

**UNESCO/UNITWIN
CULTURE,
TOURISME,
DEVELOPPEMENT**
France, May 2006

***Strategies for sustainable
development:***

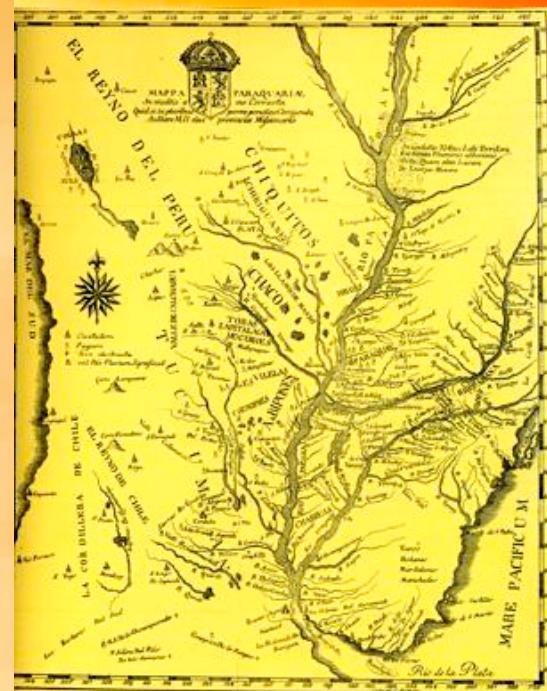
***Tourism in Nature
and Culture***

Prof. Beatriz G de Bosio

UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA ASUNCION - PARAGUAY

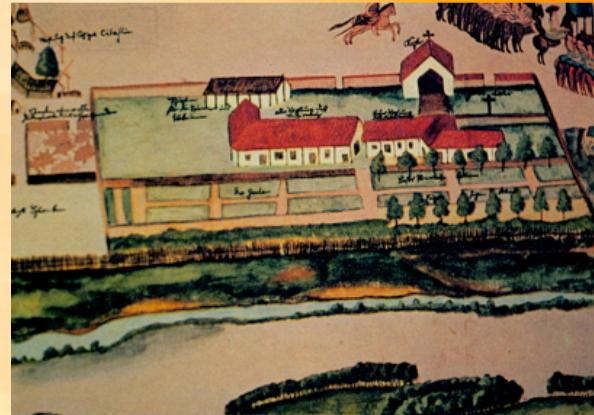
The Spanish Empire in America ruled over ample territory which was difficult to guard, especially in the border which the Portuguese Empire between roughly today's Paraguay and Brazil.

The central problem in the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth centuries was not the possession of land but the protection of the Indian population desired by the Portuguese as slave labour.



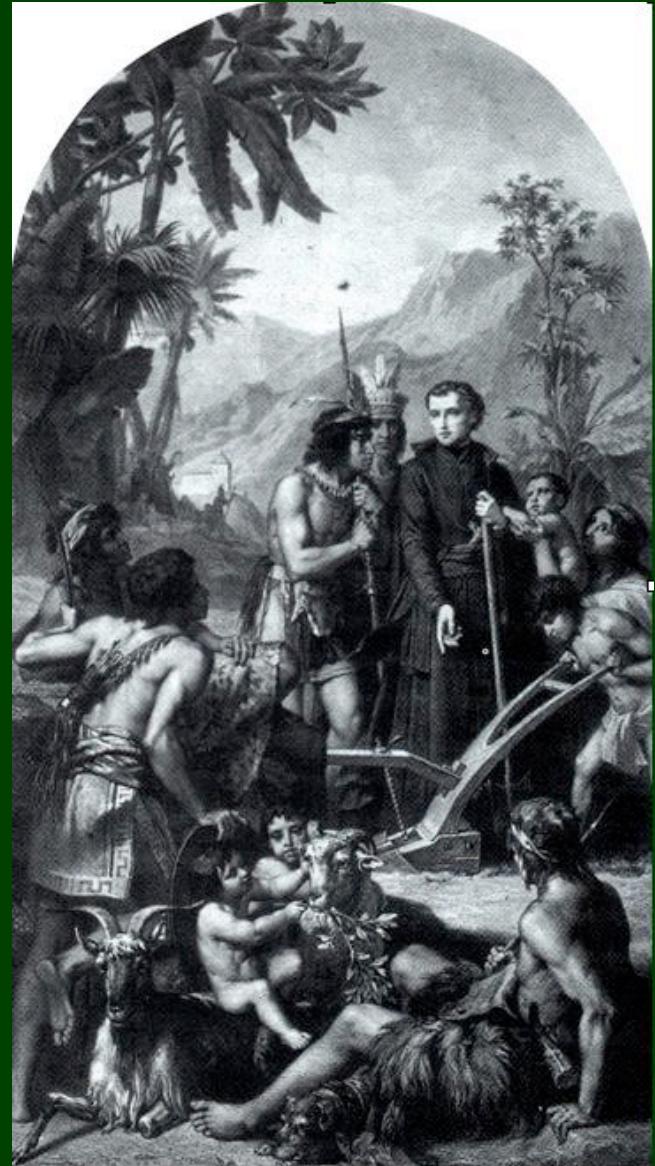
Thus, for defensive purposes many cities became “walking cities” running away from danger.

The best example was “Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo”.



The need for more stable settlements forced the Spanish Crown to recruit members of the Saint Ignatius of Loyola Company, the Jesuits, to be put in charge of assuring a Spanish presence in such border areas.

The Jesuits erected the “*Reductions*” which granted the Indians homes, safety, education, and conversion to the Christian religion.





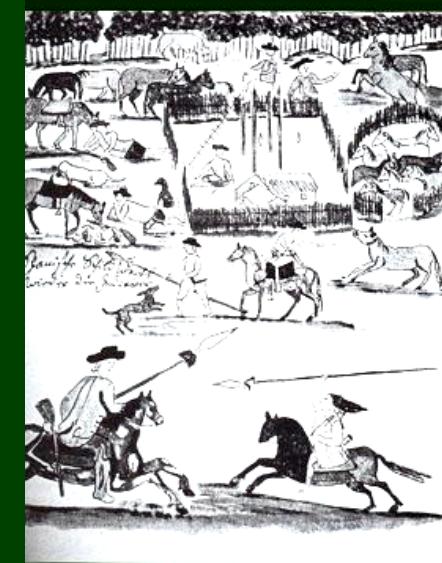
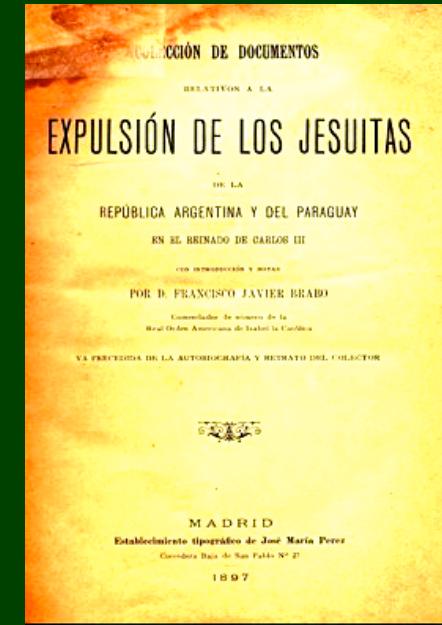
Each one of the Reductions was organized as frontier outpost directed by at most two priests of the Loyola order.

In some cases up to three thousand and five hundred Indians were led by those two priests.



The social utopia imprinted by a century and a half ended abruptly with the expulsion of the Jesuits from all Spanish possessions by a Decree of King Charles the Third due to strictly internal political infightings.

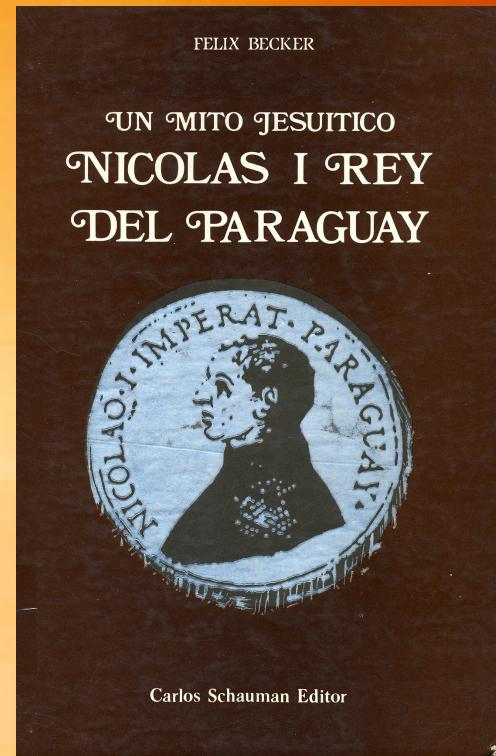
The Indian population dispersed because the utopia was unsustainable without the guidance of the priests. The natives had been taught from trades to music, to modern agriculture, but not to govern themselves.



The work of the Jesuits always attracted the interest of intellectuals around the world.

Voltaire had placed his famous novel “*Candide*” in one of the “*Reducciones*”.

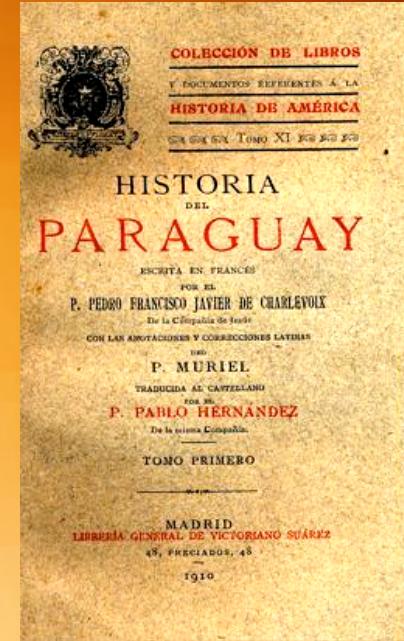
Another novel presented as history was that of “Nicholas the First: King of Paraguay”.



Montesquieu referred to San Ignacio Guazú, the first Jesuit settlement (1610) as “Capital of the Exemplary Christian Republic”

Magnus Mörner a great Swedish historian became a specialist in Jesuitdom in the Americas.

The Company itself was not lacking in intellectuals. Some of the best historical and natural studies were written by Jesuits such Nicholas Du Toit, Francisco Charlevoix, Pedro Lozano, and Cardiel among others.





In our own twentieth century, Hollywood became interested and the result was a superproductions with stars of the level of Robert the Niro in the movie “The Mission” shot around the Iguazu Falls.

The Jesuits attracted people of renown in several disciplines. In the field of music the best known was Baroque composer Domenico Zipoli whose *Misa Solemnis* was after many centuries of obscurity performed in the Trinidad ruins before the fitting present of there Spanish Majesties, Don Juan Carlos and Doña Sofía in 1990.



This cultural product of great value has nevertheless been underutilized. Despite its tremendous potential to attract visitors and researchers from all over the world avid to experience the remnants of one of the most significant social utopian experiments in the history of the world.





Thank you for your attention