

Paraguay, Land of Immigrants

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Paraguay embarked in the 19th century into a very unusual industrial development project and proceeded to contract over 200 British engineers who came into the country to build shipyards, iron works, and a steam train line.





All that interesting
undertaken came to
naught because by 1864
tiny Paraguay had
declared war on the Triple
Alliance formed by huge
Brazil, giant Argentina,
and Uruguay.

It took them five years to invade Paraguay
and destroy the infrastructure and
almost annihilated the population.
By 1870 Paraguay had to be reborn.

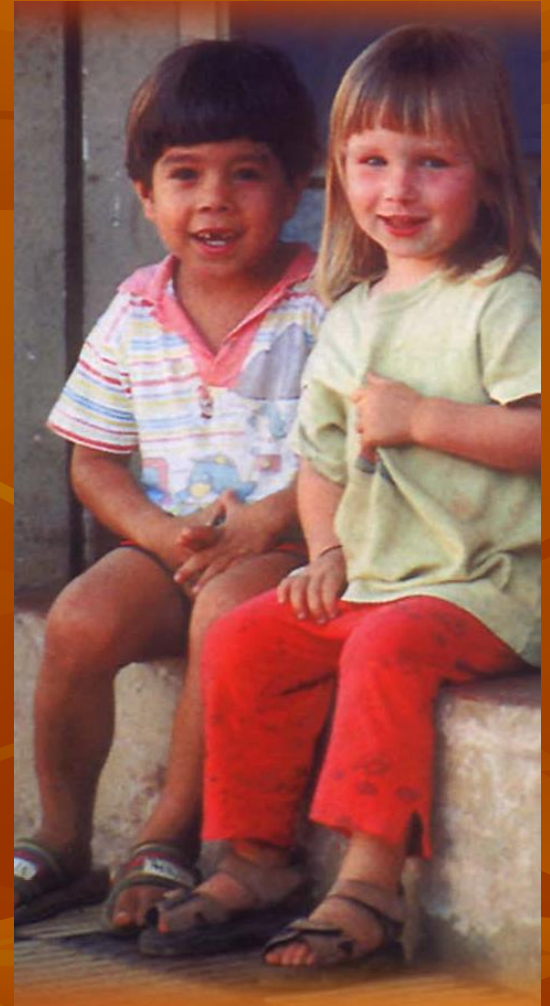


Afterwards, Paraguay became open to the immigration of people and capital. None other than Elizabeth Nietzsche sister to German philosopher Frederick Nietzsche came to Paraguay en 1887 to found an "ethnically pure" German community. The project failed and she returned to Germany.



A group of British socialists disenchanted with Australia, came to Paraguay en 1893 to create the perfect socialist community, Nueva Australia, but soon broke up into two groups.

Their descendants are prosperous merchants today. After World War I, many more German farmers came, attracted by quality agricultural land and today reside in one of the most productive regions of the country on the border of Argentina.



German Mennonites who had settled in Russia at the request of Empress Catherine the Great were expelled from the Soviet Union in the 1920s, and came to Canada and the United States.



By they were looking for a country that would exempt them from military service. Paraguay was it and today the Mennonites constitute 0.5 % of the population but are responsible for 30% of the agricultural output.

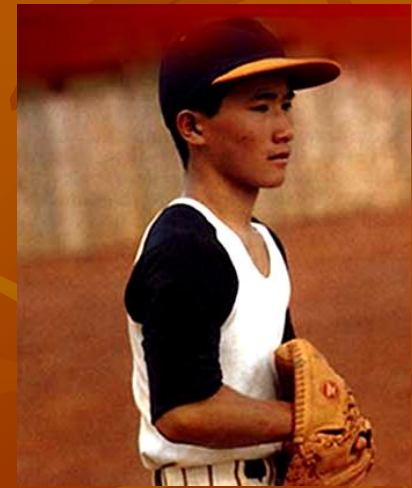
Other German came after war world II but not to many. Most of the former Nazi settled in Brazil, Argentina, including the famous Dr. Joseph Mengele, who has

acquired Paraguayan citizenship under his own name because en 1959, it was not important enough to be wanted by the Police.



The Japanese came to Paraguay in the 1930s and today they constituted one of the most productive communities in the country.

There were other streams of migration from Japan, especially after World War II including some from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



In the 1960s, people from then severely underdeveloped Korea and Taiwan came to Paraguay, searching for a better future.



Immigration from Italy into Paraguay deserved a special chapter. They were not only numerous in quantity but highly skill and magnificent workers.

They generated an explosion in the studies of medicine and the very first pharmacies were founded by members of the Scavone family, all of them still active in the business. Others were farmers and cattle ranchers, the larger industry in Paraguay for over 50 years was Manufactura Pilar, a textile mill, belonging to Alberzoni family.

The Italian presence in Paraguay and in the rest of MERCOSUR is such that the Republic Italiana can be considered as the fifth full Member of MERCOSUR.





Thank you for your attention



THE END