethnic and a pluricultural country”; which supposes an epistemological openness and a new reading of the universe under study. A challenge for our identity, as for all Third World countries, is the new reality of globalization and, in our case, Mercosur which, on the one hand opens up as a gallery of unheard possibilities and, on the other hand, as a challenge call to resist the onslaught of competition, not always loyal from countries with larger technological resources and larger markets. Here too, the author suggests some guiding mottos, such as “culture can unite what politicians have divided” or “culture provides content to education. We must affirm the place of cultural matters in the process of integration.”

Another success of the new guide, besides the constant examples of cultural traits in current customs and practices prevailing in the oral tradition, are the teaching guides whereby teachers are oriented by suggesting tasks to be undertaken by the students, so that learning in such a field does not fall into old practice of repetition, or the mere evaluation of memorizing without enrichment of the world view of the subject that receives the communication/learning.

Engaged as we are in strengthening the process of educational reform, we cannot but congratulate ourselves to this timely guide prepared by the author, and to recommend wholeheartedly its dissemination and for the benefit of those who have the irreplaceable
task of educating our children and youth in the unavoidable heritage of our rich and peculiar Paraguayan culture.

Dr. Ramiro Domínguez
Member of the CONEC
National Council of Education and Culture
Asunción, June, 2002
In the framework of the educational and cultural policies of Paraguay, it is understood that the best instrument to transmit culture is through education. Nevertheless, in practice, the teachers discover the evident lack of publications that could serve as aid and assistance in the task of disseminating concrete knowledge in the field of culture. Our purpose is to fill that void in order to help the teacher save the many hours needed to review bibliography and to try to generate a synthesis that could be of use in the classroom. It is of vital importance to link up education with culture in a feasible way.

This material intends to be highly didactic and is aimed at the teacher to disseminate new approaches of the concept of culture in a language which the students of all the communities of the country may understand and value. It is an important task because, through it, we shall be stressing within the student population the conviction that they have a cultural and natural heritage that is valuable and worth preserving. Oral and artisan traditions, gastronomy, loss of customs, folklore expressions and the other components of the Paraguayan imagery merit a socialization with the new generations receiving the influence of the mass media which privilege hegemonic cultures. Therefore, we try with these bibliographical contributions to revert the accelerated process of acculturation.

To that end, nothing could be better than to add value to our
customs and, if necessary, to rediscover our values in order to generate self-esteem—an essential element—to confront a future of great challenges, armed with faith in our origins and love for our culture, our country and our fellow human beings. This love, however, is not the nineteenth century type which excludes with xenophobia those who are different. It is the contrary process along the lines of integration and respectful of other cultures which populate the region and the world and which gives us the precious gift of diversity.

The author
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1. Goal
The Advisory Council on Culture, aware of the challenges posed by globalization and by the regional integration into Mercosur, has generated a program of cultural awareness raising and animation with transversal content modules to aid in the formal education in schools and teaching training centers, in order to strengthen the educational reform and the axial role of the Vice-Ministry of Culture aimed at the achievement of the goals of its cultural policies.

This projects comes from a need felt and expressed by secondary and teacher training institutions and it gives special emphasis on the three components of the reform: the fundamental component, the academic component and, in a very special way, the local component as the central axis in the appreciation of the rich Paraguayan cultural inheritance and the strengthening of the national identity.

2. Beneficiaries
Secondary schools students and teacher training institutions.

3. Methodology
Group dynamic, workshops, exhibits by specialists, on site research, audio visual courses (slides, “Tele Educación” videos, etc.)
4. Contents

Modules on:

- Culture
- Identity
- Tangible and intangible cultural heritage
- Sustainable development
- Globalization
- Environment
- New approaches to history and geography in the framework of regional integration
- Cultural Policies
- Cultural Mercosur
- Natural and Cultural Framework of Paraguay

4.1. Culture

Cultural identities and its dynamics as well as the cultural integration processes acquire significant relevance in the current international context.

Carefully, we must also bear in mind the conceptions or models of culture that are in force and how they influence with the teaching-learning process, be it explicitly or implicitly.

4.1.1. Education

Education is the best formal instrument to disseminate culture.

Quoting Susana Avolio de Cols: “education implies a socialization process –language acquisition, values criteria, ideas, dominant norms and customs of the society in which one lives”.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
On being educated, humans internalize the cultural patterns and communicate them to the new generations. At the same time, education is a process of internalization given that the individual develops abilities and skills by growing inwardly.

The final goals of education will be to make the individual aware of his /her dignity, his /her freedom and self-determination.

The State, through its specialized organizations, together with the family, establishes the educational policies of a country, the type of individual and the desired society. The role of teachers is to form people. Students must develop their abilities and commit themselves to their society.

The teacher is an intermediary between the cultural inheritance which he or she receives and the subject under education. Therefore, it must be a cultural policy priority the factual linking of education and culture.

4.2 Definitions of culture

In the modern conception, culture is the way people think, eat, dress, imagine, arrange their houses, make politics, speak and remain silent. It is what makes people live in a way that gives them identity and makes them distinct.

Formerly reserved for the fine arts, the concept of culture was brought to a crisis due to the impact of the scientific and technological civilization.

Cultural anthropology contributed to supersede this elitist conception of culture. Culture is neither refinement nor erudition.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in its Article 27°: “The right of all human beings to participate in cultural life.”

There is nothing significant or insignificant in culture.
Primitive cultures articulate collective patterns of behavior functional to their societies. Thus, ethnocentrism is rejected which implies judging other ethnic groups from a given cultural pattern (Recondo, Gregorio: “Identity, Integration and cultural creation in Latin America”).

Every culture has its distinctive seal, values, worldview, collective memory, etc. A typical example of ethnocentrism was the one applied by Europe to the societies it found in the American continent after the Columbian discoveries or with its colonial policies in other continents such as Africa or Asia. Culture is no longer understood today as the birthright or privilege of a few, but the product of the constant creation of the spirit of human beings and the peoples.

• Human beings internalize, through the learning process, behavior patterns and values.
• Every culture has a value and a dignity that have to be respected and protected.
• Every people has the right and the duty to develop its culture.
• In their fruitful variety and diversity, all cultures are part of the common heritage of humanity.
• They are the adequate instrument to favor and promote cultural development.

The UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies, held in Mexico in 1982 conceived culture as “The entirety of the distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and affective traits which characterize a society or social group.”

It includes, besides the arts and literature, ways of life, fundamental rights as human beings, value, tradition and belief systems.

Culture turns human beings into rational, critical and ethically committed people.
Societies, through the people and the social groups that integrate them, are **receptacles and producers** of culture.

It is not the State that creates culture, but humans as social beings interacting within their respective communities.

Culture is not a service granted by the Administration. On the contrary, the latter has to be at the service of culture.

Hence, in short, we say that:

Culture is something specifically human, acquired by inheritance within a framework of reference. It is a learned behavior. It involves biological, environmental, logical and historical components, knowledge, habits, techniques and forms of social organization, based upon a **common history**. Culture is the way of **being**, **making**, **thinking** and **feeling** of a people. In culture there are material and spiritual aspects linked to the needs of human beings.

Culture comprises **morality**, **ethical order**, **religion**, belief in supernatural beings and the worship given to them, **the legal system**, as every people has a set of norms ruling human relations. **Language** is a substantial aspect of culture as it is not only a way of communication but it implies a certain mental structure together with a worldview.

Arts, music, dancing, literature, theater, painting, drawing, engraving, ceramics, pottery, textiles, are expressions of the culture of a people.

**Skillful embroiderer of ao po’i from Yataity. The skills and techniques for the development of a community conform a given culture.**
Culture encompasses knowledge, beliefs, customs, mores and habits of a given society as well as the techniques and skills for its development. Each culture represents a set of unique and irreplaceable values. All cultures are a part of the common heritage of humanity. The cultural identity of a people is renewed and enriched with the traditions and the values of the others. Culture is dialogue, exchange of ideas and experiences and an appreciation of other values and traditions.

The cultural industries include: cinema, video, photography, books, etc.

Scientific knowledge, housing, clothing and body ornaments, and cooking are also cultural manifestations.

The Arete Guasu or Chiriguano carnival of the Guarani ethnic group.
5. Identity

By identity we understand the set of factors that allows us to distinguish an individual or group from others facing them; it is how we perceive ourselves and how we perceive others. In the words of María de los Ángeles Yannuzzi: “To raise the issue of identity really means to raise the issue of the difference.”

Article 25 of the National Constitution of 1992 addresses the topic of identity: “Everyone has the right to freely express his/her personality, to be creative, and to forge his/her own identity. Ideological pluralism is hereby guaranteed.”

As in the rest of the Americas, the ancient inhabitants of this territory were Indigenous tribes from different ethnic groups which, through migration, settled in the Pre-Columbian era in what today is the territory of Paraguay.

When the Spanish conquistadores arrived, a biological and cultural mix took place. Spaniards mixed with the Kario of the Guarani family. The Guarani were widespread in an vast territory that covered the Amazon basin to the surroundings of the Río de la Plata.

Fundamentally, the Conquest was a military task whereby Spanish power as well as cultural, economic, social, political and religious schemes were imposed in the Americas.
The total domination of the Indian by the Spaniards made the aboriginal inhabitants of these lands occupy the last echelon of the social pyramid. The new society inherited the Spanish cultural patterns but it gave its distinctive seal because it underwent a process of miscegenation that branded it deeply.

Paraguay is a multiethnic and multicultural country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic groups in Paraguay are divided into five linguistic families:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tupí Guaraní:</strong> Mby’a - Pañ Tavyterá - Ava Guarani - Guarayo —andeva o Tapite - Ache - Guayakí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zamuco:</strong> Ayoreo, Ybytósso and Tomáráho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mataco - Mataguayo:</strong> Nivaklé - Maká - Manjui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lengua - Maskoy:</strong> Lengua - Sanapaná - Guaná - Angaité - Toba Maskoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guaiacurú:</strong> Toba Qom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the process of miscegenation took place basically with the Guarani, Paraguay also received migratory flows although minor in comparison with the rest of the Río de la Plata. We must stress that the African element enters almost unnoticed in Paraguay albeit there are still elements of their culture such as the ones that preserve the community of Loma Campamento in Fernando de la Mora, known as Camba Cuá. They arrived in the country in 1821 with General José Gervasio Artigas who requested political asylum in the country. Dr. Francia granted his request but under some conditions. Artigas settled with 400 black slaves he had liberated. On January 6th, they celebrate the feast of Patron Saint Balthazar. Josefina Plá in her book “Hermano negro (La esclavitud en el Paraguay)” -Black brother - Slavery in Paraguay-, provides an extensive reference regarding this cultural universe.

The country lived processes of isolation in some stages of its history. When the Giant Province of the Indies (1617-1620) was divided...
into two Governorates (Paraguay or Guairá and that of Buenos Aires), Paraguay ended up isolated. The geographical situation of Paraguay also did not help to allow a larger migratory flow into the country.

The immigration of Spaniards and Italians was the most important. The case of the Mennonites, members of a religious community founded by a Dutch reformer, Menno Simons, was a migration of Canadian, German, and Russian origin which settled in the Chaco and also in the Eastern Region. They provided an organizational model of development in their respective areas of settlement.

The Japanese immigration into Paraguay took place before and after World War II. The first stage occurred in the settlements of La Colmena, Department of Paraguarí, and the second in those located in the Department of Itapúa which today is a melting pot of cultures.

There is a Russian community in Paraguay which arrived as a consequence of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Among them, there were officers who later founded the Faculty of Engineering.

The Jews arrived in Paraguay escaping anti-Semitic policies in Europe. At the same time, a significant Syrian-Lebanese migrations settled in the national territory which at present also counts with important Korean and Chinese communities.

Consequently, a plurality of cultural values exist in the conformation of Paraguayan society with contributions of the pre-existing Indigenous cultures and the migratory flows after the War of 1870 (Italians, Germans, Japanese, Mennonites, Slavs, Jews, Syrian-Lebanese, Koreans, Chinese, etc.).

We must make an effort to improve the social integration and the quality of life of all members of the Paraguayan society, free from any kind of discrimination.
The legend of the Ypacaraí Lake

In the táva of Cacique Tapaikua there was a water fountain at the foot of the Yvytypané hill (Patiño, today) and the beautiful stream Arecayá flowed from it. The population of the region had fallen into sin and corruption.

When an Indian refused to give water to someone else passing by, Tupã got angry and punished the neighborhood shaking the earth and from the fountain water emerged in great quantity. Fray (Father) Luis de Bolaños, a Franciscan apostle of the zone, received a desperate call in Yaguarón and rushed to the defense of the few who had survived. He climbed upon a hill, probably the Areguá Hill, and called upon God while he blessed the wayward water which immediately calmed down and receded. Thereafter, the lake so formed is called Ypacaraí: «Lake of peaceful and blessed waters».
6. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage

Man enters into the biosphere and finds himself within the framework of nature. In order to satisfy his basic needs of food, shelter and safety, he transforms nature. This transformation accomplished by man is culture, and everything that is significant becomes cultural heritage, understanding it as the set of cultural goods inherited from generation to generation, considered in a cultural historical framework both regional and universal.

Nature is the environment that surrounds us. Man needs to satisfy his material and spiritual needs. The manner in which man solves that, from the vase to collect honey, the shelter to feel protected or his beliefs in the afterlife constitutes culture.

In some cases, nature presents itself as too hostile. Man overcomes it and places himself above her laws.

Every cultural material is nature transformed by man. Man has transformed nature so much, that today we are under the obligation to protect and preserve it.

**Human Ecology**, a branch of Ecology, studies the reciprocal relations between man and environment, and **Cultural Ecology** studies the relation of human cultures with the geographical milieu wherein they develop.

When human intervention destroys the environment, Ecocide is committed. Polluting rivers with waste, cutting forests without reforestation, not giving treatment to garbage dumpers are all considered as attacks on the ecosystems.

It is difficult to speak of “tangible” and “intangible” heritage. We shall do it as a methodological recourse, because often the tangible, the concrete responds to processes or significants that are intangible.

6.1 Tangible heritage

As far as tangible heritage is concerned (with visible material traces), we may point out basically to what refers to monuments, parks, reserves, historical sites, handicraft and other visible cultural expressions.
In the last UNESCO Forum on Cultural Policies, held in Stockholm, in 1998, new categories were included in the area of cultural heritage, such as *cultural landscape, industrial heritage* and *cultural tourism*.

Let us mention some examples of tangible heritage:

**a. Housing:** Originally it had a functional role. It is important to mention a few peculiar architectural characteristics of Paraguay as the *corredor jeré* (circular corridor) or *kulata jovái* (typical dwelling with face-to-face rooms) which are functional proposals because of the hot weather most of the year. However, there is an invasion of universal foreign models that sometimes end up being little practical for a specific reality.

**Work for students:**

It could be proposed as group work the analysis of the architectural styles found in the country in the different cities and towns.

**b. The utensils for vital functions** in a given society are also tangible expressions of a culture. Cooking pots, jugs, baskets, fishing nets, hammocks, hunting weapons, traps, metal or leather pieces, among others, are part of this common heritage.

**Work for Students:**

c. Gastronomy: translates the way of living and thinking of a society and it is considered within the tangible and the intangible, for which it implies more than just a mixture of ingredients.

■ Work for students:

In group discussions, analyze the corn based culture of the Americas, the manioc, and the different recipes of Paraguayan cuisine. Get to know the bibliographical material in that respect published by national cuisine specialists.

d. Monuments and Museums: Paraguay possesses very few monuments and museums.

■ Work for Students:

As a group work, make a survey of the monuments that exist in the community, their history, heroic deeds or personalities involved. Write a report on the museums’ heritage, collections and the role they play.

6.2 Intangible heritage

It becomes intangible that thing that does not leave behind material traces, from a riddle, a saying, a sonnet, a case, a Ñe’enga or the embroidery technique in the field of handicrafts. As music and dancing have their intangible components, so does the scientific knowledge, which includes the richness of the traditional medicine that we, as Paraguayans, inherited from the Indigenous peoples.
Work for the Students:

Elaborate and execute a community project to recover oral tradition:

a) Compile Ñe’enga, cases, sayings, popular songs prevailing in the community.

b) Interview grandparents or elder relatives to collect cases or facts they remember about their daily lives, games they played or how they lived, what did they do when they were ill, how community festivities were celebrated, etc.

c) Share all the work in a major exhibit “My grandfather told me”, Invite school authorities, students, families and the people who were interviewed.

a. Rituals are collective expressions which reinforce the identity of the community, its sense of belonging through symbols fed by Christian and religious as well as Indigenous and profane traditions. Every ritual makes society self-represent by processing the common history and expectations. They are linked to transcendental aspects: excesses, wastefulness, games, duels, disguises, worship, the parody, the metaphor (Ticio Escobar, Milda Rivarola, Territorial Organization of the Central Department).

A part of the rituals constitute costumes and bodily ornaments.

Work for the Students:

Find references about the Kambara´anga (wearing of Indigenous masks).
b. **Patron Saints festivities**: they carry their specific rituals and they commemorate the day of the population’s Patron Saint. They condense social significances. They reinforce the sense of belonging and community cohesiveness as they become a common space for encounters where prevails integration and social equality.

They include: music, gambling, handicrafts fair, food and other products, sport competitions, religious acts, novenae, processions.

Patron Saint Days festivities alternate between **patterns of Catholic worship and popular religion** (González Torres, Dionisio, *Folklore del Paraguay*).

**Work for the Students:**

Conduct a research on your region’s Patron Saint festivity and expose all the details. Distinguish the roots of the elements involved: if they are from Indigenous, Spanish or any other culture roots.

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**c. Foreign appropriations**

There are imported cliché which influence and permeate the traditional mores. They penetrate and discredit them but leaving, anyway, a margin for recreation and appropriation (nowadays in San Juan festivities we listen to “cachaca” music and hot dogs and hamburgers are sold). The Halloween celebration has been incorporated in some segments of Paraguayan society, especially in schools where

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*Beatriz G. de Bosio*
English is taught. It is a pagan celebration representing the collective past of Anglo-Saxon culture. Likewise, Valentine’s Day on February 14th commemorates in the northern hemisphere the early arrival of the spring and therefore it constitutes the celebration of those who are in love which has also been incorporated here. The arrival of the spring in the southern hemisphere is on September 21st and that day is celebrated as the Day of Youth.

**d. Funerary Ritual:** These rituals come from Catholic worship and they mix with mestizo nuances.

**Work for the Students:**

Describe the customs and mores in the worship for the dead, for example burial of a “angelito” (a dead child is called “little angel”), festivities for November 2nd (Day of the Dead), etc.

Let us remember that...

In the Paraguayan tradition, the Day of the Cross (Kurusu ára) is on May 3rd. It is a widespread popular devotion throughout the country. All crosses in the cemeteries, on rural roads, houses, chapels, etc. are decorated with new or clean cloth. In some places, the crosses are “dressed” on May 1st and undressed on the 31st. Crosses are also decorated with flower garlands, laurel leaves or with chipá (corn bread) which is given to those who come to pray. There are crosses which enjoy fame for being miraculous such as the Kurusu Infante, which was erected in memory of the unknown soldier, martyr in the Battle of Acosta Ñú, located nearby the town of Eusebio Ayala, formerly Barrero Grande. It receives many visitors on May 3rd as well as on August 16th, celebrating the Children’s Day. Some other famous crosses are: Kurusu Cadete, Kurusu Isabel, Kurusu Jegua, etc.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
e. Bands: are the Banditas de San Lorenzo (little bands of San Lorenzo), the Petke Petke, Para ’i, Angu ʿa parara or chuchi that use rustic instruments such as bamboo flutes, cedar wooden boxes and leather membranes.

Work for the Students::
Ascertain the status of the Petke Petke Band and others.

f. Chants and Popular Music: Music is a cultural expression very dear to the feeling of the Paraguayans which has been amply documented throughout the centuries. In the evolution of the national heritage emerged the Paraguayan polka, the compuestos, the purahéi jaheʿo (sad singing), the purahéi joyvy (in two voices) and, finally, the Guarania which is more contemporary and lyrical.

Some of the more traditional songs of colonial origin such as the ņemboʿe purahéi (singing prayer), religious chants which accompany the intimate moments of the people such as Christmas, songs for dead children and adults, Kurusu Ára (Day of the Cross), Ñandejára Pasión (in the Holy Week), also belong to this group. Currently, the ņemboʿe purahéi is fundamentally a peasant expression.

Among those performing the Ñandejára Pasión, the estacioneros deserve to be mentioned; they are all-male choirs with banners, lanterns and crosses that visit the family calvaries and churches singing mournful, sad and painful chants linked to the Semana Santa or Holy Week religious rituals, funereal ceremonies and worship of the cross. This manifestation is seen in the communities of Ñemby, Capiatá, Fernando de la Mora, Ypane and San Lorenzo as well as in other places of the national geography.

We also find the compuestos, which are sung narrations of events or stories that took place, generally true which
deeply affected the community. In some cases, the composers were anonymous. They are sung accompanied by the guitar, rabel (popular double bass) or harp. The compuesteros of Carapeguá are famous. A distinguished researcher in this subject is Mr. Víctor Barrios Rojas who compiled in his book “Motivos populares tradicionales del Paraguay” (“Traditional Compositions of Paraguay”) the lyrics and music of the classic “Pancha Garmendia”, “Godoi fusilamiento”, “Jejuvkue jera”, among others.

―Work for students

Review the collections of newspapers to compile references about these cultural expressions, especially in Holy Week. Conduct a research on the life and works of José Asunción Flores.

g. Dance: Some expressions of Paraguayan dance have their own style and peculiar choreography. There are references of dances in Paraguay beginning in the colonial times. The chronicles of that time always mentioned Indian dances and also within the framework of customs of the colonial times, dances and chants are often mentioned. The birthday parties or santo ára are prominently recorded in the stories of foreign visitors of that time.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
Polka: It is the most typical dance. Diego Sánchez Haase writes: “that although it has nothing to do with the European polka, its name derives from this.” The teaching by Spanish, Italian and French musicians also meant the introduction of dances to the new continent, later translated into the local color by our composers.

Chopí: Also known as Santa Fe or Cielito. The chopí is a bird of elegant but unfriendly presence, with black feathers while yellow and red in the breast.

Palomita: It is one of the oldest dances in our folklore. It was widely danced during the time of the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870). The dance imitates love scenes between two doves.

Pericón: This dance is widespread in the Río de la Plata region. Originated in the eighteenth century, it was already mentioned by Juan de Aguirre, a Spanish officer who came to demarcate borders.

Galopa: (dance of the raida poti, without luxury but clean). The galopa dance is the pagan manifestation in the patron saint festivities. Generally Saint Blaise’s Day takes place on February 3rd, Day of the Virgin of Caacupé, December 8th, Saint Lawrence, August 10th, Virgin of the Rosary, October 3rd and Virgin of the Mercy where the Kambá la Mercé perform. The Virgin of the Mercy is the saint who protects the black African slaves in Paraguay.

Valseado: The waltz is a transculturation. It is called waltzing because it is the European waltz transplanted for native typical instruments and themes.

Work for the Students:
Conduct a research and document the typical dances prevailing in all cities and towns in the Paraguayan countryside.
h. Literature

There is an abundance of oral and written tradition in our society. Paraguayan literature as such comes with the European teachers hired by Don Carlos Antonio López in the second half of the 19th century. One of the peculiar aspects of Paraguay constitutes the fact that the civilian heroes who supported our cause in the War of 1870 were almost all foreign authors: Juan Bautista Alberdi, Olegario Andrade, Carlos Guido Spano, etc. Nowadays, we have a mature Paraguayan literature. Augusto Roa Bastos, one of our authors, won the Cervantes Award for Literature, considered as the Nobel Prize of the Spanish Literature.

Oral tradition in Guarani is very important because this language was more oral than written until the beginning of publications in Guarani. Representatives of Guarani poetry are later accompanied by music: Narciso R. Colmán, Félix Fernández, Emiliano R. Fernández, Manuel Ortiz Guerrero, etc.

There are great authors in all the literary genres, including poetry, essays, short stories, novels and theater.

One of the main aspects to be considered was the boom movement in Paraguay in the aftermath of the founding of NAPA (Paraguayan Narrative) by the late writer Juan Bautista Rivarola Matto in the decades of the 80s.

Nowadays, Paraguayan writers find publishing houses that are interested in publishing their work. Newspapers also give space to literary creation and that also encourages its practice.

Work for the Students:

Conduct a research on the work of the poets in the Guarani language. Currently, who are the most prevailing poets? In your opinion, when does literature begin in Paraguay?
i. Myths and Legends of Paraguay

Myths or narrations of imaginary events attributed to gods, demigods or superior beings are used to explain natural or supernatural phenomena impossible to grasp. Likewise, these fantastic beings are used to avoid deviations from agreed rules of behavior.

Thus they have a pedagogical purpose. For example, Jasy Jateré (piece of the moon) is the Guarani cupid and carrier of fecundity. He is the elf of the siesta (nap) and attracts children by whistling or touching them with his golden walking stick. He kidnaps them and takes them to the forests for some time. This is a way of putting fear in children so they do not go far way from home when the parents are napping.

The Pombero or Karai Pyhare: It is an anthropomorphic, ugly, wide-chested dwarf with hairy hands and feet whose steps are not heard. He roams about at night and he is very naughty. He releases animals from the corrals, steals tobacco, scatters the corn, steals honey, and he is very sensual with women. Sometimes, he kidnaps young women.

The Póra, Malavisión (evil spirit), Karai Vosa (man with the bag) and others conform the wide Paraguayan mythological universe.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
Legends, on the other hand, are fabulous narratives but based on historical or true facts referred to persons or things that may also have a fantastic origin. According to the legend, the brothers Tupí and Guaraní wandered in the forest seeking company. Unable to find it, they founded city dwellings where they lived for many years attracting fellow human beings. Finally, there was a civil war and, in order to avoid further disgrace, they agreed to separate. Tupí, as the elder brother and the one with more extensive descent, remained in the forests of Brazil, and Guaraní went toward the Río de la Plata basin. That is why Tupí and Guaraní people share the same language.

Legends conform the narrative basis of our national literature. The religious element comes into play with the widely known legend of the Virgin of Caacupé, an icon carved by José the Indian from the town of Tobati who, in gratitude for a miracle given by the Virgin, decided to carve the image that today is venerated in the Basilica of Caacupé every December 8th.

Among others, we have the legend of the Urutaú which is about a woman who wanted to join God in heaven. She could not reach it because God had already ascended to the sun, thus she was transformed into a night bird of that name, destined to lament her sad life for having shown an exaggerated ambition. Other well known legends are: Lake Ypacaráí, Ñandejara Guazú (our Great Father), Lake Ypoa, Ycuá Bolaños (Ycuá Bolaños is a spring) and the legend of the Toropé. All cultures share the tradition of legends and in many places, their compilation marks likewise the beginning of written literature. Among the compilers of Paraguayan legends, we may mention Father José Guevara, Narciso R. Colmán, Concepción Leyes de Chaves, Moisés S. Bertoni, Natalicio González, Dionisio González Torres, etc. among many anonymous cultivators of the oral tradition.

**Work for the Students:** Identify the myths and legends best known in the community. Identify the favorite myths and legends in every family.
Let us remember that...

The **myth** is a form of literature whose ultimate goal is to educate the population, especially children and youth, in traditions, values, dangers, taboos and to remember generally tragic events that leave a lesson behind.

The **Jasy Jatere**, is the blond elf of the nap time that prevents children from going away from their homes during those hours. The **Chogüí** bird is the story of a little Indian boy who falls from the branch of a tree and dies and his mother unable to withstand the pain is transformed into a bird sadly calling his child. The **Lobisón** (werewolf) represents the seventh male son of a family. It is the primitive form of educating families in birth control.

The myth of the **Ao Ao** illustrates a terrible animal that looks like a sheep, with big claws that would tear up the people he found in the forest. The only way to save oneself was to climb up to a palm tree. Any other trees could be felled by the Ao Ao with his big claws. This myth teaches people never to wander alone in the forest.

**j. Theater:** The theatrical genre always had great attraction even in colonial times. The missionaries performed the sacrament acts and other plays suited to the religious festivities. It is also known that, during the great festivities in the last colonial times, the stagings of theatrical pieces included members of the most distinguished families. With the government of president Carlos Antonio López, theater was allowed again after its prohibition during the years of Dr. Francia’s rule. At this the creation of the National Theater took place which would later become the Municipal Theater.

There have always been in Paraguay two forms of expression: a classical theater, generally brought by foreign theater companies, including in the twentieth century the
very popular Spanish zarzuelas; and, on the other hand, the folk theater, spoken in Guarani and especially the staging of the Passion of Our Lord which would tour the countryside with great success. Julio Correa was one of the main Paraguayan playwrights of folk theater. Some of his classical pieces such as Karú Poká and others reflect the reality of the Paraguayan peasant society. Later, Ernesto Báez became a great actor whose theater, with a great comedy content, was in reality a tearing social comment. Nowadays, theater is consolidated in Paraguay and it is an expression valued and cultivated by institutions which gather young professionals.

**Work for the Students:**

Prepare an essay on the theatrical piece that had the greatest impact. Explain the plot, the message and evaluate the performance of the actors.

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**Let us remember that...**

**The Kamba ra’anga,** which means a “figure in black” is a staging that comes from colonial times and incarnates a historical legendary character. He appears disguised bearing wooden masks. Its original meaning is unclear. He is someone who threatens and generate collective fear. It is the transposition of a secular enemy. One hypothesis is that they symbolized the dreaded Sao Paulo bandeirantes who harassed and pillaged the Indigenous peoples. This tradition was kept and passed down from generation to generation because it meant new fears and threats. These popular stagings can still be seen in the Paraguayan countryside, where figures in black beat people with noisy inflated cow bladders and pay flirtatious compliments to young girls.

In the festivities of Saint Peter and Saint Paul on June 29th in the town of Ytaguasu in Altos or the nativity of the Virgin Mary, on September 8th in the town of Yvu in Altos, Saint Balthazar´ s Day on January 6th in the town of Rosado in Tobatí and other religious celebrations in Itá, Yaguarón, San Miguel, San Ignacio, Santaní and in the outskirts of Asunción where the famous kamba ra´anga still entertain people with much richness and expressivity.
k. Religion

Each culture has its beliefs in the afterlife as well as its original myths and practical explanations on everyday life. The Guarani Indians had no problems in accepting a spiritual god of all creation because they revered the equally spiritual figure of the god Tupã. At the same time the concept of rewards and punishments was known to them because the Yvy Marae’y or the Earth without evil was the paradise human beings expected after living a full life on earth.

The Christian religion allowed a wide framework of syncretism or incorporation of local pagan elements that ultimately meant the respect and the survival of the ancestral traditions. The Christian missionaries managed to impose their rites such as the processions, pilgrimages, novena, saint patron days festivities, the Semana Santa or Holy Week, the Day of the Cross or “Kurusu Ára”, etc. And in their own turn, the Indians preserved their language as the vehicle to transmit these customs. Religions, as a vital aspect of life, form part of the community everyday life and it is perceived as the guiding element of daily coexistence.

Work for the students:

In your opinion, which is the most important religious festivity in Paraguay? Explain why.
Our collective memory gathers many legends such as that of the **Virgin of Caacupé**.

Oral tradition tells that in the early sixteenth century, a Guarani Indian, named José, from the Reduction of Tobatí, specialized in wood carving, entered into the forest looking for wood to carve statues. He was surrounded by the *Mbayaes* Indians who approached him in a threatening manner. Fearing for his life he was able to escape and hide behind a massive tree trunk and on his knees on the dead leaves he promised the Virgin he would carve an image from the wood of the protective trunk. The Virgin listened to his petition and the *Mbayaes* went by the protective trunk without discovering his presence. Free from danger José cut with an ax a wooden piece in order to fulfill his promise. Soon he finished the image of the Virgin which is worshipped in Caacupé.

Years later, in 1603, when an overflow formed the **Lake Ypacarái** that image carved by the Indian of Tobatí appeared among the waves locked inside a trunk. The neighbors picked it and such was the fame for the miracles of the image that they took it to Caacupé and made a sanctuary and there it began receiving many pilgrims to worship her ever since.

Another version by Dionisio González Torres points out that José, the Indian, carved two images of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception. The larger one remained in Tobatí and the smaller one made for a family shrine went to Caacupé.
I. Painting and Sculpture

The last of the fine arts to be cultivated in Paraguay were painting and sculpture. Not even Indigenous religion worshipped concrete images; so that creation was limited to utility implements. The arrival of the missionaries brought along religious imagery with which it was discovered the Indian’s gift for the plastic arts. Examples of this era are the legacies in the Jesuit and Franciscan temples with their altarpieces, altars, images and carvings. With them begins the Guarani-Hispanic Baroque Era, which includes the use of vegetable-based paints already known by the Indians. For four centuries the religious themes are dominant. The practice of religious imagery kept being cultivated throughout the country and it is one of the outstanding popular traditions both in wood and ceramics. There was a time when this type of popular creation was available only during religious festivities such as the Day of the Virgin of Caacupé or Christmas time.

Pictorial art develops in Paraguay beginning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of the pioneers went to study in Europe from where they brought contemporary influences into their portraits of local motifs.

From the second half of the twentieth century, schools for children and youth are opened...
as well as galleries for exhibits, contests and invitations to foreign biennials and triennials. The result was a flourishing of etching, painting and xylopainting at a highly satisfactory level, comparable to those in any other country in the continent.

Besides, non-religious sculpture begins to flourish in the beginning of the 60s when Paraguayan artists achieved recognition in international contests. The centennial of the War of the Triple Alliance is an occasion for the government to commission large scale patriotic work and some parks and avenues in Paraguay for the first time display statues of continental heroes. Thus, Paraguay is a country characterized by the absence of monuments, including one to commemorate the victorious Chaco War. Some churches and temples resorted to order large scale works from some of the outstanding sculptors for example for the temples of María Auxiliadora and the Crucecita Milagrosa, among others.

Although it started with some delay, the practice of arts in forms of painting and sculpture have reached full maturity at present, and the artists can decently earn their living with their work.

**Work for the Students**

Conduct a survey of the status of the plastic arts in each community. Mention styles and works.
Textile handicraft in Paraguay is made fundamentally by women and has its roots in Indian culture.

With cotton, they make hammocks, poyvi (coarse bedspread) and blankets. The encaje ju generally opts for phytomorphic motifs and the ñandutí in Itaúguá has a variety of colors and motifs. Sombrero pirí (typical Paraguayan hat of country men), baskets and hand fans are made with karanda’y (palm tree leaf).

Handbags are made with vegetable fibers such as karaguata and they are colored with the use of natural dyes and aniline.

And are woven with wool ponchos and fajas (girdle belts), some with geometric motifs and at times dyed in colors.

Detail of a woolen cloth, traditional handicraft of the cattle ranching zone of San Miguel in Misiones.
6.3. Museums and historic sites in Asunción

This incomplete list is provided as a reference and suggestion for group work to carry out a survey of each repository and update the information.

- **The Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (National Museum of Fine Arts)**

  Formed with the private collection of the founder, Juansilvano Godoi, this repository opened as a museum in 1909. It has a hall for European paintings and another for national painters. It displays works by Carbonero, Tintoretto, Murillo, and others. It also exhibits works by the best known Paraguayan painters such as Pablo Alborno, Colombo, Héctor Da Ponte, Jaime Bestard, and others. It shares the building with the National Archives of Asunción.

- **Oratorio de la Virgen Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (Oratory of the Virgin of the Lady of Asunción) and the Panteón Nacional de los Héroes (National Pantheon of the Heroes)**

  By a decree by Francisco Solano López, it was built in 1863 as an oratory of the matron saint of the city. The War of the Triple Alliance interrupted the construction works and they were resumed in 1930. It was inaugurated in 1936 with the solemn burial of the ashes of Marshal López and the Unknown Soldier of the Chaco War. The Pantheon is also the burial site of General José Eduvigis Díaz, General Bernardino Caballero, Marshal José Félix Estigarribia and his wife. The last to be buried was Dr. Eusebio Ayala, the victorious President in the Chaco War.
• **Museo Casa de la Independencia (Museum The House of the Independence)**

The house opened as a museum in 1965. It belonged to the Martínez Sáenz family and it was the meeting place of the Paraguayan independence patriots that brought about the Independence in May 1811. It has a hall that evokes the meetings of the Cabildo of Asunción (Spanish Town Council) with furniture of that time. Other rooms evoke colonial spaces.

It houses very valuable objects and some of them belonged to the Independence patriots.

• **Museo del Ministerio de Defensa Nacional (Museum of the Ministry of National Defense)**

Many of these relics were part of the trophies that were officially returned by the belligerent governments. The documentary collection is very valuable because they are authentic documents of that time.

• **Museo Monseñor Juan Sinforiano Bogarín (Museum Monsignor Juan Sinforiano Bogarín)**

It houses the private collection of the illustrious first Archbishop of Asunción, Monsignor Juan Sinforiano Bogarín who, in his pastoral pilgrimages, began collecting along a half a century, relics of all kinds and today it houses some very valuable pieces of Jesuit and Franciscan sacred art as well war relics, documents and garments used at that time, portraits, etchings and photographs as well as Captain Pedro Juan Cavallero’s desk.

• **Museo del Tesoro de la Catedral (Museum of the Treasure of the Cathedral)**

The Cathedral was built during the government of Carlos Antonio López. This museum is located on the left side of the High Altar. It has unique samples of silver and gold pieces of colonial times.
• **Collections in the Historic Center of the City**

In the historic quarters of the city, limited but valuable collections continue to appear in the aftermath of the architectural recovery of the zone. Among the collections of buildings that stand out are the following:

- Casa Viola: this is the only example of colonial architecture of Asunción, previous to the grid square system organization of the streets ordered by José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia after the conspiracy in 1820.

- Manzana de la Rivera, Casa Castelví, Casa Ballario.

• **Museo del Barro / Centro de Artes Visuales (Museum of Clay / Center for Visual Arts)**

It is the most important private collection but it is open to the public. It has several exhibition halls: Museum of Clay, Museum of Folk and Indigenous Art, Museum of Paraguayan Contemporary Art and the Museum of Visual Arts.

**Work for the Students**

Conduct a research on the following historic architectural monuments of the city. Consult the bibliography regarding:

- Government Palace
- Chamber of Deputies
- National Congress
- Church of Trinidad
- Church of The Encarnación
- Railway Central Station
Culture in the Classroom

- Museo Andrés Barbero (Museum Dr. Andrés Barbero)
- Solar Sarmiento (Sarmiento Residence)
- Jardín Botánico (Botanic Garden)

6.4. Sites and Museums in the countryside

- Museo Etnográfico Guido Boggiani (Ethnographic Museum “Guido Boggiani”)

It is located in the city of San Lorenzo, it houses an important collection of pieces of Paraguay’s Indigenous heritage.

- Iglesia de Yaguarón (Church of Yaguarón)

It is the most important exhibition of the Guarani-Franciscan Baroque art.

- Jesuit towns

There are architectural and iconographic remains of what were the 30 Guarani Reductions. The Reductions of San Ignacio Guazú, Santa María de Fe, Santa Rosa, Santiago, San Cosme and Damián, Jesús, Trinidad (Itapúa) remained in the territory of Paraguay.

Work for the Students

a. Add more data to the items above mentioned and add other sites and museums in the countryside, giving brief references about them.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
b. Cooperate with the locality of your choice as a volunteer at the municipal level to rescue its historic, natural and cultural heritage.

**Work for the Students:**

Trace and define what could amount to, in a national and regional level:

- Route: of the Independence and of the yerba mate.
- Itinerary of the López’s Army as far as Cerro Corá.
- Sites of the battles of the War of the Triple Alliance and the Chaco War.

Locate on a map the sites that we could consider examples for the new categories of heritage declared by the UNESCO:

- Industrial heritage (quebracho industry, a source of tannin extract in the Alto Paraguay, the Colonies of the South in the Department of Itapúa, etc.).
- Cultural landscape (a rice plantation, a soybean or cotton field, etc.).
- Cultural Tourism (Jesuit and Franciscan missions, etc.).

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**The Petéke Petéke Band** is a famous musical ensemble composed of the descendants of Indians who maintain the tradition that began in colonial times. They belong to the township of Guayaivity in Yaguarón and they were formerly known as the Angu’a Párará (noisy mortars) Band. The instruments are the mimby (flute) made of bamboo (takuapi) and a chord-o-phone called Gualambáu. Generally, they participate of religious events. Their repertoire, which is transmitted through generations, includes: Procession, Tape joasá (crossroads), San Roque, Yaguarón, Chiricote, Cacique, Jaguarű, etc.
EVERYBODY'S PENDING TASK TO STRENGTHEN IDENTITY

It is a priority of all Paraguayans:

• To protect the cultural heritage.

• To promote current creative practices.

• To implement the adequate stimulus mechanisms for cultural expressions not yet fully developed or with the possibility of extinction.

In the design and application of cultural policies, certain stages must be considered:

1. Contact and dialogue with the sectors, persons and institutions in charge of creating or disseminating artistic or cultural expressions.

2. Registration of these groups and survey of their needs.

3. Detection of incipient or inexistent cultural forms.

4. Cultural promoters, intellectuals specialized in the study of aesthetic expressions, must be in permanent touch with creators and government agents to generate and design cultural policies to support these sectors.

5. Definition of short and mid-term strategies.

6. Revalue aesthetic expressions. Provide support for transfer of techniques from one generation to the next.

7. Creation of cultural infrastructure: libraries, archives, museums, art schools, etc.

8. The regional cultural centers will cooperate in order to strengthen the communities’ sense of belonging and roots, and community self-management.
7. Sustainable Development

After the Second World War, the Austrian economic school is the first to use the term “development” as the set of actions undertaken by the States in order to improve and increase the standard of living in a country or region.

This terminology and ideology was quickly incorporated in the social sciences and in politics, especially in Latin America. At first, economic development was mentioned, but later the term came to have a wider scope.

In the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1975, a different type of development was proposed linked to the process oriented according to the needs. Its goal was to satisfy fundamental needs and to promote the realization of the communities and their members. That is, a development with a broader dimension was called for, an economic and cultural development. The UNESCO declared the “Decade for cultural development 1988-1997” with four fundamental goals:

- To incorporate the cultural dimension in the development policies.
- To revalue cultural identities.
- To provide access for everybody to participate in cultural life.
- To foster international cultural cooperation.

**Development:** It is understood as the process that satisfies the individual and collective needs, both in quantity and quality.

**Quality of life:** it is an indicator that refers to the possibility of satisfaction of the existential individual and collective needs (to be, to have and to do) and axiological needs (pertaining to values: subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, freedom, leisure, transcendence)

The development models proposed were:

- **Modernization**: The abandonment of the traditional economic structures to incorporate technology and mechanization in the productive processes. An incipient industrialization is also a part of this model.

- **Dependency theory**: Ideology embraced by socialists which claims the existence of great centers of hegemonic powers which control life and production in the periphery constituted by the Third World or lesser developed countries.

- **The focus on basic needs**: Development means attention to education, health, housing and jobs.

- **The adjustment with a human face**: also known as an aspect of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church which puts man and not the market as the axis of all productive change.

Today, the concept of **sustainable development** is put forth. For example, Paraguay cannot have heavy iron works industries because it lacks coal. Likewise, commercial sea fishing is not sustainable because of the distance separating us from the sea.

**Sustainability**: durability of the process, creativity, permanent adjustment, diversification, proactivity, transgenerational solidarity. (Causarano, Mabel, 1999. REMA)

**Work for the Students**

Analyze the components of the quality of life of Paraguayans in their urban and rural areas:

- Life expectancy, school attendance, literacy, employment, health, housing, productivity and welfare.
- Go to the National Directorate of Statistics, Opinion, Surveys and Census, and to the Central Bank offices to obtain and analyze macroeconomic indicators (imports – exports – exchange rate...
Culture in the Classroom

Check report by the UNDP on human development.

Let us remember that...

The Guarani language was the most important legacy collected and systematized by Catholic missionaries.

Guarani was declared Paraguay’s official language in the Constitution of 1992.

Bilingualism in Paraguay is a unique case in Latin America. Ninety percent of the Paraguayan population speaks Guarani.

The languages of the other ethnic groups inhabiting Paraguayan territory also have constitutional rank because the Constitution recognizes the right of the Indigenous peoples to preserve and to develop their ethnic identity in their respective habitat.

Chapter V of the National Constitution refers to the rights of the Indigenous peoples by enunciating in all six articles, from 62 al 67 that: This Constitution recognizes the existence of Indigenous peoples, defined as ethnic groups whose culture existed before the formation and constitution of the Paraguayan State.

It also states that the State shall provide them with the respective land, free of charge, which will be sufficient both in terms of size and quality for them to preserve and to develop their own lifestyles. The removal or transfer of Indigenous groups from their habitat without their express consent is prohibited.

Regarding education, the Indigenous peoples have the right to follow their rites, myths and their languages and is guaranteed the respect for their cultural heritage and they are given the right to have their own schools.

There are approximately 50,000 Indigenous living in the Chaco and, approximately 40,000 Indians living in the Eastern Region.
8. Law Nº 904 “Statute of the Indigenous Communities of Paraguay”

The Constitution expresses that Paraguay is a multiethnic country with a pluralistic culture. In that sense, the most important pending task is that of revaluing the Indigenous presence in our environment to put an end to centuries of discrimination and disdain. The law requires a special treatment for such communities, which in truth has not been translated into reality yet but it is the duty of every Paraguayan citizen to ensure observance of this law.

**Article 1** The purpose of this law is the social and cultural preservation of the Indigenous communities, the defense of their heritage and traditions, their effective participation in the national development process, and their access to a legal regime that guarantees them property and other productive resources on the basis of equality with all other citizens.

**Article 2** To the effects of this law, an Indigenous community shall be understood as the group of extensive families, clan or group of clans, with culture and a system of local authority, speaking an autonomous language and co existing in a common habitat. An Indigenous group shall be understood to be the set of two or more communities with the same characteristics who identify themselves under a common denomination.

**Article 4** In no case shall the use of force or coercion be allowed as a means to promote the integration of the Indigenous communities to the national collective neither shall be allowed measures aiming at an assimilation which does not contemplate the feelings and interests of the Indigenous peoples themselves.

**Article 5** The Indigenous communities have the right to freely apply their customary practices in their domestic coexistence as long as they are not incompatible with the principles of the legal system.
Work for the Students

Study in further details about the five linguistic families which conform the national Indigenous universe; aspects of their culture, regional location, number of members, etc.


The Totobiegosode are a part of the Ayoreo ethnic group belonging to the Zamuco linguistic family. They inhabit a region of the Pecari (wild pigs) of the Paraguayan Chaco. They are forest people who have had no contact with white people and they resist that by keeping their territories and traditions. They live off hunting, wild fruit gathering and they have their crops. By mistake they were known as indios moros or Moor Indians.

Of the 17 ethnic groups existing in Paraguay, some remain in the forests, others, like the members of the Maka tribe, live very close to the city or in the city itself.

Each one of these groups possesses its specificity, its cosmic vision, its culture, and we must respect them.

Ethnocentrism means judging other cultures from our own viewpoints which we consider a life model.
Regarding the **masks**, their wearing was unknown to the Paraguayan Guarani. However, among the Chiriguano Guarani, at the foothills of the Andes Mountains, beginning in the sixteenth century the wearing masks or *añavusú* (great enemy) existed and still continues to exist due to the influence of theChané - Arawak, and they were linked to agricultural rituals. They are made of a very soft wood, known as *torobochi* (*samu’u*).

It is impossible to set the date the first time these masks were worn.

At present, they are made in Altos and Tobatí from the root of *timbó* and *Kurupy ka’y* trees. The masks depict images of blacks, old people, animals and monsters. Colombino points out that the oldest masks have a Negroid appearance. Also some masks fully painted with intense black color are made in a township of San Bernardino.

The triangle composed of the towns of Emboscada, Altos and Tobatí is an area also inhabited by blacks and it is there where these masks are worn with greater emphasis, responding to a tradition where many components find a junction.
“...culture is fervor, creativity and people’s strength on the march...”

Augusto Roa Bastos

“...Culture is not only the collective way of life but it also includes the reasons to live for...”

René Mahieu
CHAPTER II

“I am not trying to say that one culture is superior to another, I do try to insist upon the certainty that the seed of a better future is in interculturality. To reaffirm the hope that in our America we learn to relate to each other within the most profound respect among cultures.”

Rigoberta Menchú
Nobel Peace Prize Winner
CHAPTER II

1. Cultural policies

It is the set of operations, principles, practices, administrative and budgetary management procedures that serves as the basis for the cultural action of a government (UNESCO).

For Evangelina García Prince: “It is understood that cultural policies are the rules, principles and orientations formally seeking a goal which have explicit formulation and sanction by the State and which guide the dynamics of the cultural sector toward goals and objectives of collective betterment.” (Recondo Gregorio, op.cit.).

Cultural policies must express a mechanism which enables the encounter between talent and opportunity.

A culture exists independent of a public administration. The latter has the function of organizing a cultural policy, which means:

• To exclude ideological authoritarianism.
• To exclude political interventionism.
• To exclude paternalism by the State.

Cultural policy is an administrative activity which seeks to stimulate the interactive dynamism of the producers of culture. This must:

• Build new bridges between artists and their public.
• Allow the creators to freely exercise their expressions.
• Consolidate the existing cultural trends and promote the creation of others.
• Facilitate the broadening of public spaces and democratic access to the benefits of all expressions of culture.
• Promote citizen critical awareness.
• Guarantee popular participation in education and in artistic communication.

• Promote equal opportunities in education and culture and foster the participation of all citizens in order to consolidate a participatory democracy.

• Aim to assure creative freedom in cultural matters.

The international conferences on cultural policies in Venice (worldwide) in Helsinki (European) and so many others highlighted the consideration of the artist’s freedom as a fundamental human right.

Cultural policies are a mechanism to protect the rights of the creative artists and intellectuals and to protect likewise the rights of citizens who are consumers of culture.

1.1. Goals of cultural policies

Currently, there is a discussion about the need to link in practice cultural policies as an extension of social and economic policies. There is no longer a separation as it is known that culture is a part of everyday life as well as the other basic needs of human beings. In fact, culture is the way in which such needs are satisfied and the policies must:

• Favor the improvement of the quality of life.

• Strengthen national identity.

• Favor and promote

Rosa Brítez. A genuine representative of the Paraguayan woman ceramist who shapes the primeval mud with her own hands until she turns it into a valuable artistic object.
cultural development: “cultural dimension of development” (beginning in the decade of the 1970s).

• Cultural policies imply a cooperating function toward a democratization of culture and the promotion of citizens’ participation. It makes a self-identity awareness possible and the discovery and recognition of cultural plurality.

• Assure creative freedom in cultural matters.

• Serve as a guiding instrument for world crises.

• Pursue the goal of the defense of the cultural heritage.

On the other hand, a heritage policy must consider:

• The identification and legal and scientific protection of the heritage.

• Its conservation (techniques to maintain the heritage).

• The animation of the heritage. It must be useful, vital and contribute to the collective richness.

1.2. Contents of cultural policies

Every global cultural policy must necessarily consider the following points:

• Cultural identity: it is a fundamental aspect in the framework of globalization and regional integration.

• Culture and democracy: democracy is a full fledged goal and its achievement and upholding must be taught everyday in order to internalize it as an undisputed pattern of behavior and coexistence.

• Culture and development: development must never sacrifice the cultural aspect. Therefore, the copy of foreign models must be tested first, in order to prove their respect for the native culture.
• Cultural animation: it is the promotion of cultural goods.

• Preservation of the national and regional heritage: a priority aspect of the educational and cultural policies and preservation.

• Artistic and intellectual creative freedom: in a democratic environment this is taken for granted.

• Culture and work: culture is a source of employment, occupation and production.

• Tradition and modernity: aspects that do not contradict each other because they rather complement and enrich each other.

• Culture and communication: care must be paid to the cultural aspect in the mass media and a critical spirit must be developed before the wave of foreign patterns and models.

• Correlation between culture, science and technique: science and technique have greater effectiveness where cultural aspects related to an idiosyncrasy are respected.

• Culture and leisure time: this is very important nowadays because of the accumulation of leisure time by the citizens. Creativity during leisure time is a need and, simultaneously, a great opportunity. A lack of choices drives young people to the bad habits of alcohol and tobacco.
Professor Edwin Harvey, an authority on the subject, states some basic principles of modern cultural policy:

- An improvement in the level of socio-cultural development of the population.

- The adequate use of the technological and financial resources to improve the quality of life. A theory that lay stress only on economic variables is not enough, it is insufficient. We are talking about integral development and not only about an increase in the GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

- The principle of cultural democracy (free participation of all in the community’s cultural life and the enjoyment of the cultural goods and services).

- Affirmation of the principle of freedom in cultural creation.

- The consolidation of the “national” cultural identity aimed at preserving, consolidating, and protecting the cultural heritage of each nation (OEL Seminar-Workshop to Train Human Resources, Buenos Aires, 1996).

Work for the Students

Imagine that you are responsible for a project to draft an Atlas of Paraguayan traditional culture. Which cultural expressions would you pinpoint in the Department?
Among Paraguayan handicraft expressions, there are some linked to the Indian past and others have deep Spanish roots. Within Paraguayan handicraft, textiles show great richness. It became an important activity mainly of Paraguayan women. The Indians were skillful weavers, using vertical looms, cotton, fibers and wool.

The Paraguayan hammock (Kyha) was an Indian product adopted by the colonists. Currently, its ornamental richness is less evident. Other vegetable fibers such as the palm trees and the Karaguatá were also woven.

Ponchos, blankets, bags, nets for fishing, headbands, fajas or sashes, single colored, or striped or with geometric motifs influenced by the neighboring Indians of the Transchaco, conformed the Indian textile universe that survived to this day.

Weaving in pre-currency Paraguay constituted exchange money, substituting the iron “wedges”.

Indian cotton material was the immediate precedent of the Ao po’i (narrow or long cloth). There were varieties from the fine material similar gauze—no longer seen except samples from the nineteenth century— to thicker ones.

The typói is an outfit worn by women, quite characteristic until the nineteenth century. Probably made of ao po’i, a long clothing strained at the waist by a chumbe (coral snake), a colorful woven belt. No longer worn today, it is worn for folklore performances. The typói, originally very simple, became modified by the addition of laces and embroidery.

The encaje ju is a lace characteristic of the town of Altos.
The ñandutí is a fine lace that imitates a spider web. Paraguay’s textile art derived from the lace of Tenerife, Canary Islands. The material takes varied forms such as star, flor de arasa (flower), mburukuja (passion fruit flower), panambi (butterfly), avati (corn), etc.

The main center for making this lace is Itaguá. It is also made in Altos, Carapeguá, Guarambaré and Ypacarai. Gustavo González, a physician and culture researcher was the first to study and write about the ñandutí.

San Miguel in the Department of Misiones is a typical place for woolen and cotton materials with geometric designs and floral motifs. The products have a wide market.

Another example of craftsmanship is basket work, a heritage from the Indians who were very skillful at weaving baskets and mats of vegetable fibers and some tightly knitted earthen jars to store water or honey.

Authentic is the piri, used as a bed or curtain. The Payaguá Indians monopolized its making and trade.

The Spaniards also introduced their basket work. This craftsmanship hardly survived the War of the Triple Alliance. Later, it experienced a recovery. The sombrero piri (hat) is still made with caranday fiber. Up to now, baskets, handbags and hand fans uncolored or died in different colors are made.

Leather was an important product in colonial Paraguay. Work on leather of Spanish origin and clear Moorish influence was used for seats, back of seats, to cover large chests, and jugs as well as horseback riding accessories. Largely, the craftsmanship was interrupted by the War of the Triple Alliance. However, there is some recovery at present.

In Atyrá we can see the tradition of phytomorphic leather carving.

Paraguayan ceramics, that has Guarani roots, displayed only elementary decorations. In terms of shapes, the Guarani showed special skills at making water jugs, plates and large funerary urns.
This type of pottery, without the use of a spindle, was made by women with utilitarian purposes such as jugs for grain, etc. There is a ceramic style of the Guarani Mbya which reveals the Jesuit influence in the floral decorations.

Domestic pottery incorporated other forms. Today, they are made in Itá and Tobatí –ancient Indian settlements– large earthen jars, jugs and other shapes with Indian procedures whose decoration is still based on the Pre-Hispanic englobe design. They also make non-utilitarian objects that are sprayed in black, according to tourists demands.

The chipa, the so’o josopy, the locro, the vori vori, the mbeju and other dishes are characteristic elements of Paraguayan gastronomy which has Guarani and Spanish origins. To prepare a delicious mbeju we must mix 600 grams of starch plus one cup of corn flour, a spoonful of lard, ½ teaspoon of salt, 200 grams of fresh cheese (called “Queso Paraguay”) and ¾ cup of milk.
2. Cultural Mercosur

Culture may unite what politicians have divided.

2.1. History

On March 26th, 1991, the presidents of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay signed the Treaty of Asunción which created the Southern Common Market - Mercosur, a regional organization, expression of the political will to unite our countries.

Its main goal is the promotion of the free movement of goods, services and factors of production, through the elimination of duties.

On August 5th, 1994, the four presidents approved a common external tariff through which, from beginning on January 1st, 1995, the countries formalized the entry of Mercosur into a customs union.

Mercosur comprises a population of 200 million people and US$ 7,700 per capita GDP, making Mercosur the eighth world economy. Chile signed an economic complementation that establishes a free trade zone. Bolivia expressed the intention to become a full member soon.

This bloc implies a different conception of what in the past was a border-wall in order to become an open-door border, a point of encounter and convergence (Recondo Gregorio, “Identidad, integración y creación cultural en América Latina” (“Identity, integration and cultural creation in Latin America”), Editorial Belgrano - UNESCO: 1997).

Gregorio Recondo underlines that this treaty of integration does not contemplate in its articles any declaration regarding “culture”, unavoidable element in any integration project. In the paragraphs of the treaty there are references to the
preservation of the environment and to scientific and technological development, the improvement of the quality of life and to economy in general. Mercosur emerges as a project to constitute a regional free trade zone in order to become a common market.

The author further comments that **11 working subgroups were created in the Mercosur but none collected the problems of culture and education.**

At the end of 1991 and in May, 1992, that lethargy is shaken when the Ministers of Education are convened to approach common subjects, such as equivalency of study programs, requirements of Spanish and Portuguese languages, to make educational languages compatible, training of human resources for development, etc., and protocols were signed to this end.

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**Education feeds on culture. Culture provides content to education.** We must affirm the place of cultural matters in integration.

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Southern Cone countries in the process of consolidation of democratic models necessarily must incorporate the cultural aspects to the integration projects.

The 1995 Copenhagen Summit declared education not just a right but an essential requirement for economic development.

Thus, the **Meeting from September 30th to October 2nd, 1992,** created the Specialized Meeting on Culture with the following goal: “To promote the dissemination of culture in the member countries, stimulating mutual knowledge of values and traditions, both through joint undertakings and through regional cultural activities”.

The first Specialized Meeting on Culture took place on March 14-15, 1995 in Buenos Aires with the participation of ministers and cultural authorities of member countries plus Chile and Bolivia as...
observers. A Memorandum of Understanding was drafted and the seven technical commissions were created:

**Legislation - Heritage – Cultural Industries - Networks – Training of Human Resources and External Relations**, which contemplated the coordination of positions in forums such as UNESCO, OAS (Organization of American States), etc.

In their different meetings, these specialized commissions approved interesting projects, such as:

- Design of a joint program to foster development and cooperation in the project: “Jesuit Missions, road to integration” aimed at preserving, adding value, and restoring the common cultural heritage, including ecology and tourism.

- Elaboration of curricula for the training of cultural agents and managers in cooperation with universities and regional centers.

- Adoption of a logo for Cultural Mercosur, by convoking an international contest.

- To promote the approval of laws that would grant tax exemption to the resources destined to cultural goods and the harmonization of their respective legal frameworks.

- To make the computer networks in the national libraries and archives compatible.

- To program joint actions in the area of ecology and tourism.

- Declaration of the Guarani as the historical language of Mercosur (drafting of a heritage inventory, promotion of academic research and the teaching of the language).
• Promotion of the teaching of Spanish and Portuguese in all countries and the consolidation of sub-regional border area integration.

• Establishment of an itinerant calendar of cultural events.

• Dissemination of cultural programs through the media. Sponsorship of the books co-edition as part of a Collection of Authors from the Mercosur countries.

• Itinerant Exhibit of 100 works by plastic artists from Mercosur countries.

• Programa Magallanes (Magellan Program), 1996-2005, for the integration of the historical awareness of the peoples and the geography of Mercosur, directed by the Magellan Committee (two specialists for each State).


• Inclusion of the themes on statistics and cultural indicators as content of the training courses and seminars in order to prepare a future regional census, among other things.

Cultural Mercosur is today a reality and has generated countless meetings among all educational and cultural sectors such as universities, NGOs, unions, artists, creators and intellectuals. Government sectors provided due follow-up by approving curricula, homologation of study programs and exchange that have contributed to give it a scope even wider than the mere commercial and economic aspect.

As far as the union of the peoples are concerned, the Ministry of Education and Culture has supported the creation of a National Commission of Geography and History in order to promote new approaches to such disciplines as an effort to integrate the region by modifying the previous partial, fragmented history and to turn it into a history of integration.
Work for the Students:

Visit the cultural sections of the Mercosur embassies of member countries to request leaflets on regional integration, cultural and exchange programs, tourist circuits, etc.

Spain used many ways and routes to penetrate the Americas. The first contacts were with the American islands with the discovery of the island of Guanahani, named San Salvador —nowadays Watling, British Bahamas— and Santo Domingo, seat founded by Christopher Columbus. Other routes led to New Spain or México, Florida, New Granada, Venezuela and to the isthmus of Panamá through where they later reached access to Perú, Chile, Cuyo, Alto Perú and Northern Argentina.

But directly from Spain, through a totally different route, there was access to the Río de la Plata and Paraguay.

Juan Díaz de Solís was the first Spanish explorer to enter the Río de la Plata estuary.

He had signed a Capitulation with King Ferdinand of Spain in 1514 to find a passage to the Sea of the South—Pacific Ocean—discovered later by Balboa.

The expedition set sail on October 8th, 1515 and in 1516 they reached “a water that, for being so spacious and little salty, they called the Fresh Sea that proved to be the Río de la Plata”. They went by an island they named Martín García. The members of the expedition who landed were suddenly attacked by a rain of arrows and, with the exception of crewman Francisco del Puerto, they all died. The survivors, dumbfounded by the death of Solís, the leader of the expedition, decided to sail back home. Francisco de Torres took command. And so they returned, arriving in Seville in 1516.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
I want to tell you, friends...

1. Quiero contarles amigos en esta noche estrellada acerca del Paraguay, cuyo nombre significa en la lengua de su gente agua que viene del mar...

7. En este encuentro fraterno de luna llena colmada doy inicio a la jornada señalando sin rodeos que el Paraguay mis amigos, -la tierra de mis ancestros- conformaba antiguamente una Provincia Gigante

15. que en un vasto territorio de la América del Sur se extendía por el norte más allá del Amazonas, aquel caudaloso río -que riega la vasta zona del Brasil hasta el Perú

22. la Tierra de Fuego al Sur era el hito más austral, y aunque en trecho muy pequeño el Pacífico al Oeste, con Tordesillas al Este la línea de aquel tratado que dividió los imperios de los lusos y Españoles Iniciándose la historia
30. de sinsabores y gloria, de conquista y posesiones, de todo lo aquí encontrado: minas, frutos y collados y paisajes no soñados. Hombres, flores y riberas, chocolate y cordilleras...

37. La Gigante de las Indias en su zona más austral sufrió las desmembraciones y un destino sin igual. Hoy el mapa Paraguayo, divídese en dos regiones cruzadas por aquel río epónimo y singular, The Giant of the Indies in its most southern border suffered dismemberments and a unparalleled fate. Today, the Paraguayan map is divided into two regions crossed by that river eponymous and unique, that is born in the Matto Grosso joining the Paraná until it reaches the Fresh Sea named that way by Solís thus depositing its waters into the South Atlantic.

45. que nace en el Matto Grosso y se une al Paraná hasta llegar al Mar Dulce -designado por Solís-tributando así sus aguas al Atlántico del Sur. that is born in the Matto Grosso joining the Paraná until it reaches the Fresh Sea named that way by Solís thus depositing its waters into the South Atlantic.

51. Comienzo citando al Chaco aunque de más extensión su tierra es menos feraz y alberga así a menos gente que la región Oriental. I begin by citing the Chaco, although larger by far, its soil is less fertile and thus it shelters fewer people than the Eastern region.

57. Son tres los Departamentos que integran su geografía Todos muy ricos en fauna, y belleza natural... Three are the Department, that make up its geography all very rich in fauna and natural beauty...

61. El del Alto Paraguay y el de Presidente Hayes (que por el Laudo Arbitral nos cedieran sin dudar los fecundos territorios de la Villa Occidental) That of Alto Paraguay and that of President Hayes (who by the Arbitration Decision granted us without any doubt the fertile territories of the Western Village)
67. Boquerón es el que evoca la victoria militar, aquella gesta de gloria y coraje singular.

Boquerón evokes the military victory, that heroic deed of glory and exceptional bravery.

71. Como escenario de guerra tiene mucho que narrar de los valientes soldados que surcando las picadas, asentaron campamentos sin quejas y sin lamentos, defendiendo palmo a palmo el territorio en disputa que gracias a aquel arrojo el Paraguay hoy disfruta.

As a battle scene it has plenty to narrate about the brave soldiers who, furrowing the narrow trails, encamped without complain or sorrow, defending inch by inch the land under dispute that thanks to their boldness Paraguay today enjoys.

81. Los nombrados menonitas se instalaron en los veinte, demostrando que el tesón, la templanza y convicción, se hacen indispensables para alentar toda acción.

The Mennonites settled in the 1920s and showed that tenacity moderation and conviction were indispensable to encourage any action.

87. Los quebrachos de Pinasco y las huellas del tanino, pasaron a ser historia y marcaron un destino.

The quebrachos of Pinasco and the traces of the tannin went down in history sealed a fate.

91. Carlos Casado y sus tierras y la vida del mensú se hicieron viva memoria así —como Punta Riel— aquella vía férrea propia de comparecencia fiel.

Carlos Casado and his lands and the life of the mensú were all memory alive such —as Punta Riel— the railroad he owned of loyal service.

98. Los indígenas del Chaco conforman sus universos y defienden su cultura de los embates perversos.

The Indians of the Chaco conform their own universe and they defend their culture from perverse onslaught.
102. La familia de Zamucos del lugar del Pecarí, —que algunos llaman monteses— Chamacocos, Nivaklé, y Chiriguanos al norte.

107. o los Maká más al Sur, de fauna se ensoñorean. Ñandúes, tatú bolitas, o el mítico yaguareté se entremezclan con la flora de esta exótica región.

113. Ybiraí fue la planta que se convertía en papel para a la tropa brindar su periódico de guerra donde plasmaban sus ansias sus miedos y la constancia de ese empuje singular.

120. De la Región Paraneña también llamada Oriental me dispongo yo a contar tomando parte por parte. Pero antes me conceden amigos que me acompañan.

126. dar un sorbito a la guampa que la acaban de cebar con agüita bien helada para esta noche estival.

130. Es costumbre en esta tierra compartir el tereré que de la yerba se obtiene, y así simultáneamente con la mágica infusión fortalecemos la unión.
136. Y les sigo relatando con paciencia y con fervor de esta tierra paraguaya la que inspira gran amor.

And I continue telling you with patience and fervor about this Paraguayan land which inspires great love.

140. Concepción está en el norte en frontera con Brasil fundada en el XVIII, con Pilar del Ñeembucú, también San Pedro y Rosario a orillas del Paraguay, defendieron las riberas del avance portugués.

Concepción is in the North bordered by Brazil founded in the eighteenth century as well as Pilar del Ñeembucú also San Pedro and Rosario on the shores of the Paraguay river they defended such shores from the Portuguese advance.

152. Catorce Departamentos uno a uno nombraré: Cordillera y el Guairá, Itapúa y Caazapá, San Pedro y el Ñeembucú Misiones y Caaguazú más el Alto Paraná Central y Paraguarí.

Fourteen Departments one by one that I shall name Cordillera and the Guairá Itapúa and Caazapá San Pedro and Ñeembucú Misiones and Caaguazú plus the Alto Paraná Central and Paraguarí.

156. Canendiyú al noreste y por último, Amambay —donde fluye quedamente el Aquidabanigüí—

Canindeyú to the Northeast and finally Amambay —where calmly flows the Aquidabánigüí —

160. Esta tierra de mestizos abrió sus puertas a otros pueblos y se fueron asentando para así llegar de a poco a conformar la nación,

This land of mestizos open its doors to other peoples who began settling in and thus little by little form the nation,

165. que de un modo peculiar, el blanco o el africano, el indio y el inmigrante se quisieron, se juntaron discreparon y se amaron.

because in a peculiar way, the Europeans or the Africans Indians or immigrants desired each other, got together disagreed with each other and loved each other.
170. Fueron dos generaciones las que enfrentaron las guerras —cuyas madres temerosas lo lloraron sin consuelo— el destino de sus hijos y otros hijos de este suelo. There were two generations who had to confront the wars —whose fearful mothers wept without consolation— the fate of their sons and of other sons of this land.

176. Y aunque ese azar rubricó indeleblemente el alma de todos los paraguayos, hoy miramos al futuro con esperanza y con calma. And, although that misfortune sealed in an indelible way the soul of all Paraguayans, today we look to the future with hope and calm.

181. —no es bueno tomar revancha ni sembrar desesperanza— Y la unión de nuestros pueblos se volvió un mandato fiel. Hoy nos une el Mercosur y asumimos ese albur. —it’s neither good to take revenge— nor to sow despair— and the union of our peoples became a loyal command. Today Mercosur unites us and we must take that risk.

187. Y prosigo la reseña, de la Región Oriental tierra de los guaraníes en la visión ancestral. And I proceed with the review of the Eastern region land of the Guaranis in the ancestral view.

191. Muy de paso les comento que a Itapúa se la ve como crisol de culturas. Villarrica del Guairá: se la llama la andariega pues la historia de traslados con gran orgullo despliega. By the way let me say that Itapúa is seen as the melting pot of cultures. Villarrica del Guairá: is known as the wandering city for a history of displacement she displays with great pride.

198. Concepción también se jacta de un pasado de grandeza, y Ñeembucú es la memoria de escenarios de proeza. Concepción also prides on a past of greatness and Ñeembucú is the memory of heroic deed scenes.
202. Curuguaty, la Real Villa de yerba mate, la trilla.
Decir Alto Paraná es decir montes y selvas aunque un eco lejano muy llano y deforestado responde desconsolado.
Curuguaty, the Royal village where the yerba mate threshes.
To say Alto Paraná is to think of forests and jungles an echo in the distance of very flat deforested meadows responds sorrowfully.

209. Latifundios, minifundios campesinos sin solar.
De los hijos de Loyola, son Jesús y Trinidad.
Large and small landholdings homeless peasants.
Of the sons of Loyola are Jesús and Trinidad.

213. De esos pueblos de Misiones, en el mapa paraguayo solo siete quedan ya.
De la tierra de Bolaños, son Yuty y Caazapá.
Of those towns of the Missions on the Paraguayan map only seven remain.
Of the land of Bolaños are Yuty and Caazapá.

218. Los lagos llevan sus nombres en la lengua guaraní.
Ypoá que significa “agua que suerte da” o la leyenda que encierra esa magia singular de aquel indio temeroso que talló la imagen santa.
Y pa Karai sugiere: “agua que bendita está”
The lakes bear their names in the Guarani language.
Ypoá that means “Water that gives luck” or the legend that contains that magic unique of that fearful Indian who carved the miraculous image.
Y pa Karai suggests: “Water that is blessed.”

228. La zona cordillerana de gran belleza se ufana.
Los productos de esta tierra también incluyen la greda que las mujeres moldean en cántaros y en vasijas u otras artesanías de tejidos o madera.
The Cordillera zone boasts of great beauty.
The products of this land also include the clay that women cast into jars and vases and other textile and wood handicrafts.
| 236. | El mítico Caacupé es una villa serrana de Basílica galana que alberga a los peregrinos que atravesando caminos inspirados por su fe, | Mythical Caacupé is a hilly village with a graceful Basílica giving shelter to pilgrims who, passing roads inspired by their faith, |
| 242. | convergen cada Diciembre a ofrendar a la Patrona un tributo de certeza y de humilde convicción de los dones milagrosos que Aquella sin retaceos se los brinda en posesión. | converge there each December to offer the Matron Saint a tribute of certainty and of humble belief in the miraculous gifts that She generously offers in possession. |
| 249. | Y así termino esta historia y un buen consejo les doy nunca pierdan la memoria ni desdeñen el pasado que el futuro se construye de algún sueño postergado. | Thus I finish this story and a good piece of advice I give never lose your memory nor disdain the past, as the future is made of some postponed dreams. |
| 255. | Dejo así para otro día sobre costumbres y gente. y les invito a cantar cerrando así la jornada una guarania de Flores o bailemos esa polka que es la Danza Paraguaya del inmortal Mangoré. | Thus I leave for another day tales of customs and people and I invite you to sing to finish this day a guarania by Flores or let us dance the polka that is the “Danza Paraguaya” of the immortal Mangoré. |
| 263. | Que comiencen los rasguidos de requintos y guitarras y apréstense para la farra que luego vienen los ‘casos’. | Let the sound of the music of requintos (small guitars) and guitars begin and get ready for the fun as the “cases” are still to come. |
Work for the Students:

Study and analyze the Copla (popular song) and its description of each region, its history, idiosyncratic characteristics, distinguished public figures and their contribution to the nation.
The veladas (informal staging of theatrical pieces) were typical artistic gatherings in Paraguay from the beginning of the 19th century. They included reciting of poems, dances, music, folk theater and stagings of everyday life activities. The Paraguayan Institute and the Paraguayan Atheneum were places where these artist gatherings achieved great success.

Szarán says that from the 1940s, were famous the artistic gatherings that toured various towns, organized by José L. Melgarejo, Diosnel Chase, Julián Rejala and José Ka’i, Juan Melgarejo, etc.
CHAPTER III

1. Paraguayan reality

An effective cultural policy requires full knowledge of the different periods of our history, our traditions, values, and the socio-political process. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a deep analysis of the country’s historical, economic and institutional framework in order to achieve cultural development.

1.1. Historical variables

Pre-colonial cultures

The aboriginal inhabitants of the New World were Indians of different ethnic groups who, through migratory processes, in pre-Columbian times settled in what today is Paraguayan territory. The Guarani with whom the cultural and biological miscegenation took place, were spread in a large territory comprising the Amazons Basin as far as the environs of the Río de la Plata. The conquest was a military task which sought territorial occupation and the imposition of the Spanish power in America with their cultural, economic, social, political and religious patterns.

The Conquest and the Colony

The center of the colonial expansion in the Río the la Plata was Asunción, founded by Captain Juan de Salazar y Espinoza on August 15th, 1537, not as the central nucleus Spanish colonization in this region but as a passage to the rich lands of Perú.
From the first Buenos Aires, founded by Pedro de Mendoza in 1536, expeditions departed to the routes of El Dorado. Domingo Martínez de Irala, Governor of the Province, later depopulated Buenos Aires to concentrate the resources in Asunción as a military measure in 1541 with the foundation of the Cabildo (Spanish Town Council).

Several expeditions sent from Asunción derived in the foundation of cities in a policy of territorial expansion: Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Villarrica del Espíritu Santo, Concepción del Bermejo, Santa Fe de la Vera Cruz, San Juan de la Vera de las Siete Corrientes, Ciudad Real, Santiago de Xerez and the Second Buenos Aires, in 1580. These cities, founded only with resources from Asunción made her known as “Mother of Cities”.

Juan de Salazar y Espinoza

He came to the Río de la Plata with the expedition of Don Pedro de Mendoza, as an “Oficial de Hacienda” (Treasurer) with the rank of “Veedor” (Inspector). He led an expedition with 60 men in 1536, to search for Juan de Ayolas who, departing from Buena Esperanza had sailed up the Paraná and Paraguay rivers toward the Sierra de la Plata. Salazar was accompanied by Captain Gonzalo de Mendoza who was the co-founder of our capital city. He met Irala north of Candelaria, close to what today is Bahía Negra. Without news from Ayolas, Salazar returned to the bay, cacique (chief) Caracara’s domain, where he had stopped in his northward incursion and founded there the Fort of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción on August 15th, 1537. He left Captain Gonzalo de Mendoza in charge and went to Buenos Aires to report to the Adelantado Pedro de Mendoza who, by that time, had already left for Spain.

Juan de Salazar was the “Regidor” (Member) of the first Cabildo of Asunción (Spanish Town Council), founded on September 7th, 1541, and also Treasurer of the Royal Treasury. He left heirs.
In the eighteenth century, the Cabildo of Asunción echoed the “Comunero” cause, which was an uprising of the civil province against the Jesuit province, based on the opposing views related to the relation with the Indians, the economy and society itself. The comuneros held the view that the Society of Jesus enjoyed privileges generating a prosperous and organized Jesuit State within another poorer, polarized and neglected by the Spanish Crown.

Formerly subordinated to the Viceroyalty of Perú, Paraguay passed to be under the rules of exploitation of the Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires, since its creation in 1776. There was a diversification of the products for exchange such as tobacco and cattle. Before, Paraguay was a mono producer of yerba mate.

**Franciscan and Jesuit evangelization**

The Hispanic cultural presence had as main characters the Franciscan missionaries founders of towns and disseminators of cultural patterns. Their schools educated Indians and taught them arts and crafts as well as music. Even today, collective memory remembers the Indian bands and chorus who performed in religious and profane celebrations.

Religious teaching was accepted by the local population which nevertheless contributed with some patterns of their own to achieve a syncretism still evident in the people’s religion.

A different evangelization was propitiated by the priests of the Society of Jesus. They took their Reductions to frontier zones threatened by the invasions of Portuguese “mamelucos” (slave hunters). These fortress-cities became shelter for thousands of Indians who submitted to a system of strict discipline which left a legacy of great dimensions. The current Jesuit Ruins and the rich Guarani-Baroque imagery which also includes the work of the Franciscans, constitutes the remains of the Paraguayan and regional cultural heritage.

The priests systematized the Guarani language and incorporated the Latin alphabet because the Guarani was not a written language. The oral tradition was their culture’s great strength.
Yerba mate

The discovery of the yerba mate is due to Domingo Martínez de Irala who, in 1554, led an expedition to the Guairá region where he was received by thousands of Indians living there. The Spaniards noted with interest their good height and strength physical appearance, their friendly character and natural happiness. The secret to such good qualities, according to the Indians themselves, was due to an infusion made from the leaves of a tree called Ka’a. The Jesuits often mentioned the yerba in the Annual Letters (Cartas Anuas) and it was precisely one of them, José Sánchez Labrador, the first to deal with the scientific aspect of the plant in a study dated in 1774.

The yerba mate was a product with a wide market in Hispanic and Portuguese America. The *ilex paraguariensis* became a characteristic habit of the inhabitants of the region. Sometimes, the yerba mate was considered an infusion with quasi-magical virtues or an abominable and dirty vice that caused all kinds of social stains. The yerba mate has been a subject for national artists. Poet Eloy Fariña Nuñez tells us: “It grows healthy in your regions/ the plant of yerba whose leaves/ give the mate, the native tea/ glory both in the mornings as in the siestas (naps)/”.

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*Beatriz G. de Bosio*
Independent Paraguay

The American independent movements began almost simultaneously in all the Hispanic colonial territories, after Napoleon’s invasion of the Iberian peninsula in 1808 and the abdication of the Spanish King, Ferdinand VII. Paraguay was not an exception. Between 1810 and 1811, Paraguay severed the links with the two centers of power: the capital of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, Buenos Aires, and Spain, the European metropolis. On the night between May 14th and 15th, 1811, the patriots, led by Captain Pedro Juan Cavallero in absence of Brigadier Fulgencio Yegros, sent an ultimatum to the last Spanish Governor, Bernardo de Velazco, who offered no resistance. The Paraguayan independence was achieved without any bloodshed.

The Congress of 1813 declared the constitution of a Republic in Paraguay and approved Governmental Regulations which provides for a government for two consuls. Finally, in 1814, Dr. Francia is elected Dictator of the Republic, until his death in 1840.

After the conspiracy of 1820, the patriots of May suffered persecution, imprisonment and death.

The government of Buenos Aires considered Paraguay a rebel province and it would not allow free navigation of the ships through the Paraná river.

A Congress was convened after Francia’s death which inaugurated the second consulship in Paraguay held by two citizens. One of them, Carlos Antonio López, became the constitutional president of the Republic in 1844. He ruled three terms to office: 1844-54; 1854-57 and 1857-62, when he died.

On October 16th, 1862, an Assembly confirmed Vice President Francisco Solano Lopez in power.

The essential and decisive aspect for the new Paraguayan President Francisco Solano López, was his foreign policy, which eventually led us to the War of the Triple Alliance. The agitated political scene of the Río de la Plata finally influenced Paraguayan politics.

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The assymetries among the belligerent countries allowed for a prediction of the outcome. Only in terms of demographics, Brazil had a population of ten million inhabitants, Argentina three million and Uruguay with eight hundred thousand. Uruguay left the conflict in 1869. Toward the end of the war, Asunción was ransacked and occupied by the Allied armies in January, 1869. The capital was moved to Luque and later to Piribebuy and Curuguaty. The struggle finally became a war of extermination and it ended with Marshal López’s death on March 1st, 1870.

**Constitutional Paraguay**

A decimated population, made up mostly of old men, women and children, survived the hecatomb of the War of the Triple Alliance. By 1870, Paraguay had lost eighty percent of its male population and the situation presented a desolate picture of its ruined economy, social and political structures. The generation in charge of reconstruction of the country decided to create an institutional framework.

A National Constituent Assembly was convened with representatives from the capital city and the countryside, and it enacted the Constitution of 1870, inspired in the Constitution of the United States and Argentina, with liberal tenets. It forbade slavery, torture, exile and the death penalty for political offences. This era marks the beginning of close cultural links with the Río de la Plata, where the adopted legal and educational systems came from.

Important education institutions helped in the formation of young values who later became protagonists in the national life. The Colegio Nacional (National School), the Universidad Nacional (National University) and the incipient political partisan press will generate public opinion that inaugurated the exercise of dissent in Paraguayan society. The occupation armies left the country in 1876 (Brazil) and 1879 (Argentina) which favored a more autonomous political life.

The war for the control of the Chaco Boreal (Northern/Upper Chaco) between Bolivia and Paraguay (1932-1935) was the
consequence of secular differences due to geographical boundaries which remained unclear in the multiple administrative divisions in the Spanish Empire. Two poor and backward countries became involved in a war because of the misgivings of their rulers with dire consequences for both countries.

Paraguay, recovering from the devastation caused by the war of 1864-1870, was compelled to duplicate efforts to defend every inch of ground of the territory under dispute because Bolivia surpassed Paraguay in population and as a an oil and tin producer had better access to credits from the international banking system.

Cabichuí was a newspaper printed in the camps of the War of the Triple Alliance. It was what we name combatant journalism, as its pages helped increase the morale of the troops in campaign.

Its first edition was published on May 1st, 1867 and it was printed in the camps of Paso Pucú. The headline was accompanied by an etching reproducing a beehive in reference to its name in Guarani. The etchings of Cabichuí constitute a chapter in the history of Latin American art. The artists were Julián Aquino, Saturio Ríos, Alejandro Ravizza, Francisco Velazco, and others.
Authoritarian Paraguay

The 1870 Constitution was replaced by another imposed by decree. It was the Constitution of 1840 which proposed large state intervention and predominance of the executive branch.

The military garrison in Concepción and part of the garrison in the Chaco rose in rebellion in March, 1947, beginning one of the most tragic chapters in Paraguayan political history. It was a military uprising that lasted six months where the revolutionaries were harshly repressed with the victory of the counterrevolution. An important sector of the population went into exile and suffering another loss of its ruling class, a constant in its political life.

After a period of anarchy, General Alfredo Stroessner led a coup d’état to become the ruler with more years in administration.

Stroessner started the system by which only members of the Colorado Party could get public jobs including those linked to education.

The final years of Stroessner’s regime were of sheer decadence which motivated General Andrés Rodríguez, father-in-law of Stroessner’s son and natural successor in the armed forces, to lead the military coup that deposed Stroessner in February, 1989.

In 1992, the current Constitution was promulgated. Among other things, it declares Paraguay as a multiethnic and multicultural country, establishes the Guarani as an official language, protects Indian communities and stresses the defense of the cultural identity.

Authors recommended for studying these periods of Paraguayan history:

Félix de Azara, Branislava Susnik, Bartomeu Meliá, Miguel Chase Sardi, Julio César Chávez, Efraín Cardozo, Rafael Eladio Velázquez, Margarita Durán, Mariano Antonio Molas, Fulgencio R. Moreno, Blas Garay, Juan Crisóstomo Centurión, Gomes Freire Esteves, Fidel Maíz,
Guido Spano was the author of this Nenia:

"En idioma guaraní
una joven paraguaya
tiernas endechas ensaya,
cantando en el arpa así,
en idioma guaraní:

Llora, llora urutaú
en las ramas del yatay;
ya no existe el Paraguay
donde nací como tú!
Llora, llora, urutaú!..."

In the Guarani language
a young Paraguayan girl
tender dirges she rehearses
singing thus in the harp
in the Guarani language:

Cry, cry, urutaú
on the branches of the Yatay
there is no more Paraguay
where I was born like you!
Cry, cry, urutaú..."

Work for the Students:

Conduct a research on Guido Spano.

1.2. Other elements to bear in mind in the analysis of Paraguayan reality

1.2.1. The Guarani language

The Guarani language is the mother tongue of a high percentage of the Paraguayan population and, therefore its strengthening, must be the basis of a coherent and effective educational cultural policy.
Guarani is the most important legacy of the cultural miscegenation. It constitutes one of the few examples in humanity where the vernacular language refused to extinguish in its contact with the language of the conqueror. The 1992 Constitution declares Guarani as one of the oficial languages and regularizes a de facto situation as it had to self-recognize it. It is the first Paraguayan Magna Charta to do so, in a context of a population where there is a predominance of Guarani speakers, apart from the existence of the monolingual Guarani speakers within the national territory.

Guarani was the lingua franca through the centuries and when Paraguay achieved independence, Guarani was the current language. Spanish was marginal as it was spoken by an educated minority. In the two great international wars, the Guarani language served as an element of defense and support of the morale of the soldiers (see Chapter IV: Guarani Culture).

Paraguay as a multiethnic and multicultural country has 17 Indigenous ethnic groups belonging to the five linguistic families mentioned before, with their respective cultural universes.

1.2.2. Economy

The first economic organization was not based on land tenure, but upon the encomienda system. Land was abundant, but the encomiendas assured the presence of Indian labor to till the land. In a pre-monetary economy where the barter system land tenure becomes a critical problem only after the massive sale of public property in the 1880s. Before, state property was rented at affordable prices to farmers. Economy system based on agriculture and cattle has been up to now the basis for the production of wealth in Paraguay.

Most of the population was forced to resort to subsistence farming in the first half of the twentieth century. With the building of roads and the improvement in communications, the rural population without access to agribusiness or to employment in small and
medium-sized industries, is compelled to migrate to urban areas.

For the first time in the decade of the 1990s, the urban population surpasses the rural population. Rural migration means substantial changes in patterns and values. With Itaipú, the agrarian structure of Paraguay evolved into agribusiness with injections of large capitals which caused the disappearance of the subtropical forests in Alto Paraná, which were depredated to provide room for the formation of latifundios or large landholding destined for agriculture.

There remains, nevertheless, minifundio or small landholding owned by peasants who plant cotton promoted by the cotton industry oligopoly. Soybean and wheat are complementary, when soybean is harvested, wheat is sown. Soybean is the cultivation of high yield cereal, in order to export it as commodity (raw material in bulk).

All this changed the agricultural map of the country. The discrimination policies of the Rural Welfare Institute (IBR, according to its initials in Spanish) included the transfer of large extensions of rural land to private hands, among whom there were civilian and military officials of the ruling regime, taking advantage of ambiguities in the legislation regarding who could be “subject of the agrarian reform.”

There is an interesting bibliography on all these items: Rafael Barret, Mauricio Schwartzman, María Victoria Heikel, Genoveva Ocampos, Line Bareiro, Tomás Palau, Domingo Rivarola, Washington Ashwell, Luis Galeano, Fernando Masi, Carlos Pastore, Ricardo Rodríguez Silvero, Ramón Fogel, and several documents of the Conferencia Episcopal Paraguaya (Paraguayan Conference of Bishops) as well as the reports of the Rural Welfare Institute.

1.2.3. Society

As we already mentioned, Paraguay is a landlocked, multiethnic and multicultural country. It began with a process of miscegenation with the Kario of the Tupí-Guaraní linguistic family. In the independent
era, migration policies were able to attract a considerable influx of European migrants. Although in scarce proportion, the Paraguayan cultural universe also includes, the African element that contributed with the Kamba Kuá and other forms of expressions.

In the twentieth century, the Mennonites settled in the Paraguayan Chaco and in some areas of the Eastern region. A valuable Japanese migration settled in the zone of La Colmena in the 1930s and another one after World War II in the Department of Itapúa.

Paraguay has a Russian community, as well as Jewish, German, South African communities, etc. There were other migratory presences, though newer, such as the Korean and Chinese.

The 17 ethnic groups of the five linguistic families already mentioned are also a part of the Paraguayan society. They find their culture difficult to maintain. When isolated, the task is possible, but when they leave their natural territories, they are under hegemonic economic and sociocultural pressure which contributes to transculturation.

It is important to analyze the national identity and its coexistence with Latin American identity and especially with the Mercosur member countries.

For a strategic planning of culture, let us indicate some of the basic characteristics of the Paraguayan people:

- **Paraguayan society is self-sufficient**, whenever there is a need or in given critical situations. In urban areas, individualism is more evident.

- **Participative sense and solidarity in grassroots organizations** common in our rural society, such as the *jopói* (give each other a hand), which goes back to the expressions of mutual help among Indians, such as the *minga*. In this respect, it was the missionaries who came from the Alto Perú who introduced this term, derived from the Quechua word “minkai”. Therefore, the Guarani verb was *ña mingái* which means, let us give each other a hand.

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Among the Guarani there was also a tradition of community work among different táva, established in the tovaja (brother-in-law). This practice, misunderstood by the Spanish, served to strengthen the domination.

• **The fundamentally egalitarian character of the Paraguayan society**

On this subject, it is recommended to read one of the letters written by the Robertsons, Scottish gentlemen living in Paraguay in the early 1800s, which narrates the visit to a Paraguayan hacienda in the nineteenth century where they discover that, in order to avoid mosquitoes, all the inhabitants climbed up a “sobrado” (a kind of terrace) -including the owner’s family, laborers, visitors and servants- to sleep together as a community.

• **Sense of dignity of the Paraguayan man.**

**Synthesis of Ramiro Domínguez from the book** “El valle y la loma” (The valley and the hill).

The autor adroitly analyzes the everyday life aspects of Paraguayan rural culture mentioning almost unknown situations outside of its own milieu. The inventory of these behavior patterns is simply invaluable.

Domínguez refers to the economic system of self-sufficiency with scarce margin of production for sales. The “minga” system and the communal fields used for grazing, the devotions and doctrines of the chapels with their “Ara Santo” or Patron Saint Days, the cycles of birth, baptism, “angelito” (burial of small children), wedding, death, “novena paha” (end of the novena) and the “ara santo guasu” (religious celebrations such as Christmas, Holy Week, Corpus Christi, etc. ), the “sábado ka’aru” (Saturday afternoons) with races and “partidos” (soccer games), the “avati ñembiso” (corn milling in a mortar), today displaced by the hand mill, the peeling of the sugar cane, and (cotton and tobacco harvesting in fixed dates) all give the people of the “valle” markedly community features.
emphasized by different types of association: “compadrazgo” (god parenthood), and blood ties, “correli” or political kinks, “ira” or recreational relations, work (“patron ta’yra”), religious (“capillero” or church warden, “hermano” or Franciscan), or criminal relations (“kopi”).

The term “kopi” also refers to those amusing and even burlesque expressions used to qualify the characteristics of a person. The word “kopi” is different from “talla” which is not offensive and is used in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and respect.

The use of “talla” shows the Paraguayan talent for observation of the environment and creativity, since they are said with spontaneity and rapidity.

**Work for the Students:**
Gather all the information on traditional customs both in the urban and rural areas.
Which customs are in danger of extinction.
Which elements constitute the Paraguayan folklore.

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Let us remember that...

- **tekojoja:** equality
- **tekoporå:** quality of life
- **tekojoahu:** love
- **tekomarangatu:** dignity
On the American continent a need was seen to reinforce the Indian labor and it was decided to transport Black African slaves, above all to the places where greater economic development was achieved. This was not the case of Paraguay, although the documents from the beginning of the conquest show references to the permits and licences to introduce Black African slaves into these territories.

A document from the archive shows that: “…Although Asunción had already organized its socially mestizo stability, the local industries –shipbuilding, yerba, sugar and timber– required the presence of slaves”. Such a contribution in African blood to the Paraguayan mestizo environment was received without obstructions given the unprejudiced racial tendency in the Spanish-Guarani community.

The licenses operated basically for Buenos Aires from its foundation in 1580 and Montevideo from the start of 1750.

There is total lack of precision in the denomination of the mixture of Black, White and Indian blood. In Paraguay they were not strict in the denominations applied in other places to the diverse degrees of miscegenation. The result of the union of White and Black was named mulatto or pardo. There were other terms: tercerón, cuarterón, quinterón, tente en el aire, salto atrás, etc. Zambo was the name given to the result of a union of Blacks and Indians.

In Paraguay there was never a slave market or trade. But there were traders who brought slaves sporadically and on a small scale.

Groups of slaves also arrived in Paraguay through Brazil, because Bahía de todos los Santos (All Saints’ Bay) was a great receptor and distributor of African slaves.

During the colonial period, a compulsory tax was created for people of African descent and their settlement was established in determined places.
As very few of them were able to pay the tax, acquire the status known as “amparo” or official decree that meant that blacks and mulattoes were handed to wealthy people, ecclesiastics and to the military. These people defended themselves by taking shelter in towns in the countryside.

A liberation from the “amparo” system was the origin of the town of Emboscada.

Carlos Pastore says that in Areguá, Emboscada and Tavapy the Blacks were grouped and organized by Dominican and Franciscan religious orders who had cattle and haciendas in those places. Tevegó or Etevegó was a “Pueblo de Pardos” (a town of free blacks), founded in 1813 by order of the Junta Superior Gubernativa (the governing council) with the population of pardos from Tavapy. Later, it became a penal colony, where mulattoes with misconduct problems were sent until in 1843, when is renamed “Villa del Divino Salvador”.

Blacks communities of more recent origins and different nature were the colonies for foreign residents who entered the country. San Lorenzo del Campo Grande: Cambá Loma and Laurelty, where Francia had granted land for fugitive slaves from Brazil and for the Blacks in Artigas’s army.

As a cultural contribution from this African minority reflected in the collective memory, among other things we can indicate the celebration of Cambá la Mercé, under the direction of the women in the capital city, which lasted until the beginning of the century and it coincided with the festivities of the Virgin of the Mercy, Patroness of the Order dedicated to the rescue of slaves, on September 24th, or the festivity of St. Balthazar, on January 6th in San Lorenzo and Capiatá.
The Rúas were festivities of Spanish origin during colonial times with the presence of the people on the streets. History records some very important festivities like the one held in Asunción in honor of the new Governor Pedro Melo de Portugal, in the eighteenth century. Francisco de Aguirre witnessed it and his narration indicated that there was one Rúa in the Barrio Santo Domingo (neighborhood) and two in Asunción. Among the many artistic performances, are found the Kamba ra’anga, or people disguised as Blacks.

The decade of the 20s was fruitful in Paraguay. It coincides with the creation of the Guarania by composer José Asunción Flores, Professor Ramón Indalecio Cardozo’s education reform, the foundation of the Paraguayan Scientific Society, of the Historical and Ethnographic Museum with legacies given by Max Schmidt, Moisés Bertoni and General Belaieff. The press played an important role with: El Diario, El Liberal, La Tribuna and La Nación. Magazines such as Juventud and Minerva agglutinated important poets such as Vicente Lamas, Darío Gómez Serrato, José Concepción Ortiz and Alejandro Guanes. Popular poets like Manuel Ortiz Guerrero and Emiliano R. Fernández stood out.

Julio Correa and Félix Fernández’s theater in the Guarani language and Narciso R. Colmán’s studies are from this era. The defense of the Chaco was carried out with enthusiasm, especially by Dr. Manuel Domínguez, Fulgencio R. Moreno, and other intellectuals.

Dr. Eligio Ayala’s government, Paraguay’s great statesman, who ruled from 1924 to 1928, corrected the country’s economy and was able to reach a budgetary surplus. In that way, the defense of the Chaco was possible without foreign debt.
2. Globalization

We fear that globalization may disturb the genuineness of our local cultural expressions. We are living a true technological revolution of instant communication and that may be beneficial, but we need to know how to manage it.

The matter of globalization was seen as a threat to the national states and as the likelihood of cultural homogeneity.

Our profile as a developing country, permeable to the onslaught of the mass media that favors hegemonic cultures, we run the real risk of becoming a hybridization as it in fact happens with the fast food culture, standard dressing codes and now celebrations such as Halloween or Valentine’s Day (Northern hemisphere spring day), which is in contrast with our Day of Youth on September 21st, to name only a few examples. Without rejecting it, some aspects of globalization are very positive such as the available and instant information, the elimination of distances, etc. However, we must be alert to avoid the absorption of our values and their replacement by others different from our reality which may lead to a harmful alienation as it is in fact already seen.

In a country abundant in citrus fruits of the best quality which rot because of a lack of markets, our people spend their meager income in soft drinks of international brands without nutritive value.

Globalization at an economic level, on the other hand, compels us to take safeguards to limit the invasion of Asian industrialized products or from other origins which compete in prices though not always in quality with the local production which means loss of jobs, pauperization and rural migration to urban belts.

In summary, globalization means the elimination of geographic and political borders, international trade facilitation and the fluid exchange of people, knowledge and economic resources. It is an inevitable reality from which it is impossible to escape. For that reason, the idea is that societies must learn to defend their interests and to accept only those which may benefit them. Obviously, some cultures will be able to avoid this phenomenon better and others
will be absorbed as it happened with some native populations of America with the Columbian discovery. The first globalization took place in the sixteenth century.

**Work for the Students:**

1. Analyze the impact of globalization in Paraguay. Draft an inventory of ten products of native origin and their international competition (shoes, dairy products, garments, cleaning chemical products, etc.).

2. Is globalization positive or negative for Paraguay regarding education?

3. How is Paraguay preparing to confront the impact of globalization?

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**Let us remember that...**

The **railway** was at one time the most important means of communication in our country. It was inaugurated in 1861 and the first connection was from Asunción to Trinidad, in December of that same year, it reached Luque and by mid-1862, it went as far a Areguá. By March, 1864, the railway extended as far as Ypacarai and at the outbreak of the War of the Triple Alliance, this important means of communication reached Paraguarí.

In the postwar period, it was transferred to a company associated with the Allied armies which extended the service as far as Villa Rica. In the second decade of the twentieth century, it reached Encarnación, connecting with Argentina’s rail system.

The Puerto Casado railway, in the Chaco on the Paraguay river, covered westward until kilometer 160. It was used by the Mennonites when they came to settle in Paraguay in the Central Chaco in the decade of the 20s. During the war, from 1932 to 1935, the railway became fundamentally important to transport troops and elements sent by waterway to Puerto Casado and from there they took the narrow gauge train as far as kilometer 145, called “Punta Riel” (end of rail).
3. New Approaches to the disciplines of History and Geography

As teachers of these subjects, we must face the challenge of finding new meanings to the teaching of History and Geography within the framework of a process of regional integration. Why do we say this?

We must work History and Geography under a regional approach bearing in mind the trajectory and the perspectives of both disciplines in Mercosur and the approaches and trends that happened in the past highlighting confrontation or elements which disunited us and obviating what we have in common. We must attempt the incorporation of a regional approach in designing the curricula in order not to develop these subjects in a fragmented manner. Understanding Mercosur as a process of historical construction and to include homogeneity and diversity as transversal elements, we have to lay stress on the common roots and history and propose the study of the subject as regional histories.

Support and commitment to the integration process should be transferred to the students because there is no other way to perceive the future but in this adventure of sharing together common projects and ideals. As Rómulo Betancourt had indicated: “The unfinished adventure in the Americas after the discovery and after the cry of freedom is the process of integration and creation of the community of Latin American nations to confront this globalized world and the emergence of new political and economic hegemonies.”

This process of integration must not be understood only as a widening of markets, which it is also legitimately seeking to dynamize economic development, but, essentially, it must aim at the reunion of our peoples through their cultures. It shall be imperative to respect the plurality of cultures in Mercosur, overcoming all types of cultural hegemony of the most “important” industrial and cultural centers of this regional bloc. The great challenge is intercultural dialogue and understanding that the cultural aspect is essential in a democratization process.
The technological globalization of the media reconstructs the identity of the people and they know that its defense must begin with the recovery of the historical memory and in the cultural renewal, because the loss of national or regional identity implies a cultural mutilation (Recondo, op.cit.).

Education must be no longer approached in an adversarial or confrontational manner but from the point of view of becoming agent and promoter of integration. For a long time, it favored hypotheses of conflict and confrontation, which were a reality, but time has come assume a common history for an effective integration.

During the colonial centuries, the Spanish territories in America remained isolated from one another. This was due to different factors such as penetration from different routes, overwhelming geographical obstacles, the barrier of the Andes, the desert, the tropical and subtropical forest, the mighty rivers and the different historical processes. The higher or lower intensity of the Spanish or African migration was decisive in some places and in others this happened very little. As well, the different situation of the Indians and their integration into society resulted in heterogeneous models of society.

This, added to the excessive centralism of Spain in dealing with her colonies, ended up in the emergence of eighteen separate, independent republics in contrast to what took place in Portuguese or Anglo-Saxon colonization. When they became emancipated, the Thirteen Colonies in the North, located on a same sea coast and constituted a single great republic, the United States of America. The same applies to Portuguese Brazil, primarily concentrated on its Atlantic coast from the Northeast to Río Grande do Sul. (G. de Bosio, Beatriz “Crónica Histórica Ilustrada del Paraguay”, Capítulo La Conquista: 1998).

The southern states became separated and betrayed the mandate of the Liberators. Today, we review a history of national borders
while we reformulate an integrationist thesis constructing unity from the acceptance of differences.

**Work for the Students:**

- Find common elements in the historical evolution of the Mercosur countries. What unites us. What separated us.

- Find information on San Martín, Simón Bolívar and José Félix Bogado.

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**Let us remember that...**

Caminos reales was the denomination given to the roads that departed from Asunción directed toward a given region in the countryside. These roads had landmarks as markers of distance. A great cross indicated one league, thus those crosses were known as “kurusu legua”. Each league was the equivalent of five thousand varae (2.8 feet), meaning 4,333 meters. Dr. Gill Aguínaga discovered the itineraries of nine Caminos reales (Royal roads): Tapuá, Lambaré, Capii-i-pery, Tacumbú, Ysaty, Ñu Guazú, de la Vera Cruz and Tapé Pytá.

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**Let us remember that...**

There are prevailing customs in rural areas, such as: **Tupánói**: to ask for blessing.

Expressions: “kóa ko hina la ore alcancia”, “This is our money box”.

From the “Purahéi Ñembo’e” (singing prayers).
CHAPTER IV

1. The Guarani Culture

The Guarani Indians had no written language. They inscribed in a non-alphabetical culture and of oral tradition. For that reason, it is so very important to rescue orality in Paraguay. Guarani is a vernacular language which went across centuries and today is spoken by a majority of the Paraguayan population as the mother tongue.

We know that oral literature is prior to all forms of writing. Education through speech is transformed into education through reading and writing. The West privileged an alphabetical culture.

At the arrival of the Spaniards in America, there were other forms of pictographic writing (rupestrian paintings), and ideographic such as the Mayan and Aztec Codexes written on the amate fig tree paper or on deerskin. The Incan quipus was used for writing. Garcilazo de la Vega wrote that he saw the Quipucamayus (interpreters) read in them a sacred anthem about rain (Colombres, Adolfo).

Rubén Bareiro Saguier indicates that prior to the European arrival, the Guarani-Tupí occupied a vast region. They went down the Atlantic coast in a discontinuous manner from farther up the Amazons as far as the south of the Río de la Plata estuary. They reached the Andes Mountains, and above all, along the rivers in what today is part of the territories of Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay, Guiana, Bolivia, Perú and Ecuador. “The Guarani group lived in the current Eastern Region of Paraguay, the state of Mato Grosso and part of the Atlantic coast in Brazil and the Province of
Misiones in Argentina, with some settlements in Bolivian territory in the northeast and in Uruguay in the southeast.”

In order to determine the concept of family or nationhood, certain common features are cited: language, social structure, material culture elements and religious beliefs.

They are divided into three large dialectal groups: the Amazonian that speaks the Ñe’êngatu (characterized by more pronounced archaisms in terms of phonology and morphology); the group called Tupinambá (Guarani of the Atlantic coast) who spoke what was described as the lingoa geral (as it was called in Portuguese) with abundant written documents influenced by Portuguese and leaves traces in it; and the Ava ñe’e (language of man) which includes all the dialects of Paraguay, Bolivia and Southern Brazil, closely linked with one another, possessing abundant documentation and a religious literary opus thanks to the dedication of the missionaries, especially the Jesuit.

Their material culture elements, as well as the societal structure of the community, help us understand the organization of the blurred and confusing pre-Columbian Guaraní-Tupí society.

The movility of war, the ways of relationship with the Guarani group and the large messianic migrations created shock in the social organization. These migrations responded to the search of the Land without Evil (Yvy Maraéy) led by a Karai, a high priest capable of overcoming the divisions and hostilities among the indigenous groups of the great family. The groups maintained among themselves a friendly or belligerent relationship.

The organization of the villages took place in the agglomeration of five to eight huts organized in a quadrangle, each one submitted to a patriarchal authority. In general, several friendly villages were surrounded by three defensive palisades.

The post of cacique was elective, revocable and occasional based upon the needs in case of war. Elder’s council exerted a guiding and moderating role.

The economy was of subsistence, based upon hunting, fishing and gathering where the production and distribution was determined by mechanisms of reciprocity and redistribution. A livelihood is not obtained by sales in a market. Communal economy.
They practiced the Neolithic agriculture; productive slash and burn, hunting, fishing, gathering, pottery or ceramics (funereal or utensils), basket work, crafts and tints.

The groups in contact with the Inca Empire utilized metal. The rest, used wood and bone. Less frequent was the use of stone.

Regarding religion, Bareiro Saguier takes Melia’s description and writes: “Sacramental inspiration in singing and dance, led by a Messiah in search of the land without evil”, that of eternal perfection which is located somewhere on this earth. In the Guaraní religion, the highest aspiration is to achieve the condition of immortality, supreme attribute of the gods and their chosen ones. It can be reached in this life through prayer, dances and fasting.

Belief in a supreme deity, creator, the existence of mediating gods and of civilizing heroes with similar functions, that of spirits blended with facts of nature, the deluge, the myth of the twins, the land without evil are the larger features which, with variations, arise in the religion of the Tupí Guaraní. Those are very important as sources of the Guaraní literature.

The historical process emerging from the end of the fifteenth century on the American continent is a dramatic culture shock. The Spaniards took advantage of the neolithical Guaraní social system which imposed obligations based upon kinship, of the old tradition of “saca de mujeres” (taking of women) by more powerful chiefs. (Bareiro Saguier, Rubén “Literatura Guaraní del Paraguay”: 1980).

The “Ayvu Rapyta”, cosmogonical chant of the Mbya compiled by Cadogan in the decade of the 50s, had been maintained by oral tradition during centuries or millennia.

In the year 2000, the centenary of anthropologist León Cadogan was commemorated. The Center for Anthropological Studies of the Catholic University (CEADUC) published a special issue in its anthropological supplement.

The new millennium finds the country in a serious process of revaluation of the cultural aspect related to the vernacular language in force.
The educational reform process includes the peremptory need for a literacy instruction in the Guaraní mother tongue for a wide rural sector of the population for whom the teaching of Spanish should be done as a second language.

Thus, we shall eliminate earlier contradiction whereby the students were unable to reinforce their basic primary education in the bosom of the Guaraní speaking home since the formal aspect was carried out in one language and in everyday practice in another.

Spanish shall be the universal language for preparatory knowledge for a professional life. However, the use of the mother tongue shall contribute to establish basic native culture, providing firm psychological support which will contribute to a better performance at school, avoiding desertion in the the educational system, accepting and valuing a vital differentiated reality which places Paraguay in the privileged position of having a bilingual culture.
Work for the Students:

Complete the following technical form to create a data bank in your communities.

1. Name of the municipality
2. Name of the intendente (mayor)
3. Extension of the municipality
4. Population
5. Boundaries of the municipality
6. Historical information
   6.1. Date of the foundation of the town/city
   6.2. What was there before?
   6.3. Causes that motivated its foundation
   6.4. Economic activity of the population
   6.5. Name of the patron saint
   6.6. Patron saint’s calendar
   6.7. Was it the site of any historic event?
7. Origin of the population
8. Current occupation of the population
9. Connections with neighboring cities
   9.1. Name a neighboring town and the way of access (paved road, riprap, dirt road, railway, by water, etc.)
10. Cite any other information of cultural and historical interest.
11. Towns, cities and townships that are part of the municipality
12. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage. References
Ferdinand Magellan, Portuguese navigator who convinced the Spanish King, Charles V that he would find the ocean access, the unfinished task during the Solís’s expedition and thus would reach the Moluccan islands through the west.

On September 20th, 1519, he departed from Sanlúcar at the head of a fleet of five ships and 265 crewmen.

In January, 1520, the expedition reached the mouth of the Río de la Plata but Magellan quickly concluded that it could not possibly be the inter oceanic access so he continued to sail south.

After some obstacles, in October of the same year, the fleet turned around the Cabo de las Vírgenes (Cape Virgins) where the strait opens up communicating both oceans, surging before the intrepid sailors the channel from sea to sea. Spain now was able to reach the spice lands without crossing the Portuguese territories.

They entered the strait and they observed campfires along the southern coast, so they named the place Tierra del Fuego (Land of Fire). On October 27th, after passing the Cabo de Todos los Santos (Cape of All Saints), the ships reached the Ocean which they named Pacific because of the stillness of its waters. The channel named of All Saints by Magellan himself was later immortalized with the name of its discoverer. Following the route, on March 6th, 1521, they reached the Mariana Islands and, in the same month, they sighted several islands they named Saint Lazarus (it was the Philippines). The inhabitants of the Island of Cebu had no problems with the presence of the Spaniards, but with poor judgement, Magellan confronted the natives from a nearby island, Mactam, and was killed by them with some of his fellow sailors on April 28th, 1521.

Sebastian Elcano commanded one of the ships (La Victoria) and began the return trip to Spain via the Indian Ocean. Facing infinite vicissitudes and hardships, he completed the voyage reaching Sanlúcar in September, 1522. Thus, the sphericity of the earth was proved and achieved the feat of voyaging around the world.
The Portuguese had reached leadership in astronomical and geographical knowledge. The School of Sagres founded in 1415 by Don Enrique the Navigator, son of King Juan I of Portugal, contributed to a great extent to the training of sailors and mapmakers.

**Alejo García**

He was a Portuguese captain from Alentejo who was a member of the expedition of Solís to the Río de la Plata in 1515 and survived the shipwreck. In the island of Yuruminín, afterwards known as Santa Catalina, he heard of the Guaraní Indians and about the existence of golden rivers and silver hills to the west.

Tempted by the information, in 1524 he made his way through the Brazilian coast, escorted by a group of Indians. Travelling through vast virgin territories, he crossed the Paraná River at the waterfall called Monday and reached the bay where later the city of Asunción would be founded. They were well received by the Karió inhabitants of the region and belonging to the same ethnic group as his Indian escorts. Alejo García went up the Paraguay river as far as Corumbá, crossed the Chaco and he reached the hills of Alto Perú. He raided with his troops the towns of Presto and Tarabuco, where the Charca Indians, vassals of the Incas, were opposed to their predatory methods forcing them to retreat. Alejo García dispatched some Chana Indians with letters and loads of silver to their men who had remained waiting in Santa Catalina.

In 1525, on the coast of the Paraguay river, close to what later would be the city of San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú, García and one companion became victims of the Indian allies and were killed.

When the other shipwreck survivors in Santa Catalina received the riches sent by García, they began to spread the story of the Rey Blanco (White King).

García became the first explorer to enter Paraguayan territory reaching the Peruvian Andes through that route. In Manuel Domínguez’s words “he ended his career when Pizarro did not even started his in Perú. He crossed Curitiba seventeen years in advance of Alvar Núñez, he discovered Paraguay four years before Sebastian Cabot, he explored the Chaco thirteen years in advance of Ayolas, and he entered Charcas thirteen years in advance of Pizarro’s men.”
Sebastian Cabot

Born to John Cabot, navigator at the service of the King of England who entered the Newfoundland Peninsula in North America only five years after the discovery of America. Sebastian was born in 1469 and entered into the service of the King of Spain as the Piloto Mayor del Reino (Pilot of the Kingdom) replacing Juan Díaz de Solís after his death.

In March, 1525, he signed a capitulation with the crown to follow the route of Magellan and Elcano as far as the Molucca, Cathay and Cipango, in search for gold and precious stones.

On April 3rd, 1526, he left Sanlúcar with a fleet of three small ships: the Santa María de la Concepción, the Santa María del Espinar and the Trinidad. The expedition headed for the coast of Brazil, veering from the road set in the capitulation. Cabot wanted to reach the Río Solís or Fresh Sea, because the news of the White King that had reached fame.

When he reached the coast of Santa Catalina, Cabot and his men made contact with Enrique Montes and Melchor García, who ratified Alejo García’s experience and showed samples of precious metals. A council of captains confirmed the change of course. The flagship wrecked in the Puerto de los Patos (Port of the Ducks) where they built another ship to navigate the interior rivers. Before departing, captains Francisco de Rojas, Martín Méndez and Miguel de Rodas remained on the island because they had opposed to the change of course.

The fleet reached the Río de la Plata and Cabot founded the Puerto de San Lázaro (Port of Saint Lazarus). Soon appeared Francisco del Puerto, the cabin-boy who had survived the massacre of Solís and he confirmed the news received in Pernambuco and Santa Catarina.

Cabot went up the Paraná river and arrived at the confluence of the Carcañará where they built the fortress of Sancti Spiritu, first Spanish settlement in the Plata. He sailed the Paraná river up north and on March 31st, 1528, he reached the confluence of the Paraná and Paraguay rivers. Later, they went on the Paraguay river reaching the confluence with the Pilcomayo river. A scout group was intercepted and killed by the Indians of the zone. Cabot, with diminished resources, returned to Sancti Spiritu and upon his return he met the fleet of Diego García de Moguer, a sailor who had been in the Plata with Solís and who had circumnavigated the globe with Magellan and Elcano.
He had been hired for a voyage on the Río de la Plata by the Casa de Contrataciones (House of Trade) of Seville, leaving to that end from La Coruña in January, 1526. Both captains argued about their rights for this exploration and conquest. But, after the disagreement, they joined forces to embark in search of the White King. In August, 1528, Cabot and Diego García left together northward. Cabot heard that a group of Timbu Indians was planning to attack Sancti Spiritu for which reason he decided to return. Sancti Spiritu was ruled by Gregorio de Caro whose bad policies cost him the enmity of the natives. The fort was destroyed and pillaged. Disappointed, both captains returned to Spain. Cabot reached Seville in July, 1530 and he had to face lawsuits and sentences that led to imprisonment and indemnity claims. Later, he left for England where he died at the age of 80.

**Isabel de Guevara**

She arrived at these lands with the fleet of the Adelantado Don Pedro de Mendoza. In Asunción she married Captain Pedro de Esquivel who arrived with the Second Adelantado, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. Doña Isabel knew how to read and write which, at that time, indicated an uncommon instruction. The letter she wrote from Asunción on July 2nd, 1556, is famous because in it she narrates to the Governing Princess (she refers to the hapless Juana la Loca or Joan the Mad) the suffering underwent in Buenos Aires and the solicitous work of the women. This letter is recorded among those that indicated “probanzas de méritos y servicios” (proof of merits and services) which would mean that the settlers requested recognition from the King for having served in these lands. Her letter is moving because she details the vicissitudes and famine endured by the explorers. “...The men came so skinny that all the work was performed by the poor women, thus washing their clothes, curing them, cooking for them what little they had, wash them, take their place as guards, make rounds for the fires, prepare the crossbow, whenever the Indians came warring, even to undertake to put fire in the verses and to put the soldiers on foot, those who were in condition of doing so, put the camp in alert screaming, bossing around and putting in order the soldiers...”
Mencia Calderón de Sanabria

She was the wife of Juan de Sanabria, the third Adelantado of the Río de la Plata. Although she was surprised by his death, doña Mencia Calderón, mother of four children, decides not to become discouraged and to go ahead with the expedition. She was aided by her son Diego of only eighteen years old who was appointed head of the expedition and Captain Juan de Salazar y Espinoza, founder of our capital city.

They left Spain in April, 1550, arriving in Santa Catalina on December 16th. From there they went to the Mbiazá region, some twenty leagues south of the population of San Francisco, because the ship San Miguel that had transported them was damaged. They waited for a whole year in Mbiazá until they built another brigantine with the wreckage of the first one.

The expedition was accompanied by a German chronicler Hans Staden, to whom is owed interesting references and narratives. From the environs of Brazil, Doña Mencia and her followers reached Paraguay by land five years later. The most interesting aspect of the incredible feat was that the expedition led by the wife of the third Adelantado of the Río de la Plata incorporated a group of fifty Spanish women among whom was her daughter María Sanabria who married Captain Hernando de Trejo, who gave birth to the first criollo bishop, Hernando de Trejo y Sanabria, founder of the University of Córdoba, the most important center of formation in the region at that time.

Ana Díaz

She accompanied the fifty-six mancebos de la tierra (mestizos of the land) and ten Spaniards in the expedition led by Juan de Garay to found the second Buenos Aires on June 11th, 1580. As indicated by Enrique Larreta, “among the founders was one Paraguayan woman”. The place chosen for the solemnities was the present Plaza de Mayo.

She was granted a house in 1583 and ¼ of a square of land for having participated in the foundation. Josefina Cruz wrote that “the house granted to Ana Díaz and where she probably erected a thatched and clay hut, cultivated her orchard, fought, suffered and loved is today one of the busiest corners in Buenos Aires”.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
In the Municipality of the Argentinian capital there is a painting by Moreno Carbonero, a Spanish artist, which immortalizes the important event where Juan de Garay stands wearing a beret and short cloak with a sword in his hand. Next to him, a felled tree bears the scroll of the foundation, then an officer, Ana Díaz, a priest holding the cross and a standard bearer with the banner flapping to the gust southeast winds of June. To complete the scene, successively a group of Indians appear, the rest of the founders and in the background the gray courtain of the Río de la Plata.

Francisca Jesusa de Bocanegra

She was the founder and promoter of the first establishment dedicated to the education of women in the Province, the “Casa de Recogidas y Huérfanas” (House of the Sheltered and Orphans) and worked hard to teach the Christian doctrine to the daughters of the conquerors, orphans or those who lacked the means to get an education. The regime of internation convened many girls from Asunción families. Unfortunately, with the death of the Prioress, Sister Bocanegra in 1617, the establishment stopped working. Her death left a great void in the community and it inspired Father Diego de Boroa a sonnet which was psalmodied in the funerals by the interns. One of its stanzas read:

Concave Cave, what’s of Our Mother
Dear Mother, tell us where you dwell?
Have you forgotten these poor souls?
In your haste to meet the Son and meet the Father?...

Adela and Celsa Speratti

They were outstanding representatives of the national teaching profession. Orphans at an early age when their father died in the Battle of Ytororó in the Great War, they traveled later to the Río de la Plata and, with their mother, they had the opportunity to study at the Normal School of Concepción del Uruguay graduating as Normal Teachers.

Atanacio C. Riera and Rosa Peña de González made the return of the Speratti teachers to Paraguay possible, as they were successfully teaching in Argentina. But a valuable and distinguished educational labor was awaiting for them in their own country.
Adela founded in 1897 the Normal School of Paraguay becoming its first Director. She died shortly afterwards and her sister Celsa continued the noble task.

In 1921, the Normal School for Teachers was founded. Under the direction of another distinguished Paraguayan teacher, Doña Felicidad González, disciple and follower of the Speratti sisters, the institution became a stalwart of public teacher’s education in the country.

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**Agustín Pío Barrios**

Agustín Pío Barrios, was a great Paraguayan guitarist and composer who reached an universal level. Born in San Juan Bautista, Misiones, he was the composer of important works such as “Danza paraguaya”, “La Catedral”, “Ha che Valle” and others. His artistic name was Nitsuga Mangoré. Barrios died in El Salvador where his remains are buried. The great cultivator and promoter of his artistic legacy was the maestro Cayo Sila Godoy, another Paraguayan virtuoso guitarist.

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**María de Casati**

She was the founder of the first national newspaper in defense of women’s rights. Named “Por la mujer” (For the women), it was published between May and October, 1936. Furthermore, she created the Feminist Union of Paraguay on April 26th, 1936.

Casati and the other founding members of “Por la mujer” were identified with the February revolt of 1936, led by Col. Rafael Franco who ousted the Liberal Party from government. They called themselves feminists. They had a critical view but were aware of the limitations of women’s role. They struggled for the social and political equality of women as well as their instruction and cultural improvement. They urged the government to guarantee justice and peace without gender distinctions.

This journalistic piece is considered the first newspaper in defense of women, struggling for legal equality and against legal discriminations.
Rafael Barrett
He arrived in Paraguay in 1904 as correspondent for the Buenos Aires newspaper “El Tiempo”. He becomes closely linked to Paraguay where he saw the circumstances of this country. He is associated with the national press and later founds the newspaper “Germinal” in 1908, which although it was short-lived—because the content was very controversial—he pens very critical reflections about the reality of the country in its unforgettable pages. His journalistic articles were later compiled and published in “Lo que son los yerbales” (What the Paraguayan yerba fields actually are) and “Dolor Paraguayo” (Paraguayan sorrow).

Josefina Plá
Se was born in Fuerteventura, Canary Islands (Spain) in 1903. Paraguayan by adoption, she married the Paraguayan ceramist Julián de la Herrería (Andrés Campos Cervera). She arrives in Paraguay in 1927.

She had an outstanding career in journalism until 1937 becoming the first woman journalist and chief editor in a newspaper. Josefina then becomes a narrator, poet, playwright, historian, cultural researcher and plastic artist, leaving behind an unique legacy.

She is considered the introducer of the new twentieth century aesthetics into Paraguay, because, at the head of the Grupo Arte Nuevo (New Art Group) at the beginning of the 1950s, she organized the modern art exhibition, along with Olga Blinder, Lilí del Mónico, Edith Jiménez and others.

She died on January 11th, 1999 at the age of 95.

■ Work for the Students:
Conduct a research on the life and works of: Augusto Roa Bastos, Cervantes Award for Literature, Alón, Ramón Indalecio Cardozo; Father Fidel Maíz, Juan Sinforiano Bogarín.
Inquire about the representatives of the 900 generation educated in public educational institutions (Colegio Nacional de la Capital, 1877 and Universidad Nacional de Asunción, 1889).
The **Cerro Kói** has an area of 12 hectares and the **Chororí** 5 hectares and they are a geomorphological phenomenon presenting rocks only of an igneous origin. This rarity is only known in three places in the world: South Africa, Canada and Paraguay, nearby Areguá.

The **Tinfunké** belongs to the ecoregion called flood plains of the Pilcomayo river. It is a refuge for the reproduction of several endangered fauna species, such as the *yacaré*, *ñandú*, *yaguareté*, and turtle. It is a national park totally located in private lands. It occupies an area of 280,000 hectares which remain flooded most of the year. Currently, it is affected by the detour of the Pilcomayo river.

The area surrounding the Ypoá Lake is a national park created by a decree of 1992 and it has an extension of 100,000 hectares, with extended swamp and dam areas. It has an excellent representation of the biodiversity of the Ñeembucú ecoregion.

The area surrounding the **Ypacaraí Lake** is also a national park created by a decree dated in 1990. It has an surface of 16,000 hectares, most of which corresponds to urban areas.

The **Villa de San Isidro Labrador de los Reyes Católicos de Curuguaty** was the seat of Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo when its inhabitants crossed the Paraná in 1635, to escape the invasion of the San Paulo Mameluco slave hunters. There, gathered the inhabitants...
of Ciudad Real and of Villa Rica joined by the Indians of the desolate towns of Terecañy, Candelaria and Mbaracayú.

The Guairá people who were migrating set their eyes on the Ybyturusú mountains where they settled on May 20th, 1682.

Later, Governor Bazán de Pedraza, who was by chance visiting the region, approved in 1714 the foundation of a Spanish village in the old seat of Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo, because of the advantages of the site of Curuguaty for the production and trading of the yerba mate and due to the navigability of the Curuguaty and Jejuí, part of the Paraguay river basin.

**Battle of Ka’a Yvate:**

This was a battle of the Guarani War in 1756, where the Portuguese defeated the Indians of the seven reductions of the left bank of the Uruguay river which had been ceded by the Spanish Crown to Portugal in exchange for Colonia del Sacramento through the Tratado de Permuta (Agreement of Exchange) of 1750.

The Semana Santa or Holy Week begins on Domingo de Ramos (Palm Sunday) with the blessing of the palms (*pindó karaí*) which wards off evil. Viernes Santo (Good Friday) is the most important day in the ritual because then they commemorate the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. For those days, the tradition is to make *chipa* (a type of corn bread) and *sopa paraguaya* (a solid soup).

The Vía Crucis procession occurs and the crucifixion is staged (the Ñandejára Jehupí); later, they proceed with the lowering of Christ from the cross (Ñandejára Mboguejy) for the final procession at which point comes the Tupāitu (ceremony of kissing God). Sábado de Gloria (Easter Saturday) begins with Christ’s encounter with his mother (Tupasy Ñuvaîtî). On Easter Sunday everybody attends Mass and godsons carry presents for their godparents and they receive their blessing. Many of these rituals have declined in the cities.
The **Patron Saint Day Feasts** evoke the Patron Saints of the towns, “compañías” (townships) or family. There is a mixture of the religious and profane. In general, the festivities begin with prayers, Masses and processions during in which the image of a saint is shown on the streets of the town. They aim at collective participation and it is always around a *karu guasu* (great dinner) with dancing, gambling, posts that sell religious stamps or candles and amusement parks.

There is playing of the *diana mbaja* (Mbaja reveille) which begins the day with an early bell ringing and fireworks. During the festivities, popular bands perform and typical pieces are danced. Sometimes, there are bull fights, *toro candil* (fake bull fight), *carrera pe*, *carrera sortija*, *sortija yvyrupi*, *bandera jere*, *carrera vosa*, etc. (all sorts of races). The closing of the feast is indicated by the *castillo-kái* (burning of the castle) or *Judas-kai* (burning of an effigy of Judas). Also, people engage in different games: *yvyra syi*, (slippery pole) *kambuchi jejoka* (breaking the jar), *tuna jekutu* (stick it to the cactus), *paila jeheré* (lick the pan), *gallo jejuka* (kill the rooster), parallel to gambling, bingo, ruleta criolla (creole roulette), target shooting, guessing cards and others.

**Kurusu Bartolo** Legend compiled by Ramón I. Cardozo in 1933.

During the times of Dictator Francia, a priest, Father Bartolomeo (Pa’i Bartolo) lived in Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo. This priest was eager to ask his parishioners to be virtuous, recommending them to work the land, the linen loom. Through his preaching, Villa Rica became an industrial and grain-producing town. His constant journeys around the townships led him to loose his mind. So, his family decided to lock him up and forbade him to leave.

On a given stormy day, Pa’i Bartolo managed to escape and went to Rosado, a nearby place. On his way, he had to ford a stream that was flooded because of the great rain and the priest was dragged by the waters dying in the site near Táva Arroyo (Stream Tava). The neighbors buried him and placed a cross on that spot which came to be called Kurusu Bartolo and the stream also became known as Bartolo.

Cardozo also indicates that there is a devotion to Kurusu Bartolo in times of drought and that after a novena, generally, a great rain comes as a blessing.
Another very famous legend: the Christ of Piribeuy

In a small town in the Cordillera region, in which during the War of the Triple Alliance a great battle was fought, there is an image of Christ to which faithful attribute great miraculous powers. On the day of its festivities, the third Sunday in January, Piribeuy is filled with faithful from the surrounding towns who bring tributes in gratitude for the graces granted by Him.

The legend says that in a far away yerbal (yerba field) there were screams, and noises that terrified the yerbaters (yerba growers) and the neighboring population. Nobody dared to enter the yerba forests where those screams came from. One day, a very brave man challenged all the rumors and dangers and proceeded to enter into the woods and he found a big leather sack used to transport the yerba. Fearful, he opened the leather sack and found inside a giant carved image of Christ. They said that the moment the crucifix appeared, the screams and noises stopped and a beam of light illuminated the horizon. Everybody went to witness the finding. At first they put it in a small chapel where the great cross barely fit. They tried later to take it away from there to bring it to Asunción, but it was impossible to move it from the modest chapel where it was placed. This was interpreted as the will of Jesus to remain in Piribeuy.

The harp is not native to Paraguay although it is very common to hear it called the Paraguayan harp. It was introduced to the country in the seventeenth century. Excellent instruments of 32, 36 and 40 strings are made in the country. Luis Szarán says that the earliest Paraguayan harpists were: Pulé -from Arroyos y Esteros-, José Dolores Fernández (Lolo Arpero) and José del Rosario Diarte. Several Paraguayan harpists of great talent contributed to make it known universally. Among them: Felix Pérez Cardozo, Digno García, Lorenzo Leguizamón, Santiago Cortesi, Luis Bordón, Cristiano Báez Monges, Alejandro Villamayor and Nicolasito Caballero.

Sofía Mendoza, Clotilde Balmelli, and Aura Mendoza were cultivators of the bell canto.
Ayvu Rapyta
The Theogony
The Origin of the Ñamandú

Text in Mby’a guaraní compiled
by León Cadogan

Ñande Ru Papa Tenonde
Our first last father
guerera ombojera
makes his own body surface
pytũ ymágui
from the primeval darkness

Yvára ppyyte
The divine soles of the feet
apyka apu’a i,
The small round seat
pytũ yma mbytére oguerojera ....
el apyka jaguar
In the heart of primeval darkness
Displays them in their display...

Yvara jechaka mba’e ekuaa
Divine reflection of the divine wisdom
yvára rendupa,
divine sonorous footboard of all things
yvára popyte, yvyrai
divine palms of their hands
with the stick as emblem
yvára popyte raka poty
divine palm trees with flowery branches
oguerojerá Ñamandu
pytũ yma mbytére
He displays them in their own display
Ñamandú in the middle of the primeval darkness
La Mujer de la Conquista (Women in the Conquest)
Beatriz G. de Bosio

La mujer de la conquista quedó fuera del relato
pues la gloria y los honores al valor, riesgo y tesón
se llevaron los varones de cualquier expedición.

Adelantados primero
Gobernadores después
cabildantes, oidores,
veedores, Alférez, Juez.
Curas, mancebos, criollos ¿y de las mujeres qué?

Doña Isabel de Guevara señaló el rol femenino en misiva a la Princesa
detalló su cruel destino.
Ante hambre y desnudez del inicio de la hazaña la mujer se afanó, sana
sorteando con gran maña todas las dificultades que irrumpían día a día.

Doña Mencia de Sanabria que a pie se llegó a Asunción
Trajo consigo alegría y doncellas de valía.

Jesusa de Bocanegra por citar las más nombradas
que a la huérfanas brindó desvelos y gran cariño
su muerte en plena labor Sembró gran pena y dolor.

Women in the Conquesta were left out of the tales
as the glory and the honor to bravery, risk and tenacity were taken all by the men of any expeditions.

Adelantados, first Governors afterwards Councilmen, Aldermen inspectors, ensign, judge priests, mancebos, criollos... and of the women, what?

Dona Isabel de Guevara mentioned the women’s role in a letter to the Princess.
Her cruel destiny she told.
Before famine and nudity from the beginning of the feat women made efforts, healthy to overcome with great skill all the difficulties that came day by day.

Dona Mencia de Sanabria who arrived in Asunción on foot brought along the happiness and maids of great courage.

Jesusa de Bocanegra to cite the most named who the orfans provided vigils and great affection her death in the middle of work caused great sorrow and pain.
Ana Díaz, la Señora que acompañó a Juan Garay
tesón imprimió a su hora,
y soldados y viajantes
de la nueva fundación
admiraron su valía.

La segunda Buenos Aires
de mil quinientos ochenta
significó mil desaires
generando lucha cruenta
que por el acceso al mar
la mediterraneidad
fue un destino sin piedad.

¿Y aquella mujer anónima
que se erigió solo en vientre
o quizá pieza servil
ante un cuñadazgo vil
y se erigiera en razón
y útil alternativa
en esta aislada región?

Yo lamento señalarlo
que si el relato omitió
la mujer en la conquista,
sus desvelos y templanza,
su valor y condición
adjudicando el honor
de hazañas y grandes glorias
en monopolio al varón,
no es difícil entender
en esta copla común
de juglar vindicador
que sin ellas compañeros:
¿De qué mancebos habláis?
¿Cuáles criollos mentáis?
¿Y qué honores señálais?

Ana Díaz, the lady who accompanied Garay
tenacity imprinted at her time
and soldiers and travelers
of the new foundation
admired her bravery.

The second Buenos Aires
of fifteen hundred and eighty
signified thousands of slights
generating bloody fights
that for access to the sea
landlockedness
was a merciless fate.

And that anonymous woman
that became only her womb
or perhaps a servile object
of brother-in-lawhood
and became the reason
and useful alternative
in this isolated land?

I am sorry to point it out
that if the tale omitted
the women in the conquest
her vigil and moderation
her courage and condition
adjudging the honor
of feats and great glories
in monopoly to man
it is not hard to understand
in this copla (popular song)
of a vindicating bard
that without them compañeros:
Of which mancebos do you speak?
Which criollos do you name?
Which honors do you indicate?
A Juan de Ayolas le cupo incursiónar en la selva para así brechas abrir a la Sierra de la Plata y a la gloria del Dorado (paraje tan anhelado).

Y así remontando ríos se internó en el Paraguay llegando a La Candelaria bautizada en ese día por ser un dos de Febrero aquella gran osadía.

Nombraba lugarteniente a Don Domingo de Irala a quien entregó el poder para partir hacia el Chaco y así por fin alcanzar la tierra de los tesoros.

Contaron los lenguaraces que víctima de traición Ayolas alcanzó muerte en terrible condición.

Ultimado con macanas de madera y pedernal la resistencia del indio se hizo visible y concreta pues las crónicas recogen la ingratitud de la treta...

It fell to Juan de Ayolas to explore the jungle thus to open paths to the Sierra de la Plata and to the glory of El Dorado (such a yearned destination).

And thus up he sailed deep inside Paraguay arriving in La Candelaria christened on that very day for being the second of February that great audacity.

He appointed Don Domingo Martínez de Irala lieutenant to whom he handed power in order to leave for the Chaco and thus reaching the land of treasures.

The foulmouthed told that, victim of treachery, Ayolas found death in a terrible situation.

Beaten to death with “macanas” made of wood and stone the resistance of the Indian became visible and concrete as the chronicles gather the ingratitude of the ruse...

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La carreta (The oxcart)

Vicente Lamas

Al paso cansino, monótono y lento de los mansos bueyes; viene la carreta, gimiendo quién sabe qué pena secreta en su sempiterno y extraño lamento.

El largo bostezo de todas las huellas sabe la amargura de su ingrato sino: ir siempre arrastrando por todo camino susu penas cual loco cazador de estrellas.

Eres el pasado lejano y perdido, te aroma el encanto de lo fenecido, carreta romántica, dulce y patriarcal.

Llorando te acercas a tu triste ocaso con la sacrosanta cruz de tu fracaso yo lloro contigo tu pena ancestral.

El tropero (a person who herds cattle)

Vicente Lamas

Como un absurdo y bárbaro cortejo pasó la tropa mugidora y fiera. El poncho del tropero en la carrera fulgió como un relámpago bermejo...

Like an absurd and barbaric cortege passed the mooing and fierce herd the poncho of the tropero running glowed like a reddish lightning...
Mbocayá (coconut)
José Concepción Ortiz

Tal como el campesino paraguayo, terco, sufrido, huraño, generoso, de la tormenta erguido ante el acoso tu privilegio es atraer el rayo.

Firme en el rojo suelo, sin desmayo das frutas y hojas al menesteroso y, al fin, el tenaz leño, ya en reposo: tú pareces en todo paraguayo.

Doblarte no podrá sino romperte más bien la tempestad, alto y fuerte, símbolo del terruño, mbocayá.

Hoy y ayer, en la paz como en la guerra, para hombres y bestias de esta tierra tú has sido de los pobres el maná.

Just like the Paraguayan peasant stubborn, suffering, insociable and generous of the storm erected when harassed your privilege is to attract lightning.

Firm on the red soil without fainting you give you fruits and leaves to the needy and at last, the tenacious log already resting: you seem Paraguayan in everything.

Only the tempest would break you but not bend you, haughty and strong symbol of the land, mbocayá.

Today and yesterday, in peace as in war for men and beasts of this land You have been the manna of the poor.
Culture in the Classroom

Beatriz G. de Bosio
Documentary Annex

We incorporate this document which is part of the book “Viaje a la Naturaleza y la Cultura” - “Voyage to Nature and Culture”, memory of an International Consultation by UNESCO, whose purpose was the elaboration of a Project for Cultural and Natural Tourism for Paraguay. The publication was coordinated and compiled by Prof. Beatriz G. de Bosio and Lic. Lía Colombino.

PARAGUAY, NATURE AND CULTURE

Prof. Lic. Beatriz G. de Bosio - Lic. Lía Colombino Chase

1. PHYSICAL ASPECTS

The Republic of Paraguay is located in the central part of South America. It sits on 19° 18' and 27° 3' latitude south and longitude 54° 15' and 62° 38' west of Greenwich. It is bordered to the north with Brazil and Bolivia; to the east with Brazil and Argentina; to the south with Argentina and to the west with Bolivia. It is a landlocked country with access to the Atlantic Ocean through the Paraguay, Paraná and Río de la Plata rivers.

It has an area of 406,752 square kilometers and it is divided by the Paraguay river into two natural regions: the Western region or Chaco with an area of 246,925 square kilometers, constituting 61% of the country’s total area, and the Eastern region with 159,827 square kilometers, 39% of the total area. Both regions are divided politically into departments, the Eastern has fourteen departments and the Western, three.

Population is approximately 5,500,000 inhabitants of which only 3.5 to 4% correspond to the Chaco. The total population density is very low as it is one of least populated countries in the Southern hemisphere. In 1992, according to census data, it density was 10.1 inhabitants per square kilometer.

The country’s climate has characteristics that place it within the continental subtropical, but it varies from region to region. Summers are rainy and very hot while winters show low temperatures and rainfalls diminishes. There is a marked difference

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in the distribution of rainfall between the two regions into which the country is divided and that causes a significant variation in the climate.\(^1\) The average temperatures annually range from 20\(^\circ\) Celsius to 25\(^\circ\) Celsius. The average diminishes gradually from north to south. Regarding extreme values, in the north the maximum temperature reaches more than 40\(^\circ\) Celsius, and the minimum could reach 0\(^\circ\) Celsius in the south.

Regarding the fluvial system, the Paraguay river, which crosses the territory and divides it, is considered the most important. It is navigable for vessels of large draft, and some passages only for medium draft ships. Its main tributaries are the Pilcomayo river, located in the Chaco region and form the border with Argentina, the Ypané, the Jejuí and the Tebicuary rivers.

The Paraná river forms the eastern and southern border. It is navigable for vessels of different drafts from the confluence with the Paraguay river to the Itaipú dam and, from there, for smaller vessels. This river has significant importance for the generation of hydro electrical power, because of its unevenness.

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2. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

2.1. Region Oriental (The Eastern Region)

It is “characterized by a variety of physical aspects where alternate plains with extended forested level areas, (...) mountain ranges, hills and valleys and a network of rivers and streams.”\(^2\) In concentrates most of the economic activity of the country and for that reason it is one of the most densely populated regions.

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1 Atlas Censal; Dirección General de Estadística, Encuestas y Censos; Secretaría Técnica de Planificación; Presidencia de la República; Asunción, Paraguay; 1993.

2 Chase, Beatriz; La gestión participativa de las reservas de biosfera en el ordenamiento territorial, El caso paraguayo; IV Reunión de la Red IberoMaB; Comité MaB paraguayo; p. 2; November: 1999.
The orographic system of Paraguay is located in this region and it is formed by the mountain ranges of Amambay, Mbaracayú and Caaguazú. Their height does not reach 800 meters.

The climate peculiarities corresponding to this region are observed to the north west being the climate sub-humid, and it is humid towards the northeast and the south.

The climate and rainfalls result in different types of plants in the region: sub-humid forests in the center, savannahs and marshes areas. Thus, together with the fauna of these accidents, a very unique eco-system arises.

The humid forested areas are characteristic of this region and they hold a great variety of tree species, ephifites, vines, ferns and palm trees, all of them in different strata. The most representative species are lapacho or tajy, cedar, guatambu, yvyra pytá which form the upper stratum. In the lower stratum we find the ňandypa mi and the naranja hai (bitter orange). There are species that connect these strata such as the guembé and the vines. The fauna in these forests is quite varied, above all with birds. There are abundant

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tucanos and the guyra campana, an endangered specie, as well as raptorial birds. As the forest is divided into strata, there are fauna species quite connected with them, thus there is a great variety of monkeys who feed on fruits. Among the terrestrial fauna we can name the paka or agutí, deer and the tapir or mboreví (wild boar).

Lake Ypoá: until not long ago, inaccessible natural beauty surrounded by swamps.

The “cerrado” is another one of the formations in this region and it is found in the northeast. It is associated with populated settlements as it is employed for a variety of activities such as cattle-raising (the “cerrado” is burned to renew pastures).

Thus, the flora grows thick and low, with hardened trunk and foliage because of the frequent burning. The most representative fauna are the aguara and the ñandu guasu.

The swamps are natural communities associated to marsh systems. It includes the flooded soil to the south of the region. In the flora, we have the totora, the aguape and the camalote; the fauna is represented by the carpincho (capibara) and the aguara guasu. Bamboos are also frequent in the Eastern Region with species like the takuarembo and the takuara.

There are in this region important parks and natural reserves:

I. Reserve Mbaracajú Forest: located in the Department of Canindeyú, it covers an area of 64,000 hectares and it protects one of the last remaining subtropical forests in South America.

II. National Park Cerro Corá: it is located in the Department of Amambay, to the north of the region. It covers an area of 12,038 hectares and it is characterized by the isolated hills, low vegetation
and numerous watercourses. It protects endemic species of native flora and fauna that are endangered. It has picnic and camping areas, a landing strip, basic services in the administrative area and a fully equipped hall.

**III. Scientific Monument Moisés Bertoni:** it has a reduced area and it is located in the Department of Alto Paraná. It holds a portion of higher forest and it houses the legacies of the experimentation center of the Swiss naturalist Moisés Bertoni. It has four pedestrian trails, a lookout on the Paraná river, a picnic area, an amphitheater and a historic-cultural museum.

2.2. The Western region or Chaco

The Chaco is “mainly a sedimentary basin of the tertiary and quaternary and, in almost its full extension, it has a flat topography, extreme conditions of humidity or aridity and a impermeable subsoil that causes the coasts of the Paraguay and Pilcomayo rivers to be subject to flooding.”

It is the least populated region of the country since it contains only 3% of the total population.

The Chaco possesses great biodiversity. Among the most representative fauna in this region...
sector we may name crocodiles –there are in the Chaco 23 known species--; more than hundred snake species, lizards and iguanas; the taguá, and endemic and endangered specie, not found in any other ecosystem in South America; the yaguareté; the tatú or armadillo; diverse species of butterflies and a great variety of fowl like the ñandú (ostrich), the heron the guyra campana (The Bell Bird), among others.

The Chaco flora is represented also by natural forests in this case used to extract the tannin (substance extracted from the quebracho) and also there are essence of palo santo (holy wood) and poles. There is a line that separates the Dry or Chaco Boreal from the Humid Chaco or Chaco Húmedo. Among the species that we can mention we have large trees such as the quebracho, known for the hardness of the wood, the palo santo, the pindo and karanday palms; the samu’u (big bellied tree); cacti and a great variety of orchids. The fauna in this system has the: hornero copetón, taguá, tatú bolita and yaguareté.
The wetlands are also characteristic of this region. There are also formations of alluvial material, called sand dunes. They constitute deposits of sand that remain behind a riverbed that recovered its normal size. Later, the vegetation covers it and it is shaped by the wind. They are located in the northwest, the most arid region in Paraguayan territory. The flora is disperse and it shows trees such as the quebracho and the jacarandá. The shrub known as the yvyía is very well known because it saves the lives of people suffering from thirst. Its most representative fauna is constituted by viscachas and tuco tucos.

Two important national parks are located in this region:

1. **National Park Teniente Agripino Enciso**: it has a total area of 40,000 hectares and it is located in the Department of Boquerón. It is characterized as the typical Chaco landscape with xerophilous vegetation in dense forests where the white quebracho and the
samu’u can be found. The park has old trenches used during the Chaco War. Its infrastructure is limited as it has a dirt road access, pedestrian trails, electric generator and basic hygiene services for the visitor.

II. National Park Defensores del Chaco: it has an area of 780,000 hectares and it is located in the Department of Alto Paraguay. The area is an alluvial plain covered by quebrachos, forests and thorn bushes. The Cerro León is unique since in the Chaco it is very difficult to find unevenness in the land. There are also beds of intermittent lagoons. The infrastructure in this park is larger than in the previous one since it has, running water, lodging, parking lot and picnic areas and, besides, two landing strips.

3. CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL REVIEW

Paraguay, called in its beginnings “the Giant Province of the Indies” due to the extensive territories granted by the Capitulation to the first Adelantado of the Río de la Plata, Pedro de Mendoza, is today a landlocked country.

Located in the heartland of South America, its capital is Asunción, founded in 1537 by Captain Juan de Salazar de Espinoza. From the beginning, it became the central nucleus of the Spanish conquest in the region after the first Buenos Aires was abandoned in order to boost from here the expeditions to the Sierra de la Plata.

The Paraguayan territory is divided into two great regions, separated by the Paraguay, river that comes from the Xaraxes of the Mato Grosso, and is a tributary of the Paraná river which, in turn, originates in the highlands of Brazil amid dense tropical forests.

The Eastern region, with its axis on the Bay of Asunción, was populated at the time of the conquest by Indians of the Tupí Guaraní linguistic family that occupied the central part of the South American continent. Before the Spanish arrived, some Guaraní
tribes, known as the Chiriguano and Guarayo, had migrated through the Chaco to the Andes Mountains.

It was with the Kario of the Guarani family that the biological and cultural miscegenation took place, and whose language went through centuries and remains a living language for the majority of the population.

Paraguay houses in its territory, seventeen Indian ethnic groups belonging to five linguistic families. They are the Tupí-Guaraní, Zamuco, Mataco-Mataguayo, Lengua-Maskoy y Guaicurú, with their respective cultural universes.

It fell to Asunción to be named “Mother of Cities”, since from there departed in the sixteenth century several founding expeditions which gave origin to important cities of the region, such as the second Buenos Aires, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo, Corrientes, Santa Fe, Ciudad Real del Guairá and Concepción del Bermejo.

With the division of the Giant Province by Cédula Real (Royal Decree) of 1617, it was created the Province of Paraguay or Guairá with capital in Asunción and the Province of Buenos Aires, with capital in the city of that name. The Province of Paraguay was thus marginalized from the American commercial route, isolated and abandoned to its fate.

The religious orders, the Franciscans first and the Jesuits afterwards, together with the secular clergy exerted a great influence in the complex transculturation processes, based on the Indian tradition.

The Jesuit and Franciscan imagery, pulpits and altary have become a vivid part of the cultural heritage and are now part of museums and collections.

The thirty Guaraní towns of the Jesuits Reductions on the border between the Hispanic and Lusitanian empires, covered what today

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is southern Brazil, northeast of Argentina and the north of Uruguay. **Eight of the most important Reductions are in Paraguayan territory** and are a part of a tourist circuit in the routes of Mercosur.

The Franciscan missionaries who were characterized for being respectful of the models of the Guarani social organization, the tava (villages), founded several towns among which them: Itá, Yaguarón, Ypané, Guarambaré, Atyrá, Yuty and Caazapá, most of them under the direction of the illustrious Fray (Father) Luis de Bolaños, a true apostle of the evangelization of the Indians in Paraguay.

The Paraguayan seventeenth century was marked by isolation, contraction and a fierce struggle for survival. The final decadence of the Siglo de Oro Español (Spanish Golden Century) diminished the flow of exchange with the metropolis. The stagnant population suffered raids by non-assimilated Indians of the Chaco and the terrible raids of the Sao Paulo bandeirantes in their insatiable need for slave labor.

The province received in the eighteenth century the migratory contribution of a merchant group that arrived in the Río de la Plata and Paraguay river in response to the new conditions of the European industrial revolution and to the important though tardy changes in the administrative policies of the Bourbon Kings of Spain. New cities were founded, the Villa Real de la Concepción, San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú, Rosario del Cuarepotí and Pilar del Ñeembucú, located on the Paraguay river and that soon became trading ports of the renascent national production.

On the other hand, in 1767, by royal decree of the Spanish King Charles III, the Jesuit Order was expelled from the continent while they created the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata with Buenos Aires
as the political and commercial center of the region with authority over the Province of Paraguay.

Paraguay achieved independence from the centers of power to which it was submitted, Spain and Buenos Aires, in 1811.

The will of Buenos Aires, the old Viceroyalty, compelled the first independent government of Dr. José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia to adopt a policy of “splendid isolation” to preserve the autonomy threatened by the annexationist pretensions from Buenos Aires. This forced the Paraguayan population to endure an austere and authoritarian system in a self-sufficient economy.

Although it is true that independence was solidly established, the policy of Dr. Francia affected the development of Paraguay. The markets of yerba mate (the national economy’s main product since colonial times) suffered. International trade (which was a source of development), and education, were sacrificed because of the need for national defense.

When the Supreme Dictator died in 1840, Carlos Antonio López took office, already under a new international reality who demanded and achieved recognition of Paraguayan independence by Brazil, first and the European powers, later. The Argentine Confederation resigns her pretension to rebuild the old viceroyalty only in 1852 when it recognized the Paraguayan independence. The country then opens itself to international trade, to diplomatic exchanges, to foreign investment and to the presence of a surprising amount of the best English technicians, hired by the government to build infrastructure in the country with high furnaces, ironworks, arsenals, shipyards, urban projects and sanitary organization.

Intellectual activity occupied a preponderant place in the nascent Republic whose President, a former teacher himself, personally presided over the exams of secondary school students and perhaps impressed by them, he gave them the first official scholarships to study in Europe. For the first time this happened in South America.

Paraguayan journalism arises under the government of Carlos Antonio López. The newspaper “El Paraguayo Independiente” appears on
April 26th, 1845, with the firm goal of achieving international recognition of our independence. Other important publications of that era were “El Semanario de Avisos y Conocimientos Útiles”, “La Aurora”, a magazine by the Aula de Filosofía (Hall of Philosophy), “Eco del Paraguay” (Echo from Paraguay), directed by Ildefonso Bermejo a Spanish journalist and writer, etc.

Within this policy of modernization, Paraguay inaugurated the railroad in 1861, which constitutes until today a means of communication and a tourist attraction because it is a steam engine already commercially in disuse.

The War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870) against Argentina, Brasil and Uruguay interrupted the industrial progress of the country and caused dramatic demographic loss leaving it in a shambles with the threat of even ceasing as a sovereign country.

The reconstruction of the ruined country began with the approval of a new Constitution with liberal ideology, modeled in that of the United States and Argentina.

Its enforcement met obstacles because of the earlier authoritarian tradition, which, added to the economic problems, brought about political instability and a deficient administration condemning the country, still rich in natural resources and with a fascinating cultural heritage, to a comparative backwardness within the regional context.

In that context, already in the twentieth century, and after having painfully reached the first signs of a sustained economic and population recovery, the Paraguayan people had to face another international war, between 1932 and 1935, against our Bolivian brothers as the only way to settle definitive territorial limits.

The Paraguayan Chaco or Western region was the scene of this tragic historical event.

Several sociocultural realities exist in this region. The scarce population is concentrated into three main areas. Around Villa Hayes and Benjamín Aceval; the Central Chaco’s Mennonite...
colonies, composed of religious anabaptist groups from Central Europe and Canada, and the industrial and cattle ranching towns of Alto Paraguay (Upper Paraguay) and the military garrisons on the borders with Bolivia and Argentina.

The Indians of the Chaco constitute a marginalized population in the context of the regional society. In the Chaco there are thirteen ethnic groups.

The Trans-Chaco Highway stretches to the northwest from Villa Hayes as far as Mariscal Estigarribia and, unpaved, it continues as far as the border with Bolivia.

The Chaco War ended with the fall of the civilian oriented Liberal Party from power and its replacement by the militaristic system that led to, between 1954 and 1989, to an authoritarian government led by General Alfredo Stroessner. He adopted a policy of economic growth with limited freedoms which ended up in serious limitations to autonomous cultural undertakings.

The education reform was carried out with the support of international organizations with unsatisfactory results in terms of curricula both in the humanities and in the sciences.

Once the dictator was overthrown, the emerging realities of the modern world dominated putting an end to isolation, now open to the democratization factor, economic and social integration, and recently, globalization.

Paraguay became a part of the Mercosur regional bloc, the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), despite the enormous asymmetries with the rest of the associate members.

There are great hopes in this project for the free movement of human and capital resources, and production in general. Therefore, after centuries, Paraguay, will be able to make up for her ancestral limitations imposed by the geographic imperative and happily overcome by communications of this historical time.
4. TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

In this case, the community heritage is a kind of raw material for tourism since, without heritage, there would be no attraction. By cultural heritage we call those cultural goods of a community, inherited from its ancestors. The classification into tangible and intangible is used for better comprehension.

In Paraguay, except for rare occasions, the tangible heritage is characterized as non-monumental. We may speak then of a modest heritage, which qualifies it particularly as it is not defined by an isolated building or by monuments, but through a complex cultural network making the tangible seen almost intangibly. The towns of Paraguay are not “a monument”, “a house”, “the museum”; they are, rather, urban sets which acquire importance when analyzed as a whole. Thus, a visitor to a Paraguayan town does not really enjoy his visit if he does not tour it like one more of its inhabitants, activities such as a “city tour” or craft shopping do not make him share that experience. We must, then, change the approach with which, both from a tourist and an institutional point of view, we approach heritage. The traditional way of “doing tourism” impoverishes Paraguay’s heritage, since the most advisable way would be a non-conventional and global personal approach, differentiating the local characteristics. A visit to Paraguay, as a country, not as simple isolated attractions taken out of context, must be done as one reads. And a text reading must be complete: it must be read what is manifested in the book but also that which is read between the lines. Paraguay is richer in this aspect. When that is understood, the knowledge of “the other” and also ours acquires a sense hidden to us before.

It would be useless, in these terms, an inventory of sites, museums, etc., as we would be doing a simple summation. Nevertheless, we shall mention here the most important of that, which is called the Tangible Cultural Heritage, knowing beforehand that not only those sites, monuments and museums are Paraguay, as they are isolated spots within a cultural and historical design that must be understood as a whole, in order to fully enjoy it.
Sites and Monuments
Asunción

It is the most important urban nucleus in Paraguay, and just like other cities, it does not show monumental characteristics, with some exceptions. It is the only city in Paraguay that shows samples of architectonic heritage, as we usually know it.

Asunción’s historic center possesses undoubtedly places for tourist interest and they are worth a tour. In it should be included the Iglesia Catedral (the Cathedral), built in 1845, Palacio Legislativo (the Legislative Palace), seat of the National Congress (former Spanish Cabildo), Casa de la Cultura (House of Culture), old seat of the Colegio Seminario de San Carlos de la Orden Jesuítica (College-Seminary of San Carlos of the Jesuit Order) and later military quarters, Palacio de Gobierno o Palacio de López (Government Palace or López’s Palace), built in 1860, Casa de la Independencia (House of the Independence), built in 1772, Correo Central or Palacio Patri (Central Post Office or Patri Palace) and Manzana de la Rivera (Rivera Square) which constitutes a group of houses adapted as a Cultural Center which includes the oldest standing building in the city: Casa Viola (1750), today the seat of the City’s Memory Museum. This group forms an entire environment that is combined with landscape-environmental characteristics such as the plazas (squares), the river and the street forestation. Other attractions in the historical center are those we find around the Railway Station (1861). Also within the commercial section of downtown Asunción we have the Oratorio Nuestra Señora de la Asunción (Oratory of our Lady of Asunción) or Panteón Nacional de Héroes (National Pantheon of the Heroes). The Iglesia de La Encarnación (the church of La Encarnación), built in 1893, is outside of the historical quarters but it completes it, located on a knoll and built with bare bricks.
Rest of the country

In the countryside, they towns of Paraguay are worth a visit. Depending upon their location, they have particular features according to their history. Sometimes, the layout of an urban setting and its design is owed to its foundation; in others, to their past as Indian towns or Francican or Jesuit missions, which imprints idiosynchratic characteristics in the town. It is never too much to clarify that the same would not be as complete without the life that surrounds them, their people, their feasts, their rituals.

We could risk a classification and grouping of these towns based on their general features, following the book by Architect Ramón Gutiérrez.

I. The Indian Towns

The native towns arise in the sixteenth century and they are laid out around the plaza (square) in whose center a church is built. Around it, the town will grow with aligned houses, and the new houses shall be built parallel to those already existing. On one of the shorter sides (the plaza was usually rectangular), stood the Casa Parroquial (parish house) and the Cabildo would be built. The relation between the church, with its galleries projects the religious cult toward the exterior, the square and the houses, which also have galleries giving evidence of a religious presence and a very strong morphological unit. The evolution of these towns was minimal until prior to the War of the Triple Alliance.

1. Atyrá: was founded around 1540, its quarters were modified when the church was moved in 1928, date in which it stopped functioning as the epicenter of the town. The altar and the imagery are preserved; they are from the eighteenth century. Atyrá is nowadays, thanks to the political will and the joint action of its municipality, the cleanest city in the country.

2. Tobatí: it maintains its original features. The church is from the second half of the nineteenth century but
the style is encased within the colonial architecture. The altar and the carvings are original.

3. Itá: it is probably the oldest Indian town, founded in 1537. The church building resisted until the twentieth century when it was totally transformed. Some original walls, windows and doors are maintained. It is an important handicraft center.

4. Yaguarón: it was founded in approximately 1596; it has one of the most interesting churches in Paraguay, finished in 1772. Although it suffered structural transformations at various times, it maintains an impressive altarpiece, constituting one of the best samples of Baroque imagery in Paraguay.

5. Caazapá and Yuty: They are inscribed in the category of towns founded by Franciscan priests. The foundation of San José de Caazapá is attributed to Fray (Father) Luis de Bolaños in 1607 “in the place called Guaybirá”. Ramón Gutiérrez says that the occupation of the Guairá zone with the Franciscan settlements begins in the early seventeenth century. Caazapá was a model Franciscan Reduction in Paraguay. It was an exchange center of goods and services for a vast rural area. The Franciscan evangelization was of great trascendence since the priests respected the patterns of the Guarani social organization, customs and language. Today, some mention the Franciscan matrix of the Paraguayan population. This system of the reductions initiated by the Franciscans was successfully continued by the Jesuits and it represented a model of intercultural dialogue, making the meeting of the two worlds something less traumatic.

An important heritage of the Caazapá zone is the Ycuá Bolaños (Bolaños Spring) which becomes a center of tourist attraction, more for its intangible significance. The current temple preserves samples of Franciscan art.
Visiting these towns connects us with our primeval roots and it induces us to think with optimism about the future.

II. The towns of mulattoes and Blacks

The layout of these towns was similar to those of the native Indian towns.

1. Emboscada: It is created with the function of setting the northern border around the year 1740 and it is populated with free Blacks. Although the urban layout has been restructuring itself, it maintains the square and the 1774 church in excellent condition. According to Gutiérrez, the Church of Emboscada has nothing to envy other churches in Paraguay, but it continues to be the less known church.

2. Areguá: even when its origin was that of a town for Blacks, what today is Areguá is due to the golden time at the end of the nineteenth century as it was adopted as a resort town by the wealthy families of Asunción. The urban set and its integration into the landscape (The axis Loma Hill - Lake Ypacarai - Koi and Chororí Hills) constitutes an interesting example as it is very unconventional. The casa quintas (villas) still remaining are important examples of the architecture of the nineteenth century. Today, it is the capital of the Central Department and, for its peculiar heritage, it was declared a Departmental Heritage.
III. Spanish towns founded in accordance with the Laws of the Indies

These are towns founded from the beginning of seventeenth century in response to needs of territorial dominion. They are structured based upon the famous Laws of the Indies:

1. Concepción
2. Pilar

IV. The fortified towns

They originated as precarious defense systems with palisades and moats.

This typology is followed by many towns created in the seventeenth century by the Jesuits in view of continuous attacks by Paulista slave hunters.

1. Santiago
2. Santa María de Fe

*Towns for the defense of the frontier;* later, in the eighteenth century, many towns were founded as forts with the goal of defending the borders.

1. Villela

*The fort as the origin of the town.*

1. Fuerte Olimpo.

V. Towns originating in chapels

The chapels that were built were very precarious and around them were built quarters for comunal services. The foundation dates of those towns are established according to the completion of the chapels. At the same time, these chapels become intermediate points between Indian towns and the cities, serving as support centers for the agricultural-cattle raising advance. The urban layout bears relation to the design of the Indian towns.

Beatriz G. de Bosio
The construction of the chapels generally bears relation to:

**Encomiendas:** the Laws of the Indies ordered the *encomenderos* to build a chapel in order to guarantee the indoctrination of the Indians under the *encomienda* system.

**Actions by a Governor and Bishop:** a chapel was built when a village gathered a considerable number of settlers.

1. Capiatá.

Private oratory owned by an *hacendado* (landowner): it acquires public status when the villagers start to use it.

**Built by joint action by the villagers.**

1. Quiindy

2. Valenzuela

**VI. Towns originating in *haciendas* (landed estate)**

There are cases in which a hacienda originates a town.

**Jesuit Haciendas:**

a) Paraguarí

b) San Lorenzo

**Haciendas of the Order of the Mercy:**

a) Areguá

**Dominican Haciendas**

a) Roque González de Santa Cruz.

The examples of monument heritage in Paraguay’s countryside are limited to the zones where the Missions settled. Both the Jesuit Ruins and some churches and other, Jesuit or Franciscan buildings, are invaluable, not only for the architectural and artistic value but because of the history told between the lines, as it was explained before.
Museums

In Paraguay, museum activity is relatively new. Asunción has the largest museum concentration of the country and, although with some limitations, it has interesting works of art.

Among them:

- **National Museum of Fine Arts**: created in 1902 but inaugurated in 1909, first as a private initiative, it was acquired by the State thirty years later. The original collection, collected in Buenos Aires and Europe, and that belonged to Juansilvano Godoi, contains samples of naturalism that comes from European and Río de la Plata academies of the nineteenth century. It has works of art by foreign painters such as Héctor Da Ponte, Guido Boggiani, and Jules Mornet. It also has works of art by national artists such as Pablo Alborno, Juan Samudio, Jaime Bestard, Andrés Campos Cervera, Carlos Colombo, Julián Sánchez, Modesto Delgado Rodas, among others. The museum’s collection mostly belongs to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unfortunately, a bad management during many years led to the disappearance and loss of works of art which diminished noticeably its collection.

- **Casa de la Independencia** (House of the Independence): it is a historical and documentary museum. It has samples of colonial furniture, objects of personal use, portraits and letters.

- **Centro de artes visuales / Museo del Barro** (Center for Visual Arts / Museum of Clay): structured over twenty years of work, it is composed of three museums which exhibit Paraguay’s visual expressions. Thus, the **Museum of Clay** contains collections of Popular Art with more than 4,000 pieces from the beginning of the seventeenth century and it includes carvings, textiles, laces, ceramics, jewelry, and silverwork; the **Museum of Indian Art** integrates the art of the 17 ethnic groups within the national territory, with over 2,000 pieces, among them we find vases, carvings, feather, textiles, masks and baskets; and the **Paraguayan Museum of Contemporary Art** for the multiple expressions of Urban Art from Paraguay and Ibero America, with a collection of over 1,000 works.
of art. The Paraguay’s Gold and Silver Collection, displayed in the Citibank Cultural Center—an initiative of this institution—also has a Document and Research Center which labors in the gathering and dissemination of rural and Indian cultural expressions.

- **Museo “Bernardino Caballero”** (Museum “Bernardino Caballero”): located within the park which bears the same name, it is the old house where General Caballero (1839-1912) lived. He was a true caudillo (political leader) of the first three decades of 1870 postwar. The collection includes his personal items.

- **Museo del Tesoro de la Catedral** (Museum of the Treasure of the Cathedral). Founded in 1978, it contains approximately 200 pieces: images, paintings, silver pieces, etc.

- **Museo coleccion Monseñor Juan Sinforiano Bogarín** (Museum “Collection Monsignor Juan Sinforiano Bogarín”): here is the collection gathered by Monsignor Bogarín during over 50 years at the head of the Diocesis of Paraguay. It houses mostly samples of religious art.

- **Museo Etnográfico Dr. Andrés Barbero** (Ethnographic Museum “Dr. Andrés Barbero”): created in 1929 by Dr. Barbero. It holds archeological and ethnographic collection of the several ethnic groups which inhabited the country. It also has a library and an exhibition gallery of photographs.

- **Museo Postal Telegráfico** (Postal and Telegraph Museum).

- **Museo Indígena y Museo de Historia Natural** (Indian Museum and Natural History Museum): they are located within the premises of the Jardín Botánico (Botanic Garden). The first contains a collection of Paraguay’s indigenous pieces and the second displays the fauna and flora of the country.

- **Museo Memoria de la Ciudad** (City’s Memory Museum): a building dedicated to the history of Asunción. It has a didactic goal.

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4 Salerno, Osvaldo; Paraguay: Artesanía y Arte Popular; Third Edition; Centro de Documentación e Investigaciones de Arte Indígena y Popular; CAV/ Museo del Barro; Asunción: 1996.
• **Museo del Ferrocarril** (Rail Museum).

• **Museo Julián de la Herrería** (Museum Julián de la Herrería). Located in the Centro Cultural Juan de Salazar.

In the Central Department, in the city of San Lorenzo, stands out **Museo Guido Boggiani** (Museum Guido Boggiani), in homage to the outstanding Italian scientist and researcher who lived in Paraguay and gathered a valuable collection of pieces and photographs, fruits of his studies about the Chaco’s indigenous groups which is now a part of the collection of this museum.

**Craftsmanships**

Popular craft is the set of manifestations produced by the people of different towns as examples of their culture. It is through this concept that we associate always craftsmanship with tradition and identity.

Here, it would be necessary to differentiate popular craftsmanship from popular art which is a less lax concept. The second term is used to cover such manifestations that reach a certain level of aesthetic expressivity (quality of form, techniques, and materials and density in the content).

At first, the Guarani craftsmanship was linked exclusively with strictly ritual or utilitarian ends. Those related to ritual were eradicated by the Spaniards upon their arrival in America but those linked to utilitarian ends were reformulated in accordance with the new demands imposed by the colony. Indian labor was organized twofold: the organization in missions managed by the Society of Jesus where the organizational structure was more complex and strict and, as a consequence, the margin of creativity was limited, and other organizations, in this case, civilian ones, and less rigorous than the former, with the help of a religious order. The latter were established through workshops in the
Indian towns (Táva) and as a consequence of the latter that arises the mestizo expression that so characterizes Paraguay.

Once in the nineteenth century, during the government of the two López, a commercial opening takes place after years of isolation, and thereby refined aesthetic elements are imported from the Río de la Plata and Europe. But these aesthetic criteria do not manage to displace the craft models. Furthermore, there is a displacement of this popular craft toward the uses and customs of the criollo upper class. Thus, for example, the ñandutí, earlier an exclusive religious item, starts being part of the criollo tousseau.

The problem that meant for Paraguay the War of the Triple Alliance is also reflected in the craftsmanship. Some manifestations survived because they had a functional feature, above all those linked to women, since the male population was amply reduced.

From the half of the twentieth century “(...) the advance in the use of industrialized consumer goods and acceleration in the rhythm of urbanization provoke the weakening of peasant socio-cultural patterns and a gradual and then speedy development of hybrid craftmanship forms that incorporate new models, elements and techniques.” But, at the same time, this type of manifestations started to be valued giving them a non-utilitarian character, as decorative pieces or collectibles.

Currently, the aesthetic quality of Paraguayan craftsmanship is seen diminished in some cases because it adopts elements that have not yet been reformulated as its own, especially in zones around the capital city. In other cases, such a quality is growing since the products of the same phenomenon and these reformulated elements, end up creating a craftmanship with a voice of its own.

Depending on the material and the technique used, the Paraguayan craftsmanship have very representatives examples. We will cite the most important.

Weaving made of woolen, cotton or palm fibers, is fundamentally a female activity.
Wool is widely used in San Miguel, Misiones, to weave ponchos and blankets or bedspreads. It is also used in Carapeguá to weave belts and blankets.

The cotton thread is the raw material for most textile crafts. The hammock, widely used, is woven in Carapeguá, Itauguá and San Miguel.

The encaje ju, a reformulation of a lace of European origin, shows geometric decoration in white thread and it is made in many cities and towns of Paraguay, but above all in Yataity and Carapeguá.

The poyvi blanket, widely used in Paraguayan households, is woven with thin and thick threads and decorated by stripes of varied colors. They are made in Carapeguá and San Miguel.

Another lace of international fame is the ñandutí, also a reformulation of another of European origin, in this case the “Encaje de los Soles” (Lace of the Suns) of the Canary Islands. At first, white thread was exclusively used but, at present, they are also manufactured in colors. It is produced mainly in Itauguá.

The ao po’i, is a fine handmade woven cloth. The product of this careful work is a linen used as the basis for garments where geometric motifs of the same color are embroidered. It is made in Yataity.

The palm leaf weaving, general of the caranday variety is made mainly in Luque and Limpio. Hats, baskets and hand fans are produced. The palms of Palm Sunday, made with tender pindó leaves, are made especially for that day.
Carving arises in the colonial workshops where wood and bovine handle (guampa) are worked; they are used only for canteens and tereré glasses.

However, wooden carving is used for a great variety of expressions. Among them, the santería that reproduces images of saints, generally in cedar. They are carved in Tobatí, Capiatá, Piribebuy, Asunción and Itaugúá.

The making of masks, earlier linked to Indian rituals and nowadays linked to religious festivities, is a masculine practice. These are used in the patron saint day festivities, where the Kamba Ra’anga performs wearing masks made of balsa tree. Altos and Tobatí are the only towns where they are still made.

Another expression of local craft is the artistic tin candelabra for decorative or religious use. They are manufactured mainly in the city of Luque.

Metal craftsmanship date from colonial times, first as a part of the religious and later for domestic use.

The mates and gourd, made of gold and silver, are still made in Luque. Certain jewels survived by using low carat gold and silver and they are made in Luque and Asunción.

Brass and metal packagings residues are materials quite used to make candelabra and lanterns. This practice is made in Luque, San Lorenzo and Asunción.

Ceramics is worked with two different techniques. Modeling is a technique already known by the Indians and until today it is done by women following the Guarani tradition. From the time of the colony, new themes are incorporated but the technique remains unaltered. Water jugs and figures are mainly made. Nowadays, this technique is worked in Itá and Tobatí. The other technique is molding which, as its name indicates, uses molds and lathes.
It is made in Areguá and it has absorbed values of suburban culture.

The leather carving is used to decorate chairs, tobacco boxes and luggage. It is made in Atyrá, Ypacaráí, Concepción and Luque.

The *taraceado* (inlaid work), of colonial origin, is the incrustation of clear colored wood or mother-of-pearl in furniture or wooden objects. It is made today in Luque and Asunción, almost always to decorate musical instruments.

Finally, pyrography, made in Asunción and Caacupé, is used currently to decorate mates and gourds. Following the indigenous tradition, it is made with a burning point.

### 5. INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Guarani language is the most important legacy of the cultural miscegenation in our country. Paraguay constitutes one of the few examples in humanity where the vernacular language refused to extinguish in its contact with the language of the conqueror and today remains as a living language.

The Guarani did not have a written language, and it is considered as a non-alphabetical culture and with an oral tradition. For that reason, it is so very important to rescue orality in Paraguay. In the two great international wars, the Guarani language served as an element of the defense and moral support for the Paraguayan soldier.

Although it is true that the biological miscegenation occurred with the Guarani, whose language is the mother tongue of a high percentage of the population, we must bear in mind that the country has 17 Indian ethnic groups grouped into five linguistic families with their own cultural universe.
On the other hand, the true history of European-Guarani transculturation can be clearly detected in the habits and customs of several communities in Paraguay. Thus, it is possible to refer to the different origins of cultural expressions both in their native expressions as the foreign influences, especially, in areas of larger migratory influx.

The collective expressions reinforce the identity of the community and its sense of belonging through symbols fed by religious, Christian, Indian or profane traditions, condensing social meanings in order to strengthen the community cohesion.

A classic example of intangible heritage are the patron saint day festivities. In them are clearly identified the European-Hispanic influence of the Catholic worship with the addition of the indigenous tradition that derive into what we know as popular religiosity.

The Fiesta de San Juan (San Juan festivities), for example, is celebrated on June 23rd, on the eve of Saint John the Baptist’s Day. This tradition comes from pagan Europe. It is a celebration of fire which means light, represented by the summer solstice. Through Spain, it comes to Paraguay, located on the southern hemisphere, where the date falls around the winter solstice, precisely the opposite.

The religious ceremonies in the towns of the countryside consist in moving the patron saint’s image from the house of the Mayordoma (woman churchwarden) in procession to the church on the eve; the religious services, sung vespers, novenae, and others. On the 24th, a solemn Mass is celebrated followed by a procession of the patron saint’s image through the streets adjoining the temple or the main streets. Formerly, altars with Saint John’s image were put in the houses.

In festivities of profane nature there are incorporated elements such as the San Juan ratá (St. John’s bonfire) which is the preparation to set alight the coals for the fire of the “tata ári jehasá” (walking over coals) and while the bonfire is burning, the people around—especially in the countryside—drink mate dulce (sweet mate), eat typical dishes, and perform tests and play games. Later, the people, walk barefoot over the coals without ashes and, presumably, the
protection of the saint prevents them from getting burned, as long as they have faith.

The *pelota tatá* (fireball) is another element of celebration of fire, is a rag ball soaked in kerosene or tar that is kicked around from one side to another in the crowd, which must avoid it.

The *toro candil* is the Spanish bullfight in which the real animal is replaced by a someone disguised who has the horns covered with flaming rag. In this game, the crowd resembles the torero or bullfighter who must avoid the attacks.

The pagan aspect includes guessing and forecasting the future. Other components of this celebration are the raffle of corn seeds, San Juan says yes, San Juan says no; the smear of ink on a piece of paper folded into four squares and kept under the pillow. They are pre-Christian traditions maintained alive from generation to generation, kept by the collective will which reinforces our rich heritage.

The celebrations in Paraguay are accompanied by typical dishes of our gastronomy like the Paraguayan soup, *payaguá mascada*, *mbeyú*, *vorí vorí* and others. The recipes of the Paraguayan typical dishes, with the presence of corn and manioc, reflect the American condition of its culture because of the presence of ingredients such as corn or manioc. Likewise, the preparation of such dishes is made together, acquiring the features of a family celebration of pre-industrial societies. The cooking is in a *tatakuá* which is a stove originally made of mud with two small openings designed to maintain a maximum of heat with the minimal use of firewood.

**Music**

One of the most important expressions in cultural manifestations in Paraguay is music. The Jesuits in the Reductions left clear testimony that the Guarani Indian had a natural gift which made of him an excellent composer and performer. Loyola’s order had brought many renowned musicians like Domenico Zípoli and others. Likewise, the Franciscans had created Indian bands and choirs whose performances were highly praised by observers who left testimonies.
In the independent era, the great impulse for Paraguayan music took place under the government of Carlos Antonio López, albeit throughout the colonial years, there are reports of musical presentations of Spanish pieces during festivities.

The journal “El Semanario” publishes for the first time a reference about the Paraguayan polka in its edition of November 27th, 1858. There, it was clear how important it was that the government has hired the French maestro Francisco de Dupuis who lived and taught music in Paraguay between 1853 and 1861. Among his main disciples we find Cantalicio Guerrero who directed several orchestras and took part in some of them in Buenos Aires. Guerrero created the National Orchestra in 1890 with state subsidy which was the precursor of the current Symphonic Orchestra of the City of Asunción, OSCA (according to its initials in Spanish). The other disciples of Dupuis were Rudecindo Morales and Indalecio Odriozola. The role of Madame Elisa Alicia Lynch was very significant because, thanks to her, there were ballroom dances at the Club Nacional (National Club) such as the: Lancero, Cuadrilla, Contradanza, Londón, Palomita, Waltz, Mazurca and, finally, the Polka.

Madame Lynch also imported the first two pianos of which we know of.

Paraguayan music achieves maturity in the twentieth century. Most of the distinguished performers and composers had learned their first musical education in the Police Band whose air-band concerts became social events.

Great composers of the classical period emerge, such as, for example, José Asunción Flores and his immortal Guarania. There is also Herminio Giménez who combined popular and concert music with dexterity just like Flores.

In classic guitar, Agustín Pío Barrios was called by foreign critics “the Paganini of the guitar”, and his compositions have had a revival in the world repertoire as his pieces are frequently performed by no less than by Andrés Segovia, John Williams, Cayo Sila Godoy, Felipe Sosa, Violeta De Mestral, Berta Rojas and Luz María Bobadilla.
Paraguay is one of the three countries which still cultivate popular harp together with Venezuela and México. However, the national compositions are reputed to have more virtuosity. The name of Félix Pérez Cardozo clearly stands out in this instrument.

Popular music is to a higher extent of oral tradition and anonymous composers such as the famous “Campamento Cerro León” considered as the warrior anthem of Paraguay, “Mamá Cumandá”, “Alfonso Loma” and others.

During the Chaco War there was a burst of compositions within the Purahéi (singing), which in the melancholy singing is known as the Purahéi Jahe’o (singing/crying)–; some of the best known pieces are owed to soldier-poet-musician Emiliano R. Fernández, and the music generally was arranged by Herminio Giménez. Within the classic repertoire, there are “Che la Reina”, “Reservista Purahéi” by Agustín Barboza, “Regimiento 8”, and others. The use of the Guarani language gives these compositions a peculiar identity character, highly appreciated by the Paraguayan people.

It is impossible to try to understand the Paraguayan ethos if his musical inclination and natural gift as a popular poet is overlooked. Most of the performers play music by ear, with a self-taught criterion, even if the final result is of excellent quality, highly appreciated by the universal audience. (Source: Diccionario de la Música en el Paraguay, de Luis Szarán.)

6. ECONOMY

Paraguay’s economy is based on agricultural and livestock. Therefore, its production for export is based on the resources of the soil. Its main products reflect the sharp contrasts of this society.
Soybean, the main commodity generating hard currency is grown through agribusiness. It is followed by cotton which is a typical family based small farm product.

The national industrial outlook shows deficit in results in spite of not always well led efforts of the past.

Food industry generates employment but still on a family enterprise scale, except in the dairy industry, centered upon massive production by the Mennonite community, and now with the addition of the beef industry, both focused toward foreign markets.

For a long time, Paraguay was the main world producer of tannin and pétit-grain essence, but these natural products have been replaced by synthetic goods.

Manufacture on a national scale has not been able to recover previous levels of production.

Chemical goods has had a significant growth and incipiently, they are in conditions to compete in the regional market.

The possibility of employing the abundant energy resources from the bi-national hydroelectric dams of Itaipú and Yacyretá for the type of industrial production known as the “maquila,” (which is aimed exclusively for export), promises gainful occupation, so direly needed for the country’s population.

In matters of integration and economic opening, Paraguay has always been a pioneer in the low tariff export of luxury products which, under the promise of becoming a tourist attraction, becomes harmful to national production because of the frequent invasion of foreign products, even in the most basic.

The presence of the oriental migration has generated surprising improvements in the fruits and horticultural production and other items, such as the manufacturing industry.
A century and a half of the word “Folklore”
Diario La Nación, September 19th, 2000

The “contemporary” phenomenon of globalization, in the case of the word “folklore” is no less than 154 years of existence. It was first used by the English antiquarian William John Thoms, as a label that described the task of someone who practiced a vocational dedication to history and cultural testimonies of peoples. In 1846, like today, it was sought eagerly to revalue the cultural roots as a heritage of the human societies. In our environment, the study of folklore is formalized in a chapter of the Center of Anthropological Studies of the Catholic University (CEADUC).

Every year, in the month of August, the World Day of Folklore is celebrated. And in our midst the occasion is favorable for a series of very valuable and necessary manifestations and reflections. Thanks to that, our traditions are revalued in schools and communities. Children and young people learn to observe the beauty of the manifestations and experience the legitimate pride of feeling Paraguayan. This does not go against the globalization process because this does not mean negating the local necessarily.

Precisely, folklore combines in its etymology two Anglo-Saxon words that once seemed contradictory, folk-lore, lore or knowledge of the people.

For Thoms, who coined the immortal word, folklore had a condition of past-present tense that designated a heritage whose changes justified its analysis on the premise that on the surface with the passage of time get lost or changed. As the case with the proverbial iceberg, what is immediately visible in customs, traditions and beliefs, is only the tip that hides an almost infinite pyramid.

The renewed interest in folklore in our environment received an important contribution of an international specialist and Mercosur compatriot, Professor Olga F. Latour de Botas, of Argentina who, in a seminar hosted by the CEADUC before an enthusiastic and vast
audience of Paraguayan cultural animators, described the features that identify a folklore fact and they are: popular, traditional, anonymous in authorship, of empirical or oral transmission, in word or gesture –albeit there are elements circulating in written form. The folklore is also localized and functional meeting needs; it is not past but present.

The lecturer also indicated the collective aspect of folklore, since it belongs to all. Folklore does not recognize the spectator’s plan and the plan of the one performer. In the same way, folklore lives in variants because it is dynamic.

However, folklore is not the same as “projection of folklore”. And we have ample examples in our society. A projection of folklore stops being anonymous because it has a registered author.

One of the main legacies of our Indian ancestors was oral tradition, “the inspired word”, which in the absence of an alphabet, became a vehicle for generational transmission of the facts and narrations estimated as necessary for the knowledge of subsequent generations. Thus emerge the cases, the legends, the mythical narrations, the fables and the ñeengá (refrains or proverbs in Guarani).

The Paraguayan literary history collects the name of Teresa Lamas Carísimo in her work “Tradiciones del Hogar” (1921) as the first writer who finds convenient and necessary the transcription of narrations and tales that she received in person from her elders which she describes with simplicity and depth.

In this classic of the Paraguayan literature parades the compendium of the local idiosyncrasy. Characters take the form of animals as the Chingolo, beautiful little bird who was punished with the loss of his beauty and the rejection of his love for being arrogant and conceited. Bereft of bright feathers, he sought consolation in the arms of his mother, who cried so much that she fell ill. Since then, the Chingolo exhales his complaint with a painful “che sy hasy” (my mother is ill).

The subject of the mother is recurrent. Pychaï is a wretched orphan
eternally barefoot who suffers painful sores in the feet because of chigoe, which force him to limp. Taking care of the horses in a establishment, he, out of pity, picked up a skinny horse full of scavies that passed him on the road. He nicknamed the horse “Bichoco” because he was one-eyed. The one-eyed horse not only spoke but actually called him by his real name, Periquito, and this caused an untold excitement and happiness in him. Both took part in a long jump contest organized by a powerful cacique who had a daughter, a very beautiful and marriageable princess. The daughter’s hands would belong to the one who would jump on horse a huge three league ditch that the father had it dug in many years of labor. Before the amazement of everyone because of the physical roughness and their pretension to jump such obstacle, they were objects of laughter and colossal derision, when horse and rider took their place in the contest. Invoking his mother, Pychaï spurred his friend who, with masterful impulse and long neighing, was able to win the bet with an incredible jump.

Pychaï was overwhelmed, mounted on Bichoco, he found himself before a delirious salvo of applause that celebrated the unexpected feat. And the preparations for the wedding begun. Dumbfounded, Pychaï only wanted to express gratitude to Bichoco for the achieved feat and run to find him when the horse whispered with emotion: “I am the soul of your mother and I came to earth only to seek your happiness”, and a graceful dove rose in majestic flight toward far away stars to the sound of a remote and celestial melody”.

As befits a synthesis of the Spanish and the indigenous, the characters always end their feats offering from them some moral which contributes towards the teaching of good.

However, not all the characters necessarily have an exemplary behavior. On the contrary, the gallery includes both defects and virtues so typical of human beings.

Perurimá, also described by the author, is “the incarnation of a clever and subtle genie, full of resources and ingenious happy witticisms. That characteristic enables him to get ahead in his
doings without ever letting other surprise him. He is irreverent, corrupt and sacrilegious, sarcastic and shrewd. But funny as he can be, even after committing the worst atrocities, people tend to forgive him for the joy found in the full knowledge of his adventures. In general, his favorite victims were priests who suffered his mischief and constant scoff.

The author indicates that these cases must have been originated in the times of the Jesuits. When the Indian, oppressed by the stiff discipline in the Reductions took revenge through mockery, as a form of resistance.

Just like Teresa Lamas in the early twentieth century, distinguished writers such as Paulo de Carvalho Netto, Dionisio González Torres, Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo, among others, managed to compile and publish the results of their research in works of similar relevance.

At present, however, perhaps it would be advisable to facilitate access to the work of the researchers by means of the creation of a data base and an Atlas of Traditional Paraguayan Culture. For both undertakings, we have an offer by international experts who, under the guidance of local specialists, could help in this necessary and urgent project which will prevent the loss of the collective memory and that will benefit everyone.

The very rich Paraguayan cultural heritage must be a source of legitimate pride which will allow us to recover self-esteem in order to show a more optimist and confident attitude in our own forces, since there is no better formula to overcome poverty and backwardness.
Chipa, Holy Bread and 70 recipes to prepare it
The historical meaning of Paraguayan gastronomy

ABC Color, Sunday, October 21st, 2001

From prehistoric times, every culture was characterized by the following contributions: oral communication, some kind of grain-based bread and some form of spirit beverage used in religious rituals. Of these three elements arise the symbolic universe that feeds the imagery giving origin and strengthening traditions. In Paraguay, we had a significant bibliographical void which is now filled by cultural researcher Margarita Miró (*).

The book is a valuable contribution because it develops significant subjects which contribute to revalue our Guarani culture, a task in which the national educational and cultural policy is immersed.

The final goal is to rescue and give prestige to the indigenous component of our pluricultural universe. Appropriately, Miró begins her task of compilation and dissemination together with an explanation of the Guarani symbolic universe with all its mythical elements which include an ancestral Father, thunder, our true mother, the sun, and the two versions of the origin of fire in the Guarani cosmogony.

In the work methodology she includes some rich oral records of about a hundred people of advanced age from different regions of the country who contributed data on the Paraguayan culinary culture as a true example of the duration of the oral tradition of our country.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages in the Guarani and Paraguayan culture is subject of the second part. The kagui is the


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ceremonial beverage par excellence of the Guarani. Miró estimates that it “would be more benign than modern day beer since it is refreshing, quenches thirst, it is digestive, anti catarrh and is diurectic.”

This kind of beverages includes also the chicha from other cultures. In ours, drinking the kagui was only ceremonial and, although its production was a distinctly female activity, the ceremonial consumption was almost exclusively male since it was forbidden for children and young people but women were allowed to drink it with moderation.

According to the available resources, the kagui could be made of potatoes, used mainly in the Antilles, of manioc or corn. The latter was chewed by young and pure women since it does not ferment on its own and it needs saliva for that.

Farther on, they experimented with the kagui from fruits or sugar cane mixed with honey which is the ingredient that most easily ferments and is available around the year.

Honey was a necessary addition to all variants. It is important to notice that grapes for wine as well as sugar cane are added imports by the Spaniards who brought with them the production of “água ardiente de caña” or rum, later known as “caña paraguaya” or Paraguayan cane liquor.

The next chapter refers to the birth of Paraguayan religiosity. The missionaries discover that many of the Christian principles and symbols are similar to those of the Guarani culture. And thus, some of the great evangelizers had wide acceptance since the Indians considered them shamans. This was the case of Fray (Father) Luis de Bolaños and Alonso de Buenaventura.

The Jarý

The protector spirits maintained order and balance within the nature, vegetable, mineral and animal kingdom, and these were symbolisms easily transferable from one cosmovision to another, whether it is Christian or Guarani.

The devotion for Mary is expressed in the relationship between Ñande sy and Ñande rú (our Father, our Mother) of which union
was born **Kuarahy** (the sun), is not that distant from the biblical explanations of the birth of Christ. On the other hand, among the Guarani, every important event was accompanied by a banquet or **Karu Guasu**, which Miró estimates is the precedent of the Patron Saint Day whose primary goal was to attract the natives to Christianity to make them abandon their pagan customs.

Religious celebrations are the subject of the fourth part of Miró’s book. For her, four are the celebrations that still gather the whole family: the Semana Santa (Holy Week), the Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), Navidad (Christmas), and Año Nuevo (New Year). Of all these, the Holy Week is the most traditional and in it appear the gastronomic elements of celebration such as the **chipa**, the Paraguayan soup, roasting of fowls, mutton, goat, pork and beef, all cooked in the **tatakua**.

The other celebration with a specific element is that on May 3rd, or **Kurusú Ara**. Formerly, **chipa** and other foods were hung on the cross though lately it is exclusively done with **chipa**. In the **Karaí Octubre** (Man of October), on the first of October one must necessarily eat **Jopara**, a dish prepared with “porotos” (beans) and “locro” (hominy) in order to appease Karaí Octubre who threatens with lack of food.

For the Day of the Dead, the population must hand out **chipas** and candies to children in cemeteries or in private houses in the name of the dead ancestors. In the patron saint’s day, a community dinner is celebrated in order to give thanks for favors received or to ask for protection. In matters related to the worship of the dead, food and drinks are given to honor the deceased, whether it is in the vigil or in the **Ñembo’e Paha**, —which is the community banquet the last day of the novena. On the other hand, the worship to little angels is an occasion of joy because the children’s innocence implies their safe salvation, for that reason they are dressed in white and is a moderately celebrated occasion for food and drinks.

Finally, the fifth part of the book refers to the **chipa** or holy bread. The bread made with corn flour and manioc of the entire Latin
American region survive in Paraguay under the names of chipa and mbeju. No leavening is used in its baking for which reason, despite the heat, they can be kept for several days. It is a festive food and they are found in all manifestations of popular religiosity.

Regarding flavor, it is clear that although the recipe is more or less uniform, every cook adds a personal imprint. Until December, 2000, Miró registered seventy variations with different ingredients, “but the pillars are manioc and corn and its different flours, followed in importance by coconut, peanuts, rice, beans and some other ingredients.”

In a valuable contribution, Miró next lists the 70 recipes of these chipa. As a magnificent closing of this very interesting volume, Miró refers to some newspaper articles under the heading: “Algunas chiperas que pasaron a la historia” (Some chipa vendors who entered history). She speaks of the “Negra Kali”, a woman chipa vendor in Asunción who, dressed in ao po’i and wide cotton skirts, decorated with jazmin flowers, would shout the goodness of her delicious product.

Another article mentions “Doña Rosa la chipera” who, during nap time (siesta), would carry on top of her head a basket of chipa on the streets of Asunción. Her clientele waited for her anxiously to accompany the afternoon cocido (mate drunk like tea) with this delicious product. It is a pity that these characters of Paraguayan tradition are slowly disappearing from the urban landscape although they are still very much alive in the countryside.

Margarita Miró’s contribution to the bibliography regarding the Guarani cultural universe is particularly welcome now when this one is preparing to form part of an Intangible Oral Heritage of Humanity. At the same time, this is also an effort to honor the different expressions of Paraguayan, regional and American culture. This book is recommended for the family libraries as well as reading material in the classroom as part of national history courses.
Ilex Paraguaiensis, classic of the Cultural Mercosur

ABC Color, Sunday March 17th, 2002

If we had to choose a symbol unquestionably common to all Mercosur countries, inevitably we must opt for the yerba mate. The *Ilex paraguaiensis* is now the subject of a valuable contribution to regional history and cultural bibliography development. Author of the important hard cover edition is Don Fernando Assunção, an Uruguayan researcher of long trajectory and prolific bibliographic production in matters dealing with cultural expressions in the Río de la Plata. And the title he chose for this volume stands out for being simple and accurate: El Mate (The Mate).

The edition is bilingual —Spanish and English— and it contains valuable illustration on every page, whether they are engravings from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or black and white and full color photos which give the book a peculiar attraction.

The subjects approached by the Uruguayan academician begin with the very history of the leaf of that shrub that for long had gone unnoticed to the Spanish conquerors. Discovered the infusion, another stage begins and concludes when the yerba mate grades as a trade product of great international market in both Spanish and Portuguese America. Around the end of the sixteenth century, Paraguay becomes a mono producer of the yerba mate, for whose trades later colonists and Jesuits ends in the Comunero Revolt whose mediate and immediate causes can be attributed to the yerba mate.

Step by step, Assunção shows us in this interesting narration the evolution of what soon became a characteristic habit of the population in the region. Thus, discovered the product and its use by the Indians, the Spaniards began adopting it gradually for which they needed to use the calabash gourd and invent the bombilla (a
metallic tube or metal straw) in order not to swallow the leaves. From the beginning, Assunção tells us that the route covered by the mate was uneven: “Marked fundamentally by tendentious opinions from panegyrist and, above all, those of detractors who called it, alternately, an infusion full of virtues, almost magical also an abominable vice, dirty causing all kinds of social stains.”

The mate was blamed for the scant individual or collective productivity and of “a long series of other sinful etceteras.”

Then, the book follows the route of the artistic creation associated with the making of gourds and bombillas in the most diverse metallic elements including gold and silver and with the most original designs that today are a part of the valuable collections of regional museums.

The discovery of the yerba mate is due to Domingo Martínez de Irala who, in 1554, led an expedition to the Guairá region where he was received by the thousands of Indians living there: “the Spanish quickly took notice of the good height, physical strength and excellent health condition of those Indians, their good character and natural happiness. The secret of so good qualities lay, according to the Indians themselves, in that they drank in natural gourds an infusion of leaves of a tree they called Ka’a”. (pp. 25/6)

At some time, the priests and conquerors contemplated the intelligence of forbidding the Indians consumption of the yerba. That would have been a counterproductive argument because it would have generated animosity against the missionaries. For that reason, “they opted for the solution of christianizing the use of mate to the image of the labor they were doing with them. Then, due to the preaching of the Jesuits, that drink that was considered pagan and even diabolical, became a gift to the Indians, not from Tupã but from God, the god of the Christians”. (pp. 31/2)

The Jesuits mentioned the yerba mate in their Cartas Anuas (Annual Letters) and it was precisely one of them, Francisco José Sánchez Labrador, the first to study the scientific and technical aspects in
a study dated in 1774 that today is practically unknown. But not only science took interest in the yerba mate as Assunçao tells us: “There is no inventory of grocery stores, stores, small stores within the city or outside the city in which there is no yerba mate as a merchandise of first importance for its volume in sacks or barrels.” (p. 32). This happened throughout the nineteenth century.

In the case of Paraguay, yerba mate was always intimately associated with its historical evolution. It is known that the ban on its trade, as part of Dr. Francia’s isolationist policies, forced the bordering countries to begin cultivating yerba mate, thus reducing the market of our product in the region. Aimé Bompland, another distinguished scientist who planned to cultivate yerba mate became Dr. Francia’s prisoner for over a decade.

The great prosperity of the Lopezes’ government and even a large part of the national reconstruction after the War of 1870 was due to the trade of the yerba mate. A foreign historian pointed out that the worst suffering the Paraguayan soldier had to undergo during that Great War was the lack of yerba mate as its production and harvest ended after all the able bodied men were recruited as combatants in the Army.

Assunçao dedicates an important chapter of the book to describe the relationship between the gaucho and the yerba mate. Similarly, we could do the same with our Paraguayan peasant and the tereré (mate with cold water), more appropriate in our warm climate. In the same way, the mate cocido (a form of mate drunk in a similar way to tea) is a custom hard to eradicate since it is a part of day to day reality for the Paraguayans. It is a nice surprise to notice that the closeness of the Paraguayans with yerba mate is not limited to the popular sectors since today the widespread use of terere can be seen in all the walks of life, including in the Congressional sessions or among high school teenagers.

The yerba mate frequently appears in the paintings of our national artists from the beginning of the twentieth century. Other artistic expressions also refer to the yerba mate as subject of creation.
In the case of the outstanding poet Eloy Fariña Núñez, we have memorable verses: “It grows healthy in your regions/ the yerba plant, whose leaves/ provide the mate, the native tea/ glory, in the mornings and siestas.

Nothing is more pleasant than to rock/in the hammock, under the shadow of the orange tree/in the torrid summer hours/ and to drink mate lazily/ overflowing with foam and fragrance/ brewed by the hands of a young maid.”

Few essays with thousands of words could describe better this archetype of Paraguayan customs.

Finally, being the yerba mate the protagonist in that common history which we today aim to value, as a part of the plan for the integration of the peoples, the substantive contribution of Professor Fernando Assunçao to disseminate knowledge about the things that directly pertains to us because they are a part of our common roots is frankly invaluable. We are before a classic of our cultural literature of our Latin American and Mercosur space.
CONCLUSION

Culture, as an object of systematic study has not yet been approached as such in Paraguay and, furthermore, has a scant bibliography for the wealth of the heritage, save for some honourable exceptions such as the contributions of Josefina Plá, Ticio Escobar, Ramiro Domínguez, Helio Vera, and some anthropologists with undoubtedly great contributions, but a larger analysis and reflection and not only occasional glances would be needed.

The curricula inserted within the education reform have been scarcely directed toward these themes. Culture in the world became important at the end of World War II in the belief that the great human rights abuses were a consequence of the lack of attention to the cultural aspects, specially the discrimination for religious and ethnic reasons.

And making a little history, let us remember that in 1941, the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, drafted the Atlantic Charter, a document that recommends the creation of a permanent organization for collective security whose aim is preventing future wars. The famous Yalta Conference was held in Russia in February, 1945, among President Roosevelt, Premier Churchill and Marshall Josef Stalin of the Soviet Union.

It was then decided to convene a conference in San Francisco, California for the creation of the United Nations Organization whose objective was to contribute to stabilize international relations, to foster peace and to promote social progress. Economic and social development, decolonization, human rights, disarmament, and so forth were also focal points on the agenda.
From the beginning of its foundation, the United Nations is concerned with gathering reflections and creating jurisprudence on these subjects and, in 1948, is approved the Human Rights Charter.

UNESCO, on the other hand, is the United Nations body that deals with the promotion of education, science and culture. Once World War II was over, a great conference was inaugurated in London on November 1st, 1945, with representatives of some forty states. The delegates decided to create an organization aimed at establishing a true culture of peace. It was indicated then that the new organization had to establish “moral and intellectual solidarity of humanity”.

UNESCO also exercises an activity of prospection that is very important. It strives to foresee the great transformations experienced by societies and it reflects upon the future of education, the sciences, culture, and communications. For example, the changes that the development of the Internet produces in the field of knowledge and information.

It is good to remember that UNESCO at a given point in time was located in Latin America. During World War II, the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation, executive organization for the League of Nations, was the institution that, at the end of the war, became the UNESCO, maintaining some characteristics of the Institute such as the active participation of intellectuals through the National Commissions in each country.

This United Nations body, which was also born in the aftermath of the war, began timidly to cover the cultural aspects to the point of evolving throughout the 20th century acquiring an important and privileged role among nations.

The agency pursues “human improvement” through knowledge, making, reflection and sensibility. Great programs have been developed within the fields of its jurisdiction: Education, Culture, Computer Science, Communications and Social Sciences. The current mission is to contribute toward the humanization of globalization.
In a globalized world, cultural rights, individuals and groups, intercultural dialogue, respect for cultural diversity are all imperatives for a greater guarantee of peace, sustained and sustainable development of our peoples. In 2001, the General Conference –its sovereign organ– adopted the *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, as the first international document that establishes an universal critical framework which must be a source of inspiration for the cultural policies of the member states.

It is recognized for the first time that cultural diversity is a common heritage of humanity and whose defense is considered an unpostponable mandate in order to dignify all persons.

Cultural diversity will not be able to survive without democratic structures. Cultural diversity is understood as freedom of expression, pluralism in the mass media, multilinguism, access to artistic expressions and to scientific knowledge, and the possibility of being present in all the media of expression and dissemination. Finally, at present, there would be a need for a profound reflection upon the achievements and what may perhaps be still pending, the new challenges and a true reformulation of goals, as well as an analysis of the current situation and the new order of things in the planet and for our societies that will redesign the objectives following another hierarchy.

Native or regional languages are beginning to acquire importance as the expression of minorities. The heritage that was being lost speedily at one point becomes protagonist and a whole new architectural style starts where preservation mixes with modernity.

The environment becomes relevant because its destruction implies the degradation of the human habitat. Economic prosperity creates a whole new mass industry: tourism. At first, landscape tourism and later, one that covers cultural aspects, traditions, myths and legends of the different regions of the world. Thus, the tangible heritage is joined by tourism attracted by an intangible and natural heritage.
Teachers will find in this material the way to teach and approach subjects that shall become a novelty in the classroom and that cross into the content of distinct disciplines. Through this approach, it can be dealt with myths, legends, traditions, gastronomy, values, languages, references to music, dance and literature, anthropology and diversity in general.

At the same time, students find out about their roots and notice other valuable and different expressions beyond those shown by the mass media.

In the globalized world, and facing the onslaught of the hegemonic culture, may cause in our Latin American countries a feeling of displacement or underestimation of our own cultures.

In the defense of our cultures, there should be no chauvinism nor concessions.

This valorization process of what is Paraguayan, related to regional integration and respectful of other cultures that give us the precious gift of diversity, is what we consider of great importance and that is what should be promoted in the framework of public policies.

Paraguayan culture expresses the national soul of the Paraguayan people. Therefore, to reflect it is to be immersed in the collective unconscious, to be integrated into the mystery of its myths and rites in order to finally pour its essence and embody it in educational and cultural policies in order to teach and value them at formal education level in school institutions, as privileged spaces dedicated to that end. *To integrate the cultural heritage into the cycle of life.*

Then, this contribution to the bibliography reinforces the idea that a culture that is always in the making and it is an expression of true democracy. It has pedagogical aims, condensed in summaries, with guiding generic ideas and work for student participation in
their diverse communities. It is particularly highlighted that it is not the State that creates culture and that neither it is the service of an administration but that it is the task of societal groups that disseminate and produce it.

The novel cultural issue, a phenomenon of the second half of the twentieth century, must be settled with other contributions in order to insert it into the educational universe for an apparently ironic and contradictory conclusion but profound in personal achievements: the study of what is native as a way of encompassing what is general and universal.
Culture in the Classroom

Beatriz G. de Bosio
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Beatriz G. de Bosio