according to a rota. In 1676, about 600 persons were registered who were required to perform this function. When no danger threatened, the fortín was sometimes not permanently manned. The main purpose of the presidios or fortines was to warn the population by firing a cannon shot when attacks were expected. They were, in fact, no more than simple, reinforced guard posts (guardias). When they no longer had a function, they could easily be abandoned. Where and to what extent the rural population could establish chacras and estancias depended more or less on fortifications such as these.\(^{20}\)

Governor Alonso Sarmiento de Sotomayor y Figueroa (1659-63) - who was a true soldier, as was also shown by his radical reaction to the Arecayá Indians - showed an immediate interest in the defence problem and was the person who initiated the building of various fortifications.

The principal fortification was the Castillo de San Ildefonso (also known as the Castillo de Tapuá or San Ildefonso de Tapuá). It was situated about two leguas north of Asunción, on the site which is still known today as Remanso Castillo and where the road to the Chaco now crosses the river. The construction started in 1659 and was completed in 1660. The purpose of the castillo was to prevent the Guaycurúes and other Chaco Indians from crossing the river and penetrating to the Tapuá valley, a fertile area where many Asunceños had their fields. The castle was square in shape, with four covered watch towers, but it was not very impressive. One hundred men were available for the defence. They were divided into shifts who relieved each other weekly, but all were mobilised at the same time if danger threatened. Governor Sarmiento de Sotomayor built two further fortifications: one at Güiray, on the river, and one at Ygay.\(^{21}\) The fort of Ángeles Custodios was erected in October 1662 where Puerto Casado/Victoria is now situated, under the direction of maestre de campo Lázaro de Ortega Vallejos.

Governor Diez de Andino (1663-71) observed that it was desirable to give San Ildefonso more support and proposed building five


further fortifications north and south of Asunción in order to secure some five or six leguas of river bank against the aggression of the Chaco Indians. The forts of Río Confuso (Casanillo), Finados (Isla Po’í), del Espartillar Redondo (Boquerón), Presentación (Nanawa) and San Andrés (Orihuela) were built under his authority (Fig. 9.1). They were all situated on the west side of the river and formed the first links in the line of defence which was gradually constructed there with great difficulty to keep the feared indigenous population of the Chaco under control. Labour was drawn from all the pueblos de indios to assist in the construction. Governor Diez de Andino also had 140 war canoes and two barcos, christened San José and Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, built between 1664 and 1671, to patrol the river and so complete the defences.

The line of defence was subsequently extended several times. Tobati was strengthened in 1667. By the end of 1679 (under Governor Felipe Rege de Corvalán), considerable progress had been made with the building of a presidio several leguas south of Asunción, on the site of what is now San Antonio; the fortification was, in fact, the very beginning of this settlement. In 1692, Governor Mendiola rebuilt the fortín of San Antonio and south of the capital he built two further fortines: San Jerónimo de Tacumbú and Lambaré, to prevent attacks by Payaguáes on the valley of Guarnipitán. The guardia of San Jerónimo de Tacumbú protected the port of Asunción.

There was also at the end of the seventeenth century - and possibly even earlier (see above) - a permanent canoe watch on the Río Paraguay. In 1691 Governor Francisco de Monforte ordered Sergeant Major Juan Valdés and Sergeant Major Miguel del Valle, the officers in charge of the presidios of Santa Rosa and San Antonio, to carry out regular inspection patrols with canoes along the river from both fortifications. The patrols were to go up along one bank

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22 Velázquez 1977:44-5.  
23 González Torres 1995:58. The military posts in the Chaco were used by Paraguay in the post-colonial period to back up its claims to the Chaco and counter the claims of Argentina and Bolivia.  
24 Velázquez 1977:47.  
and return along the other. The Indians from the villages of Ypané and Guarambaré had to make their contribution to the watch, which was partly intended to protect the two villages.26

**Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo**

There is one settlement which deserves a brief detailed discussion, both because it was one of the principal towns of colonial Paraguay, and because its history is illustrative of the instability of the settlement picture in the seventeenth century. This settlement is Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo. It occupied seven different sites in 112 years, at least if we consider only the most important relocations; the figure otherwise reaches 13 (see Fig. 7.2). The description of the town as the *ciudad andariega* ('vagabond city') was therefore very apt. As we have related (Chapter 5), Villa Rica was founded by Captain Ruy Díaz de Melgarejo on Whitsunday, 14 May 1570, on the territory of *cacique* Cuaracyverá (Cuarahy-verá), in el Guairá. The location was subsequently changed several times. The following is the chronological account.27:

1. On 24 July 1594, the settlement was moved on the orders of Captain Ruy Díaz de Guzmán, then 'governor' of el Guairá, from its original location to the north.28 This brought it to the spot where the Arroyo Corumbataí empties into the Río Ivaí (Huybay). It was situated at this location when Vázquez de Espinosa visited Paraguay in the 1620s and described Villa Rica as follows:

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28 There is confusion about the correct date of the relocation. According to Meliá Lliteras (1988:62), the relocation took place in 1592 while, according to Garavaglia (1983:112), the date was 1589. Nor indeed is the information wholly unanimous about the foundation date. Besides 1570, the year 1576 is also mentioned, but this is possibly a printer's error.
...‘in that wretched country, with the extreme poverty of the Spaniards living there, they have no priests to administer the Holy Sacraments, and so they are like savages without a country, never hearing Mass, and their children go seven or eight years without being christened... The Spaniards living here are so poor that their only clothes are of cotton and they wear palm-leaf hats, for no Spanish merchandise ever gets here, and they have nothing with which to buy any’.29

Five neighbouring Indian villages supplied the town with labour in around 1630.

2. In 1632 the settlement was destroyed as a result of a disastrous invasion of bandeirantes and was therefore moved in October of that year - over a distance of about 50 leguas - to the mouth of the Ygatimí, a right-bank tributary of the Paraná. This brought Villa Rica to the northern foot of the Sierra de Mbaracayú. The population of Ciudad Real was then added to that of the newly created settlement, but their number was small. Villa Rica remained a modest settlement. The effect of the relocation was that the town more or less replaced the Indian-Spanish settlement of Mbaracayú as a support point. It was now situated fairly close to three old Indian settlements: San Francisco de Ybyrapariyara, Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria and San Andrés de Mbaracayú (Fig. 5.2). The population of these villages probably increased somewhat, because Indians who had managed to stay out of the hands of the Portuguese (or who had been kept out of them) were added to them, when Villa Rica and Ciudad Real had to be abandoned and they were taken along by the inhabitants of the two settlements.

3. In 1633 the settlement was moved about 20 leguas to the west and situated north of the Puerto del Mbaracayú, near the sources of the Río Ygatimí.

4. In 1635 Villa Rica was situated rather farther to the south, on the south side of the Cordillera de Mbaracayú, between two ridges of this serranta, near the sources of the Río Carapá (between the Jejuy Guazú and the Jejuy Miní). According to Azara, the relocation was carried out in 1634, but the new site was not a good one. Villa

29 Translation from Service 1954:68. For the original text see: Vázquez de Espinosa 1969:450.
Rica then had a population of 200 able-bodied men, two priests and a small Franciscan friary. There were nine Indian villages within its jurisdiction at that time: the two Jesuit missions of San Ignacio de Caaguazú and Santa María de Fe; and the pueblos de indios of Ypané, Guarambaré, Atyrá, Candelaria, Ybyrapariyara, Terecaný and Mbaracayú.

5. In 1635, during the term of office of Governor Martín de Ledesma Valderrama, and with the official support of a Cédula Real, Villa Rica was moved farther to the southwest, to near the source of the Jejuy, which brought the settlement in 1636 close to the later settlement of San Isidro de Curuguaty and the Río Curuguaty, at a location known as Tupaiti. The inhabitants took with them on the move the Indians living in the encomienda villages of Terecaný, Ybyrapariyara, Candelaria and Mbaracayú. They settled them on new sites.

In the early 1640s, the not very favourable location of Villa Rica made it desirable to look for a somewhat better site in the vicinity.
In about 1643 the settlement was moved somewhat closer to the later San Isidro.

At that time, a second Spanish settlement was incidentally founded in the region, on the banks of the Río Jejuy, and called Talavera del Rey. When Governor Andrés Garabito de León visited the district in 1652, there were therefore two villas - Villa Rica and Talavera - and the latter was perhaps rather larger than the former. Talavera incidentally existed only until about 1665, in which year it was attacked by Indians and abandoned. According to Garavaglia, this incident also showed that the frontier area was still very unstable. Moreover, the hastily chosen sites were not always very favourable ecologically. Partly because of this, the Spanish settlements and the indigenous reductions were sometimes dependent on cattle brought in from Asunción.

In around 1650, Villa Rica had a reasonably safe location, near the Río Curuguaty, and the four pueblos de indios contributed to the functioning of its economy, which was based mainly on the exploitation and transport of yerba. One of the indigenous villages (San Andrés de Mbaracayú) was situated in the basin of the Jejuy, while the other three, i.e. Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, San Pedro de Terecañy and San Francisco de Ybyrapariyara, were situated towards the Río Amambay and Saltos del Guairá. Candelaria (whose Indians originated from el Guairá) was the most populous pueblo of the four.

6. In February 1676 - during the term of office of Felipe Rege Corvalán - a large contingent of mamelucos, led by Francisco Pedroso Xavier, invaded the area west of the Paraná. The ensuing attacks on the four Indian villages just named and on Villa Rica forced the inhabitants to abandon the site in the heart of the yerba gathering area, after forty years. In 1676 and 1677, the Villarri-queños tried to establish themselves on the former site of San Pedro del Ypané (in el Tarumá). But that site was not very suitable or safe either, and so it was abandoned again. The Guaireños subsequently led a somewhat wandering existence for some time in the zone of Ajos and even in that of estancias belonging to the comarca of Asunción. After suffering considerable privations, they finally settled in Espinillo, close to the source of the Arroyo Tobatyry, a tributary of the Río Tebicuary, north of present-day Coronel Ovie-
do and over 20 leguas south of the Río Curuguaty. In March 1678, the authorities approved this site, but the Spanish king informed them in a Cédula Real of 25 July 1679 that the Villarriqueños should resettle in Curuguaty, because this would be better strategically in terms of defending the area against the aggressive bandei-rantes. Finally, neither the one nor the other location was chosen, since the inhabitants were not very satisfied with the Espinillo site because it was affected by periodical flooding, which led to the formation of bañados, while rather unpleasant temperature fluctuations could also occur. They therefore sent some of their number to look for a higher-lying site with a pleasanter climate and found one in the neighbourhood of the Cerro de Ybytyruzú. Their cabildo approved the choice. According to López, the site was situated within the jurisdiction claimed by Asunción and in an area rich in yerbales. For this reason, the Asunceños were not very pleased with the course of events and thought that the Villarriqueños should be made to resettle in el Guairá.

7. The cabildo of Villa Rica tried to negotiate with Governor Juan Diez de Andino for the inhabitants to be allowed to settle on the newly found site. The governor actually wished to implement the Cédula Real, but eventually gave permission on 20 March 1682. A year later, he changed his mind, when it emerged that a number of vecinos were dissatisfied with the new site. He therefore ordained on 27 April 1683 that the Villarriqueños should return to the site in Espinillo de Ajos, but that did not happen either. The governor eventually gave permission in 1684 for the Guaireños to stay. This meant that, from 1682, Villa Rica was sited at its present and final location, in the region of Ybytyruzú, not far from the Río Tebicuary-mí and about 30 leguas southeast of Asunción.30 The Spanish crown incidentally persevered and, in 1696, again ordered the Villarriqueños to return to the site on the Curuguaty, but the inhabitants argued that their current site was a much better one and that they had already started building a church. They eventually received official permission from the Spanish king, Philip V, by

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30 From 1632 the town was less frequently referred to as Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo, but more commonly as Villa Rica (usually Villarrica).
Cédula Real dated 14 March 1701, to continue living on the site where they had settled in 1682. A large group of mainly poor vecinos was not taken with the site and was to supply the manpower at the beginning of the eighteenth century for the foundation of a new settlement: San Isidro Labrador de Curuguaty (see Chapter 8).

The foundation of Itapé

The settlement foundation activities of the Franciscans in Paraguay had come to an end after 1615 and were followed by a period in which they devoted themselves to other activities. Because of the shortage of missionaries, they even withdrew from the majority of the villages, so that, in the gobernación of Paraguay, they still kept under their protection only Itá, San José de Caazapá and Yuty 31. In the 1670s, however, the Order undertook a new initiative which involved founding a settlement for Monteses or Cainguás.

The Indians who were so designated were Guaraníes who had not yet been brought under the authority of the Spaniards or had taken the opportunity to escape from that authority again. They owed their freedom largely to the fact that they lived in forested and accidented and, therefore, largely inaccessible terrain and, in contrast to the Carios and Paranães, for example, did not live together in somewhat larger villages, but in small, independent and scattered groups. They lived mainly from hunting and fishing, but also practised some agriculture.

The first initiative towards founding a settlement for them was taken in March 1678, when the Franciscan, Fray Buenaventura de Villasboas (cura in Caazapá), made contact with two groups of Monteses-Guaraníes living in the forests close to the source of the Río Tebicuary-mí. He gave them some gifts and succeeded in gaining their trust. The Indians were almost dying of hunger and intimated that they wished to be concentrated in a village. Accor-

31 Besides Itáí, south of the Paraná, that did belong to the Franciscan mission province of Paraguay, but administratively formed part of the gobernación of Río de la Plata.
ding to Susnik, they were probably a remnant who were looking for a new base in order to be able to survive. Father Villasboas initially succeeded in concentrating 534 Monteses in Caazapá and Yuty, but many died there and others returned to the forests, so that in 1681, 295 Monteses remained in the two villages. Accordingly, it was found better to accommodate them in a separate reduction.

In 1682, land was marked out for this purpose on the left bank of the Tebicuary-mi in Itapé. The reduction was built in the same year and christined San Isidro de Itapé. The layout incorporated a square with a church and a house for the doctrinero. The construction took place with the support and approval of Governor Diez de Andino and received financial support from Lima, while Bishop Faustino de Casas also took a hand; he invested alms and his own funds in the settlement. The reduction was situated at a ford (vado) in the Río Tebicary-mi, on the route between Asunción and Villa Rica. Itapé was the first new foundation for many years. The Indians were expected to lead a communal and sedentary life there and were entrusted to the care of the Franciscans until 1770. The first group of Monteses whom they helped comprised only 212 persons (about 70 warriors and their womenfolk). Despite this small number, the reduction was allocated a large area of land, so much even that it led to protests from the inhabitants of Villa Rica. The boundaries of the village area were redefined at the beginning of the eighteenth century, based on the assumption that more groups of Monteses would settle in the reduction, but in practice they did not come. The majority of Monteses preferred a free existence in the forests; they either stayed there or fled back from the reduction. Moreover, the mortality among them was high. As a result, Itapé remained very small. The average population in the eighteenth century was around 100.

This last Franciscan reduction from the seventeenth century also contributed to the further pacification of the Indians and to a modest extension of Spanish authority. The reduction did not bring the Spaniards an enlargement of their labour supply, because the Indians of Itapé continued to be exempted from encomienda obligations throughout the colonial period: they did not have to perform personal services and nor could they be called on by the government through mandamientos. Neither did they have to pay
tribute in lieu. The reason was not only that the Indians were very poor. A further consideration was that other Monteses might find living in Itapé attractive through these privileges and voluntarily settle there. That would mean they would be less of a nuisance to the Spaniards in the latter's yerba exploitation, which was a very lucrative resource in the Monteses’ territory.32

Several authors regard the foundation of Itapé as a turning point in the history of the occupation of Paraguay. The settled area had contracted increasingly from 1630 as a result of the attacks of bandeirantes and free Indians, but this phase ended after 1680, thanks partly to better defensive measures in and near Asunción. Then a new phase of expansion began. Large areas of depopulated territory were to be reoccupied in the eighteenth century and many new settlements would be founded. Itapé was the forerunner of these.

The occupation pattern around 1685

Making up the balance of the developments in the seventeenth century, we note that this period can be divided into three sub-periods.

1. The first sub-period runs up to about 1635. At that time, the Jesuits left a significant mark on the settlement pattern through the foundation of thirteen settlements in el Guairá and over thirty others in the region of the Río Paraná, the Río Uruguay and some of their tributaries, as well as in el Itatí. The encomienda villages controlled by the secular priests or Franciscans led a more or less precarious existence as a consequence of flight, sickness and death, but the Jesuit reductions increased rapidly in number and population (see Chapter 33).

2. A whole new period began in the settlement history of Paraguay with the destruction of the mission villages in el Guairá and

the capture of Ciudad Real del Guayrá, Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo (on its el Guairá site) and Santiago de Jerez. It was a period that was characterised by a progressive contraction of the inhabited territory. El Guairá became depopulated and had to be abandoned. The Jesuits continued their missionary activity among the Indians from Loreto and San Ignacio in an area farther south. A large number of sites also had to be abandoned in the region of the Río Uruguay, in the region of Yguazú-Acaray and in that of the Tape. From 1640, missionary activity was eventually wholly concentrated south of the line Río Tebicuary-Río Yguazú and, within that territory, particularly in the area between the banks of the middle Paraná and the Uruguay river. Up to 1640, twenty flourishing villages were founded there at relatively safe locations (Table 6.2). Somewhat later, the two Itatín villages were also moved to south of the Tebicuary.

Besides the Itatín missions, several other Indian settlements were evacuated from northern Paraguay, with the result that, from 1676, the whole area north of the Manduvirá (and partly even of the Río Salado) was no longer under Spanish control. In 1699, Tobatí, the last support point north of the Manduvirá, was also relocated. As a result, the area that was inhabited and under Spanish authority had become extremely attenuated. The contraction was the result partly of the attacks of bandeirantes (Portuguese, mamelucos and their Tupí allies), and partly also of the attacks of the Guaycurúes (more specifically the Payaguáes and Mbayáes).

3. The two final decades of the seventeenth century form the third sub-period. The Spaniards suffered no further territorial losses in those years. It was a period of consolidation (as shown by the definitive location of Villa Rica) and even of a reversal of fortune, with the establishment of a new settlement (Itapé) on the periphery. The Jesuits also started to found new settlements.
Going into further detail and choosing a spatial approach, we can sketch the following overview of the settlement pattern in around 1700 (Fig. 7.4).\textsuperscript{33}

The demographic centre of gravity of ‘Spanish’ Paraguay (i.e. excluding the Jesuit province) lay unquestionably in and around Asunción, the area that was most defendable. The populated area extended here roughly to the Río Salado and the Tapaycuá (Ypacaraí) lagoon in the north. The Indian villages of San Lorenzo de los Altos, San Francisco de Atyrá and Nuestra Señora Limpia Concepción de Tobatí, all three situated beyond of the Río Salado, on the southern edge of la Cordillera and 40-60 km from the capital, formed the most important outposts of habitation. The \textit{pueblos} played an unmistakably defensive role. The two latter settlements had been relocated to the Asunción region from the north. Los Altos had already been sited in the neighbourhood of Asunción in 1580. On the east, the populated area extended as far as the Paraje de los Ajos. Settlement in that area was situated along the route to the \textit{yerbales} and consisted of little more than a few houses surrounded by some fields.

To the south, the inhabited area extended as far the Valle de la Frontera; to the southeast to near the Cerro de Acahay and the vast \textit{estancia} of Paraguari (or Mbatovi), which was owned by the Jesuits. The Indian villages of Ypané and Guarambaré, which had been relocated from the north and refounded, had been situated on this southern flank since the beginning of the 1680s. They were situated only 20-25 km from Asunción and lay on the edge of the extensive plain of Guarnipitán, an area that regularly suffered from the incursions of Chaco Indians. Somewhat farther to the southeast again, were the \textit{pueblos de indios} of Itá and Yaguarón, which had enjoyed relative security since their foundation in 1585 and 1586, respectively, and so did not need to be relocated. These four southern reductions also performed a defensive buffer role, as did Altos, Atyrá and Tobatí on the northern side.

Fig. 7.3. The occupied territory in Paraguay, between the Río Manduvirá and the Río Tebicuary in around 1685 (after Velázquez 1995 = 1972: 562).
None of these northern and southern *pueblos de indios* had many inhabitants; the seven villages combined had a total population of only 5,075 in 1682. The Indian inhabitants (there was no racial mixing) had to conform to the demands imposed on them as a labour force by the authorities and *encomenderos* and this had resulted in the Indians regularly running away. The inhabitants all received their pastoral care from secular priests, with only Itá remaining in Franciscan hands at the end of the seventeenth century.

The inhabited area near Asunción comprised more concretely: the *valles* and *pagos* of Tembetary, Lambaré, Tacumbú, la Frontera (now Ñemby and Villa Elisa), Valsequillo (Barcequillo), Campo Grande (Tavipery; San Lorenzo), Tapúa (now the districts of Luque, Roque Alonso and Limpio), Capiatá and Pirayú, together with the intervening zones. The population there was largely dispersed or somewhat clustered (into *caseríos*, hamlets). The inhabited area extended about 13-14 *leguas* from northwest to southeast and only 5-6 from north to south along the river. The greater part of the ‘Spanish’ population (Spaniards, Creoles and mestizoes) was concentrated in this *comarca* - including Asunción itself. This area also contained the majority of the Negro slaves and free Negroes (their total number was incidentally small) and the majority of the Indians living with the Spaniards (yanaconas). In 1682 Asunción and its environs had 9,675 inhabitants. The *pueblos de indios* named formed the northern and southern peripheries of the *comarca*.

The *Asunceños’ capueras* (*chacras*) were obviously situated in the vicinity of the city, predominantly in the zone extending in a southeasterly direction as far as the valley of the Arroyo Pirayú and bordered approximately by the two modern arterial roads. The need for subsistence agriculture had already led in around 1600 to the gradual peopling of the *campos* of Tapúa, la Frontera, Valsequillo, Campo Grande, the *pago* of Juan de Ortega, Villaviciosa, Lambaré

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34 The Valley of Tapúa was the most fertile part of the province at that time and extended north of the capital, along the banks of the Río Paraguay (Ganson 1989:96).
and the valley of Capiatá. Even in the plain of Guarnipitán, land titles had already been granted under Governor Hernandarias. Because of the regular attacks of the Payaguáes and other Guaycurúes (sometimes even on the outskirts of Asunción and as far as the Valle de Yataity), the sparse rural population showed no inclination to settle close to the banks of the Río Paraguay - in the 'litoral'. For that reason, there were relatively few chacras close to the river banks, and settlers showed all the more preference for land situated closer to the interior: Campo Grande, Valsequillo, the valleys of the arroyos Capiatá and Pirayú, the areas forming part of Itá and Yaguarón and those extending to the Jesuit estancia of Paraguarí. Pueblos de indios like Ypané and Guarambaré in the south and los Altos and Atryá in the north were incidentally also situated several leguas from the Paraguay river, because of the danger of attacks by Chaco Indians.

There were as yet no Spanish settlements east of (estancia) Paraguarí at the end of the seventeenth century, apart from Villa Rica, that was moved to its present location in Yvytyruzú, about 130 km southeast of Asunción, only in 1682. According to the census of Bishop Faustino de Casas, its population in 1682 comprised 1,185 souls: 729 'Spaniards', 14 slaves and 442 indios yanaco-nas. This population was still highly concentrated and thus wholly 'urban'; there was as yet no permanently dispersed population in the surrounding countryside. In 1700, Villa Rica was still a fortified camp rather than a proper settlement. It was nevertheless one of the two 'towns' of Paraguay; the only other being Asunción itself. The others had been destroyed or become part of the province of Río de la Plata.

Itapé had been situated southwest of Villa Rica since 1682. Two other outlying settlements were situated much farther away from the capital, in the southeast, in the midst of forests and beyond many rivers, so that they were relatively isolated. These were the Franciscan villages of San José de Caazapá and Yuty. They had a reasonably large population (totalling 3,661 persons or 9.5 per cent of the total provincial population in 1682).

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Still farther to the east lay ‘no man’s land’. The Sierra de San Joaquín and the *cordilleras* of Caaguazú, Ybytyruzú and San Rafael formed not only the watershed between rivers Paraguay and Paraná, but also the border of the area that was more or less populated and controlled by Creoles, mestizos and converted Indians. Beyond it lay territory that fell *de jure*, but not *de facto*, under Spanish authority. Thus there were no Spanish settlements or Indian villages in the area between the Paraná and the abovementioned mountain ranges. There were some free Indians (Monteses) living there and there were *yerbales* which were exploited.  

La Cordillera, the somewhat more accidented region between the Manduvirá and the Salado, northeast of the demographic core area (Asunción and immediate surroundings), was still very much a frontier region towards the end of the seventeenth century. The area was at that time as good as uninhabitable, because after the depopulation of the regions north of the Río Jejuy, the Mbayáes could in fact roam freely there. From 1661, but especially after 1676, they had extended their territory, that originally lay west of the Río Paraguay, increasingly to the east. There they became very experienced horsemen after they had learned to break in horses, and soon dominated the wholly depopulated north between the Río Miranda and the Río Jejuy. From there they could easily penetrate la Cordillera or at least attempt to do so, and did so repeatedly in practice.  

By 1700, only a single agricultural and rural enclave of Creoles and mestizos existed in la Cordillera, namely, that in the valley of Piribebuy. The farthest point of this enclave lay about 75 km southeast of Asunción, and bordered on the lands of the Jesuit estancia Paraguari. In around 1680, there were also already some small enclaves of Creoles and mestizos north of the Río Salado, i.e. in the west of la Cordillera, probably towards the present-day colonies of Acuña de Figueroa (Tapequezá) and Nueva Colombia. These may have been the first *foráneos*, rural dwellers who settled illegally on the territory of a *pueblo de indios*, in this instance, the village of Altos. This enclave north of the Río Salado, however,

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36 Susnik 1987:95.
scarcely affected the overall settlement picture of the time. It formed a very exposed outpost in the frontier zone, just like the enclaves south of the Arroyo Caañabé. Besides the enclaves beyond the Río Salado and the Arroyo Caañabé, Pirayú and Capiatá were also frontier territory in 1680. Nor were the valleys of Lambaré and San Lorenzo wholly safe.

The campos lying south of Arroyo Caañabé were no longer wholly unpopulated around 1700. Settlement had begun there in about 1675, after the Indian danger had been sufficiently reduced. The first colonists were all vecinos from Asunción. They did not settle close to the Río Paraguay, but far away from it, east of the unfordable swamps along this river and beyond the Lago de Ypo’a. The area of settlement was, in other words, the zone of Carapeguá, Ybycuí and Caapucú, which would soon become known as the partido Tebicuary. The area was served by the camino real leading from Asunción to the Jesuit missions south of the Río Tebicuary. The most southerly outlier of this new settlement zone was the extensive merced of Riquelme de Guzmán, granted to him in 1676 and sold shortly afterwards to Alonso Fernández Montiel. The land granted to him was situated between the Arroyo Yaguary, the rivers Tebicuary and Negro, and the section of the abovementioned camino real leading to the Paso de Santa María. At about the same time, Ceprián Delgado de Irala received the first lands in the zone of Ybycuí. The grazing lands in this zone were the only ones then available to the Creoles and mestizos in the southeast, because the others either belonged to the pueblos de indios, were situated too far away or were still too unsafe to be occupied. Thanks to the colonisation which started in this region immediately north of the Río Tebicuary, the then still very limited cattle ranching was able to expand. The larger-scale production started at this time. The first colonists who laid the foundations of the industry were, however, still very few in number; they pioneered in great isolation and so no real settlements were created at the end of the seventeenth century.

38 According to Susnik (1990-91:10), the merced was granted by Governor Sarmiento de Sotomayor y Figueroa to G. Riquelme de Guzmán in 1663 and split up shortly afterwards. The land then passed into the hands of the families of González Freire, García Roa, Cabañas, Ampuero and Fernández Montiel.
Lastly, south of the Tebicuary, there were the mission villages of the Jesuits along both sides of the Paraná, but west of the Uruguay, which had been wholly newly founded or relocated there because of the threat from the bandeirantes. Thanks to its own administrative and socio-economic setup, this zone formed a world apart. The Jesuits and their Guaraníes had relatively little contact with the other inhabitants of the province of Paraguay. The seven mission villages which were included in the province of Paraguay in the census of Bishop Casas had 19,070 inhabitants in 1682, which was no less than half of the population of the whole of the province of Paraguay at that time (38,666). The mission villages performed an important defensive role (as indeed they did in other South American border regions).

Fig. 7.3 shows that there were no mission villages in the more westerly area south of the Río Tebicuary. The explanation for this is fourfold: 1) the Jesuits had carried out their missionary work mainly in the east (el Guairá, el Tape etc.), so that it was natural for them to continue their activities in that area after 1640; 2) only in the east, between the Paraná and the Uruguay, would they be able, if necessary, to offer effective opposition to the advance of the Portuguese; 3) in the more westerly area they would be much more exposed to the attacks of Chaco Indians and 4) this more westerly area lies close to the Paraguay river and is therefore very low, so that it is much more exposed to floods and, by its swampy nature, much better suited to stockbreeding than to arable farming.

As we have said, el Guairá was depopulated by the razzias of the bandeirantes; as were Jerez-Ñu (the district behind the Cordillera de Amambay and Cordillera de Mbaracayú) and the area between the rivers Miranda and Manduvirá. The towns and mission villages that had been founded there had been destroyed or evacuated and the Spaniards had been forced to abandon their control of the yerbales. Northern Paraguay had become the domain of the Mbayá and a few other groups, if indeed there was any population at all.

A chain of fortifications protected the banks of the Paraguay from el Peñón to San Antonio, while the pueblo de indio of Tobatí had also been strengthened. Immediately downstream from Asunción were the forts of San Jerónimo, Tacumbú, Lambaré and San Antonio; somewhat farther to the south, along the Valle del Guarni-
pitán, lay the *presidios* of San José and Santa Rosa (the latter near what is now Villeta)\(^{39}\).

The Chaco remained the domain of the Indians. Orteja Vallejos, who had been the commander of a military expedition in the 1650s, had built a number of fortified outposts there.

To sum up, we may say that 'Spanish' Paraguay (the area outside the domain of the Jesuit missions) was still a very fragmentarily occupied province at the end of the seventeenth century, with a very small population. It comprised two Spanish 'urban' settlements (Asunción and Villa Rica), some small rural nuclei in the *comarca* of Asunción (such as Luque and Capiatá), seven *pueblos de indios* controlled by secular priests and Franciscans which performed a satellite role in the neighbourhood of the capital, and three Franciscan villages situated further to the southeast.

There had been little immigration on any scale in the seventeenth century and mortality had remained at a high level, certainly among the *encomienda* population. Consequently, the whole province had only 38,666 inhabitants in 1682, of whom no fewer than 19,070 lived in seven Jesuit missions.\(^{40}\)

In other respects, too, there had been only modest development in late seventeenth century Paraguay. As we shall see in Part 4 of this study, arable land was still only of very limited extent; the rather larger-scale stockbreeding was only hesitantly beginning to develop; the market-oriented economy was almost exclusively limited to the gathering and export of yerba (with Indian labour being used on a 'large' scale); the barter economy predominated, so that very little money circulated; and there was still little interprovincial trade. Paraguay was a country of small, simple arable farmers, small or, at the most, medium-sized stockbreeders, poor and exploited yerba collectors, craftsmen and a small group of better-off traders and administrators. In brief, the colony presented a relatively simple picture, but this was to change in the eighteenth century, at least as far as the settlement pattern is concerned.


\(^{40}\) Most of the Jesuit missions existing at that time did not belong to the civil province of Paraguay.
Settlement in the period 1685-1773

Changing times

The period from about 1685 to 1811, the year which saw the end of the colonial regime, was a completely different time from the preceding 150 years. Quite radical changes occurred. These changes did not occur suddenly, but gradually, and were most apparent in the years after 1770. The dynamic of the eighteenth century manifested itself, *inter alia*, in a somewhat greater diversification of the Paraguayan economy, that was closely associated with a greater freedom of trade (after 1778) and increased interprovincial trading activity. It further manifested itself in the expansion of the money economy, the continuing decline of the *encomienda* system, further racial mixing and an increase in the population. All these and other matters are discussed in detail in the chapters of Parts 3-5. In the following chapters, 8 and 9, I concentrate on the fact that there was a marked dispersion of the population over *Paraguay Oriental* during the period 1700-1811 and - associated with it - a considerable increase in the number of spontaneously created and officially founded settlements. The foundation of Itapé (1682) and the final siting of Villa Rica (1682) were the first hesitant portents of this new settlement dynamic. This resulted in *Paraguay Oriental*, with the exception of what are now the departments of Alto Paraná, Canindeyú and Amambay, becoming more or less fully settled by 1811, although the population density was nearly everywhere still very low. Only a few new settlements were created in *Paraguay Oriental* in the period 1811-65; it was rather a matter of consolidation through population growth. The settlement pattern that existed
in the nineteenth century up to the *Guerra Grande* had, in other words, largely taken shape in the preceding century.

The greater dynamic which characterised Paraguay in the later colonial period was to some extent not exceptional, in the sense that the other Spanish colonial territories were also marked by change. The changes were largely the result of a number of institutional and socio-economic innovations which were gradually implemented by the Bourbon dynasty, that had taken over the rule of the Spanish empire from the Hapsburgs in 1701. The Bourbons provided, *inter alia*, a more efficient and professional administration and improved the defences. In addition, however, there were also forces at work that were more specific to Paraguay and the La Plata region.

Even after 1700, the Paraguayans still had constantly to be on the alert for the Portuguese, because the latter were still trying throughout the eighteenth century to expand further the territory occupied by them and, with it, their sphere of influence. But there was nevertheless some change. The actions of the *bandeirantes* aimed directly at the occupied part of Paraguay came to an end after 1680, thanks mainly to the concentration of the population in a more defensible region and the excellent arming of the mission villages. The Portuguese could no longer carry off large numbers of Indians, as in the seventeenth century. Another important factor was that gold and diamond deposits had been found at the end of the seventeenth century in Minas Gerais and in around 1720, also in Mato Grosso and, somewhat later, gold in Guaporé. The discoveries led to an important shift in interest. The Brazilian migration flows and investments were directed mainly towards Minas Gerais and other potential mining regions; sugar cane cultivation became relatively less interesting. Because Negro slaves could be imported normally at that time, there was also much less need for forced Indian labour than at the beginning of the seventeenth century. For Paraguay, the orientation on mining meant that - apart from Minas Gerais - the Portuguese became interested mainly in the areas situated north of what is now Paraguay - Mato Grosso and, more in particular, the region of Cuiabá. They occupied lands and established themselves ‘firmly’ there by founding a succession of fortified settlements. They even advanced to the Alto Paraguay, where they availed themselves of the fact that they could use this river freely
for the transport of produce. But it was certainly not to their advan-
tage when the Spaniards tried to found settlements in Mato Grosso
from Paraguay and to establish regular communications between
Asunción and Alto Perú. The primary aim of the Portuguese was a
stable occupation of Mato Grosso, so that they could freely exploit
its minerals, practise ancillary arable farming and stockbreeding
there and develop trading and gathering activities. More in the
background was the old wish finally to reach the populous Chiqui-
tos missions and the mining centres in Alto Perú, such as Potosí,
from the Río Paraguay, or at least to engage in trade with the
Andes region. Here, the Portuguese met with little Spanish opposi-
tion, which was also partly because Paraguay was embroiled for a
long time in the Revolución de los Comuneros at the beginning of
the eighteenth century (1717-35).

All the stronger, by contrast, was the Spanish-Portuguese con-
frontation that developed in the la Plata estuary from 1680, in
territory that formed part of the gobernación of Río de la Plata and
therefore had to be defended from Buenos Aires. The cause of the
confrontation was the fact that the Portuguese established the
fortified settlement of Colonia del (do) Sacramento in that year
directly opposite Buenos Aires - in the Banda Oriental, on what is
now Uruguayan territory. This act was seen by Spain as a serious
threat to Buenos Aires. Repeated attempts were accordingly made
to remove the Portuguese from this prominent and, therefore
strategically important, support point.

The essence of all this was that the Paraguayans were brought
into contact with the Portuguese in another manner in the eighteenth
century. The latter no longer directly threatened the inhabited part
of the Spanish province and the Indian missions, but tried to expand
their influence mainly on what was for them the possibly interesting
northern 'empty' periphery of the Spanish colony. That incidentally
did not immediately become clear to the Paraguayans until after
several decades. In 1706 military reconnaissances were still being
prepared to discover whether illegal Portuguese settlement activities
were taking place in el Guairá and Jerez-Ñu; the Paraguayans
remained in as great a state of alertness until the 1730s as before.
For example, military reconnaissances were carried out in the *campos* of Jerez in 1721 and 1723.¹

The Indian threats also persisted in the eighteenth century. Ships could be attacked and plundered on the Río Paraguay and their crews be killed, especially by the Payaguáes, who also made the bordering area unsafe. After 1730, however, they preferred to live in peace with the Spaniards. The Paraguayans suffered all the more annoyance from the Mbayáes. From the north, where they had established themselves after the depopulation, they repeatedly attacked the more southerly situated villages beyond the Río Manduvirá, or at least attempted to do so. To the east, they pushed towards Curuguaty. Mbocovíes, Abipones and other groups of Guaycurúes ravaged the villages and their inhabitants in the vicinity of Asunción and to the south of it from time to time. From Lamberé, the Indians penetrated into the valleys of Areguá and Pirayú, ravaged the *chacras* near the villages of Guarambaré, Ypané, Itá and Yaguarón and sometimes even succeeded in penetrating to the *estancias* of the Jesuits (Paraguarí) and Dominicans (Tavapy).² The Spaniards had to be particularly on their guard in the dry season, when the water level on the Paraguay was low. The gradually declining risk of Portuguese attacks from the east and north meant that the Paraguayans could direct their attention more to the aggression from the Indians. The hostile Indians even became their principal concern. The threats were so frequent that the occupation front was tending to draw back from the Río Paraguay at the beginning of the eighteenth century, despite the fact that this river was actually the most important, if not the only, internal and external communication route.

As we have said, a chain of *fuertes* and *fortines* had been built along the east bank of the Paraguay, in order to ward off the danger as far as possible, particularly near strategic *pasos* (crossing places). In 1706 there were 11 fortifications. Nine of them were sited near the river over a distance of about 45 km between present-

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² Benítez 1985:129.
day la Villeta (over 20 km south of Asunción) and Piquete-cué (over 20 km north of the capital). The most southerly was that of Santa Rosa, the most northerly and most important the Castillo de San Ildefonso, in el Tapúa, about 5 leguas from Asunción. Together with the presidio of San Antonio, it was rebuilt by Governor Sebastián Félix de Mendiola in 1692. The two remaining forts were situated in la Cordillera, near the villages of Altos and Tobati, and served mainly to hold back the Mbayáes. The fortifications were occupied by vecinos, who had to serve in the provincial militias under a rota system and without remuneration. It had repeatedly been shown that these forts were not really adequate for security. Keeping them supplied with munition and other necessities was often far from simple and therefore left much to be desired. Nor were the fortines always permanently manned; the authorities sent soldiers there only at times of real danger. They were really more lookout and warning posts than defence works. Where they were permanently occupied, there was the problem that the soldiers had to be regularly relieved and constantly supplied with provisions.3

In the course of the eighteenth century - especially after 1720 - the Bourbon administrators became increasingly aware that a better approach was needed to defence. They did not regard the often isolated fuertes and fortines as superfluous, but they became increasingly convinced that the foundation of new settlements by and for Spaniards at strategic points would furnish a far more effective defence against Indian and Portuguese aggression in the long run since, through their economic function, these new settlements would accommodate a more numerous and more permanent population than the forts. As a result, it would be possible to give a much more alert response to threatened attacks. A larger number of permanent settlements, dispersed over a greater part of the province, would also facilitate the provisioning of neighbouring forts. Security policy shifted, in other words, from defence with the aid of forts and militias to further colonisation linked with expansion of

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the economy. There was, in fact, a return to the policy that had characterised the period 1554-93.4

Another new feature was that, from the middle of the eighteenth century, the authorities hired in Payaguáes to guard certain stretches of the river (such as the length between la Villeta and the mouth of the Tebicuary) against incursions by Chaco Indians.5

It must be said that the new or renovated forts, the newly established Spanish settlements and other measures, such as the hiring of Payaguáes, were not at once completely effective everywhere. The dangers remained, since it was impossible in practice to keep an eye on the Indians everywhere, while also watching the movements of the Portuguese. Moreover, the watchfulness sometimes slackened or the militias were short of arms and ammunition. But the new policy did result in a noticeable reduction in, and a better mastery of, the dangers. In fact, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that they really came to an end: even under the dictator Francia and President C.A. López, the country was still troubled by the attacks of Mbayáes and Chaco Indians, although with much less frequency than in the preceding century.

In the course of this and the following chapters, we shall see which settlements were founded by the authorities and what was done to ensure that they received sufficient settlers. We shall also see that it was not only the civil authorities and the Spaniards who founded villages, but that the Franciscans and the Jesuits were also brought in and began to undertake fresh activities. As the number of officially established settlements and reductions increased together with the number of forts, so the security became greater. This greater security contributed to an increase in the spontaneous occupation of various rural areas in the form of dispersed settlement. The result of all these developments was that the settlement pattern at the end of the eighteenth century was quite different from that of a century before. The effectively occupied territory in 1800 had at least doubled in comparison with that of c. 1700.

The further dispersion of the population, the founding of many new villages, the spontaneous settlements and, with them, the occupation of the greater part of Eastern Paraguay were made possible, or at least greatly facilitated, by the fact that the population grew in the eighteenth century. Very little of this growth was due to immigration, but was almost entirely the result of natural increase. At the end of the seventeenth century, Paraguay still had only about 40,000 inhabitants; at the end of the eighteenth century it had about 108,000. The larger population meant not only that more pobladores were available, but also that a greater need arose for agricultural land and fresh clearances were therefore needed. Apart from the population growth, the gradually improving economic climate also had a favourable effect. The demand for yerba and wood rose considerably, while there was also a larger market for agricultural products such as tobacco, sugar and oranges.

In this chapter, we shall discuss the changes which occurred in the settlement pattern up to 1773. Up to the last quarter of the eighteenth century many new settlements were founded by the Jesuits and Franciscans as well as by Spanish citizens. But there were also negative developments, such as the expulsion of the Jesuit Order in 1767-68 and the decline of their pueblos de misiones. The changes which occurred from 1773 to 1811 will be discussed in Chapter 9.

New foundations by the Jesuits in the Paraná-Uruguay region

The years following 1685 were characterised not only by recovery and expansion in ‘Spanish’ Paraguay, but a new period also began in the history of the Jesuit missions. Maeder characterises this period, which he defines as running from 1685-1740, as the recuperación parcial del espacio misionero. The bandeirante danger had been completely warded off at the end of the seventeenth century and nearly all the then existing villages had found their definitive sites. The consolidation and peace were an important factor in the marked population growth of the mission province in those years. This growth made possible in turn the considerable enlargement of the occupied territory. The latter was actually doubled in compa-
Settlement in the period 1685-1773

Comparison with the situation in the mid-seventeenth century. Missions were again established after 1685 in the area east of the Uruguay and large parts of what are now southern Rio Grande do Sul and northern Uruguay were taken into use for cattle farming. However, the Order ignored the more distant areas which had been lost (el Itatín, el Guairá and the Yguazú-Acaray region). The occupation and reoccupation of the above areas encountered few problems. The areas were virtually uninhabited, so there were no sedentary indigenous people who felt threatened or expelled, nor were there any colonists who had already laid any kind of a claim to these areas. It is true that there were conflicts at the beginning of the eighteenth century with groups of nomadic Charrúa Indians, who were forced to surrender the corridor south of Yapeyú, which they had used to penetrate into Argentinean Mesopotamia. Their confrontation with the Guaraníes of Misiones was over the use of a passage (lugar de paso) and had less to do with expulsion from an occupied or inhabited territory.

The territorial expansion was possible after 1685 because there was sustained population growth until 1732. In that year the mission population reached its greatest size and was more than double that of 1682: over 141,000 persons. The growth meant that several villages became larger than was desirable (in relation to the available land etc.) and had therefore to be 'relieved'. This was done by founding new settlements in the near vicinity or somewhat farther away. A total of 11 new villages - including two relocated ones - were created between 1685 and 1718, seven of them in the region east of the Río Uruguay (which had previously been evacuated) and four in the southeast of Paraguay. In Paraguay, Jesús (1685), Santa Rosa de Lima (1698) and Trinidad (1706) were founded; while San Cosme y Damián, that had been a quarter of Candelaria from 1638, again became an independent settlement in 1718. In the region east of the Uruguay, San Luis Gonzaga (1687), San Francisco de Borja (1690), San Lorenzo (1690), San Juan Bautista (1697) and Santo Ángel (1707) were founded. The villages of San Miguel and San Nicolás were also relocated there in 1687.

With the exception of Jesús, all the new villages were split off from existing centres:
Father Sepp showed, with reference to San Juan Bautista, that these new foundations were by no means always simple. The Indians had to be persuaded to leave their homes, essential investments had to be made and more missionaries had to be deployed. These difficulties were outweighed by the important advantages, however, that space was occupied in a more rational manner, that the food supply could be better regulated, that there was a reduced chance of disastrous epidemics and that smaller villages were easier to govern.7

The fact that population pressure was the underlying cause meant that the new villages were populated almost exclusively by Christian Indians, who had been born and bred in one of the pueblos, and therefore not by newly integrated neophytes. The new villages were set up in accordance with the model that had proved its worth over time. In this period, the villages started to occupy a continuous territory and the village layout and architecture reached their high point. Splendid churches and solid public buildings were erected (see Chapter 10).

In 1718, the total of 30 villages was reached with the separation of San Cosme y Damián. From that date, no more new villages were created in the main mission area, apart at least from San Antonio de Padua (del Iberá), with Indians from Loreto, which rapidly disappeared from the map again after its foundation in 1734. It was only outside the mission area proper that further settlement foundation activity was subsequently undertaken. North of the Río Tebicuary, San Joaquín (1746), San Estanislao (1749)

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and Belén (1760) were founded at the request of the civil authorities, as we shall see later in this chapter. Missionary work was also started in the Chaco, which fell partly within the **gobernación** of Río de la Plata.

Both the old and the new villages were situated in an area of fertile soils, numerous watercourses and a favourable climate, so that it is not surprising that the fathers succeeded in developing a flourishing economy during this period of peace and consolidation. This aroused much admiration, but also envy among the Spanish colonial population.⁸

Cattle farming expanded considerably during this period, especially in the region east of the Uruguay. The cattle ranching area extended southwards as far as the catchments of the Río Daimán, Queguay and Negro. These catchments formed part of the Banda Oriental and consisted of fertile grass plains dissected by numerous small rivers and streams. The area as far as the Río Negro became, in fact, the domain of the Jesuit missions. Big *estancias* were created, with large herds, which were owned by more than ten mission villages and, as such, played an important role in the food supply of the villages. The occupation was secured with the help of small hamlets on the *pueblos* and around the chapels of the *estancias*. It was mainly the occupation of these extensive grazing lands which was responsible for the area exploited by the missions being roughly twice as large as that which had previously been used by the villages. Besides grazing lands, the newly occupied territory also comprised natural *yerbales*. The territorial expansion had come to an end in about 1732. This coincided with the beginning of a considerable decline in the population in the 30 villages, which fell from 141,000 to 88,000 between 1731 and 1740. The fall was partly the consequence of the many military tasks which the mission Indians had to perform during the *Revolución de los Comuneros*, and was partly due to epidemics.⁹ I shall return to this in Chapter 33.

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⁸ Meliá Lliteras 1991:222 *et seq.*

Making up the balance of the Jesuits’ activities: thirty pueblos de misiones

As we have said, the Paraná-Uruguay region eventually had 30 villages. They were situated between 26 and 30° south latitude and extended over an area of about 400 km from north to south and about 500 km from east to west. If we also include the villages’ yerbales and estancias, the area was still larger.

The thirty villages were the final outcome of an often complex process of foundation, relocation, refoundation, merging and dividing. It therefore seems a good idea in the interests of clarity to give a summary overview at this point of the final situation.10 The villages could then be divided into four clusters (Fig. 8.1).

1. Eight villages were eventually located in the area between the Río Tebicary and the right bank of the Río Paraná, i.e. on territory that is still Paraguayan today. Four of them were located in the west (San Ignacio Guazú, Santiago, Santa María de Fe and Santa Rosa), three in the east (Itapúa, Jesús and Trinidad) and one rather more to the south (San Cosme y Damián).

2/3. Two other clusters, with a combined total of 15 villages, were situated in the area south of the Paraná, in what is now the Argentinean province of Misiones. Five were situated close to the left bank of the Paraná, i.e. Nuestra Señora de Loreto, San Ignacio Miní, Corpus Christi, Candelaria and Santa Ana. Ten villages were situated somewhat farther away from the Paraná and, therefore, more in the west of the Uruguay region, i.e. Nuestra Señora de la Concepción, Santa María la Mayor, Santos Reyes de Yapeyú, San Francisco Javier, La Cruz, San Carlos, Santos Apóstoles, Santo Tomé, San José and Santos Mártires.

4. Lastly, new villages were again founded east of the Uruguay at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. The villages concerned were: San Nicolás, San Miguel, San Luis, San Borja, San Lorenzo, San Juan and Santo Ángel. Together, they formed the siete pueblos orientales and they were

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10 For details of the foundation and location or relocation of each of the thirty villages, see the Annex at the end of this chapter.
Settlement in the period 1685-1773

Fig. 8.1. The area of the Jesuits' Guaraní missions on the Paraná and the Uruguay by the middle of the eighteenth century (Hernández 1913, I: end of the book; Wilhelmy & Rohmeder 1963:371; amended).

not founded or relocated until the arrival of more peaceful times made it feasible to reoccupy the area east of the Uruguay at the same time as population growth made the foundation of a number of new villages desirable. As we have already stated (Chapter 2),
these villages were first situated on Spanish territory (the Banda Oriental, forming part of the _gobernación_ of Río de la Plata), before becoming Portuguese territory in 1750 under the Treaty of Madrid, which led to strong resistance from the Indians and some of the Jesuits. The transfer was undone in 1761 and this was confirmed in 1777, under the Treaty of San Ildefonso. The Portuguese, however, ignored the borders which had been agreed in the latter year and continually tried to extend their sphere of influence farther to the south. In 1801 they permanently occupied the territory of the seven eastern mission villages.

An examination of the foundation dates shows that the western and eastern Uruguay villages were not created until after 1617, i.e. after the decision was taken to split the vast province of Paraguay (_el Paraguay gigante_) into two new, smaller provinces: that of el Guairá or Paraguay and that of Río de la Plata. As we explained in Chapter 3, the borders in the Paraná/Uruguay angle were not clearly regulated for a long time. It was not until 1727 that the question was discussed of the precise course of the borders between the bishoprics of Asunción and Buenos Aires - and therefore also of those between the _gobernaciones_ of Paraguay and Río de la Plata. It was then proposed that the five villages situated immediately southeast of the middle Paraná should come under the bishopric of Paraguay (Asunción), but not those east and west of the Uruguay. This meant, more concretely, that a total of 13 mission villages became ‘Paraguayan’ and 17 ‘Argentinean’ (although they all belonged to the same, Jesuit mission province of Paraguay). The proposals were in line with the practice that had grown up until that time (see, for example, the inventory of indigenous settlements of 1662; Chapter 7). Because of this demarcation of borders, less attention will be devoted elsewhere in this study to the 17 _pueblos del Uruguay_ than to the 13 _pueblos del Paraná_, the villages which were situated immediately southeast and west of the Paraná.\(^{11}\)

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\(^{11}\) Benítez 1985:104-5; Maeder 1975:78; Micó 1975:29,36.
The foundation of la Villeta

The first new Spanish settlement which was founded in the eighteenth century was la Villeta de San Felipe de Borbón en el valle de Bastán, over 20 km south of Asunción (Fig. 8.2). Colonisation had begun at an early stage in this area, where the villages of San Antonio and la Villeta are now situated. It is known, in any event, that lands in the plain of Guarnipitán had already been granted to inhabitants of Asunción at the beginning of the seventeenth century, under Governor Hernandarias. The land was used for grazing purposes. In the beginning, the Spaniards there were not troubled by the Guaycurús, who would later become accomplished horsemen and quickly make the east bank of the Paraguay unsafe. The Spaniards were soon troubled, however, by the attacks of Payaguáes. The thinly spread population of el Guarnipitán also suffered from the latter’s attacks at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1702 or 1703, the Indians succeeded in overpowering the garrison of the presidio of Santa Rosa, after which they set the fort on fire. The fort of San Antonio was also set on fire. The Indians had then, in 1704, attacked Guarambaré. On 7 September 1707, Indians descended on the riparian zone of Guarnipitán and the Cañada de Taiitibobo, in the valley of Capiatá, forcing the inhabitants to abandon their chacras and estancias, at least temporarily. In 1709, the Indians penetrated into the valley of Tavapy. After the attack of 1702 or 1703, the soldiers from the fort of Santa Rosa and the colonists from its vicinity had fled and had settled on the far side of Lake Ypo’á, between the Arroyo Caañabé and the Río Tebicuary, where they had occupied lands which were not their property, but already belonged to private individuals. El Guarnipitán had become depopulated by these events, which was a dangerous situation from the point of view of defence and was also economically undesirable, because the plain contained good agricultural land. The land was very suitable not only for cattle farming, but also for growing such crops as sugar and oranges.

On 20 March 1711, the cabildo of Asunción asked the governor...
to rebuild the *presidio* of Santa Rosa, because the fields around the villages of Ypané, Guarambaré, Itá and Yaguarón, which served in the *comarca* of Asunción as buffers against Indian attacks, were unprotected.\(^{13}\)

In 1713 Governor Juan Gregorio Bazán de Pedraza decided to have the fort of Santa Rosa rebuilt. He hoped that this would prevent further attacks, so that not only would the villages be better protected, but it would also be possible to carry out a peaceful and permanent colonisation of the valleys of Frontera (Ñemby), Guarnipitán and Valsequillo (Barcequillo). Five *mitas* of Indians were recruited from the four *pueblos de indios* to carry out the works under the direction of Jerónimo Fernández de Aldano. A new and better fort was completed in January 1714.

It was liable to be immediately destroyed again, however, because not many soldiers could be stationed there and those who manned the fort often had to come from a long distance. Because of all this, the garrison was sometimes very small. The governor therefore considered it desirable to found a - permanently inhabited - *villa* on the northern edge of the *campos* del Guarnipitán. He announced his decision on 4 February 1714. The *cabildo* of Asunción had always been unhappy about the foundation of new *villas* in the neighbourhood of the capital, because this would weaken the position of the capital and its *cabildo*. The *cabildantes* had, for example, opposed the plan to build a *villa* - i.e. a settlement with its own territory and *cabildo* - in neighbouring Capiatá. The assembly had no objection, however, to Bazán's proposal to found a *villa* somewhat farther away. The *cabildo* even proved to be prepared to lend a sum of 1,000 *pesos* from the health care sector (*ramo del hospital*) to enable the livestock needed for realising the proposed foundation to be bought in Corrientes.

Governor Bazán's intention was that landless country people and 'vagabonds' from elsewhere would settle in the proposed village. He was thinking especially of those who had left el Guarnipitán ten years previously and had led a marginal existence since then as *intrusos* on grazing lands which were already privately owned by

\(^{13}\) Rivarola Paoli 1993:154,159.
others. They were a source of nuisance through the rustling of cattle. Their resettlement would not only solve a number of land disputes, but also stimulate agriculture around la Villeta and so ensure a better provisioning of the rebuilt fort. More important, however, was that the new settlement would increase safety and act as a support point for river navigation.

Maestre de campo, Pedro Domínguez de Ovelar, was charged with the building of the villa on 5 March 1714. He ensured that streets were laid out, that house plots and other lands were allocated and that a start was made on the construction of the church. Once again, Indians supplied the labour, because Governor Bazán ordained that the inhabitants of Ypané, Guarambaré and Itá should report at the fort of Santa Rosa with various caciques in order to help. Teams also came from Altos, Atyrá, Tobatí, Caazapá and Yuty. In a short time a small settlement was created, laid out in a chessboard pattern, near a natural harbour on the Río Paraguay. It received the official name of San Felipe de Borbón en el valle de Bastán, but after some time was increasingly simply called la Villeta (del Guarnipitán) or Villeta.

In order to furnish the new settlement with colonists, Governor Bazán had meanwhile ordered Sergeant Major Francisco de Espínola to proceed to the ‘paraje del Tebicuary’, accompanied by certain other persons, in order to hold a junta general of all the persons who had settled there as far as the Arroyos Caañabé and Ybicuí (Fig. 7.3). The purpose was to make a survey of all the pobladores living there. As we have said, they were largely Spanish vecinos, Negroes and mulattoes who had fled to the area east of the lake of Ypo’á and bordering bañados in order to escape the Indian danger, but possessed no land of their own there. According to the survey, one hundred persons were eligible for removal. Governor Bazán ordered them to report to the maestre de campo, Domínguez de Ovelar, on 5 March, when the foundation was due to begin, so that lands could be allocated to them. Not all of them came to live in the new village immediately. In 1717, only 43 vecinos had settled in la Villeta and the village had no more than about 200

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14 Villeta is the diminutive of villa.
inhabitants; the other 57 vecinos had not yet made up their minds. Those who did settle were allotted chacras and estancias of varying size, according to the resources (mainly labour and livestock) at their disposal.

The new inhabitants engaged in arable farming and stockbreeding and therefore lived for most of the time on their land. There were few permanently inhabited houses in the village and the vida urbana remained limited. Many people came there only at the weekends - to attend mass and do business. All this made it easier for the Indians to carry out their attacks, which therefore continued, although less frequently than before. Solitary and isolated chacras were particularly under threat. In the village, people could find some safety, if necessary. The houses around the central plaza were built to form a kind of wall and the windows on the outer side could be used as loopholes. The inhabitants of la Villeta performed regular militia duties in the presidios of San Antonio and Santa Rosa and also had to supply the guardias of Remolinos with meat.

The beginning was difficult, but rather better times began when various supplementary renovation works were carried out at the charge of Governor Martín de Barúa in 1727. The village was then given, among other things, a better church. In 1730, shortly after the church was completed, the governor ordered that those who still occupied other people’s land in the district of Tebicuary, Caañabé and Carapeguá should move to el Guarnipitán within two months. They had to build houses there and occupy the arable fields and grazing lands which the government would distribute to them. With this measure, the governor wished to give la Villeta a larger population, make its defences more effective and make the existence of the population already present less risky. In other words, he hoped to consolidate the settlement more in this manner. Consideration was also given to the building of a real fortaleza, but according to Viola, that was never realised. The population of la Villeta nevertheless managed to maintain itself, although it was at risk from time to time. In 1738, for example, the plain of Guarnipitán was again ravaged by Mbocovfes’ attacks and Indian aggression also continued after that. There were also safer periods, however, as is perhaps shown by the fact that someone requested a land grant (merced) in 1744.
The foundation of la Villeta demonstrated that it was not easy to settle the riparian zone of the Paraguay. The inhabitants had constantly to contend with Indian attacks. Their difficulties were further increased because they were poor, certainly at the beginning, and they received little official support (and nor could it be offered).

The foundation of la Villeta meant not only the creation of new colonisation opportunities in el Guarnipitán, but also better protection of, and new development possibilities for, the various settlements south of Asunción, such as the pueblos de indios of Ypané and Guarambaré, and Spanish settlements, such as Capiatá and San Lorenzo de la Frontera. The dense, dispersed rural population living south of the capital could also feel safer.

In 1793, la Villeta and the surrounding rural area had a population of 3,098. It eventually became a flourishing agricultural centre that was surrounded in the nineteenth century by extensive orange groves and exported large quantities of citrus fruit to the la Plata region. Livestock were kept and the rich forests in the vicinity also enabled some shipbuilding to be established (rowing boats, sloops and other small craft).

The foundation of San Isidro Labrador de Curuguaty

Under Governor Juan Gregorio Bazán de Pedraza, not only was a new settlement founded on the west side of the Región Oriental, but also one farther to the east, in the interior. As we related earlier,

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15 San Lorenzo de la Frontera (not to be confused with San Lorenzo del Campo Grande) was also called Ñemby and was a settlement around a chapel which had already started to form before 1718 (Gutiérrez 1983:328).


17 For what follows, see Azara 1990:206; Corrêa do Lago 1984; Gutiérrez 1983:29,327-8; Rivarola Paoli 1993:160; Viola 1986b:47-54.
a hundred poorer inhabitants of Villa Rica, who were dissatisfied with the definitive location of their settlement and with their fellow townspeople, noted in about 1715 that the threat from the Portuguese had diminished, and so they were anxious to found a village on or near the spot where Villa Rica had been located until 1676. From there it would be possible to make better use of the nearby yerbales. Moreover, a new settlement, provided with a priest and chapel, would benefit the spiritual wellbeing of the people working in the yerbales, improve public order and safety and also alleviate the shortage of agricultural land around Villa Rica. The advantages for the province as a whole were somewhat different from those for the inhabitants of Villa Rica. A new settlement would be advantageous because it could be used as a base for the periodic patrols (correrías) in the campos of Jerez-Ñu and other northeastern areas to check on the activities of the Portuguese. It would also be easier to oppose the attacks of Mbayáes and Monteses.¹⁸ The result would be that the rich yerbales situated in the north would be safeguarded and their exploitation would be easier and safer.

The request of the inhabitants of Villa Rica to be allowed to found a settlement was granted by Governor Bazán in 1714. About a hundred persons from Villa Rica received permission to settle near the former location and returned there in 1715. Those who went had to possess weapons, livestock, seed and other necessities, and a chapel had also to be built immediately. The new settlement was officially founded, with due observance of all the formalities, on 14 May 1715, which was the feast day of San Isidro Labrador, and hence the settlement was officially named San Isidro Labrador de los Reyes Católicos de Curuguaty. The new village was situated on the Río Curuguaty, one and a half leguas from the spot that had been abandoned by the Villarriqueños in 1676 and about 50 leguas (220 km) from the capital. Maestre de campo, Alonso Benítez de Portugal, acted not only as the principal intermediary during the negotiations over the foundation, but also as the supervisor of the

¹⁸ Azara 1990:141-2. The Monteses were also referred to as Tobatines or Cayn-guás, but seldom more specifically, e.g. as Tarumáes - living in el Tarumá - or Carimáes - living in el Carimá (Susnik 1965:196).
building works. It is quite possible that some colonisation attempts had already been undertaken in the area a short time previously, but if this was so, they were certainly not successful; the area was completely deserted. According to Gutiérrez, the settlement was relocated after some time a short distance to a site adjoining the Arroyo Piquipó.

Curuguaty was built in the heart of the most important yerba producing region of the province, so it is not surprising that it soon flourished. In a short time, there was a church, the vecinos had been housed, chacras been laid out, the colonists had found a livelihood and the settlement could serve as a buffer against Portuguese expansion, if necessary. The new settlement already had 483 inhabitants by June 1716, which made it probably the third largest Spanish settlement after Asunción (with c. 5,000 inhabitants) and Villa Rica (with c. 1,200 inhabitants). The settlement was built according to a plan; rectangular manzanas were laid out and the church was built at the centre of the village (it was therefore a kind of trazado indiano, i.e. a town plan that was comparable with that of the pueblos de indios). In 1719 there was also already a casa de la república. Bazán’s successor, Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda, was so impressed with the rapid progress that he proposed giving San Isidro the status of villa. As a result, Curuguaty already had a cabildo (which met in the casa de la república) after three years, as well as judicial facilities and a regiment. The Spanish king officially granted the village the title of villa by Real Cédula of 31 August 1721. When an ejido, dehesas and tierras de propios were demarcated and formal solares were allocated under José de Antequera in 1722, the village already had 196 families.

On 6 June 1716, Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda, in his capacity of juez poblador, requested all the colonists who had legally settled in the newly founded settlement to describe their households and possessions. His request led to a socio-economic census filling 78 documents, which were delivered during the period 6 June-10 August 1716. These show that San Isidro was then already one of the larger Spanish settlements,

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19 A simple plan dating from the time of the foundation is to be found in Gutiérrez, 1983:33.
although its economic role was still a modest one. The colonists had immediately devoted themselves to arable and livestock farming and horse breeding. The majority of pobladores therefore listed as their possessions: a chacra, paddocks, a garden or tree plantings, some cows, pigs, sheep, mules, oxen and horses. It must be assumed from the census that the majority of families cultivated their campos themselves, largely for subsistence. In only 15 of the 78 documents are there references to servants and other poor persons who were a charge on the household head; only one Indian worker was mentioned. No mention was made of yerba collection, but Reyes de Balmaceda’s request probably gave no occasion to mention it. Trade was modest; insofar as it took place, it went overland. Defence was also a task of the inhabitants themselves, but those who lived in the front line had military experience almost by definition. Study of the colonists’ names suggests that a number of them were perhaps related, but two thirds of the household heads were not. This makes it clear that the colonisation in the Curuguaty area was not something reserved for a small group of interrelated households.20

Curuguaty was for a long time the most forward Spanish settlement in the northeast and, as such, an effective bulwark against Portuguese invasions. The Monteses could also be kept better under control from there. A presidio fortificado was built in 1749 to give better protection against the Mbayáes. Another advantage of Curuguaty was that it could serve as a base for further occupation of the territory. It would become increasingly clear from the 1770s that the foundation of Curuguaty had been the start of a successful northwards advance of the colonisation front (see below and Chapter 9). In the area of communications, San Isidro served as a support point on the route between Asunción or Villa Rica and the yerbales in the east. This route followed the waterways (the Río Paraguay, the Río Jejuy and the Río Curuguaty), but also ran over land.

Although the land around Curuguaty was very suitable for arable farming and there were also good campos for grazing, yerba gathering nevertheless became the principal activity and Curuguaty began to prosper mainly as a yerba emporium. The yerba was

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20 For further details, see the study of this census by Corrêa do Lago (1984).
initially shipped wholly in canoes and *balsas* but, in the course of time, the need for a more direct link with Asunción led to the construction of a road that could be used by small ox carts (*carretas*). This road passed through Yhú, Ajos and Dos Arroyos (now San José).

According to Azara, the population of over 4,000 persons was not prosperous at the end of the eighteenth century, even though the village was an important centre for yerba gathering. According to Aguirre, San Isidro still had little character at that time. No real (regular) street plan could be distinguished, because the *ranchos* were rather dispersed, but that was really an advantage, because of the fire risk. There was a square, however, bordered by a few houses. Many of those who had a house in the village lived for most of the time outside the nucleus, on their own land, that was situated within a radius of 5-6 *leguas*.

The foundation of Arecutacuá, Itauguá, Carapeguá and Emboscada

Two further settlements were built under the successor of Governor Bazán, Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda (1717-21), and were purely military in character. In about 1717, the new fort of San José del Peñon was built on the spot which is now called Piquete-Cué, in the north of the valley of Tapuá. It provided better protection against the Chaco Indians. In the following year - 1718 - the stone fort (*castillo*) of San Agustín de Arecutacuá was erected. The latter fortification, in particular, was of great strategic importance. Until 1760, the year in which Belén was founded, the

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21 According to the census held by the commander of the local militia, the *villa* and its jurisdiction had 4,392 inhabitants in 1790; 1,371 persons lived in the *villa* and the surrounding district, while the remaining 3,025 persons had settled in four *valles* (*pagos* or *partidos rurales*), i.e. those of Carimbatay (1,361 inh.), Ibirapariyaru-Tacuary-ibicuy (1,392 inh.), Palomares (96 inh.) and Yhu-Ybicuy (172 inh.) (Viola 1986b:57).


23 Some authors, such as Gutiérrez (1983:19-20), call the fort San Agustín de Arecutagüá. They also refer to Aracuatacúa.
populated part of the litoral extended only from the mouth of the Piribebuy to near the site of Villeta. This part of the river region, however, had to be permanently defended against Indian attacks. The Paso de Arecutacuá was one of the approach routes most used by the Indians to penetrate into la Cordillera and other areas. In as early as 1679, therefore, the cabildo of Asunción decided to found a villa in the paso, or at least a presidio to protect the capital and the surrounding valleys, but for various reasons one was never built. Governor Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda decided on 16 March 1717, however, that a castle had to be built at the paso. It would not only protect the inhabited area against Indian aggression from the north, but might also hinder possible attacks by the Portuguese (whom the Spanish still feared). The construction began in the same month of March 1717. 50 Indians were brought in for the purpose from the Jesuit missions, under the direction of maestre de campo Sebastián Fernández Montiel. Since the building of a good fortification required considerable labour and resources, the governor also called upon the Spanish population.

The castle of Arecutacuá was built on a rocky promontory where the Arroyo Piribebuy emptied into the Río Paraguay. According to Nogués, the fortification was a very simple castle, because it possessed neither a moat nor a drawbridge. It certainly did not have the imposing exterior of a European medieval castle, but it fully deserved its name strategically and technically; it had curtain walls, bastions and lookout towers. It was completed in July 1719 and was given the name San Agustín de Arecutacuá. The presidios in San Roque and Altos were then dismantled, which meant that their militias could be deployed on guard duty in the new castillo. For these guard duties, the castle commander was also given the use of two chalupas de guerra, which patrolled along the Río Paraguay.

The castillo soon proved to have been situated in relative isolation from other settlements, which hindered its logistic support. Moreover, the militiamen who occupied the fort on a rota basis had to cover great distances to reach it and return home again. But no measures were taken until 1740 to solve that problem.

In May 1723, the castle suffered serious damage from an exceptionally high water level of the Río Paraguay. Thanks in part to the Revolución de los Comuneros, indios fronterizos were again able to
make incursions without meeting serious resistance. When Governor Antequera had disappeared from the revolutionary scene in March 1725, Governor Martín de Barúa immediately decided that the castle should be restored. The restoration was completed in August 1726 and it could again perform its protective role. After Arecutacuá was rebuilt, the farmers could return to the fertile lands of Tapuá. In 1738 the castle had been practically abandoned, because the costs of fitting it out and maintaining it proved to be rather high, but it nevertheless continued to perform a defensive role throughout the eighteenth century.  

Few changes occurred in the settlement picture in the 1720s, which was mainly related to the fact that life in Paraguay was dislocated by the Revolución de los Comuneros (1717-35). People’s minds were on other things then. From that period, there is really only the creation of Itauguá and Carapeguá to report.

Itauguá was a small village, not far from Asunción (Fig. 0.2), where Guaraníes led an independent life on their own land, albeit that they had been concentrated there by the authorities. They periodically performed *mita* labour for the population of Asunción, in exchange for which they received some clothing. Governor Martín de Barúa decided to create a larger settlement here in 1728, by bringing in Creoles. Among the considerations which played a part in the decision were the fact that Itauguá was already a kind of reduction in the strategic vicinity of other *pueblos de indios* and that a larger, reasonably well protected, settlement would be able to contribute more to the regional supply of agricultural and artisan products. Barúa may also have wished to prove himself as an enterprising administrator in a Paraguay dislocated by the rebellion, while a request from the Franciscans may also have played a role. However this may be, a true village was established in 1728, built around a chapel which was dedicated to Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Itauguá and was initially entrusted to the Franciscans. The *pago* of Itauguá was rather densely populated in about 1766, but the
village seems nevertheless not to have obtained *plena vigencia* until the final decades of the eighteenth century.\(^{25}\)

Carapeguá had quite a different origin. It can be traced back to an *oratorio* dedicated to Jesus, Mary and Joseph that was built by Don Josef Cervín between 1700 and 1720. Between 1720 and 1730 it was replaced by a chapel built by Josef Miranda and given the name Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Carapeguá. Other sources attribute the foundation of the nucleus to Martín de Barúa, around an existing chapel, in 1725, because the site occupied a strategic position between Misiones and Asunción and because the Arroyo Cañabé, with its marshy borders, was difficult to cross at that point. The nearby chapel of San Lorenzo de Quiindy (literally: *frontera abajo*) was built in around 1773; the nucleus around it developed in more or less the same way as Carapeguá.\(^{26}\)

When the *Revolución de los Comuneros* had ended, attention again turned to the security of the province and it was decided in 1740 - under the governorship of Rafael de la Moneda (1740-47) - to found the village of Emboscada, close to the castle of Arecutacuá.\(^{27}\) The settlement was sited between the Río Salado and the Río Piribebuy and had to support, or rather, largely replace, the defensive role of San Agustín de Arecutacuá. Just as south of Asunción, where la Villeta had been founded, a new settlement also seemed to be a more efficient barrier (*antemural*) here than a fort. The settlement also had to provide for a better provisioning of the castle. Emboscada (officially: San Agustín de Emboscada) was fully completed in 1745 and the first colonists had settled there. They were the several hundred free Negroes and mulattoes who had settled in the neighbourhood of the fort to assist its construction in 1718, and had undoubtedly increased further in number when

\(^{25}\) Azara (1990:230) refers to Itaguá, that fell under the parish of Capiatá. According to him, the settlement was founded in 1766 at the request of scattered *vecinos*. Gutiérrez (1983:329) also mentions this.


Governor Martín de Barúa had ordered that the fort should be restored after the flood damage in March 1725, using the labour of free Negroes and mulattoes from the province. Governor de la Moneda decided that these persons must be settled in Emboscada. As a background to his decision, it should be stated that, under decrees of the Spanish Crown dating from 1574, 1577 and 1592, free male and female Negroes and mulattoes in Paraguay had to pay an annual tax of one marco de plata. This tax was difficult to collect in practice, which is why Governor Moneda found it more effective to exempt them from this obligation and let them perform military tasks in its stead as inhabitants of Emboscada, as also happened in other parts of the country. In 1783 Governor Lázaro de Ribera issued rules for the functioning of Emboscada as a settlement. The village did not perform solely a military function; the inhabitants were also expected to practise agriculture and supply themselves with food.

The plan of the village showed similarities with that of the pueblos de indios. There was a plaza with a church at its centre. The houses had balconies, but they were not arranged in long "terraces" along the sides of the square, but were grouped along parallel streets.28 According to Azara, Emboscada housed 840 Negroes and mulattoes and 221 Spaniards (foráneos; "strangers") in 1792. Apart from being engaged in defence, the population was also occupied in agriculture and forestry and other economic activities. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Emboscada had grown into an important rural centre. Quarries and woods were being exploited and about 1,000 descendants of the first pardo settlers were living there. A census of 1817 recorded a total of 1,509 blacks and 714 Spaniards in Emboscada and its environs, which gave a total population for the parish of 2,223 souls.

The pueblo de pardos of Emboscada resulted in a remarkable reduction in the incursions of Chaco Indians into la Cordillera and the valley of Tapuá, which were then the northern periphery of the territory occupied by the Spaniards. This area, however, with its fertile agricultural soils, continued to suffer from the attacks of the Mbayáes, who came from the north. Governor de la Moneda

therefore ensured that a better defence line was also built to protect the crossings in the Río Manduvirá. By 1735, under the deputy governor Cristóbal Domínguez de Ovelar, the redoubts (reductos) of Mainumby and Urundey-yurú had already been built. 29 A complete line of defence was created under the governorship of Rafael de la Moneda on the basis of the then existing fuertes of San Ildefonso de Tapuá, San Agustín de Arecutacuá, San José del Peñon (or del Mentidero) and the villages of Altos and Tobati, with the aim of consolidating the occupation of la Cordillera and the region around Asunción. The presidios of Ypytá, Manduvirá and Urundey-yurú (which were built or refurbished under Moneda) also played an important part in the line. In 1722, there were still only 10 fortifications, but by 1738 the number had increased to 12 and, at the end of the governorship of Rafael de la Moneda (1747), there were 21. 30 In the latter year, there existed near the Paraguay river north of Asunción (‘costa arriba’) the fortifications of San Miguel, San Sebastián, San Ildefonso, San José del Peñon, Arecutacuá, Manduvirá, Mainumby and Urundey-yurú. Besides Indians from the villages of la Cordillera, Moneda also recruited numbers of Spanish campesinos for the building work. The latter benefited from the forts to the extent that the additional protection enabled them to expand considerably the area of cultivated land. The forts were also deemed to receive logistical support and help from nearby Emboscada. The defence line set up by Governor Moneda continued to serve its purpose until the end of the eighteenth century, partly thanks to the fact that repair works were carried out from time to time (for example, San Ildefonso del Tapuá was refurbished in 1748 and the fort of San Miguel repaired in 1762). The line was also constantly extended, particularly south of Asunción. For example, Governor Marcos José Larazzábal not only had a number of presidios refurbished in 1749, but also had three new ones built: Santa Bárbara, San Marcos and San Fernando (that was situated near the mouth of the Montiel, one legua from the Río Tebicary and 20

30 Governor de la Moneda also ordered the building of the presidio of Angostura, so called because of its situation on the narrowest section of the Río Paraguay, about two leguas south of Villeta (Gutiérrez 1983:22).
from the Río Paraguay, and guarded the road leading to the Río Tebicuary and the Misiones).

In 1761, the total number of *presidios* on both sides of the *costa* was 17, nearly half of which were situated north of Asunción (*costa arriba*): immediately outside the town was San Miguel; two *leguas* further was San Sebastián; another two *leguas* further was San Ilde-

![Fig. 8.3. Fortines, pueblos de indios and rural chapels in the region of Asunción, 1700-25 (after Garavaglia 1983:142).](image-url)
Settlement in the period 1685-1773

fonso; el Peñón followed one and a half leguas to the north; two leguas from there was Arecutacuá; with Emboscada another two leguas to the north; and at 8 leguas from there was Manduvirá. From there as far as the reduction of Mbayáes created in Belén in 1760, there was a less well protected area of 36 leguas. The attempt in about 1752 to extend the line still further, after Mbayáes had attacked cattle farms, with the establishment of the presidio of Caraguatay, failed; this guard post survived for only a short time.

South of Asunción (costa abajo) the line comprised in around 1750 - proceeding from south to north - the (timber-built) presidios of San Fernando, Santa Rosa de Cumbarity, Angostura, la Villeta, San Antonio, San Marcos and Lambaré (known as Rosario) and, in the harbour of Asunción, the guardia of San Jerónimo de Tacumbú.31

Governor de la Moneda also set about improving the organisation of defence: he instituted the ramo de guerra, which was a contribution in kind to the defence costs. All this resulted in greater peace in the province. Thanks to the decisions of the energetic governor, it was subsequently very difficult for the Mbayáes and other Indian groups to cross the Río Manduvirá. The pueblos de indios of Altos, Atyrá and Tobati, which served as a buffer north of Asunción, were now considerably better protected against Indian attacks and the fertile lands of la Cordillera could be peacefully occupied for permanent use (see below).

In 1740, the area around the capital occupied by the Spaniards was still very small; it extended from la Villeta to Tapuá, a distance of no more than 12 leguas from north to south. Following the measures of Governor de la Moneda, however, it was possible to expand the occupied territory considerably. The governors Pinedo and Melo de Portugal ensured that this expansion continued after 1773 (see Chapter 9).

Chapter 8

The spontaneous occupation of la Cordillera and other areas

Although the populated area had increased somewhat by around 1745, it was still quite small. The 'centre' of the province was no more than an irregular arc around Asunción, the border of which passed through Limpio, Luque and Tobatí in the north and from la Villeta and San Lorenzo, through Ypané and Guarambaré to Yaguaron in the south (Fig. 0.2). Beyond that was the 'periphery': the zone of Itapé, Villa Rica, Caazapá and Yuty, and that of Ajos (Coronel Oviedo) and Curuguaty. The populous Jesuit missions 'behind' the Río Tebicuary formed a world apart.

This situation changed after 1745. Although the danger of incursions by Mbayáes and other Indian groups had not yet been completely eliminated, that danger had been much reduced, thanks to the defensive measures described above. Security had been increased to such an extent that many people dared to make a livelihood in areas which had previously been avoided or abandoned. This marked the beginning of the peopling of la Cordillera.

By 'la Cordillera' was meant the region which extended 40-100 km north and northeast of Asunción, 'behind' the Río Salado and the lake of Tapaycuá or Ypacarái. It was a hilly, wooded area, consisting of a series of valleys which gradually slope down from the Cordillera de los Altos towards a zone of esteros and bañados. Besides many watercourses, la Cordillera had fertile soils, that were suitable for arable farming and forestry. Hundreds of Paraguayan households settled there after 1745, after which numerous clearances were made and many rozas established. The area was occupied spontaneously, which means that the settlement was carried out by the colonists with their own resources. This resulted in a pattern of dispersed settlement. 32 In other words, a population emerged which lived permanently in the countryside and outside the town. It consisted of what were called españoles pobres, gente ret, or coyguá, who would gradually become increasingly numerous in

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Paraguay and disperse themselves over the province. Dos Arroyos, Cariy, Aparipy and Ybyraty were parajes in la Cordillera at that time which were markedly agricultural and rural in character.

At the end of the eighteenth century, thanks to its relatively dense population, its agricultural production and its location near Asunción, la Cordillera could be regarded as an important region.

More dispersed settlement occurred not only in the valleys of la Cordillera, but also elsewhere. The dispersal of the population and the emergence of a dispersed settlement pattern were, in fact, a fairly general phenomenon in the eighteenth century. Mention should also be made in this connection of the zones of Campo Grande, la Frontera, Capiyaty and Itauguá. There was also a further growth of scattered settlement in the area between the Arroyo Caañabé and the Río Tebicuary, which largely consisted of the extensive Tebicuary district (partido) (now Caapucú) (Fig. 7.3). As we have already mentioned, this area already began to be occupied after 1675. In contrast to the area around Asunción, the district south of the Arroyo Caañabé was not densely forested and undulating, but open and virtually flat and suited mainly to extensive cattle ranching. Consequently, the scattered settlement pattern here was determined by the location of the estancias.

Yet another example is furnished by the forests and campos around Bobí (now Artigas), the area of settlement of numerous foráneos (see below). Population dispersal also occurred in the district around Villa Rica, which reached its final location in 1682. When the town's environs appeared to be sufficiently safe, the population began to spread out, partly in order to farm in the valleys of Mbocayaty, Yataity and Carobeni and in the neighbourhood of the Capilla de Borja (Yaca-guação), along the road to Caazapá.

The various partidos (distritos) de españoles were subdivided into compañías as part of the military reorganisation which was carried through at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1790, 9 of the 12 companies of the Regiment of Dragoons corresponded with the area of la Cordillera. They were those of Barrero Grande, Aparipy, Piribebuy, Cariy, Capiypé (Caacupe?), Caandy, Naranjos,
Tobatí, and Ytú-miní. This illustrates the importance of la Cordillera.33

The dispersed nature of the settlement in valles and compañías incidentally did not mean that there were no concentrations at all. A number of small chapels were soon built and a number of people generally also settled around them, either immediately or after some time, although never very many. The partido Dos Arroyos, for example, acquired a chapel in 1781, dedicated to San José and was elevated to a parish in 1798, with its first house, that of a grocer, next to the chapel, in 1795.34 One could mention numerous other examples of the role that chapels have played in the process of nucleation (e.g. Piribebuy, San Lorenzo, and Barrero Grande that was first called Capilla San Roque). There are also examples of rural areas where such chapels were absent and consequently nucleation did not occur (as in Aparipy, in la Cordillera, where the population consisted of foráneos on the territory of Tobatí, where they also went to church).35 The connection is nevertheless generally such that capilla and casco urbano were more or less synonymous. No truly urban centres emerged, however, and the settlement growth was always very gradual. Partly because of this, it is not possible to give foundation years but, at the most, years in which the chapels were built. The officially planned and founded settlements generally had much larger central cores and also had a more regular street pattern; the allocation of chacras and solares was also more orderly.

Susnik has pointed out that the old casonas-haciendas in the Tebicuary cattle ranching region often gave a stimulus to nucleation and that the genesis of some hamlets (poblados) consequently differed from that in the valles and compañías of an arable farming

33 The military reorganisation incidentally later influenced the geographical names: the rural subdivisions of the partidos or distritos de españoles were later called compañías. They were parajes or subdivisiones menores of the distritos rurales.
34 Velázquez 1966b:30.
35 Gutiérrez (1983:405) also points out that some rural places of worship did not generate population growth, because their private owners did not want them to be used by other people; they feared a rise in the value of the surrounding land, followed by a loss of property rights.
region such as la Cordillera. She cites as an example Caapucú; the nucleus began to form when hacendados acquired grazing lands in the Tebicuary region after the expulsion of the Jesuits. A chapel was then built on the land of Don Diego Félix de León as a private oratorio, dedicated to the Señor de la Paciencia de Caapucú, and was consecrated on 14 August 1787.\textsuperscript{36}

Eventually, parishes (curatos) or lieutenancies (tenientazgos) emerged from these small nuclei. Beginning in the 1740s, more and more rural parishes and vice-parishes were formed, generally based on the existing chapels. In 1782, the cabildo of the cathedral referred to the existence of 4 curatos and 13 tenientazgos in the district of Asunción (excluding the urban parishes), which were situated 5-9 leguas apart. Curatos and tenientazgos occurred not only in the district of Asunción, but also in the countryside that fell under the jurisdiction of Villa Rica and under that of other recently founded Spanish settlements.

The dispersed rural population had increased to such an extent at the end of the colonial period that Azara characterised the population of various areas as \textit{sembrados por el campo} (sown through the fields). The areas of dispersed settlement had then already all been divided into parishes and vice-parishes and there were numerous small nuclei consisting of a chapel, a few amenities (even if it was only a churchyard) and some dwellings surrounding it.

The spontaneous occupation incidentally also had its shadow side. A number of mestizoes and Creoles intruded into the territory of the \textit{pueblos de indios} (partly deliberately, partly unintentionally) and settled in places where this was not permitted. The phenomenon incidentally also occurred outside these \textit{pueblos}: a number of country dwellers settled on land which had already passed into private hands through gifts. These non-Indian occupiers on the territory of the \textit{pueblos de indios} were called foráneos; in other places they were often referred to as intrusos. Until 1768, the well-organised and guarded Jesuit villages had not suffered from such

\textsuperscript{36} Gutiérrez 1983:389; Susnik cited by González Torres 1995:98-9. Gutiérrez says that the cabildo of Asunción wished to build a settlement on this site in as long ago as 1680 in order to reduce Indian attacks, but that this plan finally did not go through.
infiltrations, but the Franciscan or former Franciscan missions (Itá, Ypané, Guarambaré, Yaguarón, Atyrá, Altos and Tobatí) suffered all the more. They were situated in more densely populated territory and at a smaller distances from Asunción. The infiltrations also set racial mixing in train.

**Village foundations by the Jesuits in the period 1746-63**

The Jesuits were also brought in after the *Revolución de los Comuneros* to promote the further colonisation of the province (Table 8.1). At the request of various governors and with the agreement of their superiors, they founded, in the north, three reductions east of the Paraguay river and one on the river’s west bank. The settlements were situated outside their mission territory proper, that lay south of the Tebicuary-Yguazú. The reductions were intended to pacify the province further, to protect the northern border zone and so secure Spanish sovereignty over certain parts of the province, to increase the survival and livelihood chances of the Spaniards (who lived mainly from yerba collection in the north) and also to expand the colonisation potential of the region. The foundation work was obviously combined with mission work and the latter was, in fact, the most important aspect for the fathers. Another important consideration for the Jesuits was that, through foundations in the north, they could perhaps start to build a chain of missions that would eventually connect their villages in Paraguay with those in Chiquitos.

The first mission to be founded was San Joaquín de los Tobatines (also known as San Joaquín del Tarumá) (Fig. 8.2). According to Father Dobrizhoffer, missionaries of the Jesuit Order had made the first contacts with the Tobatines (also called Tarumáes or Monteses) in 1697. They were then brought together in the reduction of Nuestra Señora de Fe, but fled to the forest. In 1722, the Jesuits had again made contacts and concentrated some 400 Tobatines near the Río Tarumá, along the road from Ajos to Curuguaty. The fathers had founded the village of Nuestra Señora de Fe there, situated a good distance into the zone with many *yerbales*. The yerba collectors were expected to be able to perform their work
better through the presence of the mission post, but it proved impossible to set up an effective defence system against the attacks of Mbayáes, who lived in the vicinity of the reduction. The Jesuits therefore decided in 1723 to transfer the approximately 400 Indians to the village of Santa María de Fe, south of the Río Tebicuary, i.e. to the Order’s mission territory proper and to a village inhabited by descendants of the Itatines. The Tobatines lived here from 1724, but deserted en masse in 1733, during the conflicts between Comuneros and Jesuits. Cultural differences between both groups of Indians and annoyance about the fact that they had been forced to leave their homeland were the main motives for desertion. About 60 families returned to the woods of their original territory, which were much richer than those near Santa María. According to Azara, Father Jaime Aguilar was given the task in 1735 of forming another reduction with these deserters in el Tarumá, but the author does not state whether this actually happened. It must be assumed that it did not. In the 1740s, the provincial authorities therefore still considered it desirable to commission the Jesuits to set up a reduction once again in the forests of el Tarumá. A new mission settlement would now also again have the advantage that the yerba collectors would be less troubled by aggressive Indians and so would be better able to exploit the local yerbales. The foundation of the proposed settlement, in which 408 persons were concentrated, was realised in the paraje of Tarumá in 1746. It was the work of Father Sebastián de Yegros and was built with support from Santa María, that supplied livestock, clothing etc. The reduction was allocated a large area of agricultural land in 1747, enough for four villages. The village was initially laid out on a planned basis, but after this proved to be a fire risk, a more dispersed pattern was decided upon. In 1753, the Indians again deserted en masse, as they still feared that they would eventually again be transferred to the south. They were concentrated yet again. In that same year, the village was moved somewhat to the south because of the danger of attacks by the Mbayáes and, in 1755, it moved to its definitive site: on a hill on the east side of the Cordillera de Caaguazú. It was bordered by tributaries of the Yhú. In order to increase its security and chances of success, several hundred Christian Guaraníes from Santa María de Fe came to live in the new mission village at the begin-
The families from the south brought everything with them, including animals, tools and agricultural seeds. They had to serve as an example to the Tobatines and so familiarise them with regular work. In 1750, a total of 117 households (669 persons) lived in San Joaquín.

When the Jesuits were forced to leave the province of Paraguay in 1768, the settlement had about 2,000 inhabitants and several estancias full of cattle. It was then regarded as a progressive village. In 1772, Governor Pinedo had the borders of the village territory demarcated in order to avoid disputes with San Estanislao. After the departure of the fathers, the condition of the village deteriorated. In 1783, the few inhabitants were categorised as poor and it was reported in 1791 that some 100 persons could not go to church, because they were too poor to dress respectably. In 1799, only 931 inhabitants remained. Some of the inhabitants had left and a smallpox epidemic had also taken its toll.

On 13 November 1749, at the request of Governor Jaime de San Just, the Jesuits founded a second reduction for Tobatines, over 50 km north of San Joaquín, near the Arroyo Cuarepotí, in the territory of cacique Arabebé. They were assisted in this endeavour by a number of Indians from San Joaquín. One of the objectives (at least of the authorities) was yet again to increase security in an area with many yerbales. The settlement was christened San Estanislao de Kostka and was established by the fathers Sebastián de Yegros and Antonio de Planes (Llanes). The village then contained some 200 families, but many Indians returned to the forest, so that the survival of the mission was put in doubt. For this reason, the mission was refounded on 25 April 1751, on a site that was known as Tupicangué and was situated somewhat farther to the south, on land belonging to San Joaquín, but which was split off from this latter reduction. This placed San Estanislao about 13 leguas from San Joaquín. The village had 130 Indians at that time. Because of the fire danger, the ranchos were dispersed over the central area. In

order to increase the success of the foundation, Christian Indians from Santa Marfa de Fe were also again settled here. Among the things they brought with them were 600 head of cattle. Like San Joaquín, this mission settlement was also subsequently granted a large area of land, by Governor Agustín Fernando de Pinedo, but its extent was later restricted when other villages were founded in the vicinity. Various legal actions were fought, because numerous intrusos (foráneos) tried to occupy land illegally. Life was difficult in the mission in the early years, partly because there was little support from San Joaquín, which was itself still being developed. In 1767, the village had about 2,300 inhabitants. At the end of the eighteenth century, San Estanislao was an important yerba and timber centre, while arable and livestock farming had become particularly important in San Joaquín. Both villages had been exempted from encomienda obligations, which was to be expected in view of the period in which the reductions were founded and the ideas of their founders.38

The third Jesuit mission in the northern Región Oriental was Nuestra Señora de Belén. As we related earlier, the Mbayá Indians, who inhabited the Chaco at the time of the conquista, had migrated east of the river after 1670, about 60 leguas distant from Asunción. From their new territory they carried out surprise attacks on chacras and estancias north of the capital and elsewhere. Thanks to the foundation of San Agustín de la Emboscada and the building of a defensive line under the governorship of Rafael de la Moneda, these attacks had been greatly reduced. The Mbayáes (who were declining in numbers) subsequently became increasingly squeezed between the Portuguese in Mato Grosso and the expanding Spanish in Paraguay. Saeger (1989) has pointed out that the basis of their livelihood also became weakened through overexploitation of the palm and algarrobo stands and over-hunting. Some of them realized that it would be better to abandon their hostile stance and concluded a peace treaty with the Spaniards in 1756, under the government of

Table 8.1. Pueblos de misiones founded by the Jesuits in their mission province of Paraguay, 1746-63.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/village</th>
<th>Founded in</th>
<th>Founder(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Paraguay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oriental</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Joaquín de los Tobatines</td>
<td>1746</td>
<td>Sebastián de Yegros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Estanislao Kostka</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>Sebastián de Yegros/Antonio de Planes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belén</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>José Sánchez Labrador/José Martín Mantilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chaco</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaná mission Itapukú (near Río Apa)</td>
<td>shortly after 1760</td>
<td>José Sánchez Labrador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Rosario y San Carlos del Timbó de los Abipones</td>
<td>1763</td>
<td>Martín Dobrizhoffer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jaime de San Just, which put a temporary end to their periodic attacks. Two groups (the Mbayáes Apacachodegodis and Lichagodegodis), together comprising about 400 persons, even stated in 1759 that they wished to live in a reduction. Their request was granted by Governor Jaime de San Just and led to the official foundation of the settlement of Nuestra Señora de Belén on 23-24 August 1760. For Belén, see especially: Saeger 1989; Viola 1980:30-7. Also: Benítez 1985:159; Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:57; González Torres 1995:57, Quevedo 1973:105; Gutiérrez 1983:344; Romero de Viola 1987:38; Susnik 1965:202; Susnik 1984a:209; Velázquez 1966b:45; Williams 1977b:1-2.
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Asunción and from the two other Jesuit missions (who supplied livestock). Belén was the only Jesuit mission for Mbayáes.

Some twenty Guaraní families, who were again transferred from the southern missions, had to teach the Mbayáes (who had lived from hunting, gathering, fishing and warfare) how to grow such crops as manioc, sugar cane and grapes.

Belén immediately took on the role of a guard post against Portuguese infiltrations and, in 1773, it served as a staging post and support point for the expedition which arrived from Asunción for the foundation of Villa Real (de la Concepción). Among a series of unfavourable events were the fact that the Jesuits were forced to leave the province shortly after the foundation, that the population sharply declined during smallpox epidemics in 1763 and 1789 and that the two parcialidades which had been brought together in the reduction were constantly at loggerheads. But at least equally important was the fact that the Mbayáes finally did not convert to Christianity and were moreover little inclined to take up the systematic practice of agriculture; they in fact regarded sedentary work as something inferior and this made it difficult for them to settle permanently. Some of de Mbayáes left again. Eventually, the population of Belén came to consist mainly of the Guaraníes who had come there at the foundation and others who settled there after the expulsion of the Jesuits. In contrast to the Indians from las Misiones, the Mbayáes engaged in few activities. Consequently, no truly flourishing and exemplary mission settlement emerged there. The village decayed after the departure of the Jesuits. Those who remained in Belén or came to live there were poor. Once Villa Real de la Concepción had been founded (1773; see Chapter 9), the village lost part of its strategic border function and it rapidly became a satellite of Villa Real. The inhabitants became highly dependent on wage labour for the mestizoes and Creoles on the farms and in the yerbales. In the final analysis, Belén did not come up to expectations, but it nevertheless played a useful role in the

Sánchez Labrador also became famous for writing a three-volume work on El Paraguay Católico (published in 1910-17). It was based on his experiences during his stay and journeys in Paraguay and forms, as such, an important primary historical source for the Paraguay of c. 1750 (Nickson 1993:532).
pacification of the local Indians. The fathers did at least succeed in preventing the indigenous population from entering into alliances with the Chaco Indians. The existence of Belén strengthened the claims to the rich yerbales east of the river, the settlement increased security in the north, it certainly formed an important support point in its early days and also served, according to Williams, as a centre of civilisation from which various groups of Indians could be reached. It performed this civilising mission with a certain measure of success, because different groups of Mbayá, Guanás and Monte­sés settled near the mission village. They were also enticed to do so by gifts from Asunción.

The Jesuits hoped to found still more mission villages in the region - certainly after 1760 - at locations that would help to create a complete and secure link with their missions in Chiquitos. A camino de Chiquitos was never achieved, however; quite soon afterwards the Order was forced to give up its mission work.

Father Sánchez Labrador also started mission work shortly after 1760 among the Guaná in the Chaco, opposite the mouth of the Río Apa, with the intention of organising a reduction. In 1766 the reduction, named Itapukú, was moved to Región Oriental and in 1769 the mission work among this group of Indians was taken over by the Franciscans (Fig. 5.2).41

The pacifying work of the Jesuits was also desired farther to the south. Abipones, Mbocovíes and Tobas, who all formed part of the Guaycurú linguistic family and lived in the Chaco, had, as we have related, transformed themselves into nomadic horsemen. From the beginning of the eighteenth century, they made life in the southwest corner of Paraguay Oriental hazardous. They occasionally penetrated into the area of Cumbarity (between Angostura and Villeta), reached the valleys of Guaranguan and Carapeguá, or penetrated as far as the mission territory of the Jesuits via the mouth of the Río Tebicuary, where they tried to steal cattle on the estancias of Santiago, Santa Rosa and San Ignacio Guazú. Eventually, however, the various tribes desired a more peaceful existence.

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With the agreement and support of Governor Martínez Fontes, the fathers founded the reduction of Nuestra Señora del Rosario y San Carlos del Timbó de los Abipones west of the Paraguay river in 1763. This was the last mission village created by the Jesuits before their expulsion. The reduction was sited a legua west of the Río Paraguay, roughly opposite the mouth of the Río Tebicuary and near the Creole hamlet of Herradura, in an area that had to be ceded to Argentina after 1870. The founder was Father Martín Dobrizhoffer, who was of Bohemian, i.e. Czech, origin. Looked at from the Spaniards’ point of view, the primary purpose of this mission station was to reduce the attacks of the Chaco Indians, who raided estancias and chacras in the southern part of the Región Oriental via the Paso (ford) del Timbó. Nuestra Señora del Rosario was, in fact, the fourth reduction among the Abipones, because the Jesuit reductions of San Jerónimo, Concepción and San Fernando had already been founded years previously (in 1748, 1749 and 1750, respectively), in what is now part of Argentina.

No more than the other Chaco Indians, did the Abipones practise arable farming on any scale. They were gatherers, hunters and fishers and thus accustomed to moving around continually, so that it was difficult to persuade them to adopt a sedentary life. In fact, this only partly succeeded. According to Susnik, they were not at all interested in adopting a different way of life, but really only wanted a better, more secure base from which to continue their raids and incursions. They also hoped to obtain clothing, food and other necessities. It was, in fact, the Spaniards who had an interest in a genuine, properly functioning mission settlement. Moreover, the Jesuits were forced to leave after a few years. The village, which had 350 inhabitants in 1767, soon disappeared from the map, so that the southwest of the Región Oriental was again plagued by

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42 Dobrizhoffer also wrote about his experiences in Paraguay and, more in particular, his stay with the Abipones, so that he, too, like Sánchez Labrador and Paucke, provided an important primary historical source on mid-eighteenth century Paraguay (see Dobrizhoffer 1783, 1962 and 1970).
invasions and various punishment expeditions had to be mounted to deal with them.\textsuperscript{43}

Important mission work was also carried out in the years 1749-67 by the German-speaking, Silesian Jesuit Florián Paucke (generally referred to as Baucke). He succeeded in persuading the nomadic Mbocovíes to adopt a sedentary existence in the reduction of San Javier (founded in 1743 by Father Francisco Burges), taught them arable farming, crafts and other work and thus created a largely self-supporting community in the wilderness. In 1765, he founded the reduction of San Pedro. Like Dobrizhoffer, he also published extensively about his life with the Indians. His mission work took place in the mission province of Paraguay, but within the gobernación of la Plata and is therefore not further discussed here. After 1768, the Christian mission among the Mbocovíes came almost to a complete end\textsuperscript{44}, with San Javier having been in existence for less than twenty-five years.\textsuperscript{45}

To sum up, we may say that the mission work which the Jesuits had tried to develop in the Chaco from the beginning of the seventeenth century, but at that time without success, eventually became more successful after more than a century. According to Garsch, it is quite possible that they would eventually have succeeded in converting the whole Chaco\textsuperscript{46}, but this was not to be, because they were expelled quite soon after achieving their first modest successes among the Abipones and Mbocovíes. Only the San Javier mission had been somewhat more developed in 1768, the others were still at the beginning of their development, so that they rapidly declined after the expulsion. One needed much more patience with nomadic Indians and that the civil administrators and the new clergy after

\textsuperscript{43} For Nuestra Señora del Rosario y San Carlos del Timbó, see: Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:9,83; Susnik 1990-91:101-2; Viola 1986b:38-44. See also the first source for further details of the Abipones reductions on Argentinean territory.

\textsuperscript{44} Konetzke 1960:238.

\textsuperscript{45} For the work of Baucke, see, inter alia, Furlong (1935), Fiebrig (1937) and the introductions to his work (in Baucke 1908 and Paucke 1900, 1942-44, 1959-66). For further details of the San Javier mission, see: Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994: 77-9.

\textsuperscript{46} Garsch 1934:84.
1768 did not possess, while they also lacked adequate experience and wished to invest less in the reductions.

**The complications surrounding the seven eastern Jesuit missions**

As far as the mission work of the Jesuits in the Paraná-Uruguay region is concerned, the period from 1750 to 1761 has been characterised by Maeder as that of the second territorial contraction.

As we have stated, the Portuguese had tried continually from the sixteenth century to expand their sphere of influence to the west and south. In the mid-eighteenth century the Spanish and the Portuguese Crown tried to achieve a new demarcation of the two colonial spheres of influence by diplomatic means. This resulted in the Treaty of Tordesillas, that dated from 1494, being replaced in 1750 by the Treaty of Madrid. The *de facto* occupations were recognised and there was also an exchange of territory, so that the treaty is also known as the *Tratado de Permuta*. The exchange meant that Portugal relinquished the possession of Colonia do Sacramento (opposite Buenos Aires) and the use of the Río de la Plata, but that it might subsequently regard, *inter alia*, the region of Río Grande do Sul, containing seven mission villages east of the Uruguay, as part of the colony of Brazil. The Indians living in the villages were expected to leave. The transfer of the seven villages also meant that large areas which were occupied by the estancias and yerbales of these eastern mission villages and by a further three mission settlements, passed under Portuguese rule.

With the demarcation of the new colonial borders, the Jesuits lost half of the land that they had added to their mission territory in the Paraná-Uruguay region since the end of the seventeenth century. The area that passed under Portuguese authority comprised about one third of the combined mission territory of the 30 villages. The exchange also put an end, however, to the isolation that had protec-

47 The specific villages concerned, with a total population of 29,191 in 1750, were: San Nicolás (4,453 inh.), San Luis (3,653 inh.), San Lorenzo (1,835 inh.), San Miguel (6,954 inh.), San Juan (3,560 inh.), Santo Ángel (5,186 inh.) and San Borja (3,550 inh.) (Santos Hernández 1992:285).
ted the other 23 villages from the old enemy - the Portuguese. Diplomatic action by the Jesuits to have the decision reversed failed, nor did it prove possible to resettle the more than 29,000 Guaraníes living in the seven mission villages elsewhere quickly and without difficulty. The Indians had, moreover, developed a highly emotional territorial attachment, with almost sacral dimensions. They felt themselves attached to the area through history, culture and belief and did not wish to leave their villages. The further course of events is known: the Indians put up an armed resistance in the years 1754-56 against the combined Portuguese and Spanish force which was charged with implementing the treaty. The Indians almost always lost during this Guerra Guaranítica. They were finally defeated on 10 February 1756 by some 3,000 Spanish and Portuguese soldiers, assisted by cavalry and artillery, on the hill of Caaybaté, near San Juan. Some 1,500 Indians perished. The villages were occupied and partly destroyed. A number of Indians fled. When Gomes Freire withdrew from the village of Santo Ángel in 1757, he took about 700 Indian families (c. 2,000 persons) with him. The Indians were provisionally housed near the Rio Pardo. In 1763, Captain Antonio Pinto Carneiro founded the aldea Nossa Senhora dos Anjos with them.48

In 1761 the two countries agreed to revoke the Treaty of Madrid and return to the situation of 1750. The seven villages returned to Spanish rule. The Indians were able to return there, but the settlements had meanwhile greatly decayed. One of the main negative effects was that the Guaraníes' faith in the Jesuits had been seriously damaged, because they had not been successful in defending the interests of the Indians with the Spanish Crown and a number of fathers had acquiesced in the evacuation. The Indians' faith in the Spanish Crown, which they had long served as loyal vassals, was also seriously shaken. The protection which they had always been promised amounted to very little when the test came; there was no thanks for the defensive tasks they had performed. The Jesuits also lost much goodwill at the Spanish and Portuguese courts, firstly through their attempts to reverse the decisions by diplomatic means,

and subsequently through the suspicion that they incited the Indians to armed resistance (a number of Jesuits even openly helped to organise the war). The complications affecting the seven eastern mission villages took place within the jurisdiction of the diocese of Buenos Aires and are therefore of no relevance to the settlement picture in Paraguay, but they did affect the position of the Jesuits. The effects of this soon also became apparent in Paraguay.

Mission settlements founded by the Franciscans, 1753-72

From the mid-eighteenth century, the Franciscans also again engaged in settlement foundation activities on the periphery of Paraguay Oriental and the neighbouring Chaco (Table 8.2). Like the Jesuits, they also contributed in this way to the further occupation and pacification of the province.

The Franciscans, Juan Alvarenga and Antonio Ferreira, reached the Monteses or Cainguás in the Curuguaty district, with the aim of bringing them out of the forests and concentrating them in a reduction. They founded a modest settlement - Nuestra Señora del Pilar - with a small number of Indian families in 1753 (Fig. 5.2). The reduction was situated on the Río Tebicuary, on land belonging to the village of San José de Caazapá. After the priests had already baptised a reasonable number of people, they had to cease their work, because too many Indians fled the settlement. The 31 Indians who finally remained attached themselves to those of San Blas de Itá, where they took their fellow villagers as their example. In this way, Nuestra Señora del Pilar disappeared as a mission village.

In 1769, Mbayá Indians requested the authorities through cacique Camba of the Itapucú-guazu district (now Pan de Azúcar) to settle them in a mission village. The governor agreed to the request, after which the Franciscan Miguel Méndez Jofré founded the reduction of Nuestra Señora del Refugio for them. The settlement

was situated on the same latitude as the Río Apa, two leguas away from it, on a small arroyo, called Eghileghigó. For this reason, the mission was also called Nuestra Señora del Rosario (or: del Refugio) de Eghileghigó (Eguilechigó) In 1771, the settlement already had a small church and a house for the doctrinero. Méndez Jofré warned the authorities of the pressure of the Portuguese and requested them to found Spanish settlements from which the inhabitants could keep the Portuguese in check and from which they could also better keep in check the aggression of the Mbayáes (who were being set up against the Spaniards by the Portuguese). Villa Real (de la Concepción) was not built until four years later, however, and then not in the far north, near Itapucú-guazú, as the doctrinero wanted, but more to the south (see Chapter 9). After the death of the founder - in 1775 - Eghileghigó was abandoned. There were insufficient funds and there was no priest to continue the work.51

In 1769, a reduction was also established for the Ethelenoés, a Guaná group. Fathers Xavier Barzola and Miguel Méndez Jofré started mission work among them. The settlement was initially located in the Chaco, on a level with the Río Apa, two leguas from the Río Paraguay. The Jesuit, Sánchez Labrador, had already made a beginning with mission work there shortly after 1760 by founding the reduction of Itapukú. When father Méndez Jofré decided to establish a reduction for Mbayáes on the other side of the river somewhat later in 1769 (see above), the Guanás joined him, with the result that their reduction came to be situated east of the river. Little is known about this settlement; nor is it known how long the Franciscans remained there. It was probably for only a short time, because of the shortage of priests in the region.

After this first initiative, the Fathers Francisco Sotelo and Pablo Bartoli catechised among the Guaná-Layanas. They also founded a mission settlement, called Layanas. It was the third reduction founded by the Franciscans in the north. The Indians were concentrated there in the years 1770-72 by the fathers Francisco Sotelo and Pedro de Bartolomé. The village was built on the banks of the Río Apa, near a bañado east of the Paraguay. Once again, little is

known about this third Franciscan settlement, although we do know that one of the founders, Fray Pedro de Bartolomé, established another reduction with a group of Layanas in Tacuatí (paraje de Lima) in 1788.\textsuperscript{52}

Table 8.2. The reductions founded by the Franciscans in the eighteenth century in Paraguay Oriental.\textsuperscript{53}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of reduction</th>
<th>Year/period of foundation</th>
<th>Founder(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Pilar*</td>
<td>1753</td>
<td>Juan Alvarenga/Antonio Ferreira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethelenoes*</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Francisco Xavier Barzola/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miguel Méndez Jofré</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eghileghigó*</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Miguel Méndez Jofré</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layanas*</td>
<td>1770-72</td>
<td>Francisco Sotelo/Pedro de Bartolomé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remolinos</td>
<td>1776</td>
<td>José Mariano Agüero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naranjay</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Antonio Bogarín</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio de los Tobas</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Antonio Bogarín</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacuati</td>
<td>1788</td>
<td>Pedro de Bartolomé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco de Aguaray (Lima)</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Pedro de Bartolomé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan Nepomuceno</td>
<td>1797/98</td>
<td>Antonio Bogarín</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Text Chapters 8 and 9; Durán Estragó 1987:170-99,302.
* Abandoned after some time.

The three reductions were constantly threatened by Mbayáes and by Portuguese, who were extending their raids and forays (correrías) at that time as far as Itapukú and sometimes even to the vicinity of Belén, in order to punish the northern Payaguáes for blocking the free navigation on the Alto Paraguay in the direction of Cuiabá.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52} Durán Estragó 1987:175; Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:19. The two sources differ somewhat about the founders. According to Durán Estragó, they were Francisco de Sotelo and Pedro de Bartolomé, but according to Ferrer de Aréllaga, the mission was founded by Francisco de Sotelo and Pablo Bartoli.

\textsuperscript{53} For the reductions founded after 1772, see Chapter 9.

\textsuperscript{54} Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:19.
Smaller ‘Spanish’ settlements founded up to 1773

Even after the mid-eighteenth century, the Portuguese forced the population of Paraguay to remain constantly on the alert. One could, in fact, never trust them. This already became apparent immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Madrid (1750), which redefined the borders between Spanish and Portuguese America. The Portuguese used vague definitions in this treaty as an excuse to occupy new territory and lay claims to it. They contested the true course and even the existence of the Río Yaguarey (Yguarey). They claimed that it was the Ygatimf and, in 1751, they accordingly placed a boundary stone at the sources of the latter river, thus displacing the southern border of the territory that had been recognised as belonging to Portugal several degrees to the south. An expedition immediately set out from San Isidro de Curuguaty on the orders of Governor Jaime de San Just to destroy the boundary stone and drive out the Portuguese who had settled there.\(^55\) Even after that, constant vigilance was the watchword and the lieutenants of San Isidro de Curuguaty were repeatedly reminded from Asunción to patrol the area lying east and north of the villa, including the region of Jerez-Ñu, behind the Cordillera del Amambay and the Cordillera de Mbaracayú. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the danger from Portuguese infiltrations increased. A defence line of detachments and small fortifications (of varying duration) was then constructed at the end of the picadas (which had been constructed to exploit the yerbales) and overlooking the most used passes in the two cordilleras.\(^56\)

Besides constructing defence works, the Spaniards also founded settlements during the period 1750-70. Several new settlements grew up along the route along which yerba was brought from San Isidro de Curuguaty to the capital and provisions were carried from Asunción to the yerba gatherers’ camps. The settlements in question were Carayaó, Ajos (now Coronel Oviedo), San José de los Arroyos, San Roque or Barrero Grande (the later Eusebio Ayala) and

\(^{56}\) Velázquez 1966b:47-8.
some settlements in la Cordillera, such as Caraguatay and Caacupé. Barrero Grande and Carayó were also situated on the road connecting Villa Rica with the yerbales, which stimulated their growth.\(^{57}\)

All of these new centres were small \textit{poblados} (hamlets) which grew up around small rural chapels as a result of the settlement of some country dwellers around them. As soon as there was a certain level of concentration, these small centres were more or less consolidated, by being raised to vice-parish or parish by the governors and bishops. The trend is illustrative of the rural and agricultural character of eighteenth century Paraguay, where the population tended to disperse increasingly in order to be able to live on or near agricultural land, while small service centres were also necessary which, once they existed, encouraged further nucleation. The trend is also illustrative, however, of the greater security in Paraguay after the measures of Governor Rafael de la Moneda.\(^{58}\)

The following details can be given of these smaller centres.

\textbf{Ajos} was ‘founded’ on 7 October 1758 during the governorship of Jaime de San Just (1750-61), around a small pre-existing chapel dedicated to Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Ajos, which was frequented by a large rural population from the eastern Cordillera.\(^{59}\)

In about 1760, a number of vecinos from Curuguaty settled at a short distance from their homes in the \textit{pago} of Carimbaytay, where a chapel was built (or had existed for a short time), which was (or already had been) dedicated to Santa Rosa. The chapel, which was built by Lope Ramos Vidal, replaced an \textit{oratorio} dedicated to the same saint. In 1760, this small nucleus was granted the status of vice-parish, which was confirmed in 1783. A total of 1,361 persons was already living in Carimbaytay in about 1790, including 18 Indians, but not a single slave. The population did not keep livestock and there was very little arable farming; they engaged mainly in yerba collection.

Smaller numbers of Curuguateños also inhabited the \textit{parajes} of Palomares (late eighteenth century), Yhú (late eighteenth century) and Ybycuí (1766). As far as Yhú is concerned, it is known that an inhabitant of Villa Rica, Cristóbal Villalba, owned a parcel of land of about 60 \textit{leguas} here in 1706 that had been granted to him as \textit{merced}; that the

\(^{57}\) Benítez 1985:167.
\(^{58}\) Gutiérrez 1983:348.
development of a small nucleus was probably subsequently stimulated by the fact that the spot was situated on the road from Villa Rica to San Joaquín; and that a certain Sebastián de Villalba built a chapel on the site in 1772, which eventually led to the emergence of a settlement.\textsuperscript{60} The remotely situated campos of Aracanguy had to be abandoned before 1780, however, because the owners were constantly threatened by Monteses.\textsuperscript{61}

Six other settlements (Ybycúi, Pirayú, Caacupé, Caraguatay, Barrero Grande and Carayaó) ‘arose’ under Governor Carlos Morphy (1766-72), because the same number of existing chapels were granted the status of vice-parish or parish. The chapel of San José de Ybicuí formed the nucleus of Ybycúi; it was elevated to a vice-parish of Carapeguá in 1766. In Pirayú, that was granted the status of parish in 1769, the old chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Pirayú, of the Gayoso family, formed the nucleus of the settlement. It was situated on land which had been granted by the Gayoso family to the Franciscans and had certainly already existed for about ten years. The basis for Caacupé was formed by the chapel of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción de Caacupé, which was granted the status of vice-parish on 4 April 1770. San Roque or Barrero Grande grew up around the chapel of San Roque, which was built by the curate of Piribebuy, Gaspar Medina, with the agreement of Governor Morphy and received the status of vice-parish on 16 August 1770. 24 September 1770 is given as the official foundation date of Caraguatay. There are conflicting views about the origins of Carayó. According to Du Graty, cited by Gutiérrez, the history of this centre dates back to 1770 and originates with the chapel of San Gaspar de Carayó, but according to other information, the origins of the settlement date back only to 1919, when Manuel Antonio Frutos brought the inhabitants of the site together on 8 February to build a chapel where they could perform their religious obligations.\textsuperscript{62}

As far as the period of Governor Morphy’s rule is concerned, mention should also be made of Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Lambaré, situated in the immediate vicinity of Asunción. According to old colonists, with whom Azara spoke, the village was founded

\textsuperscript{60} Gutiérrez 1983:367.


\textsuperscript{62} For the six nuclei listed, see González Torres 1995:155; Gutiérrez 1983:349-50.
under Governor Morphy in 1766, although there had already been a *presidio* on the site since the seventeenth century. A church was consecrated there in 1768, which was raised to a vice-parish of the cathedral of Asunción in 1783.63

Settlement accelerated under the successors of Governor Morphy to such an extent that the final decades of the colonial period (the years 1773-1811) will be discussed in a separate chapter (Chapter 9). This chapter concludes with a discussion of the radical changes which the *pueblos de misiones* of the Jesuits underwent after 1768.

The expulsion of the Jesuits and the decline of their mission settlements

In 1767, the Jesuits learned from the Spanish king that they had to leave Spain and the American colonies; a similar decision had already been taken in Portugal in 1759. This marked the final stage in the history of the colonial *pueblos de misiones*, running from 1767 to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The governor of Buenos Aires, Francisco de Paula Bucareli y Ursúa, was charged with implementing the expulsion decree, but could not immediately find sufficient other priests to replace the Jesuits, so that the expulsion from the missions did not actually take place until 1768. It lasted from 16 July to 22 August, a period of over five weeks, during which a total of 78 Jesuits left the 30 Guaraní villages of the Paraná-Uruguay region. The number from the other missions was obviously considerably smaller.64 Because Bucareli was uncertain whether he would meet with resistance, he set out for Candelaria on 24 May with 1,500 soldiers to carry out the expulsion. The feared resistance did not materialise, however, despite the fact that the Indians were very fond of the missionaries.65

64 Brabo 1872:212-7; For a list of names of the missionaries expelled from the La Plata region (with function and nationality), see: Domínguez 1991:167 *et seq*.
The thirty mission villages lost their autonomy. They were brought under the direct control of the Crown. The territory which the Jesuits and the mission Indians had once ruled was quickly infiltrated and occupied after 1768 by Spaniards and Portuguese, mainly as grazing land, and incorporated into the colonial economy and society. Through the rapid advance of the (cattle-ranching) colonisation front, the mission villages lost their protective isolation.

A separation of secular and spiritual power ensued. For spiritual matters, the villages were entrusted to secular and regular priests with a variety of backgrounds and, in general, with much less knowledge of the Guarani society than the Jesuits. Some of the priests did have a sympathy with the Indians and the Guarani culture, but others very much less. Of the thirteen mission villages belonging to Paraguay, Santa Rosa, San Cosme y Damián, Jesús, Itapúa and Santa Ana were entrusted to the Franciscans (outside the former Jesuit mission territory proper, they were also given charge of Remolinos and Belén); the Dominicans were charged with the care of Santa Maríá de Fe, San Ignacio Miní and Trinidad; the Mercedarians were given charge of Candelaria, Loreto, Corpus and Santiago; San Ignacio Guazú, finally, was entrusted to a secular priest.66

The secular authority was entrusted to Spanish officials and was accompanied by an increase of the number of administrators, in the salary burden and the bureaucracy. The new administrators were often inexpert, generally possessed far less knowledge of the indigenous culture, were little concerned with the interests of the Indians, were out for their own advantage and were in league with the Spanish citizenry in order to promote the interests of the latter.

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66 Acevedo 1996:257; Brunet 1976:376-7. The new priests did not proceed to found new villages, although there is one exception: c. 1769, the Dominican Bonifacio Ortiz founded the reduction of San Francisco de Paula, with about 2,000 Guanas and Cainguás, near the Arroyo Tembey, twelve leguas from Corpus. The village did not prosper, however. In 1788, it consisted of a chapel and eight ranchos, inhabited by only 82 persons. The Indians had a habit of moving into the forest, but returning when they were in need. The settlement was not mentioned in the census of 1799, from which it may be deduced that it had ceased to exist (Acevedo 1996:285; Gutiérrez 1983:351).
Many were rapidly replaced because of their lack of expertise and corrupt practices, but without this incidentally resulting in structural improvements. The Indians were robbed and exploited by the administrators, without seeing anything in return for their efforts. There was no longer any reciprocity. The Indians were reduced to serving an often criminal elite.

The villages were opened to commerce, and the settlement of Spaniards was allowed or tolerated. The process of racial mixing began. The Spanish administrators stepped up yerba collection, because this appeared to be the most lucrative activity, so that arable farming declined. The crafts decayed and the herds were decimated, partly through the theft of animals. The campos and estancias, which the Guaranies could no longer properly care for and exploit themselves, were quickly occupied by stockbreeders, in the most favourable cases in return for rent. The balanced economy developed under the Jesuits, which was able to provide the mission population with sufficient arable crops and meat, became increasingly one-sided and increasingly based on monoproduction. The old mission society fell more and more into social, cultural and economic decay, began to break up and become impoverished. The maintenance of the old communal system became increasingly difficult, partly through the growing demotivation of the Indians and the crumbling of the old solidarity. Many began to withdraw from their communal obligations, because of the declining reciprocity. The growing impoverishment was shown, for example, by the fact that very little clothing was distributed after the expulsion of the Jesuits. The population became increasingly shabby and eventually went around half-naked, unless they provided their own clothing. The food rations became scantier, even though the remaining Indians had to work more on the communal fields than before. Education also declined. The consequence of all this was a large-scale exodus from the villages, but the exodus was in turn also the reason for the accelerated decline, especially because many experienced workpeople (such as musicians, painters and craftsmen) also sought a better livelihood or were attracted away elsewhere. Viewed from the standpoint of the population, departure was a wholly understandable reaction. Or to quote White:
"Far from fleeing civilization to embrace a semi-savage state, it would seem that, having their wealth stolen, their labor exploited, their economy distorted, and their society reduced to serving a criminal elite, the flight of the Guaraní must be recognized as a most civilized response to the semi-savage conditions to which they were subjected". 67

Although the administrators tried to allow the communal economy to continue to function as well as possible and to change as little as possible, especially at the beginning, in order to avoid unrest and not to hinder the exploitation of the indigenous labour, in practice, all these - good or quasi-good - intentions failed. There was no vision, the plans became stranded in bureaucracy, and were generally all contradictory, because they aimed at continuing and restoring the system of the Jesuits, which had been the target of so much criticism by the authorities. The viceroy Avilés tried (somewhat late) to end the crisis with a series of measures, but with little effect. Instead of being a source of tax income, the villages had become a financial burden for the Crown. White adds that the real cause was not so much the inefficient, corrupt administration of the secular authorities, as the fact that the villages had been incorporated into the system of Paraguayan colonial society and so increasingly assumed the characteristics of that society. 68 The expulsion of the Jesuits formed the beginning of this downward trend. This action put an end to the protection of and respect for the Indians, to the good communal organisation and efficient production, to the spirit of reciprocity and self-sacrifice, to the great work capacity and magnanimous, exemplary leadership of the missionaries.

1767 also brought an end to the spatial unity. The Spanish Crown first instituted the district of Misiones, that fell under the administration of the viceroyalty in Buenos Aires (1767-84). The area was then split and placed partly under the authority of Buenos Aires and partly under that of Asunción (1784-1803). It then enjoyed an administrative autonomy for a short period (1803-06 and 1806-10). The area was subdivided administratively into distritos subordinados (2 in 1767, 4 in 1768 and 5 in 1774). An administra-

ción general was instituted in Buenos Aires above the various secular administrators, which outlined and controlled the economic policy. All this completely altered the feeling of unity. An area that had become a ‘homogeneous region’ from 1610 through the intervention of the Jesuits fell apart.\(^6^9\)

Nor did the complications surrounding independence do much to promote unity. In as early as 1801 (at the time of the Spanish-Portuguese war), Portugal had carried out an armed occupation of the department of San Miguel and gained control of the seven eastern villages. They would subsequently permanently remain a Portuguese possession. The independent course of Asunción after 1810 resulted in Paraguay retaining the departments of Santiago and Candelaria (with 13 villages) in its sphere of influence; Buenos Aires retained the two other departments (Concepción and Yapeyú), with 10 villages, under its authority. 1811 brought a definitive end to the historical unity because, from that date, the old homogeneous mission region fell under the authority of the three young countries: Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay.

I shall return to various aspects of these developments in the following chapters. What is of relevance for this chapter is that the decline also had effects on the settlement pattern. The emptying villages decayed. The houses and churches fell more or less into ruin, more rapidly in one village than in the other. There was not only insufficient money, but also insufficient labour for repairs, partly because many craftsmen moved away. Nor did many administrators have any interest in maintaining the villages in their good and original condition. As the houses deteriorated, the Indians themselves began to live increasingly in simple ranchos on their small plots and, indeed, also did so in order to escape the control of the new administrators. This behaviour in turn further encouraged the decline and decay of the villages and their dwellings. And, once the houses and churches had fallen into ruin, the usable materials were removed from them to be used for other purposes. Fires and attacks by Abipones and Mbocovíes (in the vicinity of the Paraguay river) also caused damage. The fact that people suspected that the

Jesuits had possessed considerable treasures also had a negative effect: they began to dig frenziedly under some churches, causing a lot of damage, and incidentally without finding anything.\textsuperscript{70}

Annex 8.1. The thirty \textit{pueblos de misiones} existing in the Pararáná-Uruguay region from 1718

1. The eight villages between the Río Pararáná and the Río Tebicuary

San Ignacio Guazú (the oldest Paraná mission) was founded by Father Marciel Lorenzana in the basin of the Río Tebicuary, with Guaraníes paranaenses in 1610. The settlement was originally situated at Taraquí, was ‘refounded’ in 1628 on the site of the chapel of Santo Ángel and reached its final location in 1668.\textsuperscript{71}

The villages of Santiago and Santa María de Fe situated near this settlement originated from the Itatín region and had been situated south of the Tebicuary since 1669 (see Chapter 6).

Santa Rosa (Caraguatay-mí), named after the Peruvian saint Santa Rosa de Lima, was founded in 1698 by Father Jacobo Ranzonnier, with a group of families from Santa María de Fe, that had increased very rapidly in extent and so had become overpopulated. Santa Rosa was therefore a daughter village and was situated three leguas from the parent settlement.\textsuperscript{72}

Itapúa (Encarnación) was founded on the Paraná in 1615 by the Fathers Roque González de Santa Cruz and Diego de Boroa, with Guaraníes paranaenses. The settlement was originally sited close to what is now Posadas. In 1703 it was moved to its present location.\textsuperscript{73}

The village of Jesús had several sites. It was founded by Father Jerónimo Delfín in 1685 on the south bank of the Río Monday, near the Paraná and five leguas north of Corpus, with Guaraníes from the Monday region. In 1691 the village was moved, through the intervention of Father Sandoval de Rojas, to the Río Ibarety (Ibaroty), five leguas from the

\textsuperscript{70} For the decay of the missions, see \textit{inter alia}: Fassbinder 1926:144-9; Palacios & Zoffoli 1991:396-400, White 1975; Williams 1979:5, and the extensive \textit{Informe} of Zavala of 1784 (González 1941).

\textsuperscript{71} Maeder & Gutiérrez 1983:68.

\textsuperscript{72} González Torres 1995:168; Meliá Lliteras 1969:21; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:76.

\textsuperscript{73} Chapter 6; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:69; Meliá Lliteras 1969:26.
Paraná. Indians from Itapúa assisted in this refoundation. The settlement was then moved towards the Río Mandisovi and Río Capibary before finally reaching its present location, about 30 km northeast of present-day Encarnación. Because of these peregrinations, Jesús could be called the 'pilgrims' village' (pueblo peregrino). When the Jesuits had to surrender it in 1768, they were still building the church, which was never subsequently finished, so that it remained an unfinished pueblo de misiones.74

(Santísima) Trinidad was founded in 1706 by Father Juan de Onaya with Indians from San Carlos. It was therefore split off from the latter village and was located in the first instance between San José and Martires. As its lands proved not to be so suitable for farming, the village was moved to the other side of the Río Paraná, to its present location, in 1712.75

The eighth settlement - the somewhat more southerly situated San Cosme y Damián - had a series of locations. It was originally founded by Father Adrián Formoso with local Guaranies in the Sierra del Tape (Ibitimiri) on 25 January 1634, but it existed on that site for only a short time, because the invasions of the Paulistas forced its leaders to move the settlement to the south in as early as 1638. Father Nicolás del Techo accompanied the Indians during the removal and also left a description of the move. Because the Indians did not really want to leave, the fathers were forced to set fire to the settlement on their departure in order to make a return impossible. Father Cristóbal Arenas played a prominent role in the migration through the bravery and perseverance which he displayed when the Indians were tormented by hunger, exhaustion, attacks by wild animals and by bad weather. He also had to prevent them from following the suggestions of certain Indians that they should flee into the forests in order to avoid falling into the hands of Spanish encomenderos. They had to undertake a journey of 800-1000 km through forests and open terrain, crossing numerous rivers on the way. The group eventually arrived in the region of the Río Aguapey, where they settled in the vicinity of Loreto and Candelaria, in territory that is now part of Argentina. Until 1718, the inhabitants of San Cosme y Damián formed part of Candelaria, but they did have their own quarter. In that same year, an independent settlement was founded about 1 legua east of Candelaria, with its own church and priests. In 1740 San Cosme y Damián was relocated close to Encarnación, only to be moved in 1760 three quarters of a legua farther to its final

location, west of the Arroyo Aguapey, in the present-day Paraguayan department of Itapúa. It should be mentioned in passing that San Juan, the present departmental capital of Misiones (San Juan Bautista de las Misiones), was not a mission settlement, but was originally the site of the chapel of the estancia which supplied the village of San Ignacio Guazú.

2. The five villages near the left bank of the Paraná

Nuestra Señora de Loreto and San Ignacio Miní were founded in el Guairá by the Fathers José Cataldino and Simón Maceta with local Guaraníes (Guayreños) in 1610. After the exodus in 1631 under the leadership of Father Antonio Ruiz de Montoya, Loreto was relocated at a paso (ford) of the Río Yabebirí. The nucleus was subsequently moved to somewhat higher ground, but the population later returned to the site by the paso. In 1686, Loreto was moved to its final location. After the exodus, San Ignacio was also sited on the Río Yabebirí, where the river makes a bend from north to south. Finally (the exact year is not known), the village was moved to its definitive location.

Corpus Christi was founded by the Fathers Pedro Romero and Diego de Boroa with Guaraníes in 1622, on the right bank of the Río Paraná on the Arroyo Iniambey. The village was then moved to the left bank of the Paraná. In 1647, it was situated on the Arroyo Moruay and, in 1701, it arrived at its final location.

Candelaria was established in 1627 with Guaraníes from the Uruguay region by the fathers Pedro Romero and Roque González de Santa Cruz, in Caazapá Mini, east of the Uruguay, near the sources of the Río Pirayú (or, between the Río Iyuí and the site which was later occupied by the village of San Luis). In 1637, it was moved to near Itapúa, on the right bank of the Paraná. From there, it was moved at some time to the left bank, in the direction of el Igarupá, where it was first sited somewhat downstream from the spot which became its definitive location in 1665. Between 1665 and 1718, Candelaria was combined with the village of San Cosme y Damián, albeit that the two communities remained separate neighbourhoods. Candelaria was for a long time the sede superior de las neihborhoods.

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78 Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:55,60.
79 Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:41.
Settlement in the period 1685-1773

*Misiones*, and, as such, the residence of the mission superior and of the visitadores who inspected the Jesuit villages.⁸⁰

**Santa Ana** was originally founded in 1633 by the Fathers Pedro Romero and Cristóbal de Mendoza with Guaraníes tapes, on the ‘other bank’ of the Igaí, in the Serranía del Tape, in the immediate vicinity of the Río Jacuy. In 1636 or 1637 (Azara: 1638), the population migrated to the Río Paraná, where the village was sited near el Peyuré. It was built on its present site in 1660.⁸¹

3. *The ten villages west of the Río Uruguay*

**Concepción** owed its origin to Father Roque González de Santa Cruz, who founded it in a densely wooded and largely inaccessible area in 1620. It was peopled by Guaraníes from the Uruguay region and never moved. It served as a refuge for Indians fleeing from the Tape ahead of the Portuguese and was a mother village: San Luis (1687) and Santo Ángel (1707) were founded from Concepción.⁸²

**Santa María la Mayor** was founded in 1626 by the Fathers Diego de Boroa and Claudio Ruyer in the region of the Yguazú and the Paraná with Guaraníes from the Yguazú district. It was moved twice. In the first instance, the population moved away and settled in 1633 near the old village of Mártires, at the foot of the *sierra*, they then moved the settlement to its present site.⁸³

**Yapeyú** was founded in 1626 by Father Pedro Romero, on its present site, with Guaraníes and other groups. It was never moved.⁸⁴

**San Javier** was founded in 1629 on the Arroyo Tabití on the left bank of the Uruguay, its founder was Father José Ordóñez and it was peopled with Guaraníes from the Uruguay region.⁸⁵

**La Cruz** owed its origin to the Fathers Pedro Romero and Cristóbal Altamirano, who established the mission in 1632. The village was first situated for a number of years west of the Río Uruguay on the Arroyo Acaraguá and called Nuestra Señora de la Asunción del Acaraguá. It was then moved to the Mbororé (and therefore also called la Asunción de Nuestra Señora del Mbororé), before being merged with the village of

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⁸¹ Azara 1990:259; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:52.
⁸² Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:47.
⁸³ Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:44.
⁸⁴ Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:64.
⁸⁵ Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:42.
Yapeyú, from which it was split again in 1657 and moved to its present site, not far from the Uruguay.86

**San Carlos** was established in the Tape region in 1631 by the Fathers Pedro Molas and Felipe Viveros, with the agreement of Governor Céspedes, with Guaraníes from the Uruguay region. The original location was the *pago* of Caapy (Río Grande), the territory of *cacique* Apicabiyú. In 1639, a new village was founded at the sources of the Aguapey, with the same name, with the relics of this village and of other villages which had been brought to safety after the destruction by the Portuguese. The village was not subsequently moved again. In 1706, Trinidad was founded with some of the inhabitants.87

**Apóstoles** was founded in 1632 or 1633 by Father Diego de Alfaro for Guaraníes tapes and was originally called Natividad. It was then situated on the Río Araricá, Serranía del Tape. In 1637 or 1638 the population migrated to the region west of the Río Uruguay. The inhabitants then chose the apostles Peter and Paul as patron saints, after which the village was called Santos Apóstoles San Pedro y San Pablo.88

**Santo Tomé** was founded in 1632 on the Río Tumbicuacuy, near the Ybicuí (now Brazilian territory), by the fathers Luis Arnot and Manuel Berthod. In 1637-38 (or possibly 1639) it was moved to the area west of the Río Uruguay.89

**San José** was founded in 1633 in the Serranías del Tape, on a site known as Itacuata. The reduction was established for local Guaraníes, and had the fathers José Cataldino and Manuel Berlat as its founders. The settlement was moved in 1638 to the east bank of the Paraná, where it was sited between the villages of San Ignacio and Corpus. It was moved to its definitive site in 1660.90

**(Santos) Mártires (del Japón/del Caaró)** was founded in 1638, in the Sierra de los Mártires (Misiones), close to the spot where Santa María la Mayor was situated at the end of the colonial period. The foundation was the work of Diego de Boroa and Claudio Ruyer. The population consisted of Guaraníes with five or six *parcialidades* from villages which had been destroyed by the Portuguese in the Sierra del Tape. In 1704 the village arrived at its permanent site.91

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86 Azara 1904:218-9; Fernández Ramos 1929:54-5.
89 Fernández Ramos 1929:53-4;
91 Azara 1990:267; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:49.
4. *The seven villages east of the Río Uruguay*

San Nicolás was founded by the Fathers Roque González de Santa Cruz and Miguel de Ampuero in 1626 for Guaranies from the Uruguay region. The village was sited east of the Río Uruguay, on the Río Piratini Mini. Because of the Portuguese threat, the inhabitants migrated from there in 1632 and settled on the other side of the Río Uruguay, between Santa Ana and San Javier, in el Aguará poucáí. In 1652, the population was added to that of Apóstoles, but it was accommodated in a separate quarter. It was decided in about February 1687 to make the quarter autonomous. The Indians returned to the area east of the Río Uruguay and rebuilt San Nicolás on what became its permanent site.92

San Miguel dated from 1632. The foundation was the work of the Fathers Cristóbal de Mendoza and Pablo Benavidez and took place in the Serranía del Tape, where it was peopled with Guaranies tapes. The population migrated from this area in 1638 because of Portuguese aggression, and settled on the other side of the Río Uruguay near Concepción. In 1687, the village was moved to Río Grande and given its permanent site near the sources of the Ijuí.93

San Luis Gonzaga was founded in 1632 on the Río Ygay (Igaí), east of the Uruguay, with Guaranies from the Uruguay region. In 1638, the population moved away. Various parcialidades, who had been scattered by the Portuguese - some from Ibití caray, others from el Caapi, Igaí and Caazapá Guazú - then came together near Concepción. The inhabitants of San Luis were added to those of Concepción. In 1687, the group became autonomous and the new village was built in Caazapá-Miní, on a site where Candelaria was later situated. From there, it moved to a spot not far from its final location.94

San Borja was newly founded in 1690 on the banks of the Río Uruguay with Guaranies from Santo Tomé.95

San Lorenzo was founded in 1691 as a colony of Santa María la Mayor and situated in the Ijuí basin.96

San Juan Bautista was founded in 1697-8 by Father Sepp, in the Ijuí basin, with 3,000 Indians from nearby San Miguel.97

92 Azara 1990:272; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:35.
93 Azara 1990:275; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:27.
95 Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:33.
97 Azara 1990:274.
Santo Ángel was founded in 1707, in the basin of the Ijuí, with Guarani from Concepción. The first site lay between the two Ijuís, the village was then built by the Ijuí Guazuí, where it remained.\textsuperscript{98}

Settlement and colonisation in the period 1773-1811

The final decades of the eighteenth century display an even greater activity than the preceding period as far as the creation of new settlements is concerned. The governors who administered Paraguay from 1773 were all convinced that the foundation of permanent settlements and the construction of fortifications at strategically important points were the best means of countering the attacks of Chaco Indians and Mbayás and the infiltration attempts of the Portuguese. The areas between the Río Manduvirá and the Río Apa which had been lost in the seventeenth century were brought back under Spanish control and partly also actually colonised by enterprising hacendados and simple (landless) pobladores (campesinos), and used increasingly for yerba collection. The foundation of Belén and a few reductions had been the first step in this direction, but the foundations which followed were much more important. Governor Agustín Fernando de Pinedo y Valdivieso (1772-78) took the lead in this late colonial period. A number of settlements were created under Pinedo’s rule which were of great importance, both in respect of their location and in socio-economic terms. Villa Real was undoubtedly by far the most important of these.
The foundation of Villa Real (Concepción)

The immediate occasion for the foundation of Villa Real was the fact that usurping Portuguese and hostile Indians were still causing trouble in the north. In 1768 Mbayá, and Guaná Indians threatened the settlement of Belén and Father Pedro Domínguez, the local priest, was forced to ask Governor Morphy for support. The cabildo of Asunción proposed to the governor the foundation of a Spanish settlement between the Río Ypané and the Río Jejuy but, for various reasons, nothing came of the proposal. A fresh proposal was made in November 1769, this time by Miguel Méndez Jofré, the Franciscan prior and missionary who was responsible for the spiritual care for Belén at that time. Lack of money (that was rightly or wrongly attributed to the adverse effects of the puerto preciso), however, again prevented action being undertaken. In January 1773, Father Méndez Jofré returned to the matter, when he requested the cabildo eclesiástico for support for the reduction. He considered colonisation of the district through the foundation of Spanish settlements to be the only effective means of countering Portuguese penetration and Indian aggression. Governor Pinedo took his request seriously and decided, in consultation with the cabildo of Asunción, that it was now time to take action.

Three principal considerations played a part in the decision to build a new Spanish settlement in the north. The first was, as we have said, that Indian aggression had to be held in check, not only that of the northern Payaguá, who obstructed the use of the Alto Paraguay, but even more that of the Mbayás who - being mobile thanks to their horses - dominated a large part of the region north of de Ypané. Their incursions regularly made the area between the Apa and the Ypané unsafe and they sometimes even threatened

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Belén, the only reduction in the area. That had to be better protected. Another consideration was that it would be easier to keep an eye on the actions of the Portuguese from a permanent Spanish settlement. The Portuguese had established themselves in Cuiabá in 1719 and, subsequently, in a few other places (see later in this chapter). They tried to establish ranchos from these bases, ostensibly in order to keep the Indians in check, and they also engaged in other undesirable activities on Spanish territory. They tried, for example, to steal cattle, damaged yerbales and obrajes and sometimes killed unarmed workers. Last but not least, it was believed that a new Spanish settlement would also make it much easier to exploit the rich and still practically unknown yerbales and the campos of northern Paraguay, which were suitable for livestock farming. The resultant income would benefit the Real Hacienda and accelerate the development of the province. The future settlement would therefore not only perform an important defensive function, but also act as a stimulus to economic progress.²

Opinions differed about the location. Governor Pinedo would have preferred to see a settlement built north of the Río Apa, near the Portuguese forts of Coimbra and Albuquerque, because the Portuguese and the Indians could probably best be kept under control from there, thus enabling a considerable area of provincial territory to be made secure. It would also be relatively easy to build a link between Paraguay and Alto Perú from there. The cabildantes of Asunción, however, preferred to found a settlement not far from Belén. In their view, the distance from Asunción would otherwise be too great and it would then be difficult to continue to support the reduction of Belén. In reality, however, they were thinking primarily of their own interests. A villa that was situated not too far to the north would make it easier to defend their estates, enable them to expand their cattle ranching and offer them a better chance of controlling the Mbayás, which would again assist colonisation.³

The expedition which was to carry out the foundation set out in May 1773. Governor Pinedo sailed north up the Río Paraguay with

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² Garavaglia 1983:145.
four ships on 3 May, taking with him, besides the necessary provisions, about 300 future colonists, peones and Indians from the pueblos de indios. Another part of the expedition set out overland. It consisted of 130 armed men (formed by three companies originating from Guairá, Tebicuary and Asunción), who also took with them, besides the necessary horses, 1,460 cattle donated by the citizens of Asunción and intended to form the basis for the regional cattle ranching industry. The two groups arrived at the small port of Belén, that they wished to use as a base for further reconnaissances for a suitable site, on 20 May. This site was found on 21 May. The expedition arrived at the chosen location on 23 May and the precise site was determined on 24 May. The chosen site was situated somewhat north of the mouth of the Río Ypané, about 17 km (4 leguas) west of Belén and 330 km from Asunción. There were woodlands with many usable timber species, there was sufficient surface water, the waters were rich in fish, there were good campos, which could be used for the establishment of estancias, there was also suitable land for arable farming and there was a small natural harbour on the river (Fig. 8.2).

The official foundation of the new settlement took place on 25 May 1773. The site was cleared of trees and the street plan was set out. The nucleus measured four by four cuadras, with streets crossing each other at right angles and 12 varas in width. A plaza mayor was planned in the centre and a cross was placed on the spot marking the front of the future church. Over the next few weeks, the commandant’s house and the smithy were built and a barracks was erected for the serving troops. A temporary harbour was also created by the felling of some large trees and the lowering of the bank to facilitate traffic between the river and the settlement. Two estancias were also marked out for general use (see below).

Governor Pinedo solemnly took possession of the new villa and its territory on behalf of Carlos III in the customary manner on 31 May and the foundation was completed. Pinedo drew his dagger from its sheath, cut away a little grass with it, swore fealty to King Carlos III and named the new settlement Villa Real de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción. The foundation of Villa Real was the last important act of settlement foundation to be undertaken from Asunción. Exactly as had happened in the past, the citizens had
again brought together the livestock and other necessities for the foundation.

_Solares_ and _chacras_ were taken into use. The _estancia_ of Jesús María (later called _estancia del rey_) was established at a distance of one _legua_ from the settlement. Provided with paddocks and other equipment, it was intended for the communal use of the colonists and was immediately stocked with 2,019 cattle. The area of the _estancia_ was 5,584.25 ha. The work was performed by _encomendados_, who came to live on the _estancia_, and free wage labourers. A much smaller _estancia_ with _ranchos_ and paddock was established closer to the settlement. It was called _el Retiro_ and was used for the horses and oxen in use by the settlement.

_Villa Real_ was also provided with a _fuerte_, christened San Agustín, of such high quality that it was regarded in those days as the best in the province. It possessed a moat, had two entrances and the artillery was equipped with two cannons. When he returned to Asunción in August 1773, Governor Pinedo left behind a garrison of 130 men, who were to remain in the new settlement until the population could adequately defend itself. The inhabitants and the garrison were to be supplied with essentials such as yerba, salt, tobacco and carts for two years.

The governor ordered that the jurisdiction of Villa Real should extend to the Río Jejuy in the south and the Río Apa in the north. The western boundary would be formed by the Río Paraguay and in the east the territory of the town would extend over a distance of about 35 _leguas_ as far as the _sierra_ - the SE-NW trending Cordillera de Amambay. When San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú was founded some years later, the southern boundary was placed at the Ypané and the land between this river and the Río Jejuy was transferred to the jurisdiction of San Pedro.4

44 Spanish and 13 Indian families remained behind when Pinedo left in August, making up a total of 57, composed of 222 persons. In order to give the new settlement a sufficient population in a short time and to allow it to grow further, Governor Pinedo decided after his return to Asunción that 60 households who had no land of their

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4 Areces 1997:57.
own, but lived as tenants or occupiers in the Pirayú valley, in la Cordillera and in a few places near the capital, should be incorporated into the citizenry of Villa Real. Free land grants would make settlement attractive to them.

According to Ferrer de Aréllaga, the first group of colonists in September 1774 consisted of 202 persons: 174 Creoles, 6 Indians who lived in the village, 18 Indians who lived on the estancia del rey as encomendados and 4 mulattoes who had settled in the village. The great majority were able-bodied persons and, therefore, young or quite young. They lived in 38 houses and owned 27 chacras. The Creoles among them, living in 32 houses, owned 21 chacras and had 517 cows, 121 horses, 106 mares and 34 mules. In addition, there were a few dozen people who were staying only temporarily in the villa: 28 labourers (peones), a smith, a carpenter, 34 militiamen and 10 infantrymen. A military commandant and a priest exercised worldly and spiritual authority, respectively. Two years later, the population had doubled, thanks to the fact that the landless migrants from the Asunción region had arrived by then.5 The population subsequently grew further despite all the difficulties (see below), because other colonists also arrived at their own expense and on their own initiative. Villa Real did not have a great attraction, however, because the area was regarded as dangerous. Governor Alós y Brú (1785-96) therefore had to resort to forced recruitment in order to boost the small population.6 In 1782, the total population comprised 962 persons. In 1792, it had increased to 1,551 and, in 1799, the nucleus and surrounding area had 2,227 inhabitants.

Governor Pinedo had entered into an alliance with the local Mbayás at the foundation. Cacique Lorenzo el viejo, the leader of the local Indians, supported the foundation of the new settlement and even assisted personally with his subjects in erecting the first dwellings. He remained loyal and continued to live in Villa Real until he died two years later, after being baptised. At his death he asked the Indians to maintain peace and friendship with the Spani-

Settlement and colonisation in the period 1773-1811

He was buried in the church, which shows how much he was admired. Relations between the colonists and the Mbayás of Lorenzo remained good for about twenty years. They offered support in the defence of Belén and Villa Real, which was certainly a good thing, because Fuerte Borbón (near the Río Apa) was not built until 1792. This made Villa Real the most forward Spanish settlement along the Río Paraguay north of Asunción for many years.

Life in the north was far from simple and there was soon considerable discontent among the colonist population. The environs of Villa Real were the area of operations of hostile Mbayás, who sometimes came close to the town, sowing panic and forcing the population to remain constantly on the alert. In 1783, Lengua Indians from the Chaco also made an incursion and carried off numbers of cattle. The militia duties which these alarms necessitated formed a permanent burden on the younger members of the population and obviously hindered the town's development. The attractiveness of yerba collection quickly led to the population falling into debt and to the neglect of arable farming, which had an adverse effect on the food supply. Because of cattle thefts, there was sometimes even a shortage of meat. Facilities (such as a school) were non-existent and the houses were no more than simple, more or less dilapidated, huts. Despite all these drawbacks, the settlement grew.

Besides its important strategic and defensive role, Villa Real also soon began to perform an important economic function. As the opportunities for yerba collection, timber exploitation, livestock farming and arable farming were increasingly discovered, many people overcame their objections to settling in Villa Real, despite the still very real insecurity. The woods and yerbales were rich, the arable land was fertile and the campos were suitable for cattle farming. All this ensured that the town soon became one of the more important Spanish settlements of the province. It remained, moreover, for a long time the principal settlement of the whole of the north. It derived its importance mainly from its role as a collec-

7 Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:100-01.
ting and distribution centre for yerba gathering and as a recruitment centre for yerbateros.

At the time of independence, Villa Real had expanded into a settlement with a hinterland of small-scale arable farming, extensive livestock farming and yerba collection, and with a considerable trade (including an illegal trade with the Portuguese). This trade had stimulated the growth of shipping and of services (pulperías etc.). But the settlement itself was still far from urban in those days. In other words, it had not yet become a true villa and had little 'royal' (real) about it. In 1803, its chapel was little more than a galpón de tejas (barn with a tiled roof). There were still so few houses on the plaza that they did not completely enclose the square, and such houses as there were had roofs of plant material and were also still very simple in other ways. The majority of families lived in the countryside, on their lands, where they tried to make themselves as safe as possible.

On 15 February 1812, the Junta Superior Gubernativa of the now independent Paraguay granted the settlement the status of villa, with the official name of Villa Real de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción. It had previously been known as a villa, but was in fact not yet one. During the course of 1812, the place was also given a civilian administration (cabildo) for the first time. Until then Villa Real had really been a largely military settlement, that was not only inhabited by people who were accustomed to defend themselves, but was also governed by a military commandant.

The further colonisation of the northern region

Villa Real served not only as a centre of trade and shipping and of the agricultural activities carried out in its immediate vicinity, but also served as a base for the recolonisation of the area between the rivers Ypané and Apa.8 The first advanced settlement points in the territory of the Mbayás were Yuy, Peguahó, Agaguigó, Naranjaty

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8 For this colonisation and the tensions which ensued between Spaniards, Portuguese and Indians, see the studies by Areces (1992, 1997).
and Arroyo Caré. Then followed Confluencia, Apatuyá and Gavi-
lan-cué and, lastly, Fuerte Borbón and Fuerte San Carlos del Apa.
All these small nuclei were founded with provisions, necessities and
people from Concepción. Their further occupation was deliberately
couraged by land grants by the authorities. Whoever wanted land
to set up a cattle ranch could have it. The first official distribution
of land took place in 1792, when new migrants again arrived from
other parts of the province; before that, land had already informally
been taken into use for arable and livestock farming (see Chapter
17). This land allocation acted as a stimulus to colonisation.

An important setback followed soon afterwards. This was related
to the fact that relations with the Mbayá deteriorated considerably
after 1792. The colonists had tried to maintain peaceful relations
with these natives, partly by giving them presents. The Mbayá and
Guaná Indians gradually began to demand more. They claimed
rights to the lands which were being colonised and began increa-
singly to steal cattle if their wishes to receive compensation were
not met. Relations became increasingly strained, although the
Mbayás and the Spaniards were still officially at peace. Estancias
and chacras were being threatened and there was also increasing
insecurity in and around Villa Real. Women and children were
sometimes carried off. This gave the Spaniards occasion to organise
expeditions against the Mbayás, not only to punish them, but also
to drive them off to more northerly areas and to recover the cattle
and horses they had stolen. In 1796, the Spaniards committed the
error of taking extremely hard action against the Mbayás. On 15
May, a punishment expedition of 150 men, including prominent
cattle ranchers and led by estanciero José Miguel Ibañez, murdered
some 75 natives. This brought down on them the revenge of the
Mbayás and also encouraged the latter to seek increasingly the
protection and friendship of the Portuguese. In May 1796, the
Mbayás carried out one of their most devastating attacks in reaction
to the slaughter. They captured a large number of cattle (insofar as
the farmers had not managed to bring them to safety), caused the
depopulation of 30 estancias north of the Aquidabán, and also took
a number of people prisoner, whom they afterwards tried to sell as
slaves to Portuguese fazendeiros. The small-scale, ancillary arable
farming also disappeared alongside the cattle farms. The colonisa-
tation front that had pushed northwards from 1792, after being given a strong impulse by the allocation of lands in the area between the Aquidabán and the Apa, fell back to the south of the former river.

When the situation had been more or less brought back under control, the order was given to repopulate the abandoned estancias. This was done, but there also remained vast areas of unused land, as baldíos, because the old owners did not return there. The threat of aggression by the Mbayás remained and even increased, particularly from the area north of the Río Apa. It took several years, in fact, before the situation was normalised. The few cattle ranches which were re-established north of the Aquidabán were provided with militias of poor, wretched persons, who were recruited elsewhere in the province. Between 1792 and 1806, only one merced was granted for the establishment of a new cattle ranch in the area near the Río Apa, namely, to Manuel Acosta, and this illustrates how unattractive people found this border zone.9

The governor ordered the new military commandant of the villa to make peace with the Indians if possible, but the Mbayás were not prepared to do this and carried out fresh attacks. Many Indians were killed in a counteroffensive and others escaped to Mato Grosso.

All this helps to explain why Governor Lázaro de Rivera y Espinosa devised the plan in 1796 of protecting the zone of the Río Apa against Portuguese and free Mbayás by installing near the newly completed fort of San Carlos del Apa a group of Guanáchavaranás farmers who were trying to free themselves from their status of vassals of the Mbayás. When this plan proved not to be feasible, a plan was made to settle some 300 landless rural dwellers and small tenant farmers, who would be recruited from the older agricultural areas, but there was little enthusiasm for this plan either; people preferred to collect yerba rather than to settle as small farmers in an extremely hazardous frontier zone.10 The administrators also realised that there was little point in exercising

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pressure on people to settle in an area like the Apa region where they were so exposed to danger.

In 1804, an estancia was established near Fuerte Borbón, which had been constructed in 1792 (see below). It was an attempt to create a new población in the far north, near lands which were suitable for livestock farming. The ranch was also intended to hinder the passage of the Indians. This decision entailed for the area near Villa Real that the lands belonging to the local estancia del rey were then divided among landless vecinos from the villa, which meant that they were more densely populated, thus increasing the safety of Villa Real. An attempt was made in 1806 to further crank up colonisation by offering arable land to people who promised to come and live in the settlement.\textsuperscript{11} Besides settling in Villa Real itself, colonists also settled in the neighbourhood of the village, in small agricultural settlements (such as Horqueta and Loreto) or more dispersed over the countryside. These developments meant that colonisation advanced in the nearer environs of Villa Real and that the same thing was also taking place more to the north, although on a smaller scale, because the difficulties and insecurity there were considerably greater.

Niño y Nuestra Señora de Loreto, in the district of Yuy (about 5 leguas northeast of Concepción), and Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Horqueta (about 9 leguas from Concepción) were the two most important nuclei which owed their origin to the renewed agricultural colonisation. They originated through the departure of small numbers of colonists from Villa Real when the area around Belén became dangerous through the continuing presence of Mbayás who did not form part of the population of Belén and constantly demanded gifts, a kind of tribute, from the Spanish ‘infiltrators’. If their wishes were not met, they became aggressive. It then became attractive to look for safer territory and better agricultural land. The first colonist of Yuy - later the site of the chapel of Niño y Nuestra Señora de Loreto - was José Miguel Ibañez. He settled there in 1788 and built a small village with indios chavaranás, whom he used as labour. In 1802, the colonisation received a fresh impulse, because new colonists settled there. In 1806, there were 16 chacras. In about 1800 (perhaps 1803), a chapel was

\textsuperscript{11} Areces 1997:60; Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:82.
built by Benigno and Venancio Zarza and the hamlet was referred to as Capilla Zarza; not until the beginning of the twentieth century did people start to refer to Loreto.

Horqueta (i.e. the horqueta formed by the five sources of the Arroyo Caré) originated in 1792 after the first official distribution of agricultural land. The first colonists were small subsistence farmers and a stockbreeder. After the population had grown somewhat, a chapel was built. 10 May 1793 was subsequently chosen as the official date of the foundation of Horqueta by Juan Manuel Gamarra and Father Andrés Salinas.12

In view of the attacks of the Indians, it is not surprising that all the inhabitants of the north during the early decades possessed military experience and skills. The area of the mercedes de tierras which were granted was incidentally partly dependent on the role which the beneficiaries had played at the foundation, on their record of service in the field of defence and on their size of their herds. The first estancias were granted to Spanish or Creole captains who had made themselves useful at the recolonisation. Those who were willing to settle in the frontier zones received the largest areas of land (see Chapter 17).

All the estancias, but especially those situated in advanced positions north of the Río Aquidabán, were initially small bulwarks, where owner, supervisor and workers lived in a constant state of preparedness. In addition, there were piquetes, watch posts and small forts at several places between and on the rivers Apa, Aquidabán and Ypané. The forts of Borbón and San Carlos del Apa were added in 1792 and 1794, respectively (see elsewhere in this chapter).13

The Mbayás continued to hold sway over the greater part of the area between the Río Ypané and the Río Apa until the nineteenth century and they continued to make trouble, so that regular action had to be taken against them. They maintained relations with the Portuguese, who encouraged them to attack the Spanish settlements

and *estancias*. Apart from their contacts with the Indians, the Portuguese also had constantly to be watched for other reasons. They often attempted to undertake infiltrations.

In conclusion, it may be noted that - despite all the difficulties - the gradual reconquest of the northern region got under way after the settlement foundation initiative taken by Governor Pinedo in 1773. Moreover, Pinedo succeeded in keeping the Indians behind the Río Ypané after 1773 (after Governor Rafael de la Moneda had first ensured that they no longer crossed the Río Manduvirá). In the area between the Río Ypané and the Río Apa, the Spaniards tried increasingly to keep them under control after 1773. They did succeed in keeping the Portuguese behind the Río Apa. These achievements were the result of a form of colonisation that was largely military in character and consisted primarily of an expansion of cattle ranching. As a result, besides being normal production units, the *estancias* doubled as small military bulwarks. They also supplied the northern forts and militias with meat. Like the big *hacendados*, the other colonists (small landowners and labourers) also regularly performed - individual and collective - defence duties. The population was sometimes temporarily forced to move out but, on balance, they established themselves increasingly permanently in the region.\(^{14}\)

It goes without saying that there were casualties both among the Spanish and the indigenous population in the struggle for the northern regions. Dozens of mestizos and Creoles were killed as *yerbateros* or as colonists. But it was certain almost from the beginning that the indigenous population would come off worst in the long run. Their marginalisation was completed in the nineteenth century, but had in fact already begun on a large scale at the end of the eighteenth century. The Mbayás became involved in a hard struggle with the colonist population for the possession of extensive *bosques, campos* and *palmares*. These lands served an essential function as a hunting and gathering territory for the Indians, as well as of grazing land (for cattle and horses which they mostly stole from the Creole *estancias*), but they were also excellent potential

\(^{14}\) Ferrer de Arréllaga 1985:81,90.
grazing lands for the Spaniards. Because of their means of subsis­
tence (hunting, fishing, gathering and rudimentary, shifting, horti­
culture), the Mbayás needed a lot of space and they also needed the
possibility of being able to migrate with the ripening of the plants
and the migration of the fauna. The Creoles, however, because of
the extensive character of their ranching, also needed quite large
areas of land. In other words, both groups had, in fact, largely the
same and, therefore, conflicting interests. The Mbayás claimed
rights to the land, because they had been present in the region since
1661. The Spaniards did the same, because they had brought the
region under control and partly colonised it in the period 1580-
1676. The colonists and the Spanish authorities tried to maintain
peace with the Indians in principle (e.g. with the aid of gifts), so
that they would not be exposed to aggression and might be able to
use the Mbayás as allies against other Indian groups and the Portu­
guese. The Mbayá also had an interest in good relations, but neither
party succeeded in practice in living in the same territory in har­
mony. As soon as the colonists suffered too much nuisance from
the Mbayá (e.g. because they stole cattle), they retaliated. They
tried to drive them away, to rob them of their horses (and so
immobilise them), to recover stolen cattle and/or also kill a number
of Indians, if necessary. This then again provoked anger and
retaliation from the Mbayás.

In the course of time, the Mbayás - who were much reduced in
number - formed a growing hindrance to the expanding cattle
ranching industry and they were increasingly forced to withdraw
north of the Río Apa, into Mato Grosso, from where they threate­
ned the area fragmentarily occupied by the Spaniards south of this
river. Behind the Río Apa they enjoyed the protection of the Portu­
guese, who repeatedly set them against the Spaniards and bought
stolen cattle and horses from them in exchange for iron objects,
weapons or drink. The Portuguese and Mbayás also traded with
each other for the exchange of other goods. The often strained
relations between Mbayás and Spaniards incidentally did not pre-
clude the two parties sometimes trading with each other - in more peaceful times.\textsuperscript{15}

The Guanás were another northern Indian group. They had arrived in the area north of the Río Ypané in the second half of the eighteenth century, where they tried to free themselves from their subservience to the Mbayás and began to practise intensive arable farming, using ploughs. They settled particularly around Villa Real. They tried to maintain peaceful and good relations with the Creole commandants in the hope of being able to count on their protection against the obtrusive dominance of the nomadic Mbayá, who tried to keep them in a position of dependency. Because of their rapid increase, which caused them to carry out many new land clearances, and because of their determined efforts to achieve economic self-sufficiency, the Guanás soon came to be regarded as competitors of the Spanish \textit{campesinos}. This resulted in an increasing tension, that led inevitably to aggression by the Guanás, who were forced to look for assistance from their old masters. As a result, the Guanás were forced increasingly to move on by the Creoles, on the grounds that they behaved in a hostile manner, practised thefts or committed other misdeeds. They eventually moved to Mato Grosso, except for those who had been concentrated in the reduction of San Juan Nepomuceno, in the Caazapá region (see elsewhere in this chapter).\textsuperscript{16} With their extensive mission experience, the Jesuits may have been able to bring them together into special villages in order to reduce tensions and prevent their downfall, but they had to leave the country in 1768.

The livelihood of the Cainguás or Monteses, who lived in the east of the region, was threatened by the \textit{yerbateros}, but they managed more or less to maintain themselves until the War of the Triple Alliance (after which the large yerba enterprises appeared on the scene).\textsuperscript{17}

The 'Indian problem' almost wholly disappeared as the nineteenth century progressed: the Indians were either killed because

\textsuperscript{17} Areces 1997:56.
they were regarded as barbarous enemies, or they had retreated, or they had been concentrated into reductions or integrated as labourers. When Villa Real was founded, the (southern) Payaguá had already started to live on a peaceful footing with the Creoles.

Other settlement activities and defence measures under Governor Pinedo (1772-78)

Eastern Paraguay

After this description of the colonisation of northern Paraguay Oriental - which was set in train by the foundation of Villa Real - it is necessary to return to the 1770s since, after the foundation of this settlement, Governor Pinedo engaged in various other activities.

He continued the policy of his predecessor, Morphy, which was aimed at the consolidation of the dispersed rural settlement by giving the small country chapels and the mainly dispersed habitations surrounding them a more official status. Under Pinedo’s rule, that happened with Hyaty (1773), (Santo Tomás de) Paraguarí (1775), San Lorenzo del Campo Grande (1775) and Quyquyó (1774/77) (Fig. 9.3).

The basis for the settlement of Hyaty was formed by a chapel that was dedicated to Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de Hyaty and had been built by Father Joaquín González Altamirano. Because of the settlement which grew up around it, this nucleus was elevated in 1773 to tenientazgo of Villa Rica.18

Paraguarí ‘arose’ at the end of 1775 around the farm buildings and workers’ dwellings (casco) of the estancia owned by the Jesuits and extending over five leguas of the wide valley of Yariguá. Pinedo gave the estancia chapel to the Spanish citizens, elevated the settlement to a pueblo and made it a vice-parish of Carapeguá. The village was surrounded by a considerable number of dispersed habitations because, on the Jesuits’ departure, there were some 73 shanties (casuchas) of

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Negro slaves situated on the *estancia*. The slaves worked on the many *puestos* into which the ranched was subdivided.\(^\text{19}\)

**San Lorenzo del Campo Grande** originated from the *chacra* which the Jesuits possessed in Tapyipery, southeast of Asunción, in about 1650, and on which there was a chapel dedicated to San Lorenzo Mártir. When the Jesuits were expelled in 1767-68, the property passed to the Crown. Pinedo concentrated the existing population more around the chapel, insofar as this was necessary, and elevated the settlement to a *pueblo* on 10 August 1775. It became a vice-parish of Capiatá. The chapel was transferred to the inhabitants.\(^\text{20}\) San Lorenzo was relocated under President C.A. López (see Chapter 11).

The occupation and settlement of the great plain extending from the Cerros de Paraguari to the Río Tebicuary had already started in 1675. **Quyquyó** was created here during the governorship of Pinedo. The chapel of San José de Quyquyó formed the nucleus of this settlement. The place became *tenientazgo* of Carapeguá in 1774. A new church was built in 1777 and Quyquyó became a vice-parish of Carapeguá. Carapeguá (1725), Quiindy (1733) and Ybycuí (1766) - other places in the region - had then already started to grow. The flat terrain, which is broken only here and there by low mountain ridges (*cuchillas*), is highly suited to larger-scale cattle ranching, and numerous prosperous cattle ranches duly grew up. Settlement there had a partly dispersed character.\(^\text{21}\)

Governor Pinedo also took action against the Portuguese, who had started to build a *presidio* at the foot of the Cordillera de Amambay in December 1766 and beginning of 1767, that was completed in 1768. A settlement had then grown up around it. In undertaking this action, the Portuguese had used vague passages from the border treaty of Madrid (1750) to give their somewhat provocative presence on Paraguayan territory a semblance of legality. The activities had the approval of the Governor of São Paulo. He had given orders for the creation of a *villa* near the Río Ygatimi, using the

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\(^\text{19}\) Durán Estragó 1996:55; González Torres 1995:152; Gutiérrez 1983:375-6. Durán Estragó (1996:58) states that the *centro urbano* of Paraguari did not have a permanent population until 1861. The few dwellings that were situated around the *colegio* were used only on Sundays and festivals. The tenants of the *estancia* lived for the rest of the time mainly dispersed on the land.


argument that action had to be taken against troublesome Indians. An important motive, however, was that the presence of silver was suspected and that the Río Ypané could be used to descend to the Río Paraguay, from where boats could reach Cuiabá. In addition, the very old wish to be able one day to advance on Potosí also played a role.\footnote{Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:17.} The Portuguese settlement was founded in a short time by Captain Juan Martín Barros and was built on the left bank of the Río Ygatimí, on a site frequented by people who were engaged in illegal trade and other transports. The settlement was given the name Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres de Ygatimí and was further reinforced in 1774 and 1775. Several hundred soldiers and peones were stationed there. The inhabitants had started to exploit the surrounding yerbales and develop the campos, so that the settlement grew rapidly. They entered into good relations with the inhabitants of San Isidro de Curuguaty and also maintained regular contacts with São Paulo. It was feared in Asunción that the Portuguese could capture San Isidro de Curuguaty from Ygatimí and could advance from there to threaten Asunción. The Portuguese enclave was seen, in other words, as a direct threat to Paraguay and so to the Spanish Crown. Governor Pinedo therefore received orders from the viceroy to take action against the Portuguese.

In order to prepare their expulsion, Pinedo had a fort built in the vicinity of the Río Apa in 1776, from where his people could keep an eye on both the activities of the Portuguese and those of the Indians. The fort was completed in May 1777 and given the name San Carlos del Apa. It was not Captain García Rodríguez de Francia (as is sometimes assumed), but the Teniente General of Curuguaty, Venancio de la Rosa, who was directly concerned with building the fort. Several hundred men from Curuguaty took part in the construction.\footnote{Gutiérrez 1983:21. This was the first fort of that name, that was soon abandoned after the successful clean-up operation. Several years later, however, a new fort was built with the same name (see elsewhere in this chapter). Near the fort was the reduction of Eghiñeghigó, which survived until the end of the eighteenth century (see Chapter 8).} The fort had not only to serve as a base for attacks, but had also to attract malcontents from the Portuguese
Settlement and colonisation in the period 1773-1811

villa and so weaken the illegal settlement in that way. The fort was garrisoned with 50 men.

On 15 September 1777, Pinedo advanced on Ygatimi with about 1,000 soldiers and 500 auxiliares and prepared an attack. The Portuguese surrendered on 27 October 1777; only one person was killed. The Portuguese fuerte was found to be occupied by a garrison of 300 men; there were 14 cannon. There were also 100 colonists (pobladores), who could take up arms, if necessary, and the Spaniards found a large quantity of food and munition there. After the surrender, only 80 persons wanted to settle in Paraguay; the majority returned to São Paulo, taking with them their weapons, personal possessions and other items. The settlement was set on fire and the walls were demolished. The Portuguese did not subsequently try to settle there.24 A garrison stationed in San Isidro had to guard against further infiltration attempts.25

The Chaco and the southwest

Governor Pinedo also proceeded to found a reduction in the Chaco for the settlement of Mbocovíes and a Spanish settlement on the other bank of the river at more or less the same time.

The reduction was founded because the Indians themselves asked to be brought together in 1776. Apart from their request, however, Pinedo hoped to be able to counter further the attacks from the Chaco. The Indians promised to live in peace with the Spaniards and therefore no longer to interfere with the ships on the river and to dedicate themselves to arable and livestock farming. Besides a settlement with ranchos and a chapel, the Governor promised them an estancia for cattle and horses. The necessary livestock would be given to them. The reduction would also receive some oxen, seed

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24 Governor Pinedo subsequently founded, at least according to Benítez (1985:168), the village of Ygatimi with the people who had taken part in the campaign north of de Sierra de San Joaquín, but other authors make no mention of this foundation.

and farm implements, to enable the inhabitants to start arable farming. A priest would be admitted and the children would be baptised. The Indians who came to live in the reduction were expected to guard the neighbouring river bank and river crossings to prevent other Chaco Indians trying to land on the east bank. Sergeant Major Salvador Cabañas set out from Asunción on 4 November 1776 to found the reduction, which he did on about 18 November. A church was built and land was distributed. Each Indian household received a *merced de tierra* measuring one by three *leguas* (about 5,625 ha) to be used mainly for cattle ranching. The settlement was given the name Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes y San Francisco Solano de los Remolinos and was situated on the right bank of the Paraguay, somewhat north of the mouth of the Río Tebicuary, about 30 *leguas* south of Asunción (Fig. 9.1). The reduction was also given a *fortín*, with a detachment of Spaniards to protect the inhabitants. Little is known of the initial development, except that it scarcely began and that the foundation was in fact a fiasco. This was largely because fewer Indians settled in the reduction than had been expected, because different groups of Indians revolted, since they did not wish to recognise *cacique* Atazurín as their leader, and because most of the Indians left again quite quickly. This happened after Atazurín had been taken prisoner by the head of the *presidio* and had died as a result of his rough treatment. In February 1778, the reduction was practically depopulated; only one Indian family was living there in the midst of a few Spaniards. Nor was the refoundation by Governor Melo de Portugal (see later in this chapter) a success.

In order to give the southern border still better protection against possible incursions, Governor Pinedo founded, as we have said, not only a reduction, but also a Spanish settlement. This was christened Nuestra Señora del Rosario de los Remolinos and was built opposite the reduction, half a *legua* north of the Río Tebicuary and therefore also about 30 *leguas* south of Asunción. Pinedo settled 14 Portuguese deserters from Ygatimí and 2 Paraguayans there, who came forward voluntarily but, in the same year, 72 Spaniards (including Negroes, mulattoes and free Indians) were sent there to strengthen the colony. Anyone who settled there received a grant of land. The intention was to create an integrated Spanish-
Portuguese-Indian settlement, but partly because the Indians failed to show up, nothing came of the idea.

After the damage caused by floods in 1785, the Spanish settlement was moved a little to the north in May 1786 (under Governor Meló de Portugal), in the hope that there would be less damage from high water there. On its new site, not far from the present site, Remolinos was still no more than about three leguas as the crow flies from the old location and the reduction. A number of new colonists (miliciens) came to settle there. The population, which lived from agriculture and stockbreeding, did not always live in the village, but often stayed on the fields, which made them vulnerable to Indian attacks from the other bank, including some from the reduction. The place came to serve as a support point and port for river navigation. According to Azara, there was an estancia del rey near the village, from which the ‘barbarians’ of Remolinos and Naranjay (see below) had to be supplied.

Remolinos (including the reduction) was the principal foundation realised by Governor Pinedo south of Asunción. His successor, Melo de Portugal, profited from its existence in his efforts to push the frontier farther to the southwest. In c. 1790, only 1 Portuguese and 13 Spaniards still lived there of the original colonists. In 1792, Remolinos had a population of 458 persons.

Because the inhabitants continued to suffer from floods from time to time (from the Río Tebicuary, Arroyo Caañabé, Arroyo Surubii and Lago Ypoá), the dictator Francia decided to move the village 2.5 leguas. Remolinos was built on its final location in 1825 and from that time it was called Villa Franca. After 1825, its population and economy grew considerably.26

In 1777, towards the end of his term of office, Governor Pinedo drew up a complete colonisation project for the Chaco in order to check the advance of the Portuguese and the infieles (non-incorporated, pagan Indians). Under his plan, a whole series of settlements

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would be built as far as Santa Cruz de la Sierra. In his correspon-
dence with Madrid he described it as a useful and advantageous
project and also argued that the distance between the settlement of
Villa Real which he had founded and the mission settlement of
Corazón de Jesús with its Chiquitos Indians was only 80 leguas.
The plan was over-ambitious and was not implemented. The Gover-
nors Melo de Portugal and Alós y Brú, after Pinedo, also consid­
red such a colonisation project, but it was not realised under their
administration either.27

Settlement foundation under Governor Melo de Portugal
(1778-85)

The Chaco

Governor Pedro de Melo de Portugal y Villena (1778-85), Pinedo’s
successor, continued to found Spanish settlements and reductions.
On his journey to Asunción, when he had just been appointed
governor, he called in at the totally decaying reduction of Remoli­
nos, where he met several caciques of the Mbocovíes, who propo­
sed peace and requested the creation of a new settlement, which
they wished to people with about 300 of their followers. This
request was granted in the same year, partly because Melo de
Portugal regarded Remolinos of importance for the expansion to the
south. He had a ranchería - a complex of huts - built next to the
presidio for the Mbocovíes and Lenguas, who arrived in July 1779
under the leadership of cacique Amalcois. The pastoral care was
entrusted to a Franciscan priest, José Mariano Agüero, who also
served the neighbouring Spanish settlement of Remolinos. How­
ever, this second reduction was not a success either. The Mboco­
víes did not adhere to what had been agreed, they sometimes
temporarily admitted other groups into the reduction, showed little

27 Sánchez Quell 1995:212-3; Romero de Viola 1987:146,148-9. The distance of
80 leguas given by the governor is incorrect; he may deliberately have given
too low a figure.
enthusiasm for work, but largely clung to their traditional lifestyle and so did very little arable farming. They consumed most of the cattle that they received, and not even the oxen and milk cattle were always spared. They then asked for new cattle or tried to steal horses or other livestock, sometimes in the company of other groups. At a certain point, the Spaniards in the neighbourhood were forbidden to buy cattle from Mbocovíes, because they were almost certainly stolen beasts. All this meant that the inhabitants of the neighbouring area on the far side of the Paraguay were still regularly troubled by the Indians. A number of inhabitants of Remolinos even decided to give up their ranches and fields. Nor was the conversion of the Indians a resounding success. Many Spaniards in the neighbourhood, in fact, considered that it would be better to abolish the reduction, because it was little more than an abode of thieves, scarcely of Christians.

Nor did the Mbocovíes come to adopt arable farming at the beginning of the nineteenth century and they continued to cause difficulties, even when their reduction was eventually moved to the east bank in the hope that they would provide for their subsistence there through arable farming. Francia therefore felt compelled several times to send a number back to the Chaco. In 1820, the Indians who were still living in the reduction moved away and the existence of the settlement came to an end. The land on which the reduction was founded became part of Argentina after 1870.28

The southwest

The first important Spanish settlement to be created through the intervention of Governor Melo de Portugal was Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Ñeembucú. After the Jesuits had been expelled in 1767-68, the vast area south of the Río Tebicuary had passed wholly under the control of the secular authorities and had also become available for further occupation by Spaniards, which occupation also subsequently got under way. As a result, the Spanish colonisation front

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pushed across the Río Tebicuary, towards the Paraná. Moreover, ranchers from neighbouring Corrientes grazed their cattle at various places in the southwest, including the parajes of Curupayty and Pedro González. They also cut timber there. The illegal use of lands which officially formed part of the province of Paraguay had already begun there at the beginning of the eighteenth century, despite the fact that a Real Cédula of 11 February 1724 had stipulated that the Río Paraná (at least at that point) formed the boundary between the gobernación of Paraguay and that of Río de la Plata. The Correntinos, however, had other ideas than the Paraguayans and the Spanish Crown. They had erected a chapel in las Lomas de Pedro González and even built a small fort in Curupayty, leading to all the associated tensions.

Both matters - the advancing Paraguayan cattle-ranching colonisation front and the infiltration of Correntinos - were sufficient reason to consider founding one or more new settlements in the southern Litoral (i.e. near the river). Moreover, supplied with a garrison, these would be able to counter the aggression of Chaco Indians, while they could also serve as support points for the river navigation. Remolinos had already been founded under Governor Pinedo and, according to Pangrazio - cited by González Torres - Pinedo also had a fortín built in Ñeembucú. It nevertheless appeared that a more important settlement was needed to protect effectively and to occupy the southwestern areas near the river (the zone between the paso of Curupayty and the Río Tebicuary). In 1778, therefore, a military expedition was fitted out under the command of Lieutenant Colonel José Antonio de Yegros for sending to the campos and bañados south of the Tebicuary.

It was decided in March 1779 to strengthen and populate the parajes of Curupayty and Humaitá (a strategic access point - lugar clave de acceso). Soon afterwards, small presidios with adjacent poblados were established in Humaitá and Curupayty and, shortly after that, Yegros arranged for Remolinos and Herradura to be provided with garrison posts.

Governor Melo de Portugal had meanwhile summoned by decree, on 16 February 1779, all those who wished to people the southwestern region. In order to make settlement more attractive, the colonists received, besides the usual facilities (such as land), ten
years exemption from military service. They were required only to
defend their own settlement. Shortly afterwards, settlement actually
started 12 *leguas* north of Curupayty, in the area of Ñeembucú.
Seventy *vecinos* (with 8-9,000 head of cattle) had then already
declared themselves prepared to settle there. The official foundation
of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Ñeembucú subsequently took place
in October 1779 (probably on the 12th; later the patron saint’s day).
The settlement was sited at the mouth of the Río Ñeembucú, i.e.
north of the garrison stations of Curupayty and Humaitá and about
40 *leguas* from Asunción. Sergeant Major Juan de Xara was made
responsible for the building work. A street plan was set out, *solares*
were distributed and a chapel was built. King Carlos III issued a
missive on 1 February 1784 in which he pronounced himself in
favour of granting the status of *villa*. The viceroy, Arredondo,
announced officially on 28 September 1792 that such status had
been granted and gave permission to form a *cabildo*.

In the years immediately after the foundation, pieces of land
were given to hundreds of beneficiaries for the practice of livestock
and arable farming, after they had first been surveyed and delimited.
Some of this was intended to legalise rights to lands which had
already previously been spontaneously occupied. The measure
involved not only the taking into production of new land, but also
the intensification of the use of lands which had already been informally occupied in earlier years since, because of the long period of
insecurity, these lands had initially been used only extensively.
There was no lack of interest in land in the *costa abajo*. The soil
there was of good quality and land was beginning to become
scarcer in the already somewhat more populated parts of *Paraguay
Oriental*. Five years after the foundation, more than 70 square
*leguas* of waste land had already been distributed.

The low-lying *campos* of southwest Paraguay, with their many
watercourses, were by nature mainly suitable for cattle ranching.
They were stocked with thousands of cattle. Stockbreeding was the
most important source of livelihood from the beginning of colonisation; it was, in fact, a rapidly increasing activity in Paraguay in
those days.

The cattle ranchers and other colonists did sometimes still suffer
from Indian incursions. The establishment of numerous cattle
farms, in fact, encouraged frequent incursions by Chaco Indians throughout Ñeembucú, although they had less effect and the Indians could no longer easily penetrate, as previously, as far as the villages of San Ignacio and Santa María or into the partidos of Quyquyó and Quiindy. It was only after 1811 that the incursions came more or less to an end, when still more guard posts were built on both banks. Nor was the area immediately spared the attentions of Correntinos. They continued to try to cross the Río Paraná in order to use the pastures and woodlands on the Paraguayan side. Not until 1810 did the cavalry of Fulgencio Yegros temporarily put a stop to the illegal settlement of Correntinos in the area.

Pilar continued to serve an important defensive function for the southwest costa into the nineteenth century. Its population also had to supply the garrison stations of Remolinos, Herradura, Humaitá and Curupayty with food and other goods. The economic function also developed, however, at the same time as the defensive and settlement functions. In 1782, the district had a total of 530 inhabitants. In 1784, Melo de Portugal announced that Pilar had 105 vecinos and 560 inhabitants, including 160 children. In 1792, the number had already reached 1,730 (excluding neighbouring Tacuaras and Laureles, which had 520 and 621 inhabitants, respectively). In 1792, Pilar had more than 50 houses and over 100 Spanish vecinos (500 almas de comunión). 1,917 persons were already living there in 1799. As a result of the granting of mercedes and the spontaneous settlement of pobладores, various small centres gradually developed in the vicinity of Pilar, including Isla Roy, Piray Guazú, Laureles, Guazú-cuá, Isla Umbú, Estero Cambá, Curupayty, Arroyo Hondo, Isla Alta and Desmochedos. In this way, the low-lying, often marshy and, in the wet season, sometimes even inundated southwest corner of Paraguay was gradually taken into use for cattle ranching. This development would continue in the nineteenth century. The Jesuits had always avoided this corner. The villages which they founded south of the Tebicuary were situated farther to the east, where the terrain was somewhat higher, the
danger of aggression from the Chaco less and the distance from the other mission villages smaller.\textsuperscript{29}

In 1794, Pilar served as the starting point for the expedition of José de Espínola y Peña. It was the most important expedition to be undertaken through the Chaco in the period before independence and took place from 5 June-28 August 1794. It reached as far as Salta. The expedition brought peace and friendship to all the Indian groups with which it came into contact. Thanks to the expedition, a new connection was opened for trade and traffic between Paraguay and Northwest Argentina.\textsuperscript{30}

\textit{The Chaco again}

In February 1782, Governor Melo de Portugal decided to found the Indian mission settlement of San Antonio de los Tobas in the Chaco, about six \textit{leguas} downstream from Asunción. The objective was to put an end to the attacks and raids of the Tobas and to simplify the occupation of the Chaco by Spaniards. The Tobas themselves hoped to gain a safer life, i.e. to suffer fewer attacks from other groups of Chaco Indians. Besides a village with \textit{ranchos}, the governor gave the Tobas an \textit{estancia} as a basis of livelihood. The reduction was established and maintained with the support of \textit{vecinos} from Asunción who wanted greater peace and security. The construction was already greatly advanced by June 1782. The pastoral care was entrusted to the Franciscans, like that of Remolinos, which had been founded and refounded a number of years previously. The \textit{fuerte} of San Antonio was built on the other bank opposite the reduction. It was intended to give increased security and formed the beginning of the village and port with the same name.

Governor Melo de Portugal decided in 1782 that another Tobas reduction should be founded after San Antonio de los Tobas, on the


neighbouring site known as Naranja(ha)y, i.e. once again opposite the *presidio* of San Antonio. The intention was realised in the same year by José Pastor Torres. The Franciscans served this settlement from San Antonio.

Both reductions were short-lived, because bellicose Chaco Indians attacked them, while the Indians found it difficult to adapt to their new situation and, as a result, there was a big turnover of people. They had to be helped with livestock from time to time. San Antonio de los Tobas had disappeared from the map by the beginning of the nineteenth or perhaps by the end of the eighteenth century, as a result of attacks in which the houses and the church were set on fire. Naranjahay still existed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but was by then also already nearing the end of its life. The land on which the two reductions were situated became part of Argentina after 1870.\(^\text{31}\)

According to Susnik, the foundation of the two reductions, like those of Nuestra Señora del Rosario y San Carlos del Timbó de los Abipones and Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes y San Francisco Solano de los Remolinos, was an illustration of the desire to be less troubled by various groups of Chaco Indians. The greater security would make the occupation of the eastern Chaco for livestock farming easier and also make possible more direct links with Tucumán and Potosí. These more rapid communications were partly of interest for the export of yerba to Chile and Alto Perú. Unfortunately, none of the reductions was destined to survive for long. Nor did they put a complete end to the aggression of the Indians, enable the opening of better communications with Alto Perú, or lead to further colonisation.\(^\text{32}\)

*The north*

Further settlement also took place farther to the north, on the shipping route between Asunción and Villa Real. Two settlements arose here: San Pedro Apóstol de Ycuamandiyú (on the north bank

\(^{31}\) For these two reductions, see: Durán Estragó 1987:182-5; Gutiérrez 1983:386.

of the Río Jejuy, nearly 15 km from where it enters in the Paraguay) and Rosario de Cuarepoto (on the river of the same name, a few kilometres from where it enters the Río Paraguay).

San Pedro was founded at the request of Pedro de Gracia La-coisqueta (also: Lacoizqueta/Lacoiscueta) and about 20 other colonists who had settled in the Urundey area at a place known as Tobatimi. They wished to be better protected against the incursions of Indians. The foundation was allowed by Governor Melo de Portugal on 6 October 1784 and carried out by José Ferreira (one of the other colonists) and Pedro de Gracia Lacoiscueta (hence the name San Pedro) on 16 March 1786. According to Azara, cited by Gutiérrez, the initial nucleus of the new settlement arose on the estancia of Fernando Bernal, a colonist from Villa Real, who relinquished a large part of his land for the creation of the new villa in reaction to an attack by the Chaco Indians. The new village was built more or less following the example of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Ñeembucú. The foundation of the latter settlement and the distribution of waste land there had brought greater security and progress in the southwest. The authorities reasoned that it would therefore be possible to achieve something similar in the north. Farms were distributed, but San Pedro did not become a predominantly agricultural village. Pedro de Gracia, the 20 other vecinos who were involved in the foundation and the people who arrived subsequently devoted themselves predominantly to the exploitation of the previously unused yerbales. That was also, in fact, the primary economic motive of the founders. According to Williams, San Pedro soon became the principal yerba-producing centre; a 'sizeable settlement almost overnight', with 1,382 inhabitants in 1799. The jurisdiction of San Pedro extended in the north as far as the Ypané (so that it bordered that of Villa Real), in the south it extended to the Río Jejuy, in the west to the Río Paraguay and in the east to the Cordillera de Amambay. The Río Jejuy formed the natural link with the Río Paraguay, from where one reached Asunción.33

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Rosario de Cuarepotí began to grow more or less spontaneously in 1783 thanks to 15 colonists, but the site was not entirely suitable and so a more favourable location was chosen in 'el paraje de Ybiracapá' in 1787, where the settlement was definitively founded by Captain Roque Acosta Freide on the orders of the governor. The initial street plan and the plaza were then set out, solares were distributed and other provisions made.\footnote{A simple plan of Cuarepotí from the time when solares were distributed (1787) is contained in Gutiérrez 1983:34.} The official foundation date was given as 14 June 1787. The settlement was built on land that had been made available by José Coene, a well-to-do trader and landowner of Flemish origin. Rosario had a population of 840 in 1799. Cattle ranching became an important activity in its hinterland.\footnote{González Torres 1995:160; Gutiérrez 1983:29,387-8; Montalto 1982:23; Viola 1986b:80-3.}

Watch towers were built near both places, manned by the local militia, in order to increase the safety of navigation, and harbours were formed for the shipment of yerba and timber.\footnote{Velázquez 1966b:28.}

*Smaller centres in spontaneous colonisation zones*

Like his two predecessors, Governor Meló de Portugal encouraged the creation of a number of small rural nuclei by giving chapels, which served the surrounding rural population and around which some habitations had developed spontaneously, the status of vice-parish or parish when they reached a certain size. He also ensured that places with a certain population density were provided with a small church or chapel. Once they had been created, the small centres continued to grow gradually, sometimes as a result of land grants in the vicinity, or the creation of facilities such as a tambo, a posta and a pulpería\footnote{Gutiérrez 1983:17,19.} During Meló de Portugal’s regime, the following hamlets were promoted to vice-parish or parish: Mbuyapey (c. 1778?), Arroyos y Esteros (1781), San José de los Arroyos (1781), Areguá, Acahay (1783), Valenzuela (1783), Ybytimí.
Settlement and colonisation in the period 1773-1811

(1783), Y(h)acanguazú (Borja) (1785) and Limpio (1785).\textsuperscript{38} The following details are known about these centres.

**Mbuyapey** ‘arose’ after the brothers Manuel A. and Tomás A. Ferreira erected a small chapel, dedicated to the Virgen de los Dolores (Costa Capilla Tuja), on the land at the foot of the Cerro Morotí which they had received as a gift from the Crown by *Cédula Real*. They were the first colonists of the region. The construction must have occurred during the period 1770-1780, but the precise year is not known.\textsuperscript{39}

The beginnings of **Arroyos y Esteros** (formerly Urundey, later Capilla Duarte) go back to the chapel whose construction started in 1781 and which offered the possibility of creating a vice-parish (falling under the parish of Piribebuy).\textsuperscript{40}

It is known of **San José de los Arroyos** that the church was probably built in 1790 and that it had the status of parish church in around 1798. 1781 is given as the village’s ‘foundation’ date. Gutiérrez comments that San José de los Arroyos is often confused with Cariy, that was a place of worship with the status of vice-parish of San José de los Arroyos and was founded, according to Azara, by José de Rivas in 1755.\textsuperscript{41}

**Areguá**, on the estate of the Mercedarians, had already begun to form in the sixteenth century. The village is mentioned here, because its existence was formalised under Melo de Portugal. As was said in Chapter 5, it was a *pueblo de pardos*.\textsuperscript{42}

**Acahay** grew up around the chapel which Canon Gerónimo Verdejo built on his own land in the second half of the eighteenth century. It did not remain a private chapel, however, but was used in 1783 for the creation of a vice-parish, falling under Carapeguá.\textsuperscript{43}

**Valenzuela** developed around the chapel of San José de Valenzuela (Ibiratí/Yvyratý), a small, private place of worship built by the presbyter Antonio Fernández de Valenzuela and consecrated by him in May 1783. According to González Torres, it was also referred to as Capilla de Valenzuela de los Naranjos. After the founder’s death in 1787, the

\textsuperscript{38} Benítez 1985:168; Cardozo 1994:47.
\textsuperscript{39} González Torres 1995:144; Gutiérrez 1983:405; Speratti 1966:9-10.
\textsuperscript{40} Gutiérrez 1983:386.
\textsuperscript{41} González Torres 1995:164; Gutiérrez 1983:405. Azara (1904:179) situates Cariy at 6 *leguas* from the chapel of Piribebuy.
\textsuperscript{42} Benítez 1985:168.
\textsuperscript{43} Gutiérrez 1983:387.
chapel served for the creation of a vice-parish, since all the local inhabitants had always attended the religious ceremonies there.\footnote{González Torres 1995:179; Gutiérrez 1983:387; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:91.}

Ybytymi became a vice-parish of Pirayú in 1783. The chapel which was completed in 1787 and was dedicated to Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Ybytymi, became the parish church in the latter year.\footnote{Gutiérrez 1983:387.}

Y(h)acanguazú (Borja), in the region of Guairá,\footnote{I.e. the area around Villa Rica.} owed its origins to the chapel of Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza de Yacanguazú, which was built by Mateo de Borja, who wished to provide the surrounding inhabitants with a place of worship. The ‘foundation’ took place in 1785.\footnote{Gutiérrez 1983:388.}

It is known of Limpio (Tapuá) that the village’s origin can be traced back to the end of the seventeenth century, when Governor Rege Corvalán and the cabildo of Asunción had the idea in 1677 of concentrating the population living dispersed over the countryside around the capital into two new villas, one north of the capital in the Tapuá valley and the other south of it in the plain of el Guarnipitán. The plan was thwarted by the relocation of Ypané and Guarambaré (1682) and priority was subsequently given to the foundation of other settlements, but the idea was nevertheless finally realised, albeit with the due delay and consequently also under other governors than Rege Corvalán. The idea of the southern villa was realised by the foundation of la Villeta, and of the northern one by the ‘foundation’ of Limpio in 1785. The population of the Limpio district had become sufficiently dense at the end of the eighteenth century to justify the creation of a vice-parish (tenientazgo), falling under the cathedral of the capital. A chapel was built, dedicated to San José.\footnote{Gutiérrez 1983:22,388.}

Settlement foundation under Governor Alós y Brú (1785-96)

The Governors-Intendant Joaquín Alós y Brú (1785-96) and Lázaro de Rivera y Espinosa de los Monteros (1796-1806), who succeeded Melo de Portugal, completed the settlement foundation work of the eighteenth century and, with it, the settlement picture of the period.
Some smaller centres in spontaneous colonisation zones

The first-named administrator was responsible for the administrative reorganisation of the Jesuit villages which were reincorporated into the province of Paraguay in 1784. As we have described, the mission villages falling under Asunción had been attached for administrative purposes to the gobernación of Río de la Plata in 1729 at the request of the Jesuits during the Revolución de los Comuneros, and this situation had subsequently continued.

The further settlement of the former Jesuit territory south of the Río Tebicuary led to the foundation of San Pedro del Paraná (1789) and Cangó or Bobí (now: General Artigas) (1789) in what is now the department of Itapúa. Yabebry (1790), Laureles (1791) and Tacuaras (1791) were founded in what is now the department of Ñeembucú.49 Caapucú also dates from the period of Alós y Brú (1787). The following details are known about these villages.

Cangó (Bobí) was built on lands belonging to Yuty, which was situated 40 km to the north. A number of Spanish tenant farmers had settled on the site known as Bobí in about 1770. The colonists built a chapel there (Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Bobí) with the permission of the doctrinero, in a small valley (cañada) known as Cangó. The chapel, which was completed in 1773, was an insignificant structure, but nevertheless performed a function for the vast rural area between Yuty in the north and the former Jesuit missions in the south. Nor did the settlement itself have many pretensions, because the inhabitants were poor and were aware that - because they were tenants - they might not be able to continue living on the land. The settlement, however, or what passed for one, did not disappear, but was granted a more formal status in 1789. It had 1,432 inhabitants in 1785, all of whom were tenants of Yuty and made a living mainly as small cattle farmers.50 The isolation of the once advanced Franciscan villages of San José de Caazapá and Yuty was reduced not only by the development of Cangó, but also because Creoles and mestizos settled in Borja, San Pedro del Paraná, Mbuyapey and other neighbouring valleys.51

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Little more is known about **San Pedro del Paraná** than that it acquired a more formal basis of existence in 1789.\(^{52}\)

The information about **Caapucú**, that owed its origin to the expansion of cattle ranching which took place after the expulsion of the Jesuits, is rather ambiguous but, according to some sources, it was created under Governor Alós y Brú. The dictator Francia is reported to have had the settlement relocated in 1816-17, because there was a shortage of water on the original site.\(^{53}\)

The official foundation date of the village of **Yabebyry** was given as 24 July 1790.\(^{54}\)

**Laureles** originated in April 1791, with the completion of the chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Laureles. It was built on the initiative of the bishop on three **cuadras** of land donated by Xavier Viveros. Laureles was the first vice-parish of Pilar and served quite a large rural population, comprising both Paraguayans and **Correntinos**. Before the building of the chapel, the population had used the **oratorio** of Juan Paez, 25 km distant from the **paraje** of Laureles. Laureles already had 621 inhabitants in 1792, and 946 in 1799.\(^{55}\)

**Tacuaras**, which was situated much closer to Pilar, was of military origin, starting with the building of a **presidio** in 1782 on the **paraje** of Tacuaras or Yacaré to check the incursions of Chaco Indians. The fortifications were improved by Governor Alós y Brú in 1790. Continuing the policy of his predecessor, Melo de Portugal, he also decided to settle people there. The lieutenant-colonel of the militias, José de Espínola, gave up a part of his land for the building of the chapel of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción de Tacuaras. With a population of over 500 believers, Tacuaras became a vice-parish of Pilar del Ñeembucú in October 1791.\(^{56}\)

**Reductions in the Chaco; relations with the Payaguáes**

An Indian reduction was also founded under Governor Alós y Brú, near the capital, west of the Río Paraguay, with the support, and partly on the initiative, of Father Amancio González y Escobar, for

\(^{52}\) González Torres 1995:166.


\(^{54}\) González Torres 1995:186 (He refers to 1730, but it must be assumed that this is a printing error).

\(^{55}\) Gutiérrez 1983:386.

\(^{56}\) Gutiérrez 1983:386.
the further security and pacification of the Chaco. This was Melodía, named after the ex-governor, Melo de Portugal. The specific occasion for the foundation was the fact that caciques of the Lingua-Cochaboth, the Machicui-Maskoy, the Enimagá-Makás and the Toba-Tashik, who had come to Asunción with some Indians from these groups, requested that a reduction be created for them, where they could live in peace and harmony with the Spaniards and be instructed in the faith. The authorities saw as an advantage of the foundation that the route to Alto Perú could be shortened and that this would benefit trade; it would no longer be necessary to travel via Tucumán. Moreover, other settlements might follow Melodía and the complete pacification of the Chaco might even be achieved in the long run. Colonel José Antonio de Zavala y Delgadillo was made responsible in 1786 for setting out the village plan and allocating land, to enable the Indians to settle in the reduction. Melodía was built a little north of the mouth of the Río Confuso and became the principal Paraguayan Chaco reduction, which is not to say that it was the first attempt at evangelisation among the Chaco Indians (see Box 9.1). Melodía repeatedly suffered attacks from Enimagá, Tobas and other groups of Indians. The Tobas and the Enimagá not only continued to attack and steal from each other, but also harassed the population on the other bank and began a relentless struggle for the possession of the hunting ground between the Río Confuso and the Río Pilcomayo.

The Indians who came into the reduction soon proved little inclined to abandon their traditional way of life. They preferred robbery to trying to become stockbreeders and farmers. In other words, they behaved no differently from the Chaco Indians whom the authorities had tried to concentrate in Remolinos, for example.

They not only attacked farms on the east bank, but the estancia of a certain Ascensio Flecha was also the target from time to time. Flecha was one of the few farmers who had ventured to start cattle farming on the far side of Asunción. Governor-Intendant Lázaro de Rivera had even been forced to order the cabildo in 1798 to persuade Flecha to abandon his farm in the Chaco. What it amounted to was that, at the very ‘front door’ of the capital, there was not the
Box 9.1. The *poblaciones*, *reducciones* and *fuertes* founded in the Chaco in the colonial period.\(^{57}\)

In chronological order, these were:

* **Villa Concepción del Bermejo**, situated on the right bank of the Río Bermejo (1585).

* The reduction of Mataraés and that of Frentones, both situated upstream from Concepción del Bermejo and founded in 1591.

* **Guatizungá**, between the Pilcomayo and the Yavebyry, near Estero Patiño.

* **Yasocá**, lying nearly directly opposite Asunción and founded, like Guatizungá, by the Jesuits, Pedro Manrique and Roque González de Santa Cruz, in 1609. They survived for only a short time.

* The reductions of San Bernardo, Santiago de Canayá and Nuestra Señora de Dolores, on the left bank of the Bermejo, all three founded by *vecinos* from Asunción. They survived until 1631.

* The reduction of Santa Bárbara of *indios* Itatines, founded by the Jesuit Pedro Romero in the vicinity of the later Bahía Negra in 1645. It survived for only a short time.

* The Fuerte de los Ángeles Custodios, built in October 1662 in the area of the Río Confuso, north of the Pilcomayo. Further, Fuerte de los Finados, Fuerte del Espartillar Redondo, Fuerte de la Presentación, Fuerte de San Andrés (all dating from the period 1663-71) and Fortaleza, the latter founded opposite Asunción in 1675.

* **Itapucú**, a Guanás reduction, founded in the years 1760-70 by the Jesuit Sánchez Labrador. His work was continued by the Franciscan priest.

* The reductions of San Francisco Javier (1743) and San Pedro (1765), founded by Jesuits for Mbo covíes, in what is now Argentina.

* The reductions of San Jerónimo (1748), Concepción (1749) and San Fernando (1750), all three founded by Jesuits for Abipones, in what is now Argentina.

* The reduction of Nuestra Señora del Rosario y San Carlos del Timbó de los Abipones, founded in 1763 under Governor José Martínez Fontes by the Jesuit Martín Dobrizhoffer, the fourth reduction among the Abipones.

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\(^{57}\) Sources: text of chapters; plus Báez 1927:33; Benítez 1985:181; Cardozo 1930:80-1; González Torres 1995:57-8; Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:9.
Box 9.1. cont.

* The reduction (with presidio) of San Francisco Solano de los Remolinos, founded by Governor Pinedo in 1776 and refounded in 1778 by Governor Melo y Portugal, situated between the Pilcomayo and the Bermejo, and the reduction of Naranjay, founded in 1782 by decree of the latter governor (at 25° 30' S). Both settlements had been intended for Mbocovíes and were entrusted to Franciscans.

* The Franciscan reduction of San Antonio de los Tobas (1782).

* The reduction of Melodía, founded for Lenguas and Machicuis in 1787 by the Paraguayan missionary Amancio González y Escobar, on the Río Confuso, in the vicinity of the later Villa Hayes and opposite Emboscada.

* Fuerte de Borbón (later: Olimpo), founded in 1792.

* Fuerte de Paso de la Cruz, situated at 19° S.

least certainty that one could operate a cattle ranch without encountering security problems. Punishment expeditions organised from Asunción had little lasting effect.

Melodía was so depopulated in 1796 that Governor Lázaro de Rivera tried to repopulate it, on the advice of Father González. The ‘renewed’ Melodía continued to exist with ups and downs until the death of Father González in 1817. The constant attacks by Chaco Indians and further population decline caused its ultimate disappearance. The site where the reduction had stood continued to be known as Amancio-Cué. The French colony of Nueva Burdeos was founded near its remains in 1855 (see Chapter 11).

Susnik has pointed out that the settlement foundation initiative just mentioned, as well as various previously mentioned initiatives (such as the foundation of the Mbayá reduction of Belén, the Abipones reduction of San Carlos del Timbó, the Mbocovíes reduction of San Francisco Solano de los Remolinos, the Tobas reductions of San Antonio de los Tobas and Naranjay) show that the various Chaco groups were beginning to revise their relationship

Fig. 9.1. Forts, reductions and other settlements founded in the Chaco in the colonial period (After Box 9.1; Montalto 1982:Map).
with the Spanish population towards the end of the colonial period. They increasingly eschewed confrontation, aggression and incidental barter and requested peace agreements and the foundation of mission settlements, where they would enjoy more secure livelihoods, be less troubled by inter-tribal conflicts and gradually become more integrated into the colonial society through the missionaries. Less positive considerations sometimes also played a role: a reduction could also serve as a better and more stable base for the continuation of such activities as cattle rustling. The Indians' altered strategy was largely related to their declining numbers. They were, in fact, increasingly less capable of resistance and the complete maintenance of their traditional way of life. The fact that the authorities nearly always acceded to these requests shows that they were very much concerned to increase peace and security in the province, especially on the western border - in the Chaco - partly in order to assist the occupation of this region.

No reduction was founded for the Payaguá (Payaguáes), but their relation to the Spaniards had also changed in the late colonial period. According to Ganson, the history of the (southern) Payaguá can be divided into two major periods: one of resistance and conflict (1528-1730) and one of peaceful and more intensive contact, in which they took advantage of the livelihood opportunities offered by the Spaniards. Until 1730, the Payaguáes constantly attacked ships carrying yerba and other products and they also came on land to organise raids. The many fortifications and guard posts that were built along de Río Paraguay also served to keep them under control. The southern group, in particular, gave a lot of trouble in Paraguay. Together with the Mbayás, they constituted a serious danger to the colony until the beginning of the eighteenth century. After 1730, however, the southern group altered its livelihood strategy. The changed relationship was again partly related to the decline in their numbers. It was Governor Martín de Barúa who, realising that they would not allow themselves to be subjugated, decided to enter into more friendly relations with the Payaguá and to protect their trade. He proceeded to give a warm reception to the Payaguá who

came into Asunción to exchange honey, beeswax, earthenware pots and other goods. In about 1740, the Indians discovered that, besides their traditional wares, they could also sell fish to the Spaniards, even for the whole province. Barter trade proved to be more lucrative than constant struggle. Governor de la Moneda was therefore able to report in 1743 that the Spaniards had been living in peace with the Payaguáes for two years. The latter carried no weapons, were decently clad when they appeared in Asunción, practised trade and supplied the province with a large quantity of fish. They were also hired in to patrol the river in order to protect Spanish ships and to prevent incursions into eastern Paraguay by other tribes. Through all this they did become increasingly dependent on all kinds of Spanish products. Cattle stealing became at that time more an activity of the Payaguá-Sarigue, the northern tribe.

In 1766 a number of Payaguá requested to be allowed to come and live in the Mbayá reduction of Belén. As we have said before, this often happened at that time with nomadic tribes, such as the Abipones and Mbocovíes. Father Sánchez Labrador gave them permission to settle on the edge of his mission, but they had to live in peace with the other tribes and satisfy certain other conditions. If the experience proved to be positive, a second Jesuit mission might even be built, so that they would have their own mission village. Because of the conditions imposed, fewer than a half of the Payaguá-Sarigue settled in the neighbourhood of the reduction (150 women and all the children besides the guerreros). The rest preferred Mato Grosso or migrated to the south.

In the early 1790s, no more than 1,200 Payaguáes lived along the Río Paraguay in the neighbourhood of Asunción. No reductions were eventually created for them, mainly because of the shortage of capable missionaries after the expulsion of the Jesuits, although the Payaguá who lived from trade and activities in Asunción did come to live together in a separate little quarter on the edge of the city, where they were obviously also visited by priests. The northern group continued to thwart the advancing Portuguese colonisation front in Mato Grosso in the colonial period.
Ganson compares the Payaguá with the Chichimecs in Mexico and the Araucanians in Chile, except that the Payaguá were a tribe of river dwellers and canoeists.\textsuperscript{60}

\textit{Reductions in the northeast}

The Paraguayans remained interested in yerba exploitation under the rule of Governor Joaquín Alós y Brú and they aimed to secure and exploit new, still untouched \textit{yerbales} in the northeast, which promised richer harvests. New settlements and/or reductions were intended to assist the exploitation.

One of the reductions was Tacuati (Taguati), situated on the Río Jejuy in the modern San Pedro department, which was founded in 1788. The Franciscans concentrated here Guaná-Layana who originally lived in the Chaco, but from 1673 had started to settle north of the Río Jejuy on the \textit{paraje} known as Lima. The reduction did not flourish, however, because of the hostile presence of the Mbayás who lived around the mission. The \textit{doctrinero}, Pedro de Bartolomé, therefore left the reduction in 1793 to settle with a group of Layanas in Aguaray (see below).\textsuperscript{61} This meant that the reduction had been abandoned by the Franciscans, but it did not permanently disappear, because \textit{cacique} Vicente Suicá (Ziucá), together with certain other \textit{caciques}, made a request for the mission to be refounded in 1797, e.g. by the sending of a priest. The mission was re-established in 1799. The Guaná-Layana who populated the reduction had always wanted to have more fertile lands in \textit{Paraguay Oriental} instead of the poor land in the Chaco. They already produced many arable crops, but lacked an \textit{estancia}, tools, seeds and other necessities. They also needed a Guarani-speaking priest, because Guaraní was the language which the Guaná (who belonged to the Guaycurú linguistic family) did understand, in contrast to Spanish. The leading \textit{cacique}, José Antonio Ziucá (the oldest son of Vicente), declared that the group then consisted of 1,281 souls, excluding the elderly, spread over 13 \textit{cacicazgos}.

\textsuperscript{60} Ganson 1989: 85,105-9,119-21; Gutiérrez 1983:18,389-90.

\textsuperscript{61} The Layanás were also referred to in documents as Tacuatis
In 1799, the pastoral care for the Tacuatís (about 800 in number, according to Gutiérrez) was entrusted to the Mercedarian monk Fray Ignacio Cañete, who had to reorganise the mission, but his task was taken over in the same year by his fellow monk, Marcos Mancuello. The building of a chapel (capilla de Mercedes) was started in 1800. The still existing village of the same name, Tacuatí, originated from this reduction. Tacuatí was the last reduction to be founded by the Franciscans in the colonial period. It was an atypical reduction at the time, in the sense that, although the Layanas received land to practise arable farming and stockbreeding, they were also free to hire themselves out as labourers and to engage in barter. Tacuatí functioned at the time as a puerto de entrada to the rich yerbales in the catchment of the upper Río Ypané.62

Lima was another settlement in the yerbales region. It arose in the first instance through action from Asunción. Certain inhabitants of Asunción started exploiting woods and other lands in the paraje known as Lima, on the Río Aguaray-Guazú, from about 1750. In 1773, the majority of them settled in the recently founded Villa Real on the directions of Governor Pinedo. This did not mean that the habitation of Lima then came to an end. Other Spaniards took possession of the lands thus released, being attracted by the presence of yerbales in the eastern part of the valleys of the Aguaray and the Jejuy and near Curuguaty.

Like the cattle farms situated in the region, these yerbales suffered regularly from attacks by Monteses (Cainguás) roaming through the woods.63 To reduce the problems, the abovementioned Franciscan Pedro de Bartolomé decided to found a reduction on the Río Aguaray. He hoped this would also increase the safety of the settlement of San Pedro, of which he had been the joint founder and

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63 One of the principal places where the disorders originated was - somewhat remarkably - the reduction of Tacuatí, inhabited - as we have said - by Guanás, who were strongly under the influence of the Mbayá, who were allies of the Portuguese. The Mbayá had more or less enslaved the Layanas in order to exploit their labour for farming activities (Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:-102).
the first curate. The foundation of San Francisco de Asís del Aguaray took place in 1792 in the paraje of Lima, situated within the jurisdiction of San Pedro. Layanas (Guanás) from the reduction of Tacuatí also came to live there (see above). Ferrer de Aréllaga comments that Lima was situated only 20 leguas (over 85 km) from Villa Real and that the reduction did not assist the development of Villa Real. This was because the Tacuatís, alone or jointly with Mbayás, attacked the Monteses, disturbing the good relations between the latter and the Spaniards and thereby also the unhindered development of the yerba trade. The Tacuatí gradually became increasingly bold and in 1813 even attacked Villa Real.\(^{64}\)

Until about 1773, the lands of the reduction had been in the possession of four colonists (Don Juan de la Cruz Riberolá and Lorenzo Caballero in the paraje de Lima, Pablo Cabañas in el Palmar and Sebastián Fernández de Montiel in Aguaray), but two of them had lost their mercedes when they refused to settle in Villa Real on the orders of Governor Pinedo. José Justo Caballero, however, a descendant of one of the pobladores, challenged the claim of the newly founded reduction to the land. The settlement was also troubled by Mbayás, who joined forces with the Portuguese. San Francisco Asís del Aguaray was therefore moved in the direction of Mbocayaty and Ciervo Laguna in June 1796 and was built on its present site. The population received one and a half legua of land around the village for its own use.

Thanks to this settlement, not only were a number of Monteses pacified and converted, but the Spanish claims to the Río Jejuy region were further secured. The Portuguese displayed a great interest in this region because of the rich yerbales and other natural resources, the mild climate and the numerous watercourses. More Cainguás gradually settled in the reduction, even in 1798. After some time, the reduction became an open village, known as Lima, and the process of racial mixing began.\(^{65}\)

\(^{64}\) Ferrer de Aréllaga 1985:102.

In the 1790s, two strategically important forts were also built in the north: Fuerte Borbón and Fuerte San Carlos del Apa. Both were the concrete result of the order that Carlos IV had issued - through the viceroy - in two *ordenanzas reales* on 11 June and 13 October 1791 to build military fortifications close to the settlements of the Portuguese on the Río Paraguay in order to check their further advance.

Fuerte Borbón was built under Governor Alós y Brú and was the first truly permanent military fortification in the northern Chaco, no fewer than 100 *leguas* north of Asunción and thus the most northerly Spanish settlement within the province of Paraguay.

As was stated earlier, the Portuguese had founded various (fortified) settlements farther to the north in the course of the eighteenth century, once again ignoring the borders in existence at the time. They had first founded Cuiabá (1719), Nova Coimbra (1775) and Albuquerque (1776) and, after 1777, Corumbá (1778), covered by the Treaty of San Ildefonso. In 1798, they would further found Miranda. From 1767 they had, moreover, settled farther to the east, in Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres de Yguatimí, but they were driven out again from here in 1777. The Portuguese had even considered building a fortification on the site of Fuerte Borbón, but had been forced to abandon the plan because of resistance from the Mbayás. A strong advance military settlement like Fuerte Borbón was certainly therefore no superfluous luxury. The fort was to be used to keep an eye not only on the activities of the Portuguese, but also on the movements of the Indians. This would enable the inhabitants of Villa Real (and any subsequent settlements) to be warned, if necessary. The fort might naturally also facilitate communications with Alto Perú via the Chaco.

Fuerte Borbón was built in the territory of *cacique* Calapa, the leader of a group of Mbayás and Guanás Indians. The expedition which was fitted out for the purpose had left Asunción in four ships on 5 March and proceeded to the customary, solemn foundation ceremony on 24 September, after which building began on 25 September. The work was directed by the commandant of the cavalry and head of the *Regimiento de Dragones del Rey*, José Antonio de Zavala y Delgadillo. The fort was built on a higher hill,
the Cerro de los Tres Hermanos, as an insurance against floods. A suitable mooring place (puerto) was constructed on the river.

It was not easy to find sufficient timber, reeds and other building materials on the site, but in November the fort was nevertheless completed. The king rewarded Zavala y Delgadillo with a military promotion. Williams described Fuerte Borbon as a ‘fairly sizeable strongpoint’. It consisted of ‘a weak stockade of sticks, 174 by 144 feet, outfitted with three cannon in towers and one at the gate, and held by a large garrison’. When Borbón was founded, it was occupied, according to Velázquez, by 70 persons (including a chaplain, an interpreter for contact with the Mbayá and eight peones with a capataz); in 1806 there were 76 persons. Later, according to Ferrer de Aréllaga, the garrison generally did not exceed 40 persons, but could be expanded with militiamen.

Fuerte Borbón enabled vast, but desolate, areas situated farther to the north and west of the Río Paraguay, to be retained for Spain. In other words, the fort enabled at least part of the boundary arrangements in the Treaty of San Ildefonso to be implemented. Another advantage of Fuerte Borbón was that it increased the safety of navigation and facilitated the pacification and incorporation of numerous Indian groups in the area.

The commandants tried from the beginning to maintain the best possible relations with the Mbayá caduveos and Guaná tereno living round the fort, for example, by making gifts to sixteen caciques in order to secure the continuing existence of the fort. The Indians indicated, however, that they wished to be free to migrate between Villa Real and Nova Coimbra in order to be able to continue the barter trade in which they engaged with the Portuguese and the inhabitants of Villa Real. In the course of time, some of the Mbayá caduveos chose to move to Portuguese territory (Nova Coimbra).

Life in the fort was by no means always easy. It took about two weeks to reach Fuerte Borbón from Villa Real and even the return journey downstream took four or five days. Because of its isolated situation, provisioning the fort was far from simple. Almost every-

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thing had to be brought in from elsewhere: from the neighbourhood of Villa Real (where an *estancia del rey* provided the meat supply) or from still further afield (Asunción). The activities undertaken from 1804 to start cattle raising in the vicinity of the fort were not very successful. There was a danger of floods in the lower-lying areas and from wild animals which attacked the cattle. Arable farming was also difficult there. There was consequently a shortage of everything to a greater or lesser degree. Partly because of this the fort began to decay after a number of years and instances of desertion also occurred.

In anticipation of the developments in the post-colonial period, we may state here that the dictator Francia ordered the fort to be renovated in 1817. The palisade of palm wood was replaced by a brick wall, the living quarters were renewed, the livestock supply was improved and land for arable farming was reserved near the fort. On 25 December 1823 the fort was renamed Fuerte Olimpo, a designation that was no longer a reminder of the colonial past. The settlements in the region still suffered from attacks by Mbayá and Guaná (who were sometimes incited to them by the Portuguese) under the regime of the dictator Francia, although they were considerably fewer than previously. Nor had the danger of a further Portuguese advance been completely removed, so that the fort still performed a strategic function at that time.67

The viceroy, Nicolás de Arredondo, considered it necessary for the northern border itself to be further strengthened. He wanted one or more *fuertes* to be built between Villa Real and the Río Apa, but eventually one fort was built, that of San Carlos del Apa on the south bank of the Río Apa, about 75 km from the mouth of this river, on the site of present-day San Carlos. The intention was to control the *garganta del Guachié* - a passage much used by the Portuguese and Mbayás - from the fort. José Bolaños was the commandant of the expedition that was fitted out for the construc-

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tion and was responsible for the work (at the end of 1794). Fuerte de San Carlos was a brick fort. For unknown reasons, the garrison seems to have been largely moved after a short time to a new fortification, inside a palisade of tree trunks, which was described in 1796, with reference being made to an earlier Fuerte de San Carlos. At its foundation, the old brick fort had a garrison of 34 persons; the fort inside the palisade had a garrison of 57 persons in 1803. In the latter year, it was more or less in ruins, after being attacked by the Portuguese at the beginning of 1802, and Governor Lázaro de Rivera decided to move it to a more favourable site. The original site was low and marshy and therefore unhealthy, while there were also no good pastures or *barreros*. At a new site, these problems would hopefully not exist and it would also be easier to protect Villa Real. A new brick fort was built in 1805 on the left bank of the Río Apa, with a *batería cerrada* (enclosed battery) on the other side of the river, while a *fortín* was also built on the upper reaches of that river. Renovation works were carried out under Francia, as at Fuerte Borbón. In the course of time, it became a fortification with all the provisions necessary for defence, with militiamen from Curuguaty and Concepción being responsible for manning it in turn.\(^{68}\)

The building of the Borbón and San Carlos forts unfortunately did not lead to the Portuguese evacuating their fortifications in Nova Coimbra and Albuquerque, east of the Río Paraguay. On the contrary, they built yet another fort in 1798-9, that of Miranda, on the banks of the Río Mondego, thus further supporting their expansion. In 1801, when Spain and Portugal were at war with each other, Intendant Governor Lázaro de Rivera took advantage of the situation to advance on Nova Coimbra in order to try to expel the Portuguese from their solid - brick - fort and possibly even from the whole of Mato Grosso. His expedition failed, however, and he returned without having achieved his objective, although he did establish the *presidio* of San José on the Río Apa. At the end of the

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same year a column of Portuguese, assisted by Mbayá, made short work of it from Miranda. 69

The foundation of San Juan Nepomuceno

Under the government of Lázaro de Rivera y Espinosa de los Monteros (1796-1806), the last settlement of the eighteenth century was founded at the end of 1797: San Juan Nepomuceno. This settlement was founded in the northeast of the present department of Caazapá, south of the Cordillera de Ybytyruzú, and was established for the benefit of Chavaranás, belonging to the Guanás group, who originated from Alto Paraguay. The Jesuits, Manuel Durán and Manuel Bertodano, had already established a reduction for this Indian group in 1766, on the north bank of the Río Apa, about 50 leguas north of Belén and 4 leguas east of its mouth. This reduction is reported to have had as many as 6,000 inhabitants. Its further development came to a halt because the Jesuits were forced to leave the country in 1768.

In the 1790s, the Chanás-chavaranás provoked a conflict between the Mbayá and the Spanish colonists, who were both aiming to profit from the services of the Chanás. The conflict led to a shattering of the peace and to the previously mentioned massacre among the Mbayás on 15 May 1796. After this conflict, 800 Chavaranás were moved from the campos of José Miguel Ibañez (in the district of Yuy) and the south bank of the Ypané; Ibañez retained only 20 for personal services. In this way, it was hoped to restore peace. The authorities created a reduction with the displaced Chavaranás in the jurisdiction of San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú. The settlement was entrusted to the care of their old protector Ibañez. In July 1797, the Indians (then numbering 1,424) asked to be concentrated in a new reduction.

This new reduction was not founded in the ‘far north’, but considerably farther south, on extensive lands near the Río Capiyvary, suitable for arable and livestock farming, relinquished by the

pueblo de indios of San José de Caazapá. The foundation took place with support from the villages of San José de Caazapá and Yuty, which supplied livestock and farm implements. The explanation for the choice of site lies in the fact that the Chavaranás (who originally lived in the Chaco) had begun to practise arable farming east of the Paraguay, which had placed them in a dependent position relative to the nomadic Mbayás. They were regularly obliged to supply them with arable products. The authorities wished to put an end to this ‘tax’ and considered a reduction remote from the original territory to be a solution. Governor Lázaro de Rivera also hoped, however, that the rich lands of the zone near Caazapá would be used more intensively.

The official foundation date of the reduction was 30 December 1797. On that occasion, the new settlement was named after the Franciscan saint San Juan de Nepomuceno. In 1798 it acquired a church, which is why this year is also given as the foundation date. San Juan was not only the last settlement to be founded in the colonial period, but also the last reduction to be established by the Franciscans in Paraguay. The conversion process went rather slowly at first.

The Indians incidentally had difficulties not only with the religion, but also with their new homes. Continuing into the beginning of the nineteenth century, numbers of them tried regularly to return to their original homeland in the north. They were brought back again wherever possible. In 1799, the reduction had 1,109 inhabitants. Viola (1993) believes that lack of arable land or pastures cannot have been the cause; there were sufficient land and livestock. Nor were there any oppressive tribute or encomienda obligations. He relates the migrations more to nostalgia and the wish to maintain contacts with relatives in the north. However this may be, the exodus did nothing to assist the development of San Juan Nepomuceno. Moreover, this reduction of Indians of the Arawak linguistic family in Guaraní territory was never wholly accepted by

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70 The Chavaranás, who lived dispersed in the north, were forcibly concentrated into a reduction in 1812, that of Yeteti.
the Spanish population (no more, in fact, than Tacuati, the other Guaná reduction).71

Spain’s unconquered periphery: Mato Grosso

Before we make up the balance of the changes in the settlement pattern in the period from about 1685 to 1811, there is one region that has already been mentioned several times and that deserves somewhat more systematic attention, i.e. southern Mato Grosso.72 Officially, it formed part of the Spanish province of Paraguay, but it was not peopled by Spanish colonists from Asunción. Although the Jesuits did found some missions in el Itátin in the seventeenth century, these soon had to be relocated. Santiago de Jerez also disappeared from the map. The region became uninhabited apart from the indigenous population. From that time, the territorial claims of Paraguay were wholly theoretical. The Spanish Crown showed little interest in Mato Grosso and was more concerned about the influence that Portugal was trying to build up in the La Plata region. The Portuguese were therefore able to regard Mato Grosso as part of the Portuguese hinterland, northern Mato Grosso totally so, and they usually did what they wanted there. They carried out reconnaissances without having formal rights to the territory. These reconnaissances led in 1719 to the discovery of gold. Interest then increased considerably. Cuiabá soon became an official settlement, provided with fortifications. Arable and livestock farms were started in the environs. The place attracted civilians as well as soldiers and, in 1748, became the capital of a capitania. Cuiabá was also one of the settlements from which the Portuguese constantly organised new reconnaissance expeditions. In around 1770, they were already operating as far as the Río Apa. As we have said, they founded Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres on the Río

72 Besides earlier sections of this chapter, see also Williams 1980.
Fig. 9.2. Paraguayan and Luso-Brazilian settlements on the Paraguayan-Mato Grosso frontier by the end of the colonial period and the beginning of the nineteenth century (after Williams 1980:26).
Ygatimi in 1767, which settlement was cleared from Asunción in 1777. It is understandable therefore that the Spanish authorities decided to found Villa Real in 1773. This was for a long time the most northerly settlement to keep the Portuguese in check from Paraguay.

The Portuguese took little notice of the Treaty of San Ildefonso (1777). They continued to carry out reconnaissances and establish staging posts, where necessary. They established a fort, for example, in Miranda in 1798, much farther south than any other official Portuguese base. It became the new, more convenient staging post for the volatile, unreduced Mbayas. In 1790, there were reports of five new Portuguese settlements on what was officially Paraguayan territory, including one on the east side of the Alto Paraguay and one not far from the spot where Fuerte Borbón was built in 1792. Aguirre noted in 1794 that Nova Coimbra, Albuquerque and a handful of other forts (some of which the Spaniards did not discover until after 1790) were all illegal, because they had been built after 1777. The Portuguese maintained, on the other hand, that they had been founded two years before the Treaty of San Ildefonso and therefore only constituted so many valid claims under the principle of *uti possidetis*. The Portuguese further argued that the only function of the forts was to keep the northern Payaguá in check and so protect their convoys to and from the region of Cuiabá. The Portuguese tried to win over the Indians with the aid of gifts and by other methods, in order to facilitate and consolidate the occupation of Mato Grosso.

Not only had various illegal settlements been created in around 1790, but there was also a modest trade between Nova Coimbra and Villa Real. This was carried on with small mule caravans and dugout canoes and had existed, despite all the ‘warfare’ etc., for about 25 years. The ordinary Spanish and Portuguese subjects evidently took little notice of the existence of borders and national rivalries.

The actions of the Portuguese after 1777 were sufficient reason for the Spaniards in the province of Paraguay not to rest with the foundation of Villa Real. From the latter, they further extended their control over the northern region, e.g. by the foundation of Tacuatí (1788), Fuerte Borbón (1792) and Fuerte San Carlos del
Apa (1794), and by the establishment of estancias and chacras north of the Aquidabán. The border was nevertheless frequently subjected to pressure, not so much through direct Portuguese aggression, as by the attacks of the Mbayás, who were more than once incited against the Spaniards by the Portuguese. The border held, however, and the north remained Paraguayan territory as far as the Río Apa, although regular actions were needed to hold it. Thus Intendant Governor Lázaro de Ribera ordered the commandant in the north, José Espínola, in 1797 to take action against the growing number of raids by increasingly well-armed Mbayás and other Guaycurúes, who descended on the south from Mato Grosso. The commandant had to order them to be pursued, if necessary, to beyond the Río Apa. It was known that the Indians exchanged the horses and cattle which they stole in Paraguay for weapons and strong drink from the Portuguese, who were garrisoned in the forts north of the Apa. Espínola's punishment expedition was successful. He defeated the Mbayás and returned to Villa Real with about 1,400 head of cattle and 1,500 horses which had been the property of the Paraguayans.

While the northern part of Paraguay was further strengthened militarily and new colonists were almost forced to settle in the area, as a means of defending it, Governor Rivera also tried to conclude peace with the Indians. In January 1798 a treaty was signed with the leaders of a large group of northern Mbayás in the village of Atira, but this did not essentially improve the situation. Villa Real remained a military front-line settlement, where people were sometimes no longer safe at a shot's distance from the central square.

The Fuerte San Carlos del Apa, that Governor Lázaro de Rivera had had built on the Río Apa in 1794, performed a very strategic role at the end of the eighteenth century but, according to Williams, it was only an insignificant little fort and was in constant danger, because it could easily be attacked by Indians and Portuguese. Anyone standing on the north bank could easily shoot a (burning) arrow into it. It was a 'miserable spot to which to be posted'. As a result, security south of the Río Apa hung by a silken thread. The fort's vulnerability was exposed in 1802 when it was surprised and destroyed by the Portuguese, assisted by more than 400 Indians. The destroyed fort was immediately rebuilt by the Paraguayans,
who also began to establish other fortified outposts. At that time, the greater part of the Paraguayan militia took turns in serving on the northern border. These various measures once again prevented the Portuguese from taking possession of the area south of the Río Apa, although they continued to operate clandestinely in the area to the north of the river. They had built smaller posts close to the banks of the Apa and they had complete freedom of movement north of this river.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century little changed. Until independence - and even subsequently - the northern region remained the target of Portuguese aggression and expansion. In 1811, the hostilities in the north were an accepted fact, with which the Paraguayans tried to live. Thanks to various forts along the Río Apa and small tributaries, constant patrolling, the building of Fuerte Borbón and its outlying pickets, and the general militarisation of the whole northern colonisation zone, the Portuguese advance had been halted at the Río Apa, but indepent Paraguay could permanently forget all its claims to the territory north of this broad, sluggish tributary of the Paraguay - i.e. to southern Mato Grosso. Officially, it was disputed territory, but in practice it belonged to the Portuguese.

The settlement pattern at the end of the colonial period

Table 9.1 presents a summary of the ‘Spanish’ settlements which were officially founded after 1635 or arose more spontaneously, arranged by year or period of foundation. The table once again shows clearly that the settlement foundation activities largely took place in the period after 1750. No fewer than 40 new Spanish larger or smaller settlements were created between 1758 and 1803, as well as a number of reductions and forts. Three quarters of these 40 new settlements were created after 1773.

In about 1800, the territory of Paraguay occupied by the dominant population (Creoles, mestizos and *peninsulares*) comprised the whole eastern region, with the exception of the area of the present departments of Alto Paraná, Amambay and Canindeyú. Apart from the forts and a few, not very prosperous reductions, no settlements were to be found in the Chaco (see below).
Table 9.1. ‘Spanish’ settlements founded or created in the Región Oriental in the period 1635-1811 (excluding mission and military settlements).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pueblo/Villa</th>
<th>Created in</th>
<th>Under Governor</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>17th century</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luque</td>
<td>1635</td>
<td>Ledesma Valderrama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capiatá</td>
<td>1640</td>
<td>Ledesma Valderrama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piribeuy (Capilla Guazú)</td>
<td>1636/40</td>
<td>Lugo y Navarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa Rica (final location)</td>
<td>1682</td>
<td>Diez de Andino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period 1700-1811</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Villeta del Guarnipitán</td>
<td>1714</td>
<td>Bazán de Pedraza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Isidro de Curuguaty</td>
<td>1715</td>
<td>Bazán de Pedraza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ñemby (San Lorenzo de la Frontera;</td>
<td>1717/18?</td>
<td>Reyes Balmaceda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontera; Ñemby de la Frontera)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carapeguá</td>
<td>1725</td>
<td>Barúa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Itaiguá</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>Barúa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Lorenzo de Quiindy</td>
<td>1733</td>
<td>Ruiloba y Calderón</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concepción de Emboscada</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>La Moneda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Rosario de los Ajos Cnel Oviedo)</td>
<td>1758</td>
<td>San Just</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carimbatay</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>San Just</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ybycuí</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Lambaré</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pirayú (Capilla Gayoso)</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carayád</td>
<td>1770/77?</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caacupé</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrero Grande (Eusebio Ayala)</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caraguatay</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Morphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa Real (Concepción)</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyaty (Félix Pérez Cardozo?)</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo Tomás de Paraguarí</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Lorenzo del Campo Grande</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quyquyó</td>
<td>1774/77</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remolinos (1825: Villa Franca)</td>
<td>1776</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ygatimí?</td>
<td>1777</td>
<td>Pinedo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mbuyapey (Capilla Tujá)</td>
<td>1778?</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humaitá</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curupayty</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Ñeembucú</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
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Table 9.1. cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pueblo/Villa</th>
<th>Created in</th>
<th>Under Governor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arroyos y Esteros</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Capilla Duarte)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San José de los Arroyos</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acahay</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ybytimí</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valenzuela (Capilla de Valenzuela</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de los Naranjos)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limpio (San José de los Campos</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limpios de Tapua</td>
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<td>Y(h)acanguazú (Capilla de Borja)</td>
<td>1785</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pedro Apóstol de Ycuamandiyú</td>
<td>1786</td>
<td>Melo de Portugal</td>
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<td>N.S. del Rosario de Cuarepotí</td>
<td>1787</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caapucú</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cangó (San Pedro de Bobí)</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pedro del Paraná</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yabebyry</td>
<td>1790</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laureles</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacuaras</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lima (previously San Francisco</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asís del Aguaray)</td>
<td></td>
<td>late 18th cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yhú</td>
<td></td>
<td>late 18th cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palomares</td>
<td></td>
<td>late 18th cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horqueta</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Alós y Brú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loreto (Capilla Zarza)</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>Rivera y Espinosa</td>
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Sources: Text of Chapters 7,8,9; further, Montalto 1982:23 et seq. A detailed, but not wholly correct list of foundation dates is also to be found in Azara 1847:329-30; see further, González Torres 1995:84-188 and Kegler Krug 1995 (=1974):678-80, who derived their data from Azara.

The settlement pattern differed considerably from that of around 1700. The altered picture was the result of well-considered actions both to give the provincial territory (actually, Eastern Paraguay) better protection against external and internal aggression, and to make better use of the natural resources (yerbales, woods and lands suitable for arable and livestock farming). The latter motive, in particular, favoured dispersed habitation.

Despite the great increase in the number of settlements, the population distribution was still very unbalanced at the end of the colonial period. Asunción was still the only ciudad and, in every
respect, the principal centre. An important population concentration had been created within a radius of over 40 km (10 leguas) north, east and south of the city. In this area, there was also much dispersed settlement. As a result, the population density was relatively high (see Chapter 34).

The further dispersion of the population which had taken place in the comarca asunceña in the eighteenth century was mainly the result of the greater security. After 1761, when the last great incursion of Chaco Indians had occurred and pastures and arable fields from Cumbarity to Tapuá had been destroyed and plundered, there had been no further significant incursions and the dispersion of the population that had already begun continued apace. As a result, the valleys of the Pirayú and Capiatá arroyos, which were bordered on the north by the Tapaycúa (Ypacarai) lake (with landowners possessing titles dating from around 1550), had populations in 1793 of 5,395 and 2,352, respectively (all categories combined). They lived on capueras and estancias. According to Azara, hundreds of Creoles and mestizos lived with their families in the cañadas (small valleys) of Aldana, Tavyryvó and Mbaepirunga and in the valleys of Tapyura, Ñuatí, las Salinas, la Frontera and others, sembrados por los campos (sown through the fields). 73

La Cordillera also had a large, mostly dispersed, population. After 1740, hundreds of families of Creoles and mestizos had here joined the intrepid pioneers who, even before the Revolución de los Comuneros, had dared to erect their homes in empty and dangerous frontier territory. Towards the end of the colonial period, there were numerous chapels in la Cordillera surrounded by small population concentrations and performing a modest service function, for example, in Caacupé, San José de los Arroyos, Cariy, Aparipy and Valenzuela, which formed the centres of districts (pagos, valles) with a highly dispersed and markedly rural population. 74

In other words, at the end of the eighteenth century, a great part of Eastern Paraguay was sown with ranchitos campesinos, situated in

73 Velázquez 1966b:30-1.
74 Velázquez 1966b:30.
suaves valles. Aguirre, cited by Garavaglia, recorded 40 Spanish parroquias, vice-parroquias, oratorios and capillas rurales by as early as the 1780s. Among them he included four villas (Villa Rica, San Isidro de Curuguaty, Villa Real and Pilar), but 36 belonged to the mundo campesino, where they served as a meeting place and social centre.75

Villarrica was the most important settlement after Asunción and had grown on its permanent location at the beginning of the nineteenth century into an important centre for the trade in yerba and timber. When its environs had become more secure, the population here had also dispersed more, partly in order to be able to farm in the valleys of Mbocayaty, Yataity (where a chapel was situated in the mid-eighteenth century) and Carobeni, and in the neighbourhood of the capilla de Borja (Y(h)acanguazú), along the road to Caazapá.76 Guaireños (inhabitants from Villa Rica) had, moreover, peopled Curuguaty and Ajos; other inhabitants, who were engaged in cattle ranching, had settled west of the Indian village of Itapé, towards the Serranía de Ybycuí and Serranía de Acahay. But the principal activity of Villarrica was the exploitation of yerbales.77 Villarrica was situated at some distance from Asunción and the other villas were also situated somewhat farther away, more or less on the periphery, so that they hardly competed with the capital.

A chain of officially founded Spanish settlements had been created in the Litoral (i.e. along the Río Paraguay) as protection against the indóciles from the Chaco, who were incidentally becoming less aggressive towards the end of the colonial period. This chain comprised, from north to south: Villa Real, San Pedro, Rosario, Emboscada, Limpio, Villeta, Remolinos and Nuestra Señora del Pilar. In addition, there were numerous fortifications, from Fuerte Borbón in the far north to Humaitá in the south. According to Cardozo, the number of (not always manned) fuertes

75 Garavaglia 1983:146.
76 According to Du Graty, cited by Gutiérrez (1983:331) the settlement of Yataity was created in 1840; a chapel dedicated to Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Yataity had already been built in 1740, however, which was the property of Captain Bartolomé de Oviedo.
and *fortines* along de Río Paraguay never totalled fewer than 23 and there were 40 in 1798. There was a total of 23 forts in 1782: 7 in the *costa arriba*, 3 in Asunción and 13 in the *costa abajo*; with a further 4 in the *villas* (including San Isidro de Curuguaty, because of its situation close to the Portuguese sphere of influence).

Most of the fortifications were situated in the eastern river zone between Humaitá and San Pedro. There were 22 *guardias* or *destacamentos* here in 1806, 14 of which fell under the responsibility of the *Regimiento de Costa Abajo* and 8 under that for the *Costa Arriba*. They had a combined complement (*hombres de efectivo*) of 235 men (see Table 9.2).

The *Costa Abajo* was the river bank zone of the Río Paraguay south of Asunción as far as the confluence with the Río Paraná, while the *Costa Arriba* extended from Asunción as far as San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú. The more northerly Villa Real had its own militias, while Fuerte Borbón and Fuerte San Carlos del Apa were occupied by separate garrisons.

In the Chaco, i.e. on the right bank of the Paraguay, there were a few small fortifications south of Asunción: Naranjay, Orange, Formoso and Montes Claros. The *presidio* of Angostura and the guard post of Remolinos, both on the left bank of the Río Paraguay, supplemented these defensive points (Fig. 9.1).

Some fortifications from the beginning of the eighteenth century (Santa Rosa, San Jerónimo, San Miguel, Güiray and San Ildefonso) had either disappeared or lost their importance.

All the fortifications along the river had not only to protect Eastern Paraguay, but also to ensure that the navigation to and from the Río de la Plata could be take place in sufficient safety. In order to increase that safety, daily canoe patrols were carried out along the river, from and between the *presidios*, at the end of the colonial period. Payaguáes were also engaged to operate these patrols. It had already been customary from the mid-eighteenth century to keep the stretches of river between the various fortifications under control in this way, and especially the places where the river could be easily crossed.78

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Table 9.2. Guardias on the Costa Abajo and Costa Arriba in 1806, with their complements.\textsuperscript{79}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costa abajo</th>
<th>Complement</th>
<th>Costa arriba</th>
<th>Complement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lambaré</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Castillo***</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Peñón****</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villeta</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Arecutacuá</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angostura</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Manduvirá</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maipinam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ypytá</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibiocá</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cuarepotí</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobato</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pedernal</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remolinos</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ycuamandiýú</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herradura*</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortín (San Fernando?)**</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacuaras</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacuaras</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neembucú (Pilar)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boquerón</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total       | 148(156?)  | Total       | 79         |


\* Near the mouth of the Tebicuary.
\** Perhaps at the same river mouth; the question mark is by Velázquez.
\*** Castillo de San Ildefonso, Castillo de Tapuá.
\**** San Miguel del Peñón; subsequently called Piquete-Cué.

N.B. According to the table, the total for the Costa Abajo is 148, but in Velázquez' text a total of 156 is given.

The mercedes de tierra which were granted out along the river for cattle ranching at the end of the colonial period made little contribu-

\textsuperscript{79} Almost all the information in this table corresponds with that from Molas (1957: 28-9). He gives a total of 14 guardias or presídios for the Costa Abajo Oriental (i.e. from north to south: Lambaré, San Antonio, Villeta, Angostura, Ibiocá, Nundiaí, Lobato, Mortero, Villa Franca, Herradura, Tacuaras, Tayí, Humaitá and Curupaití) and 9 for the Costa Arriba Oriental (i.e. from south to north: Castillo, Peñón, Arecutacuá, Manduvirá, Ipitá, Cuarepotí, Potrero-porá, Pedernal and Fuerte San Carlos on the south bank of the Apa). Molas' list of guardias is almost identical with the enumeration given in Table 9.2; only some names are different. According to Molas, there were 4 fortifications on the Chaco bank (Fuerte Formoso, Orange, Monte Claro and Santa Elena).
tion to security; because cattle ranching was extensive, too few people lived on the ranches.

In comparison with the situation in 1706 and that in the 1740s, the protected area had been considerably expanded, to such an extent that the whole of the Litoral was defended and could be peopled, although this does not mean that danger had been completely eliminated. Into the first decades of the nineteenth century, it was not yet completely safe to live along the river.

At the end of the colonial period, settlements had been created not only in the Litoral, but also in the northeastern interior, in the latter case, mainly in order to oppose the advance of the Portuguese and to increase or simplify the opportunities for yerba collection. The most important were villa San Isidro de Curuguaty, the former mission villages of San Joaquín and San Estanislao, and the reductions/villages of Lima and Tacuati. Some fortines were also built in the eastern part of the country at the end of the eighteenth century (San Miguel, Palomares in the neighbourhood of San Isidro de Curuguaty) and guard posts (guardias) in Ajos and Movebos, which fell under Villa Rica.80

Only the Región Oriental had been largely brought under control by the dominant population of Spaniards, Creoles and mestizos. Several entradas had taken place in the Región Occidental (Chaco) at the time of the conquista, mainly to try to find a suitable route to the ‘Sierra de la Plata’. The Paraguayan militias had subsequently mounted 37 expeditions into the Chaco on their own initiative in the seventeenth century, without the least support from the Crown, and a further 42 in the eighteenth century, making a total of 79. But these had not led to the peaceful occupation of the region, or of the greater part of it. The Indians were, in fact, still largely lord and master there, despite the decline in their number. There was, however, a cordon of protective forts, guard posts and Spanish settlements. The forts and guard posts were situated on both sides of the Paraguay river, the Spanish settlements only on the east side (see Box 9.1).81

80 Morínigo 1990:132.
Attempts were also made to create a number of Indian reductions west of the river. A small number of them still existed at the end of the colonial period. The sedentarisation of the indigenous population was generally much more difficult to realise here than in Paraguay Oriental, because the Chaco Indians were not farmers, but hunters, gatherers, fishers and warriors, who were reluctant to give up their traditional way of life. Once they had been concentrated, they did not take readily to arable or livestock farming and often had to be supplied regularly with a certain number of cattle and other provisions, which was an economic burden for the Spaniards. If scarcity arose, they left the reductions to go hunting or to rob Spaniards.\(^8\)\(^2\)

There had been no lack of large-scale colonisation plans for the Chaco. The viceroy, Marqués de Avilés (1799-1801), received many, but none of them was ultimately realised, any more than they were under his successors. Officially, therefore, the Chaco was still a virtually empty territory in 1810, at least in terms of Spanish occupation.\(^8\)\(^3\)

**Settlement categories at the end of the colonial period**

The settlements in existence at the end of the colonial period can be divided into six different categories (see Table 9.3).

The Spanish settlements form the first main category. This group can be divided into two large subcategories. The first comprises the somewhat larger ones, which were officially founded and often had a planned layout. Besides Asunción, Villa Rica, Villa Real (Concepción), San Isidro de Curuguaty, San Pedro, Rosario, la Villeta and Pilar de Ñeembucú belong to this subcategory.

The second subcategory comprised the small to very small settlements in the rural areas with mainly dispersed habitations, consisting of a chapel surrounded by a few houses and, in the

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\(^8\)\(^2\) Viola 1995:97.

\(^8\)\(^3\) Corona Baratech 1951:97. For these plans, see: Azara 1836.
Table 9.3. The 91 settlements (excluding forts) existing in Paraguay at the end of the colonial period, broken down according to the nature of their origin (in alphabetical order).

a. 9 Officially founded Spanish settlements

Asunción, (San Isidro de) Curuguaty, (Villa Real de Nuestra Señora de la) Concepción, (Nuestra Señora del) Pilar de Neembucú, Rosario de Quarepotí, San Pedro Ycuamandiyú, Villa Rica, Villa Franca, la Villeta

b. 43 More spontaneously developed rural centres, around a chapel or fuerte, or along a link road

Acahay, Ajos, Arroyos y Esteros, Barrero Grande, Bobí, Borja, Caacupé, Caapucú, Capiatá, Carayó, Caraguatay, Carapeguá, Carimbatay, Caray, Curupaity, Horqueta, Humaitá, Hyaty, Itaiguá, Lambaré, Laureles, Limpio, Loreto, Luque, Mbuyapey, Palmares, Paraguay, Pirayú, Piribebuy, Quinindy, Quyquyó, San José de los Arroyos, San Lorenzo de Campo Grande, San Lorenzo de la Frontera, San Pedro Paraná, Tacuaras, Valenzuela, Yabebyry, Yatayty, Ybicuí, Ybytimí, Ygatimí, Yhú

c. 11 Pueblos de indios

Altos, Atyrá, Caazapá, Guarambaré, Itá, Itapé, San Juan Nepomuceno, Tobati, Ypané, Yaguarón, Yuty

d. 16 Pueblos de misiones

North: Belén, San Estanislao, San Joaquín
Between the Paraná and the Tebicuary: Encarnación (Itapúa), Jesús, San Cosme y Damián, San Ignacio Guazú, Santa María de Fe, Santa Rosa, Santiago, Trinidad
South of the Paraná: Candelaria, Corpus, Loreto, San Ignacio Mini, Santa Ana

e. 3 Pueblos de pardos

Areguá, Emboscada, Tavapy

f. 9 Young Indian reductions (West and East Paraguay)

Eghileghigó (until 1775), Melodía, Naranjay, Remolinos, San Antonio de los Tobas, San Francisco Asís del Aguaray (Lima), San Francisco de Paula, Tacuati, Timbó.

Sources: Text Chapters 5-9; partly also Gutiérrez 1983:26.
Fig. 9.3. The 91 settlements existing in Paraguay at the end of the colonial period (after Table 9.3 and Gutiérrez 1983:26).
**Legend to Fig. 9.3.**

| 1  | Acahay                      | 39 | Limpio       | 67 | San Pedro del Paraná |
| 2  | Ajos                        | 40 | Loreto       | 68 | San Pedro Ycuamandiyú |
| 3  | Altos                       | 41 | Loreto       | 69 | Santa Ana            |
| 4  | Aregúa                      | 42 | Luque        | 70 | Santa María de Fe    |
| 5  | Arroyos y Esteros           | 43 | Mbuyapey     | 71 | Santa Rosa           |
| 6  | Asunción                    | 44 | Melodfa      | 72 | Santiago             |
| 7  | Atyrá                       | 45 | Naranjay     | 73 | Tacuara              |
| 8  | Barrero Grande              | 46 | Palomares    | 74 | Tacuati (red. Guanás) |
| 9  | Belén                       | 47 | Paraguarí    | 75 | Tavapy               |
| 10 | Bobí                        | 48 | Pilar        | 76 | Tumbo                |
| 11 | Borja                       | 49 | Pirayú       | 77 | Tobati               |
| 12 | Caacupé                     | 50 | Piribebuy    | 78 | Trinidad             |
| 13 | Caapucú                     | 51 | Quarepotí    | 79 | Valenzuela           |
| 14 | Caazapá                     | 52 | Quiindy      | 80 | Villa Franca         |
| 15 | Candelaria                  | 53 | Quyquyó      | 81 | Villarrica           |
| 16 | Capiatá                     | 54 | Remolinos    | 82 | Villeta              |
| 17 | Caraguatay                  | 55 | San Antonio  | 83 | Yabebyry             |
| 18 | Carapeguá                   | 56 | de los Tobas | 84 | Yaguarón             |
| 19 | Carimbatay                  | 57 | San Estanislao | 85 | Yatayty              |
| 20 | Caray                       | 58 | San Francisco | 86 | Ybycuí               |
| 21 | Carayó                      | 59 | Asís del Aguaray (Lima) | 87 | Ybytymí              |
| 22 | Concepción                  | 60 | San Ignacio Guazú | 88 | Ygotimí              |
| 23 | Curuguaty                   | 61 | San Ignacio Miní | 89 | Yhú                   |
| 24 | Curupaitity                 | 62 | San Joaquín | 90 | Ypané                |
| 25 | Corpus                      | 63 | San José de los Arroyos | 91 | Yuty                 |
| 26 | Eghileghigó                 | 64 | San Juan Nepomuceno |  |  |
course of time, also a few amenities, such as a cemetery, a *pulpería* (general store), a *tambo* (overnight accommodation for travellers) and a provision for changing horses (*recambio de cabalgaduras*). A number of these hamlets served as halting places for postal traffic. In other words, these small settlements were mini-service centres for the rural farming population. They were the result of the, at first slow and later more rapidly advancing front of almost wholly spontaneous and predominantly dispersed arable and livestock farming colonisation. The settlements in subcategory 1 sometimes played a supporting role in this colonisation process. Table 9.3 shows that this second category of Spanish settlements comprised over 40 centres, the large majority of which were created in the eighteenth century.

As was noted earlier, some of the chapels of these settlements were private places of worship founded by a landowner, which either immediately or in the course of time began to serve the population living around them, so that, after some years, they were considered to be of public value by the church and were recognised as such. Other chapels were built on the initiative of the bishop and the governor, when they observed that the population which had settled spontaneously at a particular place had reached a certain size. A third category consisted of the chapels that were built on the initiative of a group of country people or a local priest, for example, because they were living too far from an already existing chapel. All these developments were formalised as soon as the chapel started to serve as the place of worship of a *vice-parroquia* or *tenientazgo*, which meant that services, baptisms, marriages and funerals could be held there officially. Where foundation dates are attached to this second group of Spanish settlements, it should be realised that these have a different significance from those of the group of officially founded *pueblos* and *villas*. In fact, the dates which are attached to the small settlements are generally those on which a chapel was built or it was recognised as the place of worship of a parish or vice-parish. It might sometimes be many more years before a somewhat more compact built-up area actually developed around it in the form of a *ranchería*, or before the status of vice-parish was granted. This always happened under the autho-
Settlement and colonisation in the period 1773-1811

Besides the two kinds of settlements dating mainly from the eighteenth century, there were 27 *pueblos de indios* and (former) *pueblos de misiones* at the end of the colonial period. They had nearly all been founded before 1700, either in order to concentrate groups of Indians who were subject to the *encomienda* system, or Indians who, on the contrary, had to be kept outside that system. Of the 11 *pueblos de indios*, Itá, Ypané and Guarambaré were situated closest to Asunción. They had developed into agricultural centres in the valleys of la Frontera and Guarnipitán. Yaguarón had grown towards the end of the colonial period into a tobacco processing centre, thus achieving considerable prosperity, and possessed the most handsome church in the province. Farther to the north, in la Cordillera, were situated Altos, Atyrá and Tobati. Considerable numbers of Spaniards (some of them *foráneos*) were already living in their environs. These villages formed a protective girdle (*cinturón*) around Asunción, particularly at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century, but increasingly less so in the second half of the eighteenth century. Farther to the southeast, 'beyond' Villa Rica, were the reductions of San José de Caazapá and Yuty. Their inhabitants lived mainly from cattle ranching, timber and yerba collection. West of Villarrica was the much smaller and poorer *pueblo de indio* of Itapé and, a long way to the southeast, was the still very new and equally small San Juan Nepomuceno, that still had the status of a reduction. These villages all owed their origin to the Franciscans in first instance.

In the north there were three reductions founded by the Jesuits: San Joaquín, San Estanislao and Belén.

All the 14 Indian villages named above were situated north of the Río Tebicuary. South of this river, there was a total of 13 former *pueblos jesuíticos* or *pueblos de misiones*, 8 of which were situated north of the Paraná, in what is now Paraguay, and the remaining 5 near the left bank of the Río Paraná, in what is now Argentinean Misiones.

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After the expulsion of the Jesuits, priests of other orders and a secular priest had taken over the pastoral care from them. Apart from six former Jesuit villages, the Franciscans were still responsible for four villages and reductions of their ‘own’ in Eastern Paraguay at the end of the colonial period (Itá, San José de Caza­zapá, Yuty, and San Juan Nepomuceno).

A third main category were the three pueblos de pardos: Tavapy, Areguá and Emboscada. The last village had been founded officially, while the two other settlements had arisen more gradually and spontaneously.

A fourth main category consisted of the nine recently created reductions, such as Melodía and Naranjay, which did not have the status of pueblo de indio.
Layout and organisation of the colonial settlements

This chapter deals with the appearance and internal organisation of the settlements. The *pueblos de misiones* founded by the Jesuits and the *pueblos de indios* established by the Franciscans receive the most attention. In comparison with these two groups of villages, there is relatively little to say about the Spanish *villas* and *pueblos*, which are discussed at the end of this chapter. Asunción is not discussed, because the growth, structure and function of the capital are dealt with in Chapter 12.

The eleven *pueblos de indios*

The *pueblos de indios* north of the Tebicuary (see Table 9.3) owed their origin to Franciscan missionaries. The latter, however, transferred the majority of the indigenous villages sooner or later to secular priests because of their lack of manpower. Eventually, only Itá, Caazapá and Yuty remained in the hands of Franciscan pastors throughout the colonial period.¹

Like the Jesuits, the Franciscans were also expected, in laying out and organising the villages, to conform to the current Spanish legislation, such as the *Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento y Población* of Philip II of 1573 and the *Ordenanzas* of Governor Ramírez de

¹ In addition, they were responsible in the late colonial period for a number of recently founded reductions, such as San Juan Nepomuceno and Melodía, and for six former Jesuit mission villages.
Velasco of 1597, which mentioned, among other things, the concentration of the Indians into reductions. The founders (and refounders), however, also departed from the general instructions if this was considered desirable because of the specific circumstances, in which case they often followed the existing Guaraní tradition.\(^2\)

**Layout and appearance**

The *pueblos de indios* were larger than the traditional Guaraní villages, because several *cacicazgos* were concentrated in them. The physical structure showed a certain similarity to the pre-Spanish *tava*. The latter possessed a kind of square, around which were situated a few large communal houses. This square reappeared in the Franciscan villages. It was the *plaza*, generally measuring at least 100 x 200 m, in the middle of which was situated the - free-standing - church. The square formed the focus for all the religious activities in the village. Processions and fiestas were held there, just as the various rituals had taken place on the open space in the pre-Spanish settlements. The dead were also buried there. The square was not a market place, but there was usually a second *plaza* that served as a market place, although this was laid out only when the village had begun to consolidate and was being extended.

On one side of the square was situated the Franciscan friary or the presbytery of the secular priest, as well as the administration building (*cabildo*), the storehouses, the workshops where artisan activities (*oficios*) were practised, and the prison. In contrast to the Jesuit villages, therefore, these buildings were not situated immediately next to the church.

The *oficios* were sometimes situated in a patio of the *cabildo* building or, where there was a true friary, usually around one of the patios of the friary. The Franciscan model reduction of San José de Caazapá had a friary complex consisting of two cloisters: the fathers lived on the first, where were also situated the refectory and the village storehouses (in which were kept supplies, implements, the *cabildantes*’ ceremonial clothing and other things); the work-

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shops were situated around the second cloister. Whatever the local situation, the workshops and other communal buildings were always situated near the presbytery or the friary, so that the priests could easily keep an eye on them. Near the cabildo were to be found (as in San José) the little school where music and song were taught and the primary school, the main function of which was to teach the children some Spanish. The primary school was attended only by the sons of the caciques, cabildantes, artists, churchwardens, musicians and other more prominent village inhabitants, not by the children of the ordinary Indians or by only a few of them. With a few exceptions, the villages had no hospital facilities, and then not until the late colonial period. The model reduction of San José did not obtain such a facility until the second half of the eighteenth century. For a long time, it was customary during epidemics to isolate the sick from the healthy by accommodating them at a spot near a chapel, on a chacra or on a puesto of an estancia, where special measures could then temporarily be taken. This was not unusual according to Gutiérrez, because even Asunción did not possess a proper hospital until the end of the eighteenth century and even the well-equipped Jesuit villages of the eighteenth century often lacked a permanent facility. A widows' house (like those in the Jesuit villages) was unknown in the pueblos de indios.

Along the other three sides of the square were situated the long house blocks (tirones) inhabited by the Indian population. The number of blocks varied according to the size of the village. Where the village was somewhat larger, the house blocks were built in a number of parallel rows behind each other around the square. Unlike the Jesuit mission villages, however, they did not form a pattern of regular manzanas. Other than in the pre-Spanish malocas, each Indian household had its own dwelling. The dwellings were all of the same size. The blocks comprised ten or even more single-storey houses and were at least partly provided with covered arcades to give the inhabitants and pedestrians some protection against cold, rain and heat. The arcades also performed a social function, because they facilitated mutual contact.

The interior of the houses was very simple, even of 'Spartan simplicity', according to Necker; a few hammocks, a minimum amount of furniture and a few household utensils. In the middle of
the room was a hearth on which food was prepared. The hygiene often left much to be desired, and was indeed a problem in the Jesuit villages, too. The houses had their entrances on the side of
the square, which meant that a certain control could easily be exercised over the residents.

The houses and other buildings were initially wholly constructed from natural materials, which were also used for the pre-Spanish malocas. The houses consisted of a framework of timber and bamboo, had walls of adobe (clay mixed with straw) and roofs of straw or palm leaves, which drained down on both sides. There were no doors or windows, but the openings could be closed with skins, if necessary. The church and other buildings were in fact constructed in the same manner. In the course of time and certainly in the eighteenth century, bricks and tiles also began to be used in the pueblos de indios, which considerably increased the durability of the structures, but this happened more in some villages than in others. The reduction of San José de Caazapá, that was founded in 1607, already had tiled roofs in 1618. Unlike in the mission villages of the Jesuits in the eighteenth century, no natural stone was used. In general, the pueblos de indios were much less attractive than the pueblos de misiones, because even in the eighteenth century many houses were still built with less durable materials. Many governors observed during their periodic visits that they were in a poor state and needed improvement. Often, only buildings like the church, the presbytery and that of the cabildo had tiled roofs. The villages administered by the Franciscans were more or less model villages and, therefore, in a certain sense exceptions. Itapé, by contrast - which was also an Indian village - was described by Azara as the most wretched and unfortunate village of the province; its inhabitants lived in straw huts and there was only a small church, which illustrated its poverty.

The villages generally had only one or a few exits, which were provided with a gate and guarded by a guardia. Since the Ordenanzas of Alfaro (1611/8), Spaniards (with the exception of the cura)

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3 Necker (1990:49) states that when tejas are referred to in the descriptions this does not always mean that the roof was covered with earthenware tiles. Often tile-shaped parts made from palm trees were used. We may assume that he meant palm stems divided into halves which were put on the roofs alternately with their hollow and convex side up, so that they overlapped each other.

4 Diario (Azara) 1993:180.
were no longer allowed to stay in the Indian villages. For this reason, there were special guesthouses (tambos). San José, in any event, had a tambo, close to, but separated from, the friary complex. It is not clear whether all the pueblos de indios had a tambo.

The patios of the friary of San José de Caazapá had a huerta, in which crops were grown for the friars and - certainly in the beginning - experiments were conducted with the cultivation of new crops. The priests of the other pueblos de indios probably also had such a garden.

![Diagram of the pueblo de indio of San José de Caazapá](Fig. 10.2. The plan of the pueblo de indio of San José de Caazapá (reconstruction based on the inventories of 1784/86, 1789, 1809 and 1848; after Durán Estragó 1992b:87).)

Beyond the village extended the communally and individually worked fields, on which a few simple huts generally stood to
provide temporary shelter. On the edge of the village or sometimes outside it, there were generally a corn mill, a sugar-cane press and, later, also one or more brickyards and small industries which could not be operated within the village itself. Baking was done near the houses or in special ovens in the fields. Animals were slaughtered near the village and on the puestos of the village estancia(s). Some villages (such as San José) had several, large livestock ranches. These were subdivided into puestos and equipped with everything necessary for their operation, including small fields on which the estancia workers grew some crops.

The appearance and spatial pattern sketched above crystallised out with the passage of time and therefore applies at least to the eighteenth century, but less so to the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, from which time the majority of the pueblos dated in the first instance. The villages from the early colonial period were simpler than those from the end of the eighteenth century. Besides differences in time, there were also differences from village to village. Each settlement had its own layout. Some villages were decidedly much better built and maintained than others, which was related not only to the care of the administrators, but also to the availability of labour. In general, however, the settlements were modestly built; much more simply than the Jesuit villages. Only the churches had richly decorated interiors.5

Organisation

The pueblos de indios were originally governed by a poblero, a Spaniard who represented the encomendero(s), and by the caciques, who could generally only impose their authority sufficiently if they enjoyed the support of the poblero. The pobleros ensured that the Indians fulfilled their labour obligations towards the encomendero, regulated the work within the village, including the spinning by the

women and the manufacture of cotton cloths. They also had to ensure not only that the Indians worked harder and more regularly, but also that they led more civilised lives. The pobleros partly reorganised the village economy (made necessary by the concentration of population) and were probably also the people who introduced oxen, ploughs and other innovations into the villages. The real bosses, however, were not the pobleros and the caciques; it was the encomendero who ultimately pulled the strings. It is not clear when the first pobleros arrived in the indigenous settlements, but Necker assumes that this was not until after the foundations by the Franciscans. He considers it unlikely that the pobleros could have maintained their position before 1575 as agent of the encomendero among semi-nomadic and more or less rebellious Guaranis. This only became easier after the pacification. The pobleros generally had a bad reputation, because they often mistreated the Indians and made them work too hard and for too long, and because they sometimes indulged in promiscuous sexual behaviour. Ramírez de Velasco therefore ordered that they had to be married. Necker assumes that their behaviour was related to the fact that they had to prove their authority in the village and that this was often only possible if there were kinship ties. In this respect there was a similarity with the caciques of the pre-Spanish period and with the first conquistadores.

From 1597, each village had to have a fiscal indio, who was responsible for ensuring that the Indians fulfilled their religious obligations. From 1599, the villages had a corregidor, a kind of indigenous mayor. This function was generally performed by the principal cacique. After 1611, the year in which Alfaro drew up his Ordenanzas, the villages also had a cabildo, a village council. Alfaro was opposed to pobleros and encomenderos living in the villages. He believed that only natives should live in the pueblos de indios, not even Spanish administrators. The Real y Supremo Consejo de las Indias, which had to pronounce on the proposed Ordenanzas, decided, however, that there had to be an administrator. From that time, this function was exercised by the cura-doctri-

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6 Chaves 1976:68.
nero, who was appointed by the governor and lived permanently in the pueblo de indio. The latter meant that the often customary peripatetic visits of clergy came to an end. The wider availability of clergy at the beginning of the seventeenth century made this change possible, although there was a condition that these priests should speak fluent Guaraní. The Franciscans and other clergy who were appointed in the villages were therefore mostly not recently arrived peninsulares, but locally-born Creoles and mestizos. When the number of clergy was still limited (as in the seventeenth century) each village usually had only one priest; in the eighteenth century, when there were more priests, the parish priest was sometimes assisted by one or more colleagues, certainly in the larger villages.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century, the cura-doctrinero was virtually the absolute boss in the pueblos de indios. He was responsible not only for pastoral care, but also (jointly with the corregidor) for the management of the communal property and the appropriation of everything that was produced communally. He, in fact, took over the position of the poblero and, with it, that of the encomendero, although the latter did retain his right to labour by the natives.

This situation continued until towards the middle of the eighteenth century, when Governor Rafael de la Moneda decided in 1745 to limit the task of the parish priests to that of pastoral care. He appointed administradores civiles for the material management of the communal property and the appropriation of its production. This change was first implemented in the villages of los Altos, Tobatí, Ypané and Guarambaré. Moneda’s intention was to free the villages from excessive intervention by the priest, but as was to be expected, his measure led in practice to a far more corrupt and inefficient situation than before. The administradores received the right to a fixed percentage (ranging from 8-10 per cent) of the returns from all the transactions involving goods belonging to the community. The intention was to encourage the administrators to crank up the economy of the villages, but in practice they generally seized the opportunity to serve mainly their own interests. They started to exploit the labour potential of the Indians in a shameless manner. The governors often appointed their friends to these posts.
When the Jesuits were expelled in 1768 the same thing started to happen in their mission villages.\(^7\)

The indigenous *corregidor* was the ‘second man’ in the villages. He was first appointed by the governor, but it was laid down by *Real Cédula* in 1740 that he should be elected, like the members of the *cabildo*. The *corregidor* had to ensure that the *mandamientos* and other decisions of the governor were carried out and that the other labour obligations were enforced. He had to communicate the orders of the priest (or the administrator) and see to it that they were complied with, assist in the management of the natives’ communal property and the communal funds, and cooperate with the priest in dealing with material matters and the punishment of misdemeanours. He was therefore responsible, together with the *cura-doctrinero* (or administrator), for the *bienes del pueblo*. It was initially also his task to ensure that the Indians performed their religious duties. During the time that the *corregidor* exercised his function, he was exempted from *encomienda* duties and he was allowed to bear the title of *don*. The *corregidores* usually came from the more important families (*linajes dominantes*).\(^8\)

The *cabildo* was made up entirely of natives and was elected annually by the sitting *cabildantes*, with the proviso that the priest had a clear voice in the matter and the governor ratified the elections. The size of the organ varied, depending on the size of the settlement. A complete *cabildo* of a larger village (e.g. San José de Caazapá) usually consisted - apart from the *corregidor* - of two *alcaldes* (councillors who could dispense justice in cases of minor crimes and misdemeanours), two *regidores* (councillors)\(^9\), an *alguacil* (police constable), a *procurador general* (treasurer), a *alférez real* (royal standard-bearer), a *secretario* (secretary), an *alcalde de la Santa Hermandad* (for rural affairs) and an *alcalde de tambo* (officer responsible for the village inn). *Caciques* were

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\(^7\) Garavaglia 1983:332-8.

\(^8\) Garavaglia 1983:339.

\(^9\) According to the approved *Ordenanzas* of Alfaro (1618), there had to be an *alcalde* in each village, but there had to be two if the settlement comprised more than 80 houses. Two *regidores* were then also required (Thomás de Krüeger 1996:84).
nearly always chosen for all these positions. The *cabildantes* constituted the élite of the village. As *cabildo*, they also organised the religious celebrations, bought candles and other requisites for the processions and looked after the paraphernalia of the local saint. The majority of *cabildantes* could (more or less) read and write, both Spanish and Guarani. They were not paid, but were exempted from certain obligations such as *mita* services and were allowed to wear ceremonial dress on special occasions. Those were the only privileges.

The *caciques* who were not *cabildantes* also performed functions: they spoke on behalf of their Indians, acted as supervisors of the work in the fields, allocated the private fields to which each Indian household was entitled and ensured that their ‘subjects’ fulfilled their obligations to the *encomendero*. The *caciques* (whether or not they were members of the *cabildo*) retained a certain power and prestige throughout the colonial period. They were allowed to bear the hereditary title of *don*. The *encomenderos*, clergy, administrators and governors could not wholly ignore them and were always well-advised to take them into account.10

Like the parish priest and/or the administrator, the *cabildantes* and other *caciques* obviously represented the village in dealings with the outside world. They received the authorities (such as the governor, the bishop and the superior of the order) when the latter visited the villages. They possessed special, ceremonial clothing for such duties, which they also wore on other special occasions (such as processions). Durán Estragó and Necker see in this a parallel with the pre-colonial period, when the *caciques* and *shamans* had the custom of decking themselves out festively with feathers, painting their bodies and otherwise adorning themselves on special occasions.

Susnik and Necker attributed little real power to the *cabildos* and their *corregidores*. Officially, the *cabildo* did administer the village, but in practice it was little more than the passive executor of the decisions of the administrator and his assistant. The *corregidor*, in his turn, often had to conform to the will of the *cura*. The

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corregidor did have a certain power, however, in the area of division of labour and of subsistence crops, which sometimes led to minor conflicts with the caciques, who represented their rank and file. Some corregidores and curas were good, others were less good or downright bad administrators and pastors. Some used their position to promote their own interests. In such cases, the corregidores sometimes subjected the Indians to all kinds of illegal obligations, especially in the area of personal services, to enable them to supplement their income. If the interests of the Indians were clearly harmed as a result, the protector de los naturales intervened. According to Susnik, the corregidores and cabildantes were not always welcome among the Indians. They tried to impose their wishes on them and were often seeking their own advantage. The Indians had far fewer problems with their own cacique (their natural leader). The parish priest also had to appeal to his parishioners from time to time in order to stretch his meagre income. Some parish priests were strict and feared, others were loved. The Indians themselves did not always object to giving their services; the cooking of food and the tilling of the caciques’ fields had also been customary in the pre-colonial period. But the demands of the corregidores were gradually screwed up, especially when the villages developed a commercial potential with their assets in the eighteenth century.\footnote{For the internal organisation of the villages, see: Durán Estragó 1992b: 44-5, 91-5; González Torres 1995:42-3; Necker 1990:180-6; Susnik 1965:161-5, 206-14; Susnik 1990-91:22; Susnik 1995 (=1964):15; Whigham 1995:161-2.}

Under the Spanish legislation no Spaniards were allowed to live in the villages. The clergy and the administrators were responsible for enforcing this measure, but made no attempt to isolate the inhabitants of the pueblos de indios as systematically from the Spanish population as the Jesuits did. The Franciscans and the secular priests who took over their task allowed the Indians to supply encomienda labour and to make their labour available in other ways, if necessary (see Chapters 13/14). The villages established with the support of the clergy were, in fact, partly intended to facilitate conversion and partly to facilitate pacification and the
exploitation of indigenous labour through the *encomienda* system (and later also the *mandamiento* system). The *curas* generally did not oppose the established colonial order, but tried to reduce its excesses.

The *encomienda* obligations and the supply of labour through *mandamientos* meant that the villages had a rather fluctuating population and they sometimes resulted in crises. The Franciscan or ex-Franciscan *pueblos de indios* were villages which regularly lost population (either temporarily or permanently), until the Jesuits were driven from their missions and their villages also lost population.\(^\text{12}\)

Like the Jesuit missions, the *pueblos de indios* were based on communal ownership and partly also on communal labour. Fields, workshops, implements, livestock and public buildings belonged to the reduction, the *tava-pueblo*. The inhabitants did have their own plot of land to meet their daily needs, but its potential was by no means always intensively exploited. The time which they could and wished to devote to it was often limited; in fact, no more than two days a week. With the exception of the sick, the *corregidor* and certain other officials, men, women and children from the age of 11 years were obliged to work for the community. The women spun cotton and worked on the land, if necessary. The men who were charged with the arable farming and the artisans worked on the land or in the village workshops, respectively, for four days a week, at least when they did not have to perform services for the *encomendero* or meet other external labour obligations. The crops from the communal land were stored in storehouses. The arable farmers received seed and implements for their operations from the communal storehouses. What was produced jointly by the inhabitants was for general use and was partly distributed; surpluses were sold to generate income in order to cover certain needs of the community.

Each day, the *cura-doctrinero* allocated the tasks which the *corregidores* and the members of the *cabildo* decided were to be performed. The *caciques* acted as the *capataces* of the Indians who worked the land, while the *cura* managed and controlled the craft

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\(^{12}\) Flores G. de Zarza 1986:113.
workshops and the communal storehouses. He was naturally also responsible for the religious activities, such as the religious exercises which were held each afternoon for children under 11, unmarried women and married women without children.

Recalcitrance was met with corporal punishment, which was repeated quite often, because the Indians were generally not very inclined to perform the work imposed on them by the corregidores or other cabildantes. They really only cared to do work that resembled their traditional activities. They were generally good imitators and therefore quickly familiarised themselves with the work in the carpentry workshops, smithies etc.13

The pueblos de indios had the potential to develop into prosperous settlements - according to the concepts of the time -, but the extent to which that happened depended on the administrator(s), or to what extent there was a call from the province for indigenous labour for public works, yerba collection or other activities and, not least, on the inhabitants themselves. As soon as the minimum subsistence needs appeared to have been met, many Indians lost their interest in agriculture, with the consequence that the production on their own plot of land often remained insufficient. Many preferred temporary work outside the villages (through the mitazgo, or ordinary hiring), which gave them a freer life and yielded additional income. This ‘flight’ sometimes meant that communal labour suffered. The recruitment for public works had a comparable effect. The pueblos de indios formed an important source of indigenous labour for public works and other activities at the provincial level and grateful use was made of it.14 Some villages experienced periods of languor, but also periods of greater prosperity; with others the picture was more stable. Epidemics and population decline affected this dynamic.

The absence of the Indians was already causing concern under Governor Hernandarias, who therefore encouraged the development of crafts in order to keep the Indians in the villages.15 This only

14 Susnik 1984a:201.
partly succeeded; particularly at the end of the eighteenth century, the economy of the pueblos de indios often had to contend with a labour shortage. Such problems did not occur in the Jesuit missions until 1768; there the people were kept together.

By the mid-seventeenth century there was already a certain social differentiation in the pueblos de indios: the cabildantes and fiscales guaraníes, who had been exempted from communal labour formed an upper class (los mandarinos). The artisans and the artists, who enjoyed the privilege of premiums and thus saw the opportunity to gain minor economic advantages, also belonged to the ‘élite’. The cabildantes nearly always came from the small upper stratum (largely caciques); it was often a matter of the same people filling varying posts. The lower stratum consisted of the mass of simple men and women, who were employed on the communal activities.16

Because of their greater openness and the more intensive contacts with the society of Creoles and mestizos (mainly through being engaged as labour) the pueblos de indios formed ‘transitions’ or ‘bridges’ between the traditional indigenous society and the Spanish colonial world. Through their residential segregation, the inhabitants of the pueblos de indios enjoyed a certain measure of protection and many were able to preserve their own identity, but they also underwent a process of acculturation through the system of obligatory labour and the presence of Spanish administrators. At the end of the colonial period, the villages were increasingly infiltrated by Creole tenants, which further strengthened the contacts with the ‘Spanish’ society.17 From that time, many craftsmen left the villages, because they were no longer subject to mita obligations and could find a better livelihood elsewhere; the ordinary Indian stayed and lived from his arable plot, his ox and the clothing he received from the community. In the long run, the cultural distance between the inhabitants of the pueblos de indios and the Creoles and mestizos became ever smaller and the pueblos Indians were

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absorbed fairly painlessly into Paraguayan society in the nineteenth century.

The thirty Jesuit villages (*pueblos de misiones*)

The thirty mission settlements (*pueblos de misiones*) which the Jesuits eventually founded in the Paraná-Uruguay region had a character of their own.\(^{18}\) They differed both from the Spanish settlements and from the *pueblos de indios* which had been entrusted to the care of Franciscans or secular priests. There were nevertheless also resemblances. The thirty Jesuit villages did not differ very much from each other, which was mainly due to the fact that the missionaries followed the existing Spanish legislation quite closely and, more in particular, the instructions contained in the *Leyes de Indias* (*Libro IV, Título 7*). They were also guided by the directions issued by the superiors. As more reductions were built, a greater need arose for uniform regulations. In 1637, the four missionaries who had the most experience of working among the Guaraníes (Ruiz de Montoya, Díaz Taño, Ruyer and Ampúero) drew up some general regulations that were approved from above. In the preceding years, the Peruvian reduction of Juli had served more or less as a model (although not so much for the layout of the villages) and the Jesuits had followed the directions issued by the superior, Torres Bollo, in 1610. Torres Bollo believed that the wishes of the Indians should be taken into account. Further directions were issued by the provincial superiors after 1637. Many aspects remained unclear, so that a second set of regulations was added to the existing one in 1689. All the regulations were collected together in the *Libro de Órdenes*, that was present in all the villa-

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\(^{18}\) I have omitted here the three villages which were created more in the north of Paraguay in the mid-eighteenth century (San Joaquín, San Estanislao and Belén). They were not only of more recent date than the Paraná-Uruguay villages, but were also situated in a different territory. They showed similarities (such as a planned layout), but also differences. As young settlements, founded shortly before the expulsion of the Jesuits, they were less substantial than the thirty villages situated farther to the south.
The missionaries were guided not only by these regulations and instructions, but also by the local possibilities and limitations and they built on a number of elements of the Guaraní culture. They also took as an example in the beginning the manner in which the already existing *pueblos de indios* had been set up. Besides the instructions and directions, there were the lessons of practical experience. The missionaries learned by doing and, eventually, a model crystallised out that was found to be the most suitable. The idea that the Jesuits tried to realise an already specifically fixed type of settlement - a utopia - from the beginning is incorrect.19

*Site, layout and appearance of the villages*

The choice of the regions in which the Jesuits were to carry out missionary work was a matter for the Spanish authorities and the Jesuit provincial superior. The choice of the actual sites of the villages to be founded within a mission territory was, however, a matter for consultation between the responsible missionaries and the *caciques* of the Indians who were to be concentrated. All the proposed reductions required the approval of the governor.20

The Jesuit mission settlements were always built on a somewhat higher spot as a safeguard against flooding, which could sometimes last for months. Other advantages of a higher site were that it was easier to defend and that the climate was generally somewhat healthier and more pleasant than on the lower ground. The wind was fresher there and there were fewer insects. The neighbourhood of swamps was avoided and the site should preferably be open to the south to enable the inhabitants to benefit from cooler winds. Most of the settlements were situated in the vicinity of a navigable river or stream. A small port (landing stage) was then laid out, so that communications could be maintained with the other villages or the wider Spanish world along the extensive waterways system. In choosing a site, the founders obviously also took into account whether a street pattern could easily be set out (and subsequently

extended) there, whether there was sufficient fertile land in the vicinity for arable and livestock farming and whether there was woodland to supply constructional timber, firewood and other necessities. The colonial law incidentally also explicitly laid down that villages could only be built in favourably situated, fertile and well-watered areas, so that the Jesuits did take such instructions into account. The directions which the Provincial Superior Torres Bollo gave to the Fathers Cataldino and Maseta, who were to carry out missionary work in el Guairá, state that the proposed villages must have sufficient water for washing, drinking and bathing, as well as fish waters and fertile soils, and that the latter should not be too quickly flooded. It must be possible to sow sufficient land to support at least 800-1,000 Indians. The local climate should not be too warm. The founders should look for sites free of mosquitoes and other discomforts and check on the communications. It was best to seek out a somewhat higher site, that was rather more open and easier to defend. At first, the Jesuits did not think of everything and they still had to gain experience in selecting a site. A particular site was sometimes found to provide a less healthy living environment than was initially assumed and certain locations also proved not to be as safe as had been thought. Some villages were therefore relocated after a while, sometimes even several times. But, by the beginning of the eighteenth century practically all the existing villages had found their permanent sites. The last removal was in 1760, when San Cosme y Damián, which had become an independent village in 1718, reached its definitive location.

Most of the villages were situated at distances of 5-10 leguas from each other. They were larger than the traditional villages, which had certain efficiency advantages for the missionaries, and which meant for the Indians that they lived less dispersed and were therefore rather less free, and that each group was less able to preserve its specific identity. As the villages grew older, the situation became increasingly regarded as normal. Several cacicazgos generally lived together in the villages, which had previously not always been the case.

The building of the villages and the clearing of the necessary arable land in the vicinity were the work of the Indians themselves,
but the missionaries did give directions and sometimes also physical help, partly in order to set the Indians a good example.21

The villages were all laid out on the same plan, certainly in the later period. It is not surprising therefore that various planos tipos of the villages were drawn in the eighteenth century. When one had seen one village, one had seen them all, so to speak, although each village did have some character of its own.22

The centre of the pueblos de misiones was formed by a square or rectangular open space (plaza), that varied somewhat in area, but seldom exceeded 150 x 150 varas (128 m). The plaza of San Ignacio Miní, for example, measured 125 x 108 m. The plaza was situated on one side of the village and therefore did not form the geometrical centre, but it was the social centre. The plaza sometimes had a fountain and a large cross at each corner of the square, sometimes even a small chapel, that would be used as a mortuary, as a stopping place for processions or a place from which the Eucharist could be taken to the sick. These chapels were sometimes temporary, but often permanent. The church and other community buildings were all situated on the plaza.

In many villages, an image of the Virgin Mary or of the local patron saint stood on a pillar in the middle of the square. While many trees were planted elsewhere in the village, the plaza was bare and open. No officially constructed roads or paths crossed the square ('informal' paths at the most), there were no flower beds, rotundas or the like. The plaza was in fact the place where the Indians could gather for all kinds of activities and where military manoeuvres could be held. Trees and other planting would have formed an obstacle in this instance. The Indians met each other on

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21 With regard to the siting, see, inter alia, Carbonell de Masy 1986b:46-7; Conzelmann 1958:39; Fassbinder 1926:21,27,45; Meliá Lliteras 1978:159.
Fig. 10.3. Model plan of a Jesuit mission (after Haubert 1967:187; McNaspy & Blanch 1982:140; Palacios & Zoffoli 1991:133).

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<td>Church, with portico</td>
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<td>Mission garden</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>House of widows and orphans</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Patio of Colegio</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Grand Plaza</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Classrooms</td>
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<td>Statue of patron saint</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Second patio</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Crosses at the corners of the Plaza</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Storerooms and workshops</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Blocks of houses of Indians</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>House of missioners</td>
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the plaza and assembled there when they went to church. Processions were held there, as well as many other celebrations, such as communal meals, song, dance, musical and theatrical performances, sporting events, and militia exercises. The square was comparable with the plaza de armas of the Spanish settlements. No market was held, however, because there was virtually no local trade. Randle
has emphasised that the *plaza* performed a central, sacred role. The square with the church was the centre of gravity of the village. All the streets gave easy access to the square. Randle refers to Rome - the Holy City - where the streets are also oriented towards the churches and link them together, so that they can be easily reached.\(^{23}\)

The church was situated on the north or south side of the square. It was built communally by the Indians and under the direction of the fathers. It had to be large enough to accommodate a few thousand villagers. The first churches were rather simple. Like the other public buildings, they were still constructed of less durable building materials. The frame consisted of unworked tree trunks, the roofs were made of palm leaves, straw, reeds or other plant material, the walls of adobe and the floors of compacted clay, but nevertheless these churches were also considered handsome. Governor Céspedes García Xerfa, who visited the reductions of el Guairá in 1629, spoke of *muy lindas iglesias* (very handsome churches). In the period of concentrated missionary activity - after 1640 - however, much larger and more solid buildings were erected, including churches with three or even five naves. Timber was still the most important building material, but it had already been worked. The preferred timbers for the frame were the hard woods *lapacho* and *urundey*. The *cocotero* (coconut palm or *pindó*) trunks were split and hollowed out for use as roof covering. Use was also made of roofing tiles, brick and, where natural stone was used, that was also dressed. When Jesuits who were trained architects arrived from Italy and Spain in about 1700, church building developed further. A third phase of church building then began, according to Busaniche. The eighteenth century churches were architecturally ambitious, were built of stone, employing hitherto unknown stone arch and vaulted structures from about 1740, and were very richly decorated. Representative examples from this third building period include the baroque churches that were erected in Trinidad, San Ignacio Miní and Concepción. Lime or cement were also generally not used in that period, because they were not present. Clayey earth

\(^{23}\) Randle 1986, *inter alia*, 31,33; Ruiz Moreno 1940:18.
was used as mortar, ingenious timber structures were devised and leather straps were used to bind beams together. Some villages possessed smithies for the fabrication of iron building materials. Nearly all the luxury of the villages in the eighteenth century was invested in the church, but it was, after all, the house of God.

As we have seen, the Jesuit reductions differed from the pueblos de indios founded by the Franciscans in the siting of the church. In the Franciscan villages the church was situated in the middle of an open field (plaza). The other public buildings and dwellings were situated along the four sides.

On one of the sides next to the church in a Jesuit village was situated the building complex (colegio) in which, besides the rooms of the fathers and the guest rooms, various central facilities were accommodated (a small school, various workshops and stores). On the other side of the church lay the graveyard.

The colegio or casa de los padres was a somewhat taller building, but nevertheless consisted of only one storey. It comprised two patios, one measuring 60 varas square and the other 60 x 80 varas. The first patio bordered the church. On the north or south side there were six rooms (aposentos) for two or three fathers and their guests; there was also an almacén (store room), as well as the refectorio (dining room). There was sometimes also an underground wine cellar here. On the east or west side there were five or six aposentos for the mayordomo and his trastos (tools; materials), another served as an armería (armoury for muskets, lances, sabres and other weapons) and another again for storing the special clothing worn by the cabildantes, soldiers, dancers and processionists on festive occasions. Here was also situated the little school where reading, writing, music and dancing were taught and, last but not least, the accommodation for an old porter who served as a guard. The second and larger (rear) patio was bordered by the workshops where the various crafts were practised. The seldom

25 For a picture of architecture and art in the Jesuit missions, see, inter alia, the publication by McNaspy & Blanch (1982). See also Busaniche 1955.
mentioned abattoir also seems to have been situated on this second patio, but the rule was probably for it to be situated outside the village, while only the distribution of meat took place in the colegio. There was often a spring, well or other form of water supply in the patio, so that people could wash there.

There was also a casa del cabildo (‘ayuntamiento’); it was undoubtedly situated on the square, but is not quite clear where. The cabildo may also have simply met in a part of the colegio. In his study of the seven eastern mission villages, Simón places the building on the other side of the square, opposite the church, but Palacios & Zoffoli situate it on the side of the square, near the church.27

In normal times there was no separate hospital; sick Indians were cared for at home. During epidemics, however, special provision was made and strict measures were taken. Pesthouses were set up in a remote corner of the village, where the sick were placed in quarantine, and temporary quarters were also built outside the village. At such times the roads were closed to isolate the villages and prevent the spread of infection. When the plague had passed, the houses were decontaminated and textiles and clothing were burned.28 Gutiérrez has pointed out that a Spanish city like Asunción also had no permanent hospital until the end of the eighteenth century (see above).

The villages also had a prison (which was seldom used, because punishments were generally mild). Where it was situated is uncertain, but it was probably near the cabildo building. The position of the orphanage (if there was one) is also not very certain.

The villages had two graveyards: an ordinary graveyard (next to the church) and one outside the village for use if epidemics occurred. They were divided into four sections: for boys, girls, men and women. Everyone was buried here in principle; only the fathers, the corregidores who died in post and certain highly meritorious Indians were interred in the church. The graveyards were well maintained and had a park-like appearance: palms, orange trees and

flowers grew along the paths. A large cross stood in the middle at the crossing of the paths and there was a chapel at the back.

The widows' house (cotiguazú) was probably situated to the left of the church, next to the churchyard. It consisted of a large patio bordered by living quarters. It was not only the true widows who stayed in this building, but also (voluntarily, unless inclined to unfaithfulness) the married childless women whose husbands stayed outside the village for longer periods or whose husbands had fled. Widows who had children under 14 continued to live in their homes in the village. Sometimes, some women who wished to lead a quiet and modest life (recogidas) also lived in the cotiguazú, as well as disabled single persons and - in a separate section - women who were undergoing a punishment. Young girls were also instructed in 'feminine' accomplishments in the widows' house, while orphans and other needy persons were also housed there, unless special facilities were needed for them. The cotiguazú (or casa de recogidas) was in fact, therefore, a kind of casa grande for specific groups.

Behind the buildings complex just described lay the fathers' garden (huerta, huerto, quinta), covering some three hectares, where all kinds of things were grown to provide for the maintenance of the fathers or to make the Indians' menu occasionally more festive. Experiments were also conducted here - certainly at the beginning - with new plants and trees. The garden formed the transition, as it were, between the village and nature. The village was never extended behind the church and ancillary buildings, but always on the three other sides of the square. As a result, the garden was never hemmed in by buildings.

The Indians' houses were situated in symmetrical manzanas on the other three sides of the square, separated by streets running east-west and north-south. This 'chequer board' pattern was not invented by the Jesuits, but had been prescribed for the Indian pueblos by the Spanish viceroy Francisco de Toledo. In fact, the officially founded Spanish settlements, and certainly those of

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29 Wirtz 1979:76.
30 Maeder & Gutiérrez 1994:12.
somewhat later date, were also built in a chequer board pattern in conformity with the *Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento y Población* (1573).

The straight streets were generally about 16-18 varas (14-16 m) wide. Those in San Ignacio Guazu were 13-20 metres wide, including the covered arcades of from 2.10-2.40 m wide. The streets were paved and clean, which was very remarkable because, even in Asunción, that was then not the case. The streets in the capital were narrow, sometimes also crooked, unpaved and - as in the other towns of the time - dirty. The width of the streets in the missions had been chosen to avert the risk of spreading fires as far as possible. That was certainly no unnecessary precaution in the early reductions, because the houses and other buildings were still all largely constructed of combustible materials. Moreover, in the early days of a mission village, the Indians often turned their backs on their new homes. They then had the custom of setting fire to their huts, which meant that a whole village could catch fire. When the Jesuits ultimately founded the settlements of San Joaquín, San Estanislao and Belén in the north in the mid-eighteenth century, they took the fire risk into account and adapted the building pattern to it. In addition, the width of the streets made ox cart traffic possible, as well as a smooth movement of people. The streets which served as main traffic roads leading out of the plaza (or gave access to the plaza) were extra wide and well-constructed, and often also provided with small chapels. Orange and other trees grew along the streets. If a village had to be enlarged, because of population increase, the streets were simply extended and the built-up area enlarged.

The houses were all alike. The only difference was that the houses of the caciques were situated closest to the church. The houses had originally been built of timber, clay, reeds, palm leaves and other simple materials. Bricks and tiles were seldom used. They were, in fact, no more than huts built according to the native model (*cabanas, chozas*). This also explains the speed at which, in the beginning, villages were built or extended, complete settlements moved or churches enlarged. From the 1640s, however, tiles began to be used as roof covering in order to counter the fire danger, the first often near the church and the fathers' house. It is known that
this was done in San Ignacio Guazú and Concepción between 1637 and 1639 and in San Ignacio Miní and Mártyres in the years 1644-49. At that time, somewhat more durable materials were also already being used at certain other places. In the latter part of the seventeenth century stone, brick and tiles began increasingly to be used. This was partly because German and Flemish priests came to the missions at that time. The shabby ranchos were then increasingly replaced by brick houses. Houses were also increasingly whitewashed. The new houses were generally 7 varas (5-6 m) wide and long and consisted of only one storey.

Modernisation usually took place in stages. The huts roofed with plant material were first provided with tiled roofs, after which houses began to be built with brick or stone walls, starting in the neighbourhood of the church. They were built earlier in one village than in the other, also depending on the age of the settlement. According to Fúrlong Cardiff, the houses in some villages were given an attic in the eighteenth century, designed to make them more comfortable in the summer, but there was no question of a true upper and lower storey. In the last phase (eighteenth century), everything was built of brick and stone. The often impressive ruins to be seen today obviously date from this final phase.

All the building materials were obtained or made in or near the villages themselves. Besides various kinds of timber from the surrounding forests, adobe, hard natural stone, brick and tiles, the locally present, relatively soft, tacurú stone was also used. This was dug out of clayey ground, became harder as it dried, but could still be worked reasonably well. When durable materials began to be used, brickworks and quarries were opened near the villages. The Indians built the houses themselves, with the fathers often helping and giving directions.

31 Maeder 1989:56.
32 Fúrlong Cardiff 1962:187. According to Conzelmann (1958:40), two-storey brick houses, divided into several rooms and provided with a balcony, were built in some villages at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. It must be assumed that this is not correct; Fúrlong Cardiff's information appears more reliable.
In the beginning, the houses were still built as communal houses, in conformity with the indigenous tradition. They were occupied by several related households, with the posts on which the roof rested on the inside serving as partitions; there were no walls. According to Meliá Llitteras, a cuadra was reserved in the first reductions to serve as a square and the other cuadras were used for the building of such houses. Six one hundred-foot houses were built on a cuadra. Each house had five lances each of 20 feet and an Indian lived in each lance with his chusma, according to the information given by Father Roque González in about 1613. González also reported to his provincial that the Indians were very satisfied with their housing. Next to each house there was sufficient space for a small garden, if desired. The missionaries were surprised that the Guaraníes so readily accepted the new style of living. The fathers then started to build single family houses, which again went more smoothly than they had expected. The Indians had no difficulty with them. Living in the later villages was therefore individualised, which meant that each family had its own space, that was separated from the others by solid walls. The missionaries also considered that to be better on moral grounds (greater privacy, easier prevention of polygamy). Nevertheless, the Indians continued to live with several households under the same (continuous) roof. The change took place gradually. Gutiérrez stated that there were still collective houses in villages like San Javier and San Nicolás in 1627 and that partitions were gradually made with skins. Later, too, partitions or dividing walls were not a matter of course; the whole change took place over a century.

The people who fell under a particular cacique often lived together, so that they formed a kind of small neighbourhood. In other words, the cacicazgo structure was recognisable, and remained so until the expulsion of the Jesuits.

Six houses built together formed a manzana or cuadra. They were bordered at the front and back by somewhat higher-lying covered pavements of two to three metres wide. The covering was achieved by allowing the roofs which sloped down on two sides to project for some distance. There were, in other words, arcades, which protected the residents against heat and rain and made it possible for pedestrians to walk along a street in reasonable com-
fort. These arcades also performed a social function; they enabled people to make easier contact with each other.

The single family houses originally consisted of only one room. The sleeping areas were separated off by mats or skins. It was not until shortly before the departure of the fathers that the dwellings began to be further subdivided.

The houses were very simply fitted out and provided little comfort, but they did provide the minimum shelter that was considered necessary. The floors were of clay at first, and were later tiled. The houses usually had no chimney, but there was a hearth in the middle for cooking. Cooking was also done in the arcades. In Candelaria, however, there were also houses with chimneys. There were a door and a window at the front, but only a door at the rear. The interior was extremely simple and basic. Apart from the hearth, it consisted only of hammocks, a few pots and pans, one or more small cupboards, a table, a few chairs and benches and one or more images of saints. Some provisions were kept in the house and the hunting and fishing gear. The residents really did little more than sleep there, because they were working on the fields or recreating in the village during the day and the children were partly brought up in the community from the age of four.

The houses were communal property and were allocated to the Indians. If one of the children married, they were given a house of their own. In fact, therefore, there was no difference in possessions. In the fields, the villagers often had a rancho, constructed of tree trunks, branches, reeds and other materials, where they could shelter or, if necessary, pass the night if the field was situated rather far from the settlement.33

Some villages (such as San Miguel) possessed a well, to which the water was conducted along a tunnel. By no means all the villages probably had such an amenity. If they did not, the water had to be brought from outside the village from the river or a spring. There were also devices (norias, sakkiehs?) for raising water from a river or stream for conducting to the fields and

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village, partly for irrigation, and partly for supplying to fishponds and public bathhouses. In the villages themselves there were water tanks and reservoirs. Remains of basins have been found in the ruins of the villages of Apóstoles and Santa María la Mayor. There were also villages which had toilet blocks for men and women at the head of a row of houses, each consisting of eight to ten cubicles. An underground system of cellars and tunnels was then constructed for the discharge of sewage, flushed by water from a reservoir constructed on the highest point in the village (behind the church). Remains of such a system have been found in San Ignacio Guazú. It is not known to what extent the other villages also had such a facility.3 4

If insecurity (including the danger of wild animals) required it, the villages were surrounded by a rampart, a wide ditch or a palisade. The village was then entered through a number of entrance gates. The villages were guarded, especially at night, when the gates were closed. This was, in fact, not unusual, because the Spanish settlements which had to face danger in any way (e.g. la Villeta) were also closed at night and were guarded. By no means all the villages were properly protected. Usually there was no more than a hedge of cactus, agave or other thorny plants to keep in the livestock and to keep the wild animals outside the village. At a greater distance from the villages, guard posts were built for protection, often on one of the puestos de estancia. There were also permanent guard posts closer to the villages themselves.3 5 But such provisions for defence were not a marked feature of the village plan; the missions were certainly not fortified places and their inhabitants were certainly not professional soldiers.

If guests came, they lodged in the fathers’ house or in a special lodging for merchants and travellers (tambo; posada). It was situated next to the churchyard or just outside the village, near the entrance gate. Not all the villages had this facility. In about 1750, six villages had a posada where Spanish traders could stay.

34 Gutiérrez 1974:115; Simón 1987:100-3.
In addition, there were stone quarries and brickyards in the vicinity of the village and also tanneries and water mills on the river, according to the economic orientation of the villages. The abattoir was generally also situated there. Around the settlements, there were small estancias, fields, orchards and, later, also yerba groves. Where the fields began there was a chapel, usually dedicated to St. Isidore, that was linked via a broad avenue with the plaza in the village. The cultivated land around the village usually extended to a river or a wood, that formed the natural border. In the vicinity of the settlement there were generally some small chapels which formed the goal of processions.36

In the eighteenth century, the villages were spaced from 10 to 25, up to a maximum of 50, km apart, with the exception of San Borja, Santo Tomé, La Cruz and Yapeyú, which were situated 100-200 km (24-48 leguas) from the other villages (Fig. 8.1). They were interconnected by roads and bridges had been built in many places; if not, a river or stream had to be crossed by canoe. There was generally an Indian at such points who was responsible for taking people across. The roads were more or less metalled, which was unusual, because this investment had not been made outside the mission territory, and nor had the Spaniards had the custom of building bridges or providing canoes. At five-legua intervals along the roads there were a small chapel with one or two aposentos (rooms) attached, and one or more ranchos of Indians who guarded the chapel and rooms. The aposentos had beds and could be used as resting places for travellers. There was no charge for staying overnight or for using the ferries over the rivers. Such posadas were generally lacking on the roads between the Spanish settlements.37 Azara reports that there were checkpoints on the more important roads (tranqueras or vallas), that were guarded by reliable older Indians, who intercepted travellers and allowed them to pass only if the father of the nearby village was in agreement. They were then accompanied by an Indian, so that they did not

36 Garsch 1934:96.
37 Ruiz Moreno 1940:13-4. This author cites as an example Map 47 in Fúrlong Cardiff's Cartografía Jesuítica del Río de la Plata (1936), because it gives a good picture of the many roads in all directions and of the chapels.
leave the road or speak to anyone.\textsuperscript{38} Besides the roads between the different villages, there were drovers' roads leading to and from the estancias.

To sum up, we find from about 1650 villages that are well laid out and increasingly well-equipped. Apart from Córdoba, no other colonial town in the la Plata region in the eighteenth century could stand the comparison with the Jesuit missions. In Asunción, there were still only a few brick houses, even in 1825. According to Rengger, the streets were winding, irregular and often so narrow that carts could scarcely pass along them.

It is not surprising therefore that the few Spaniards who visited the \textit{pueblos de misiones} came away impressed by their wealth, certainly at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. They saw there handsome churches, brick houses, paved streets, workshops, full storehouses, arable fields, orchards and estancias on which large herds of cattle were grazing. In comparison with the capital, Asunción, the settlements were simply handsome.\textsuperscript{39}

\textit{Contacts}

In general, few Spaniards visited the mission villages, because they were in fact accessible only for the civil and spiritual authorities (governor, bishop, superior). They formed a world apart; for the Creoles and mestizoes they were even an almost totally unknown world. Passing strangers were allowed to stay there for not more than two days; other persons (such as traders) for not more than three days, at least if they had reason to do so. In that time, they enjoyed the hospitality of the fathers. This isolation from the outside world was not an invention of the Jesuits, but was based on the general provision that Spaniards, mestizoes and other non-Indians were not allowed to establish themselves in Indian settlements. When Alfaro explicitly stipulated in his \textit{Ordenanzas} in 1611 that no Spaniards, mestizoes, Negroes or mulattoes were allowed to

\textsuperscript{38} Azara 1990:247.
\textsuperscript{39} Caraman 1976:129.
come and live in the native villages, he could refer back to earlier Cédulas Reales. The relevant rules had therefore already gradually taken shape before the regulation was finally incorporated in the Recopilación de Leyes de Indias of 1680. The rule therefore also applied elsewhere, and also already existed in the reduction of Julí. The rule was not everywhere always strictly adhered to, but it was upheld in the Jesuit missions. In fact, the missionaries did no more than apply the law. They also adhered to the provision that Indians could not simply leave their villages. The fathers incidentally applied the rules not so much because they were so law-abiding, as because they had learned that many Spaniards did not exactly set an example to the Indians in their behaviour, and nor were they always reliable. The Jesuits had concluded from this that the creation of a new social, cultural and Christian order for the Indians could only succeed if contacts with the Spaniards remained restricted. Haubert has pointed out that the rule about the settlement of Spaniards promulgated by Alfaro found its way into the text of his Ordenanzas partly at the instigation of the Jesuits; Provincial Superior Diego de Torres Bollo had a hand in the text of Alfaro’s Ordenanzas.

The fathers adhered more strictly to the rule than the people who administered the pueblos de indios, but they nevertheless applied the rule with due flexibility, where necessary. If it was necessary to attract a Spanish estanciero or some gauchos to familiarise the Indians with cattle rearing, or if a non-indigenous craftsman or mayordomo had to be attracted to teach the Indians certain skills or to run an estancia, the fathers made no difficulties about doing so and allowed them to live for some time in or near the village. A few mulattoes also lived permanently in some villages, because they had family ties with the Indians.40

By no means all the villages were intensively visited by traders; those situated close to Asunción were visited most (see Chapter 30). The bishops and governors paid only occasional visits. With a few exceptions, however, all the governors of Paraguay did pay one personal visit to the reductions of their territory during their five-

year term of office. The governors who resided in Buenos Aires did so less often, because of the greater distance. According to Fassbinder, the *encomenderos'* complaints that the Jesuits at an early stage of their work screened off the missions to such an extent that they did not even admit bishops and governors were without foundation. They sometimes requested visitations themselves.\(^{41}\) It is true, however, that the provincial of the fathers paid more visits and often had more influence than the bishop or the governor.

It goes without saying that the isolation of the reductions had a unifying effect; they developed a lifestyle of their own, especially when the villages came to be situated together in a relatively small area (the middle Paraná and upper Uruguay region) after 1640.\(^ {42}\)

**Social structure**

Only two missionaries lived in each settlement (usually inhabited by a few thousand Indians), certainly at first. These were the *pai guazú* and the *pai mini* or coadjutor (often a friar). The former was mainly or exclusively responsible for spiritual matters, the latter was generally in charge of ‘temporal’ matters, such as education, the distribution of supplies and supervising the workers in the workshops. Only if the villages were of some size would they be led by three or - very exceptionally - four clerics; at a later stage the number might be five or six.\(^ {43}\) The Jesuits managed to persuade the Spanish king to allow them to bring in foreign missionaries. Arrangements were made for this from time to time, for example, in 1732, when it was laid down that a quarter of the new

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41 Fassbinder 1926:46-7. The sources differ here: Saeger (1972:227) states that ‘... in the last hundred years only an insignificant minority of the governors had performed the visitation of the reductions required by them by law. Because the Jesuits had virtually sealed off the reductions from the outside, Paraguayan travellers and merchants were condemned to traversing terrible swamps and dense forests’. To see this in perspective, it should be mentioned that Saeger based his statement on pronouncements by the *cabildo* of Asunción in 1724, i.e. during the *Revolución de los Comuneros*. This *cabildo* was not very favourably disposed towards the Jesuits.


missionaries could be Germans. Besides Spaniards, Italians, Flemings, Germans, Czechs and Austrians worked in the missions.

The caciques, who had functioned as leaders in traditional Guarani society, were not pushed aside by the Jesuits. The fathers always tried to gain the support of the caciques as soon as possible and ensured that they subsequently remained allies. The Jesuits maintained the position and attached certain rights and privileges to it. In so doing, they hoped to make the daily contact with the natives and their missionary work easier. The caciques enjoyed the highest status after the priests. As a result, the caciques and their families eventually became a kind of hereditary aristocracy in the missions. They received the title of don and were allowed to bear a sword and dagger. Shortly before the expulsion of the fathers, they were placed on a par with the Spanish hidalgos by the Spanish king. In the missions, the caciques lived closest to the colegio and the church and had a place of honour in the church. The Jesuits left the allocation of land and the distribution of commodities such as seeds, yerba, salt and tobacco to the caciques. The allocation of tasks was also partly arranged by them. They acted as leaders in times of war, although they were subordinated to Spanish officers outside their mission. The caciques and their eldest sons were exempted from paying tribute. It is possible that some caciques who were artists had the right to sign their work. The villages had been peopled by bringing together several small groups, which meant that they had several caciques. Each cacique had thirty or more vassals who obeyed and respected him and helped him with his work, which he was himself incidentally also obliged to perform. The caciques also had to cultivate their own private field; they received no tribute from their vassals. Because of the respect that the caciques enjoyed, they could not be punished openly and only light penalties could be imposed on them. The members of the cabildo were generally recruited from among the caciques. Some of the craftsmen were selected from among their children and these children also received priority in learning to read, write and count and in music and dancing lessons. The caciques thus retained a

44 Fassbinder 1926:41-2.
great deal of their public social role, a policy that was advantageous not only to them, but also to the Jesuits. Susnik nevertheless considered that the role of the *caciques* had been undermined, because the fathers in the mission villages ultimately pulled all the strings. In the *pueblos de indios* the situation was not essentially different. The fathers esteemed the *caciques*, but they, in their turn, greatly admired the Jesuits. The Indians respected the *caciques* but, after two or three generations, their concept of the original function had blurred and they were familiar only with the *caciques* as they functioned in the missions.

Meliá Lliteras has pointed out that some *caciques* were engaged at the time of the Spanish *conquista* and colonisation in creating somewhat larger and therefore stronger villages. In this they found an ally in the missionaries, who were trying to found reductions which were generally larger and, in any event, also more permanent than the traditional villages. It must be assumed that these did not give the *caciques* the greater power at which they were originally aiming, but they did gain a more solid power base.\(^4^5\)

The remaining population of the *pueblos de misiones* consisted of ordinary Indians, who were, in principle, all of equal status. Craftsmen, people who were allowed to receive more education and people for the performance of specific tasks were also recruited from their ranks, but only in small numbers. As a result, there gradually arose, apart from the *caciques*, a ‘class’ of Indians - a small ‘élite’ - who also could and did begin to perform various functions.\(^4^6\)

**Administration**

Like the other indigenous settlements, the mission villages were governed by a *cabildo*.\(^4^7\) In as early as the late sixteenth century, but still more explicitly at the beginning of the seventeenth century,

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\(^4^5\) Fassbinder 1926:36-7; Otruba 1956:124; Plá 1963:140-1; Susnik 1984:8.

\(^4^6\) Armani 1985:247.

\(^4^7\) For the administrative organisation of the villages, see: Fassbinder 1926:36-44; Gutiérrez 1974:86-8; Lacombe 1955:303; Lozano 1989:11-2; McNaspy 1987:35; Thomás de Krüeger 1996:84-6.
in line with the Spanish *ciudades* and *villas*, the Indian villages of the Spanish empire were given a relatively far-reaching measure of self-government by the Spanish Crown. Alfaro was therefore able to lay down very legitimately in his *Ordenanzas* that a *cambio* should be created in each Paraguayan reduction. The Jesuits complied with this legislation, but - in conformity with the suggestion of the Crown - did not immediately introduce the prescribed organisation if it was found that this did not accord very well with the native way of life.

The *cambio* consisted wholly of Indians recruited from among the *caciques* and other notables. If the settlement was a large one, the full *cambio* comprised quite a large number of people. They each performed a specific task and were designated by Spanish titles. The leadership of the body was entrusted to the mayor (*corregidor*) and, in his absence to a deputy mayor (*teniente corregidor*), which was incidentally a function created by the Jesuits. As elsewhere, the *cambio* further included two *alcaldes urbanos* (*ordinarios*), one or two *alcaldes de la Santa Hermandad*, an *alférez real*, four *regidores*, an *alguacil mayor*, a *procurador*, an *escribano* and, sometimes, also some administrative assistants.

The office of *corregidor* was introduced into the missions in 1633. The mayor was *de jure* the highest civil authority in the reduction and presided over the *cambio*; he was also *presidente del tribunal de justicia*. The *teniente corregidor* was specially responsible for education and youth care. The *alcaldes* were responsible for carrying out the instructions and directions of the *corregidores* and also had powers under criminal and civil law to deal with misdemeanours. They further checked the productive work in the community, including the workshops. If the latter was their exclusive task, they were referred to as *alcaldes de oficinas*. The *alcaldes de la Hermandad* had the same powers, but for the area outside the village, which included the *estancias*. They were not allowed to administer punishments where the offences had occurred, but had to bring the people who had committed them to the village. The *regidores* were, in fact, lower administrative and police officials who acted as neighbourhood ‘mayors’, responsible for looking after the streets and helping to bring up the young. The *alguacil mayor*
was a kind of police constable and municipal servant, who was used as a factotum by the cabildo, for example, to carry out their orders. The procurador or mayordomo brought community initiatives to the attention of the cabildo and was also a kind of treasurer responsible for the goods of the village; he was supported in this task by a number of assistants (contadores, fiscales, almaceneros, controladores de abasto). The escribano acted as a secretary and scribe.

Other officials included a porter, a beadle and a number of peripatetic male nurses, who visited the sick. These persons were not members of the cabildo.

Only the office of corregidor was of unlimited duration, at least if there were no serious objections to continuation. The mayor was appointed by the governor on the recommendation of the fathers and the indigenous heads; the other cabildantes were chosen at the beginning of the year and subsequently confirmed in their office by the governor with the agreement of the parish priest. The corregidor received no salary, but was exempted from payment of tribute; the other cabildantes received nothing and had to be content with the prestige that they derived from their position, although they did have the right to wear imported, luxury ceremonial dress on special occasions. This clothing was acquired by the community and was subsequently returned to the central wardrobe.

In practice, the true direction rested wholly or largely with the cura, the parish priest who was appointed by the Order and with the agreement of the Spanish king and as, the latter's representative, received a salary from the state (in contrast to the other fathers). The cabildantes generally had a great respect for him; they received much advise and many directions from him and had the duty to keep the cura informed on all matters. They discussed matters daily with the father(s). One of the tasks of the cabildantes was to ensure that the Indians performed their work, but because this could not be left entirely to them, the fathers themselves also kept an eye on things. They did the same if punishments were
imposed and administered, since the corregidores and alcaldes sometimes carried these out with rather too much enthusiasm.\footnote{The heaviest punishment was incidentally confinement in the village prison. There was no death penalty. Dangerous and incorrigible elements were sometimes expelled from the mission.}

To sum up, the Indians were not really encouraged to act and think for themselves; the paternalism was too strong for that. Perhaps it was necessary, however, for there to be constant direction and control. In any event, it did ensure the proper functioning of the villages.

**Education**

In all the Jesuit villages not only was religious and cultural education (including song and dance) provided, but also basic education in reading, writing and arithmetic. As far as reading and writing were concerned, the missionaries restricted themselves to Guaraní, the natives' own language. From time to time, the ecclesiastical and secular administrators spoke out in favour of education in Spanish, but the missionaries did not see the necessity for it. They did not speak Spanish with the Indians. Guaraní was the language of every day speech and only for outside contacts (e.g. with the authorities) did they use Spanish. Only the Indians who definitely needed to have some knowledge of Spanish, because of certain outside activities, such as pilots, bearers and couriers, received instruction from the missionaries in the foreign language, but they generally did not become very proficient in it. Nor did the fathers see it as their task to ensure that they did. Their primary mission was to proclaim the gospel and provide pastoral care and, in as early as 1603, the bishops' synod had obliged all the missionaries to acquire the language of their mission territory. The fathers also saw a concrete advantage in not allowing the Indians to learn Spanish: it protected them against intensive contacts with Spaniards and their possible negative effects. The Indians themselves obviously felt little need to learn Spanish, especially since most of them had few contacts with the outside world and almost the whole Spanish population also
understood Guarani. Thanks to this linguistic policy, Guarani became an instrument of cultural unification and cohesion. The Jesuits' policy helped to ensure that Guarani did not disappear as a language. It was studied and recorded and remained purer than in 'Spanish' Paraguay.

There was no question of universal education. The village schools were attended, in fact, mainly by the children of the caci­ques and other notables (principales, such as cabildantes and menestrales) or those who were exceptionally gifted. The great mass did not attend school, but that did not mean that they had no right to do so. The desires of parents who expressly wished their children to go to school were taken into account, but only very few parents expressed such a wish. Gutiérrez reports that, in some villages, 8-900 children attended the school. Thus according to him, the education was perhaps not so very exclusive, although this is sometimes suggested. According to Kahle, the results of those who learned to read, write and calculate were poor. There were few textbooks in Spanish and, when the fathers themselves started to print books, there were few Spanish language ones among them. The children who did not go to school were entrusted from their fourth year to the care of the regidores during the day, which relieved the parents. Altogether, quite a lot of care was devoted to the young.49

Defence

A special aspect of the mission villages was their defence.50 As we have mentioned, the mission villages were attacked from the end of


the 1620s by numbers of *bandeirantes* who were equipped with firearms and were assisted by large numbers of friendly Tupí Indians, who were equipped at the least with traditional weapons. The missionaries quickly realised that they would be able to resist such actions successfully only if the Indians who were entrusted to their care were also armed. This applied all the more since the Indians in the Jesuit missions received no support whatsoever from the Spaniards in the event of external aggression and, if they did sometimes receive some, the support often came too late and was inadequate. When Father Ruiz de Montoya travelled to Spain after the exodus from el Guairá and spent some time at the Spanish court, he therefore tried to obtain permission for the Indians to bear arms.

In the 1630s the Indians gradually began to arm themselves, but their weaponry was still mainly limited to the traditional means of defence. The question of defence at that time received the attention of the Spanish king. In 1638, he laid down in an edict that the Indians who had been converted by the Jesuits in el Guairá, the Tape, the Paraná and the Uruguay region were direct vassals of the Crown and that they could under no circumstances perform personal services for Spaniards. The king ordered the governors of la Plata and Paraguay to provide for the immediate protection of the mission settlements. In 1640, the king gave the Indians official permission to bear firearms.

It took some time, however, before the order was implemented, because the king also valued the agreement of the viceroy in Lima. On 19 January 1646, the latter agreed to the purchase of 150 hackbuts and muskets with accessories, including 70 barrels of gunpowder and 70 *quintales* of lead, all at the expense of the Spanish state. From that date, the arming of the villages was official and the Guaraníes became *fronterizos en defensa de las tierras del rey*, frontier troops defending the king’s land. In 1647, Philip IV issued a *Real Cédula* specifically sanctioning the right of the Indians to bear firearms. He acknowledged that they were defending Spanish territory and expressed his gratitude. In 1648, the Crown officially appointed the mission forces as *guarnición de frontera*, in the hope of sufficiently frightening off the *bandeirantes*. The forces were incidentally expected to come into action not
only against the attacks of the *Paulistas*, but also against Indian tribes who were set up by the Portuguese against the Spaniards and the Jesuits and were being armed by the Portuguese. These groups tried to wreak havoc mainly in the southern missions. In other words, the forces were given a more limited task of defending the missions and a broader one of opposing the expansion of the Portuguese sphere of influence. They had to prevent the Portuguese from destroying the missions at any cost and from blocking strategic links that would open the way for them to Asunción, Buenos Aires and Potosí. Without the Paraguay and Uruguay missions the Spaniards would probably not have succeeded in keeping the Portuguese out of the la Plata region.\(^{51}\)

It should be mentioned somewhat in passing that the Jesuit missions which were created elsewhere in Spanish South America were also allotted a strategic role. The missions of Paraguay, Chiquitos, Mojos, Maynas and Orinoco together formed a deliberately created buffer. They had a dual function: firstly, the conversion and protection of the Indians, secondly, the defence of the eastern side of the Spanish colonial core territory situated in the Andes. In this way, the Spanish Crown compensated for the lack of men and resources who would have been needed to maintain a standing Spanish army overseas and also had less need to call upon the militias of the local Spanish population.\(^{52}\) The missions outside Paraguay incidentally had a different military organisation from those of the Guaraníes.

The Jesuits had little difficulty in organising the settlements more on military lines. Among the friars who had come out from Europe were enough persons with battle experience to train the Indians in the use of firearms and (where necessary) in warfare; where experts

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\(^{51}\) Palacios & Zoffoli (1991:225) remark in this connection that the missions of el Guairá and el Itatín unfortunately did not hold out, but that this does not detract from the strategic importance that was also intended for these villages; they were planned to thwart the further westward advance of the Portuguese occupation front.

\(^{52}\) Palacios & Zoffoli 1991:225. Various publications contain a map showing these missions and from which it is also clear that they formed a buffer. See, for example, Hartmann 1994:153, Caraman 1976:331; Palacios & Zoffoli 1991:endpapers.
were lacking, one or more Spaniards were engaged for the task. The Guaranies received their first lessons in the use of weapons from some Chilean friars who spent some time in the reductions on the suggestion of Father Ruiz de Montoya and with the permission of the king. One of the most famous trainers was Friar Antonio Bernal, who led the Indians in Jesús y María in 1636, in Caazapaguazú in 1639 and at Mbororé in 1641.

The results of the militarisation soon became apparent. In 1639, 1641 and 1652, the mission forces brought the Paulistas a series of heavy defeats, with the result that they subsequently left the villages in the Paraná-Uruguay region in peace. This marked the beginning of a new, more peaceful period in the mission history.

After the first gift of 150 hackbuts and muskets at state expense, all the arms in the missions were subsequently made by the Indians themselves (even including wooden cannon) or were purchased by the Order itself. In the process, the number of hackbuts and muskets had already increased to 800 in the 1660s. Each village possessed at least 20-30 and not more than 30-40 firearms; the most threatened ones had about 50. The weapons were controlled by the fathers and their use entrusted to the most experienced Indians. The Guaranies were allowed to carry the weapons only on exercises and at times of actual war, although they all had to come to church on Sundays carrying a bow and arrow from their seventh year, so that they would not be collectively defenceless during a surprise attack. They continued to use all the traditional weapons, such as bows and arrows, slings, lassoes and indigenous clubs. In practice, they were used for much of the fighting. The simple cannon were made from hollowed-out tree trunks strengthened externally with cowhide, so that they could be used three times. The missions produced gunpowder themselves with difficulty and it was of poor quality.

In the event of war, each village - in conformity with instructions from above - had to have about 200 horses. That the Jesuits had little difficulty in assembling the necessary horses appears from the fact that the 30 villages possessed 78,357 horses (including foals) at the time of the expulsion of the Order in 1768. Moreover, each village had to have available at least 60 lances, 60 sickle-shaped knives (desjarretaderas) for severing the hocks of horses, 700 iron arrows, sufficient bows, slings or catapults and stones.
The weapons were kept in the arsenal of the colegio. Two Indians were responsible for the maintenance of the weapons. All these directions and many others about the organisation and training of the militias were issued by the mission superiors, who knew how important - with so many enemies - a good army was.

Each village had two militias, a foot one and a mounted one, which comprised all the able-bodied men. The militias were hierarchically organised in the customary manner, which meant that the villages had maestres de campo (senior officers), capitanes (captains), sargentos (sergeants) etc. The officers were chosen at the same time as the members of the cabildo. All the officers and soldiers were Indians. Their respective tasks were properly and clearly regulated. There was regular training on the village square under the direction of the fathers and the caciques. Larger manoeuvres were also held from time to time, both on land and on water (for the possible defence of the mission port). Children were trained in the use of the bow and arrow from their seventh year and had their own little company. The fathers themselves acted not only as chaplains in time of war, but also as members of the general staff, which meant, in fact, that they were in supreme command. In the event of war or threat of war, four superintendentes de guerra were appointed by the provincial, one each for the upper and lower Uruguay and the upper and lower Paraná. Each of these fathers was assisted by two Jesuit advisers. The caciques and the capitanes formed a kind of war council. In the event of war, the caciques held command over their subjects, but in practice this was quickly left to those who were best suited to the task.

Thanks to the fact that the villages were situated quite close to each other after 1640, the defences could be quickly put on alert. If necessary, the Jesuits could mobilise several tens of thousands of warriors (cavalry and infantry) in the eighteenth century. In everyday life they were all farmers and artisans; there were no professional soldiers.

The fact that the bandeirantes left the missions in the Paraná-Uruguay region in peace after 1641 did not mean that there were no further tasks for the mission forces. In practice, they were repeatedly mobilised, because the governors began to deploy them in all kinds of military operations. They did this through a request to the
provincial superior. The mission Indians were deployed at various times, for example, to drive the Portuguese from the Banda Oriental (Colonia do Sacramento), to help put down the Revolución de los Comuneros and sometimes also to oppose the attacks of Chaco Indians. The missions supplied the largest contingent of forces (12,000 men) to the la Plata governor, Bruno Mauricio de Zavala, in 1735, to help restore order during the Revolución de los Comuneros in Paraguay. In 1732 and 1733, 7,000 Guaraníes aided Zavala for 19 months. They were then entitled to receive payment, but they did not accept it. It was obviously particularly humilitating for the insurgent Spaniards that they were being called to order by an Indian force, deployed by the king and viceroy. According to Conzelmann, the Jesuits sent indigenous soldiers to support the Spaniards no fewer than 50 times and they therefore, according to Fassbinder, gave their blood and their lives or risked them that many times for the Spanish Crown. According to Arango Vieira, the mission militias were involved in about 100 campaigns in less than a century, not only against the Paulistas, but also against all the other enemies of Spain. On all occasions, their support was decisive. It was understandable, therefore, that the Spanish king called the Indians the antemural of his domains. They were generally regarded as the bravest troops of the Spanish colonial army. As a force, the mission Indians served the Spanish Crown like few other population groups. The Indians regarded their military task for the Spanish king as a very honourable one. Like the Spaniards and mestizoes, they were allowed to bear arms and to defend the interests of the Spanish king. Viewed formally, this made them the equals of the Spaniards or mestizoes and nor did they feel inferior to them. This makes it all the more understandable that they felt gravely ‘betrayed’ by the Spanish Crown when it transferred the seven eastern mission villages to Portugal in 1750 and expelled all the Jesuits in 1768.

The Spanish population took a different view of the arming of the Indians. In as early as 1639, they opposed what they called the illegal arming of the mission villages. They feared that the mission Indians might also use the weapons against the Creoles and mestizoes. Philip IV laid down by Real Cédula dated 16 October 1661 that the arms
were to be removed from the villages and stored in Asunción. They
could be returned in the event of an emergency. As a result of further
purchases after 1646, the weapons arsenal had been expanded to such
an extent that ultimately 800 hackbuts and muskets, 218 arrobas of
gunpowder and 40 arrobas of lead were being held. The Jesuits were
obviously unhappy with this state of affairs and persuaded Governor
Diez de Andino in about 1664 that 150 hackbuts should be returned
for use in extreme emergencies. In 1676, they requested the return of
all the arms, because of the invasions, but received only some. It
emerged that a large part of the arms had been used by the Spaniards.
In 1677, the villages again received some weapons from the governor
of Buenos Aires. In a Cédula Real of 25 July 1679, the king ordered
that all the surrendered arms must again be stored in the villages.
General Alonso Fernández Montiel implemented the decree and gave
back replacement weapons for those which had been used or lost. In
1684 the restitution was complete and all the arms were back in the
arsenals of the colegios of the mission villages.

After 1767-8

After 1767, the administrative organisation of the villages remained
unchanged, except that Spanish lay administrators had replaced the
fathers, and clerics from other orders and secular priests were
responsible for pastoral care. The communal and individual organi-
sation of labour was left intact. Nevertheless, the villages began to
decline economically and demographically and, in 1788 - within
twenty years - nearly all the villages were in a pitiful state. In 1804
Governor Lázaro de Ribera made an attempt at restoration. His
decree of 1 May of that year, which was aimed at putting an end to
the abuses of the administrators and the extortions of the Spaniards,
was in fact completely ineffective. The measures came too late.
Many Indians moved away after the exodus of the Jesuits, some of
them to cities like Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Montevideo and Asun-
ción, where they found employment as artisans or labourers. They
also went to work on estancias, while others emigrated to Brazil,
especially those from the seven eastern mission villages. The
Portuguese made handy use of the fact that the Indians felt betrayed
by the Spanish Crown. They tried to gain their sympathy and, in
this way, to integrate them into Portuguese society. This had also
happened towards the end of the Guerra Guaranítica: when Gomes
Freire withdrew from the village of Santo Ángel in 1757, he took about 700 Indian households (c. 2,000 persons) with him (see Chapter 8).

The economic decline and the exodus of the population was also reflected in the appearance of the villages. Their maintenance was neglected, so that the houses and churches fell into decline. They even gradually disintegrated and became overgrown. According to Susnik, many of the people who remained settled on their ranchos. She regarded this as an open rejection of the arcade dwellings, but whether that was so may be doubted. It was probably - in view of all the changes - safer and more attractive for them to live on their own land. In this way, they escaped to some extent from the grip of the secular administrators. It may also be assumed that life in the villages themselves became considerably less pleasant after the departure of the Jesuits. The secular and other priests probably organised many fewer musical and dance festivities, theatrical performances and processions, and generally showed less concern and dedication than the Jesuits. The fact that the houses were less well maintained will also have encouraged the Indians to move to their own little plots. Through the disintegration of the villages, the cacicazgos also disappeared. The decline continued in the post-colonial period and little more remained of most of the villages than a few ruins, or sometimes not even that (see further Chapter 11).

The reductions

The reductions in the strict sense of the term, i.e. the settlements recently founded for natives, formed a separate category at the end of the colonial period (see Table 9.3). The fact that they were established on orders from above meant that they were given a chequer board layout, but otherwise their appearance was not comparable with that of the older pueblos de misiones or pueblos de indios. The houses of the Indians, the church and the few other

public buildings were built of simple, mainly plant materials. There was usually no *cabildo* at first and, in the early years, there were many experiments with communal and individual production, certainly in the settlements where nomadic groups had been concentrated. There was often no question of self-sufficiency, so that regular supplementary help was needed. These were in every respect settlements which were still in their infancy. A number of them disappeared again quite quickly.

**The Spanish settlements**

In building the settlements which were officially founded for peopling by Spaniards (*peninsulares*, Creoles and mestizos) the authorities adhered generally to the *Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento y Población* issued by Philip II in 1573, which laid down that the villages should have a central square, that the street plan should be laid out according to a ‘chequer board pattern’ and that the streets should be of a certain width. Church, presbytery and public buildings were to be built on the *plaza*. Asunción was not really built according to a plan (see Chapter 12), but the later towns (such as Santa Fe, Corrientes and Buenos Aires) were. In fact, however, a number of these later settlements subsequently disappeared or found themselves outside the province of Paraguay. When settlement activity increased again in the eighteenth century, the settlements were built according to the instructions then in force. The Jesuit villages did not differ fundamentally in their layout (square, chequer board pattern) from the planned Spanish settlements, although they were distinguished from the Spanish settlements - certainly until 1767 - by the fact that the churches, village buildings and houses of the Indians were built largely, if not wholly, of brick, tiles and other more durable materials. In other words, until the expulsion of the Jesuits, and for some time afterwards, the mission villages were certainly considerably more attractive than the *villas* and *pueblos* of the Creoles and mestizos. Most of the houses there were little more than wretched huts, constructed of wood, clay, palm leaves and other less durable materials. The streets in the mission villages were also better than in the Spanish settlements.
Even Asunción, the only ciudad, was less handsome than any of the thirty Jesuit missions. In about 1800, only some of the houses and buildings in the capital (those in the centre) were built of brick and provided with tiled roofs. Nor did towns like Corrientes and Santa Fe have much character at that time.

The centres outside Asunción were wholly insignificant. In Villa Rica - the oldest villa of the province and, after Asunción, the principal settlement - one had the feeling of being in the country rather than in a small town. Azara noted in his Diario of 1785 that the houses were built in a straight line, that most of them had a roof of paja, and that there were also a few built of brick and with a tiled roof. All this illustrated the suma pobreza of the population. The church was being rebuilt during his time, but the task took forty years. And that was Villa Rica. The picture that Azara gave of the Franciscan village of San José de Caazapá was decidedly favourable by comparison. This village was built on a hill, was four cuadras wide and four cuadras long, it had brick houses with tiled roofs. They had balconies on the front, the roofs of which were supported by pillars, thus protecting the occupants against sun and rain. The church, however, (which stood in the middle of the square, as was customary in a Franciscan village) was in a poor condition.\footnote{Diario (Azara) 1993:183-4;188-9.} Villa Real (Concepción) - another villa - was no more than a ‘collection of tumbled shacks almost falling into the river’ at the beginning of nineteenth century.\footnote{Williams 1979:12.} Robertson was thankful to be able to leave Villa Real again after two days, ‘for if the pains and penalties of purgatory be at all equal to those of that place, there certainly cannot be much of fear beyond it. The heat, the effluvia, the filth, the mosquitoes, the lizards, the serpents, the toads, the centipedes, the binchucas, the bats, the naked inhabitants, the wretched huts, the squalid poverty, - all rendered my residence there, for two days, not only painful, but loathsome in the highest degree’.\footnote{Robertson 1838,II:138.} And he wrote that in 1838; shortly after the foundation (1773), the situation in Villa Real will have been worse rather than
better. Pilar - also a villa - was but little more impressive. Rosario de Cuarepotí and San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú - important yerba centres in the north - were considered rural even by those in Villa Rica. Beyond these few nuclei, were a few score villages composed of thirty to fifty huts surrounded by farms’.

The plans of the smaller settlements differed from each other. The location of the square varied, for example. Many villages had not been officially founded, but had arisen more or less spontaneously, around chapels, around the casco of a big estancia or at specific points along a link road. Where there was some attempt at planning, the new settlement often revealed traces of the original indigenous village and the pueblo de indio: a square with a free-standing church surrounded by the houses. Gutiérrez gives various examples of this and mentions that the pueblos de pardos of Tavapy and Areguá also showed similarities with the layout of the pueblos de indios. This evidently had something attractive both for pardos and Creoles.

The dwellings scattered over the countryside (where the greater part of the population lived as arable or livestock farmers) were little more than simple huts (ranchos, chozas). In around 1800 they consisted of roofs of palm leaves or other plant material and walls of wattle, plastered with clay. They generally had no doors and wooden shutters, but were closed off with skins, if necessary. The floors were of clay and the furniture was very simple. The little rural churches and small chapels were generally built of the same materials as the houses; a number were roofed with tiles at the end of the colonial period.

It was not only in the area of housing, but also in that of communications that Spanish Paraguay was no match for the Jesuit missions, at least when these were still flourishing. The roads between the settlements were better in the mission region, there were bridges or there were canoes to ferry travellers over the river, and posadas had been built at regular distances. All of this was

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57 Williams 1979:12.
59 González 1948:166; Pastore 1978:106 (both based on Azara).
practically absent in the Spanish territory, which made travelling there a lot less pleasant.  

The *ciudad* and the *villas* possessed a *cabildo*. In function and composition the latter was comparable with that in the indigenous settlements, but there was also a difference. The *cabildos* of the Spanish settlements had far more power than those of the Indian villages, where the administration in practice was in the hands of the Jesuits or the (Franciscan or secular) *cura-doctrinero*, later the lay administrator.

The smaller Spanish villages (*pueblos*) had neither their own jurisdictions, nor *cabildos*. Administratively, the smaller settlements fell under the nearest *ciudad* or *villa*.

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60 Simón 1987:103.
Changes in the settlement pattern in the period 1811-70

Summary of the main developments

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population of Eastern Paraguay had considerably less to fear from the Chaco Indians than a century before. The southern Payaguá had entered into peaceful relations with the Spaniards. They traded with them and were hired to keep surveillance on certain lengths of river against Chaco Indians who plotted attacks on the settlements of Eastern Paraguay. Certain other groups of the Guaycurú linguistic family (such as the Abipones and Mbo covfes) had decreased in number as a result of punishment expeditions, internecine quarrels and their own infanticide and had been partly concentrated into missions. Farther to the north, part of the Indians had migrated to Brazilian territory. The groups who lived farther away from the river in the Chaco generally remained there, had little contact with the population of Eastern Paraguay and, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, appeared somewhat more inclined to accept the authority of Asunción. Thanks to the building of fortifications, the establishment of fortified estancias, the foundation of reductions and various Spanish settlements, the Mbayás-Guanás of northern Paraguay Oriental had been brought increasingly under control.

Vigilance could, however, not be relaxed. The danger of surprise Indian attacks had not wholly disappeared, certainly not in the north, and, although the Portuguese no longer organised slave hunts, they still had to be watched, as they were trying to extend their sphere of influence. All this helps to explain why money was
Fig. 11.1. *Guardias* and fortifications along the Río Paraguay in the early nineteenth century (After Rengger 1835).
Changes in the settlement pattern in the period 1811-70

still being spent on the building of forts and/or their renovation and modernisation in the period 1811-70. The dictator Francia ensured that the fortines erected in the Chaco (Orange, Formoso, Monte Claro and Santa Elena) remained in good condition in order to be able to keep the Indians there under control. They survived until the mid-nineteenth century and were manned by 30-40 soldiers, who were supplied by the state with provisions and equipment. The line of fortifications on the east side of the river was maintained and even somewhat improved, because certain fortifications in this line (the presidios of Ibiocá and Ñundiay) were rehabilitated or relocated.1 Some estancias were created to supply these defensive points with the necessary meat, e.g. at Remolinos. Francia also modernised Fuerte Borbón (renamed Fuerte Olimpo) and the fort of San Carlos del Apa.

President C.A. López also left his mark in the area of defence. Under his rule, for example, Humaitá, a small poblado and fortified since 1779, was transformed into a great military complex. The fort, church and village were designed by the Hungarian military engineer Wisner von (de) Morgenstern, who was brought to Paraguay by the president in 1845 under his technical development programme and was charged, among other things, with modernising the defences. The fort was incidentally not primarily intended to keep the Chaco Indians at bay, but to guard the border with Corrientes.2 In the north, the president considerably extended the number of fortifications.

Under the dictator Francia, foreign commerce diminished considerably. There were few possibilities of practising other, non-agricultural activities. Moreover, every form of suspect political conduct was met with drastic punishments, so that part of the population of Asunción moved to the valles and compañías, where they felt themselves farther from El Supremo’s sphere of influence. Pastore even refers to the reoccupation of the countryside, somewhat comparable with the developments after 1550, when it became apparent that agriculture was one of the few alternatives for the

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Spaniards then living in Asunción, who were forced to abandon their dreams of the ‘Sierra de la Plata’.\(^3\) When the political climate improved under President C.A. López and trade revived, most of the migrants again preferred the capital as their only or principal place of residence. The urban-rural migration was therefore of a temporary nature.

The existing settlements increased further in population in the period up to 1870. Some were rebuilt on a new, more regular, street plan (e.g. Asunción and Encarnación), while renovations were carried out in others on a more modest scale\(^4\), and a few settlements were moved to more favourable sites (Villa Remolinos, Saladillo and San Lorenzo). Itapúa was given not only a new street pattern in 1843, but also the higher status of villa, on which occasion it received the official name of Encarnación.

Reference has already been made to the relocation of Remolinos under the dictator Francia in 1825 (Chapter 9). From that time the village was called Villa Franca. The relocation of Saladillo is discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

San Lorenzo, which was created on one of the Jesuit properties, was moved in 1852, because the site had been a good one for a chapel and a few houses, but proved to be less suitable for a larger and growing settlement, since the chapel was situated on a hill, so that there was a lack of water. President López had the old chapel demolished and a new church built somewhat farther away, in a small valley, in 1848. This brought San Lorenzo to its present site. In the north, the border of the area that was allocated to the new settlement was formed by the Arroyo Tayipery (later known as Arroyo de San Lorenzo) and the road linking Asunción with Capiatá; in the east, the boundary followed the old camino real from Campo Grande to Paraguari and, in the south, the territory extended as far as the tall, dense forest. The relocation was officially completed in 1852. The site of the old Jesuit chapel was subsequently known as Capilla-Cué. On their new site, the inhabitants

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\(^3\) Pastore 1972:105.

\(^4\) Villa del Pilar, for example, was practically rebuilt between 1822 and 1827, and Villa Rica was provided with two new meat markets, with ancillary corrales and galpones, by the state in 1829 (White 1989:137).
began to engage not only in agriculture, but also collected firewood for the steamships of the merchant fleet.  

In November 1842, under the consulate of Carlos Antonio López and Roque Alonso, and by decree of 7 October 1848, the special status of the then existing 21 pueblos de indios and pueblos de misiones was abolished in stages. From 1848, the villages were regarded as ordinary Paraguayan settlements; the inhabitants enjoyed the same rights and obligations as those of the ‘Spanish’ settlements. After this administrative act, the Christian Indians were deemed to have been wholly integrated into the (dominant) Paraguayan society. They were, in fact, by now strongly hispanicised, apart from their language, but nearly all Paraguayans understood and also spoke Guaraní, and the inhabitants of the pueblos had already had so much contact with the dominant population that Spanish was no longer a completely foreign language to them.  

The number of settlements also expanded in the period 1811-70, but not as spectacularly as in the final decades of the eighteenth century. Four somewhat larger new settlements were added, namely, Tevegó, Villa Oliva, Encarnación and Nueva Burdeos. These will be discussed separately elsewhere in this chapter. A number of somewhat smaller villages were also established. On the other hand, most of the Indian reductions in the Chaco (Remolinos, San Antonio de los Tobas, Naranjay and Melodía) disappeared in the early nineteenth century, as did the five former Jesuit villages on the left bank of the Paraná.  

Of the newly created smaller villages, mention should be made of Cambá Loma and Laurelty, between Luque and San Lorenzo, which Francia designated as places where escaped slaves from Brazil and blacks from Artigas’ entourage, who sought asylum in Paraguay in 1820, could settle.  

Another new small village was Terecañy, about which little is known, except that the dictator Francia did not want the population of San Isidro de Curuguatay to disperse too much, because this would

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Table 11.1. Settlements created in the period 1811-70.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Settlement</th>
<th>Year of foundation</th>
<th>Name of Settlement</th>
<th>Year of foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under Dictator Francia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tevegó I</td>
<td>1813</td>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>1853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurelty/Cambá Loma</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Paso de la Patria</td>
<td>1852/60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terecany</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Caraguatay-Mbocayati</td>
<td>1854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under Consul/President C.A. López</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yataiti</td>
<td>1840?</td>
<td>Villla Hermosa</td>
<td>1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tevegó II</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>Yabebiri</td>
<td>1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encarnación</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Isla Ombú/Umbú</td>
<td>1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmen del Paraná</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Itacurubí</td>
<td>1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caaguazu (Empalado)</td>
<td>1842/4</td>
<td>Yabebiri</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa Oliva</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: this chapter.

be disadvantageous for its numbers and therefore also for its defence. The dispersal also led to a renewal of an old land conflict between Curuguaty, San Joaquin and San Estanislao. It was noted from the two latter villages that some vecinos from Curuguaty were settling on lands that belonged to the two former Jesuit missions. In response to these complaints, Francia charged the military commandant in 1840 to ensure that all the vecinos who had settled in Carolina and its district (belonging to Villa del Rosario) from Curuguaty and were not necesarios or convenientes (necessary or useful), should go to live with their families and livestock in a new settlement called Terecany (which was also the name of a former Indian reduction). The inhabitants of Curuguaty who had settled on the territory of San Joaquin were also expected to move there and would be allocated lands which they could exploit. The relocated population was exempted from taxes for three years and was supported to some extent by the state. A chapel of Nuestra Señora del Carmen de Terecany is known to have existed there in 1845, which
must have stimulated the further concentration of development around it.\textsuperscript{8}

Another new settlement was San Antonio. It was not founded officially, but grew up gradually around the fort of the same name and the adjacent landing place. The port was already being used at the end of the colonial period for the shipment of some sugar, timber, oranges and other products to the south. That continued as far as possible in the nineteenth century. Under President López, San Antonio was a port for the export of oranges. It would continue in that role and increase in importance as such.\textsuperscript{9}

In the period 1811-70, there also arose, as in the preceding period, a number of new rural service centres around chapels, while three already existing nuclei were further consolidated. Mention should be made of the chapels of San Miguel, Guazú-cúa, Paso de la Patria, San Juan Bautista and Yabebí, all situated in the southwest, where colonisation by livestock farmers made further progress. In addition, there were Villa Hermosa (Bella Vista) in the far north, on the threatened Brazilian border; and Caraguatay-Mbocayatí, Itacurubí, Caaguazú and Yataity, in central \textit{Paraguay Oriental} (some of them stopping places on roads to and from the \textit{yerbales}). The following details are known of these settlements.

The \textit{oratorio} (place of worship) of \textbf{San Miguel} was situated near the former Jesuit village of Santa María. President López decided that a graveyard should be laid out there and this was done in 1844; in 1853 he ordered the enlargement of the \textit{oratorio} and, from that time, a small village gradually grew up.

When the church was rebuilt in Guazú-cúa, a vice-parish of Pilar, in 1857, this gave definitive form to a new little village (\textit{poblado}).

\textbf{Paso de la Patria} originated as a \textit{poblado} when President C.A. López had a barracks built there. An \textit{oratorio}, dedicated to Santa Rosa, was built in 1852 and the status of parish was granted in 1860.

\textbf{San Juan Bautista de las Misiones} grew up around a public \textit{oratorio} and churchyard situated on an \textit{estancia} of the former Jesuit village

\textsuperscript{8} Gutiérrez 1983:409; Viola 1986b:62-3. Terecañy no longer appears on the map later in the nineteenth century; I suspect that it disappeared during the war of 1864-70.

\textsuperscript{9} Viola 1998:44.
of San Ignacio Guazú. The official foundation date - under President C.A. López - is not known. After the war of 1864-70, the village increased further in importance through the immigration of Correntinos, who engaged in livestock rearing, and the fact that it was the capital of the department of Misiones.

Yabebyry began to develop at the beginning of the nineteenth century; its chapel was granted the status of parish church in 1860.\textsuperscript{10}

The history of Isla Umbú, which is also situated in the southwest, is somewhat different. It was founded by President C.A. López as Colonia Isla Umbú, 15 km south of Pilar, on 8 August 1860.\textsuperscript{11}

Villa Hermosa was founded in about 1860 and grew very slowly at first; it was renamed Bella Vista in 1902.\textsuperscript{12}

Aguirre tells us with regard to Caraguatay-Mbocayatí that a puesto de Mbocayatí already existed in 1795, known as Caraguatay. An oratorio of Januario Duarte was built in the vicinity in 1845. The core was developed around this place of worship in 1854 and subsequently provided services for an extensive rural area (Ybyraité, Iriarte, Yagua­rizo).\textsuperscript{13}

The origin of Itacurubi was undoubtedly due to the building of an oratorio in 1864 in the jurisdiction of San José de los Arroyos.\textsuperscript{14}

The zone of Caaguazú began to attract colonists in around 1830, but occupation did not really get under way until the consular government decided to open a road (provided with eight bridges) to the yerbales in 1842. The settlement was originally called Empalado. It was consolidated in 1844, when about a hundred colonists from Villarrica came to the site. In 1850, the poblado had about ten houses and a small church dedicated to Nuestra Señora del Socorro.\textsuperscript{15}

There is uncertainty about Yataity: according to Du Graty, cited by Gutiérrez, the village of Capilla de Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Yataity was founded in 1840, but it is also known that Captain Bartolomé de Oviedo had already built a chapel dedicated to el Rosario on the site in 1740.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{10} For the five villages named above, see Gutiérrez 1983:408-9.
\textsuperscript{11} González Torres 1995:125.
\textsuperscript{12} Gutiérrez 1983:409.
\textsuperscript{13} Gutiérrez 1983:409.
\textsuperscript{14} Gutiérrez 1983:409.
\textsuperscript{15} Gutiérrez 1983:407.
\textsuperscript{16} Gutiérrez 1983:331.
Changes in the settlement pattern in the period 1811-70

Fig. 11.2. Map of the new or further consolidated settlements from the period 1811-70 (After Table 11.1).
Reviewing the developments, it can be said that the period 1811-70 was mainly one of consolidation in the settlement pattern that had taken shape in the colonial period and especially from 1770. At the end of Francia’s period of rule, there existed in Paraguay 55 pueblos or parroquias de origen español, 14 pueblos de origen indio, 8 pueblos de origen indio ex-jesúitico and 3 pueblos de origen negro. This was scarcely more than the total of settlements that already existed at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century (see Table 9.3). Various new settlements were subsequently added, but only a few new settlements of significance were created, at least when compared with the foundations in the eighteenth century. In other words, the settlement pattern that existed in 1870 had, in fact, almost wholly taken shape in the eighteenth century.

The fate of the thirty pueblos de misiones

Thus various new settlements were created after 1811, but settlements also disappeared in the former Jesuit mission territory. After the declaration of independence, claims were laid not only from Paraguay, but also from Argentina and Brazil to las Misiones or at least to parts of it. East of the Paraná, various rival groups fought out their differences, with the result that this part of las Misiones was changed increasingly into a no man’s land.

As we have described, the seven eastern mission villages were reoccupied by the Portuguese in 1801, when Spain and Portugal were at war with each other. From that time they remained permanently in Portuguese hands, but they did not long survive. The troops of the Portuguese general, Francisco das Chagas Santos, played real havoc there in the years 1817-18. Several years of peace followed, but when the Banda Oriental fought for its independence against Brazil (1825-28), the seven eastern mission villages

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17 Pastore 1972:105. For a list of names, see Table 35.2. Some rural parishes comprised several smaller nuclei (vice-parishes). The capital comprised several parishes. The number of 14 pueblos de indios includes Belén, San Joaquín and San Estanislao.
again suffered great damage. After a campaign intended to recover the seven mission villages, General Fructuoso Rivera evacuated at the end of the 1820s at least 2,000, but perhaps as many as 6-8,000 mission Indians to the Banda Oriental. He also took away thousands of head of livestock and 60 carts full of sculptures, ornaments, bells and other valuables. The seven villages were systematically plundered. The population decline speaks volumes. In around 1750, the seven villages had nearly 30,000 inhabitants, in 1768 - after the confusion of the *Guerra Guaranítica* - they still had 22,349, but in 1801, according to a Portuguese census, only about 14,000 inhabitants. In 1814 - again according to a Portuguese census - the population had fallen to 7,200 and, in 1827, after the second destruction phase, only 1,874 persons lived there. When peace came in 1828 and Uruguay was recognised as an independent state, all seven reductions (except for São Francisco de Borja, that was already inhabited by many non-Indians) had been turned into practically abandoned ruins. In 1835, according to a survey by the viscount of São Leopoldo, only 372 people remained in the villages. After 1835, São Borja also found itself in a semi-abandoned state. At that date, only 130 Guaraníes were living there, of whom 38 were disabled. From then, according to Tormo Sanz, a line could in fact be drawn under the population statistics of the seven missions.18

The core area of the former Jesuit missions - that of the 15 *pueblos de misiones* which were situated between the Paraná and the Uruguay - was partitioned in 1811 under the treaty concluded between the Argentineans and the Paraguayans. The treaty took the previous relationships into account: the five villages which were situated closest to the Río Paraná fell under the administration of Asunción, while the remaining ten were allotted to ‘Argentina’.19 The five villages which were allotted to Paraguay were: Candelaria, Santa Ana, Loreto, San Ignacio Mini and Corpus. As we know, they had formed part of the see of Asunción and the Spanish *gobernación* of Paraguay for most of the period before 1811.

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19 Santos Hernández 1976:164.
In February 1817, Portuguese troops commanded by General Francisco das Chagas Santos destroyed first La Cruz and then plundered six villages west of the Uruguay, which they subsequently destroyed. The villages had already previously suffered from the depredations of General Artigas and his troops. As a result, La Cruz, Yapeyú, Santo Tomé, Santa María la Mayor, San Francisco Javier, Santos Mártires and Concepción disappeared as former mission settlements from the map. In Apóstoles, San José and San Carlos, the troops limited themselves to plunder; all the land within a radius of 50 *leguas* was changed into a 'desert'. During the operation, 60 *arrobas* of silver, about 6,000 horses, many valuable church ornaments, numerous bells and other items were seized. After the destruction the remainder of the population was moved to Portuguese territory; those who had managed to escape soon afterwards established small settlements in Corrientes.²⁰

The dictator Francia wished to avoid a confrontation such as had occurred between Brazil and Argentina in Misiones and he begrudged the Portuguese any war booty. He decided that nothing valuable should be left in the five Paraguayan villages that would make it worthwhile to occupy the area. He therefore ordered Paraguayan troops to cross the river in February 1817 to evacuate the five villages, which were then set on fire, thus destroying the remaining villages in the area between the Paraná and the Uruguay. The inhabitants of the five villages who had not fled or left beforehand, all transportable valuable objects (such as church altars) and the livestock of the villages were moved to the other side of the Paraná and added to the mission villages situated there.

From that time, Francia kept the depopulated area behind the Paraná as far as possible under control. To defend Candelaria and Itapúa, his army constructed a wall two meters high and with a length of twelve hundred meters. This fortification (Trinchera de los Paraguayos) was occupied by a sizeable garrison from the early 1820s onward. In 1822, the dictator established another base camp at Tranquera de Loreto fifty miles west of Trinchera. The river was

regularly patrolled and the evacuated territory was inspected by the cavalry. This was no luxury, because a watch had to be kept not only on the ordinary Correntinos, but also on the bandits operating in the area, on revolutionary caudillos and some hostile Indian groups. Large numbers of royalist Portuguese troops were also stationed in São Borja, who sometimes operated in the area west of the Río Uruguay. The costs of these defensive measures were not small, but Francia did ensure that a trade corridor remained open between Itapúa and São Borja in the 1820s and '30s and that trade could take place with the Brazilians without too many difficulties. The traders were given escorts, if necessary. The government of the province of Corrientes and that of the United Provinces (the Argentine Confederation) refrained from transforming their claims to the department of Candelaria into deeds, knowing that the dictator Francia was able to oppose them and would do so, if necessary. They might also find themselves dealing with the much more powerful neighbour Brazil, which had every interest in seeing that trade between the villages of Itapúa and São Borja was not disrupted (see Chapter 31).21

Not all the inhabitants of the five villages evacuated by the Francia incidentally moved to Paraguay. A number sailed up the Río Paraná and founded a small settlement about 10 leguas north of the mouth of the Río Yguazú. They did not keep livestock or domestic animals, but limited themselves to the practice of simple arable farming. They lived peacefully together with the Guayaná tribe, whom they converted to Christianity, and adhered to a number of cultural, social and economic values gained from the time when they had lived farther south in the mission villages. Paraguayans who came to collect yerba in the woods of Tacurupucú on the Pyra-Puytain encountered the colony in 1851. The Paraguayan state then entered into trade relations with them. Martin de Moussy estimated the population of the colony on the Pyra Putain at 400 in 1856.22

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21 Gutiérrez 1983:59; Williams 1977b:13,19,24. The fortifications of 1822 were repaired in 1849 and occupied by Brazilian troops in 1865.

22 Garsch 1934:143; Martin de Moussy 1856:46.
The eight villages which were situated in the area between the middle Paraná and the Río Tebicuary - the undisputed Paraguayan missions - were spared large-scale destruction. They still existed when the dictator Francia died in 1840 and the same regime prevailed as in 1811. Changes nevertheless took place, as increasing numbers of Creoles and mestizos settled in them and their special status was abolished in 1848. From that date, they were regarded as normal settlements. However, since 1768, much of what the Jesuits had achieved had already fallen into ruin or disappeared, and the villages had lost many of their original characteristics. The churches had been poorly maintained after 1768 and many treasures had disappeared elsewhere (e.g. to churches north of the Tebicuary). Many houses were also in a poor condition. Most natives preferred to build a simple dwelling of wood, clay and palm leaves on or near their land to continuing to maintain the brick houses in the villages. Martin de Moussy accordingly noted in the 1850s that very many churches, other buildings and dwellings were in a ruinous state, although there were also some good houses. These were rented out by the state, and not only to natives, because, ultimately, nearly everything in these former mission villages had become state property. Generally speaking, however, the eight villages had fared less badly than those on the other side of the Paraná. With the exception of Encarnación, each former mission settlement here still has its ruin or museum.

In 1799, 18,473 persons lived in the 13 former Paraguayan mission villages (see Chapter 33); in 1846, the 8 remaining villages had about 15,000 inhabitants, but in 1856, according to Martin de Moussy, only about 4,400 souls.²³

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²³ Garsch 1934:137-8; McNaspy 1987:87; Martin de Moussy 1864:45-7; Santos Hernández 1976:164-5.
Changes in the settlement pattern in the period 1811-70

The measures to protect the northern periphery

Under the dictator Francia

Independent Paraguay also immediately had to contend with problems on its northern border. The Mbayás and Guanás continued to be aggressive and often proved to be better armed than many colonists, because they received weapons from the Portuguese in exchange for stolen livestock. Livestock thefts were quite common at that time. The estancias near the Portuguese settlement of Miranda were stocked with livestock stolen in Paraguay. At the beginning of 1812, a large group of Mbayás succeeded in capturing Fuerte Borbón, which was subsequently occupied by the Portuguese. The Paraguayans managed to recapture the fort. When a large force found itself in the north in connection with this operation, the government decided to take advantage of the opportunity to expel the Mbayás from the whole northern border area. While they combed out the area, however, the Mbayá continued their attacks, supported by the Portuguese.

In order to strengthen morale and to increase administrative efficiency, the Junta Superior Gubernativa granted Villa Real de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción the status of villa in 1812, oversaw the creation of a cabildo there and announced that it was now capital of the military district of the North. Because of its strategic importance, the place continued to receive help and, from 1831, government support to poor colonists (in the form of clothing, tools etc.) was even increased. The Villenos managed to hold out, despite the fact that the Indian attacks continued.24

One of the most important attempts to give the north better protection was the foundation of Tevegó, a village of free Negroes and mulattoes. As readers will recall, there were already three pueblos de origen negro in 1811: Emboscada, Areguá and Tavapy. Soon after independence, therefore, a fourth settlement of blacks was added to these: Tevegó. The occasion for this was the fact that a number of free Negroes and mulattoes who occupied land belon-

ging to the monastery of Santo Domingo in the valley of the Río Tavapy wished to settle elsewhere at that time. The cabildo of Asunción suggested to them that they should settle on the other side of the Río Paraguay, on a higher-lying site near the Río Pilcomayo. As we have said, however, Paraguay had to contend in 1812 with a new wave of Portuguese aggression (including the temporary capture of Fuerte Borbón and fighting in the southeast near Candellaría). To make matters worse, there were also infiltrations of Chaco Indians in the area of Concepción. Since no action had yet been undertaken for the colonists from Tavapy, the Junta Superior Gubernativa that was then in power was able to change the plans. It announced in a decree of 27 January 1813 that a pueblo de pardos would be established on the site of the former Guaná reduction of Tevegó in northern Paraguay and that this new settlement would be peopled by pardos from Tavapy. The new settlement would be able to check the Indian aggression in the north and also keep a better watch on Chaco Indians crossing the river. A better watch could also be kept on the Portuguese, who had extended their sphere of influence as far as the Río Apa after 1777 and still constituted a threat to Paraguay. Through this defensive function, the new pueblo de pardos would contribute to the safety of Villa Real, that was still the only important settlement on the northern periphery and was sometimes threatened by aggressive Indians who even penetrated into its outskirts. Insofar as there were reductions in the region, these proved to be not sufficient to wholly guarantee the region's safety. Agriculture and yerba gathering were accompanied by the unavoidable risks. As a result, the rich potential of the region was really underused. The administrators therefore hoped that the new settlement would also give an impulse to yerba gathering, timber exploitation and agriculture.

The new village, including fortifications, was founded in 1813 on an elevated and dry site on the left bank of the Río Paraguay, north of the Río Apa and about 45 km south of Fuerte Borbón, a site where Governor Pinedo may have wished to see Concepción
Changes in the settlement pattern in the period 1811-70

built. The new settlement was given the name Etevegó. Initially, some 40 men from Tavapy were sent there in 1813 to make the necessary preparations, so that the others could follow. They were protected by a picket of soldiers. An optimistic picture was given of the economic resources: there would be sufficient maize and other crops on the fields which the Guanás-terenoés of the former reduction of Nuestra Señora de la Revelación had left behind. Although each colonist had to take his own equipment with him, the government would provide additional tools and implements, as well as half an arroba of iron, from which more tools could be made. The first livestock consisted of cattle and horses captured from Mbayá and Guaná in the zone of Belén, who had previously stolen them.

The due disappointments immediately arose. There were no maize fields, communications overland were (obviously) very difficult, so that it was far from simple, for example, to bring in cattle from central Paraguay. The isolation also soon led to a shortage of clothing and weapons, and the colonists were quickly faced with a food shortage, but had nevertheless to supply food for the provisioning of Fuerte Borbón. Moreover, Mbayá Indians regularly tried to attack the young jungle settlement and the colonists also had to fight disease. Disappointed and demoralised, both the colonists and the garrison charged to protect them abandoned themselves to desertion, drink and idleness. The frontier climate demanded so much attention and energy from the new inhabitants that no time was left for ordinary work. Consequently, even after the start-up period, agriculture developed inadequately and with great difficulty. In 1814, only 204 pardos and 55 militiamen were living there, but they had to be sustained from Asunción, e.g. by the sending of livestock. There were complaints about inadequate support from Asunción. After the adverse reports from the first migrants, those who were still living in Tavapy felt little inclination to settle in Tevegó as well. By 1816, living conditions in Tevegó were already so ‘unstable’ that some of the pardos fled to relatively

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25 One finds also Etebegó, Tavegó and Tevegó, and the name San Salvador was also used.
safe Villa Real, where the majority sought employment as domestic servants. It was mainly the less able who remained behind.

At the end of 1815 and beginning of 1816, the dictator Francia decided to accelerate the peopling of Tevegó by banishing there coloured people who had been condemned to life imprisonment (thieves, murderers and women of easy virtue). He also sent there a number of Correntinos who had fled to Paraguay to escape the unrest in their own country. And, in 1816, he ordered the removal of the still remaining households from Tavapy. Political prisoners were also sent to Tevegó. Because of all this, from 1818 the settlement acquired more the status of an armed and reinforced penal colony. According to Plá, perhaps half of the population consisted of criminals in 1820. No-one went to the colony of their own free will at that time.

While the population became decreasingly enthusiastic about its new home, the dictator repeatedly showed his irritation at the lack of success of the colonisation experiment, which he attributed mainly to the inefficiency of the authorities and soldiers and to the lack of backbone of the colonists, some of whom had indeed themselves first asked for a new settlement. He wanted them to try to be self-supporting, but nevertheless continued to support the colony for several more years in the hope that it would be more successful in the longer term. The defences were also improved and support was offered from Villa Real in exchange for greater security. Francia increasingly realised, however, that no self-sufficient colony of farmer-soldiers would be created, but a settlement peopled partly by professional soldiers and partly by black peasants and common criminals, who could not or would not provide for their own defence and food supply. The costs involved with the defence and maintenance of the settlement eventually proved so high that, according to the dictator, it would be estúpido y cruel to continue the experiment any longer. On 12 October 1823, he decided - after a devastating attack by the Mbayás - to shut down the settlement. Tevegó was evacuated and the houses were set on fire. The inhabitants had to settle in Concepción and in the partidos of its district, either independently if they had any property, or as agregados with citizens if they were insolvent. As a result, the villa and its districts temporarily received quite a number of Negroes and mulattoes. The
state helped somewhat to provide for the sustenance of the displaced population.

To sum up, Tevegó was no more than a colonisation project that remained trapped in an embryonic stage. Francia had incidentally ordained that the settlement should be laid out according to a plan. Solares were allocated around a plaza on which ranchos de paja, provided with covered balconies on the front, had been erected.

By no means all the pardos had left Tavapy after the decision to found Tevegó. According to a survey of 1826, three years after the confiscation of the properties of the regular clergy, the village still had 415 pardos, some of them free, but mainly slaves.26

Not only in and around Tevegó, but also beyond, the situation in the north continued to demand attention, because the Mbayás (sometimes allied with Guanás) continued to harass the livestock rearers and small arable farmers and so hamper the advance of the colonisation front.27 In 1814 and 1815 - as in 1796 - a large number of estancias in the Aquidabán district even had to be abandoned. Francia feared that the murder of colonists and the cattle thefts would eventually lead to the general depopulation of large parts of the region and therefore allowed, with the agreement of the livestock farmers, a number of punishment expeditions to be mounted.

It may be deduced from the fact that the head of state had appointed (the already 65-year old) José Miguel Ibañez as jefe de la frontera norte, that he was serious about settling up with the hostile natives and bringing peace and order to the northern region. As we noted earlier, Ibañez was one of the first colonist-militiamen of Villa Real to acquire a property title in the Mbayá territory of Agaguigó, in Yuy and Naranjaty through a merced real. He was the person who had already gone to war earlier against the Mbayá and had been


responsible as expedition leader for the massacre on 15 May 1796, in which 74 or 75 Indians perished. He knew the places where his former enemies might be found. In the period from 1813-February 1815, Ibañez conducted two expeditions against the Mbayá and Guaná. His actions had little success (partly through a lack of horses), except that his men captured numbers of livestock that were divided between the expedition members and the colonists. Ibañez received less material support from Francia for these operations than he had hoped. The expeditions temporarily put a stop to the aggression, but brought no lasting peace.

The peace which the dictator Francia concluded with the parcialidad of Mbayá-Caduveo in September 1821 soon proved to be worthless. The Indians found the terms unacceptable and breached the treaty by as early as January 1822. Francia’s actions subsequently became increasingly severe. In 1825, he sent an expedition of 4-600 men to burn the palm forests of Mbocayá and to deprive the troublesome Indians of an essential source of livelihood. The areas which had been settled by the Creoles were retained, despite the fact that the Indians regularly carried out attacks. Williams refers to attacks in 1820, 1821, 1823, 1824, 1832, 1833, 1837 and 1840 and adds that the area was not really wholly safe in the intervening years.

Francia eventually failed during his period of rule to put an end to the indigenous aggression in the north. There was no progress towards achieving his objective of integration. When action was taken against the Indians, they withdrew, if necessary, behind the Río Apa, in the neighbourhood of Miranda, where they could count on the support and sympathy of the Portuguese and were not pursued by the Paraguayans. The region was not essentially further pacified in 1840 than in 1820.

Nor did Francia succeed in winning back the area north of the Río Apa from the Brazilians. He incidentally made no serious attempts to do so, because he wanted to avoid any conflicts that might threaten the independent existence of Paraguay. He only improved the defences by constructing new or better fortifications along the Río Apa and by increasing the (sometimes all too passive) garrisons.
Francia did make some attempts to encourage colonisation in the north. Anyone who settled there received free land. The dangerous north, however, was completely out of favour, which was why the dictator also simply obliged groups of potential colonists to settle there. In 1820, he sent the first large group of *Correntinos* by ship to the north, where they were expected to settle around Concepción. During the rest of his period of rule, he sent several hundred more *Correntinos* as voluntary or involuntary colonists to the areas of Concepción, San Pedro de Ycuamandiyú and Aquidabán. In 1822, for example, he directed a group of 49 *Correntinos* to Concepción, with the instruction to the commandant Acosta not to allow them to settle on their own initiative, because they might subsequently decide to escape. If they nevertheless did try to escape, they could be shot down. In 1832, he again sent 14 *Correntinos* who had been taken prisoner to the north. When General Artigas sought refuge in Paraguay in 1820, many of the approximately 200 men who escorted him were sent to the area of Concepción, where they were given land on which to settle, but were not allowed to leave the area. None of these measures stimulated the development of the north; the area remained a frontier region made unsafe by the Indians, where the economy stagnated rather than flourished and where large resources and manpower had to be invested in defence. The colonists had to withstand the unavoidable dangers and privations. The Río Apa could nevertheless be maintained as the *de facto* border and the indigenous population was marginalised, eliminated and integrated in the long run.

*Under the Consulate and President C.A. López*

In the 1840s, after the death of Francia, the problem of the north received the full attention of the consuls Carlos Antonio López and Mariano Roque Alonso and then of López in his capacity as president.\(^\text{28}\) The Mbayá, whether or not allied with the Guanás, con-

continued to constitute a threat to the livestock farmers, especially in the area between the Río Aquidabanaguí and Río Apa; and the situation in Concepción was still deplorable in 1841.

In the latter year, several river crossings were fortified. In 1842 the two consuls decided to refound Tevegó, in order to be able once again to better resist the Indian and Portuguese danger. An expedition set out consisting of 103 colonists (mainly *pardos* who had come to live in and around Concepción) and 121 militiamen and grenadiers to provide protection. They took with them 300 head of cattle, 240 horses and ample food supplies. The new village was given the official name of Villa del Divino Salvador (de Tevegó) and was located this time 70 *leguas* from Asunción and 20 from Concepción, again on the Río Paraguay. The two consuls had in view a large colony that would be well defended and would be able to draw on a state *estancia* with a large cattle herd to provide for its needs. The population did indeed increase through the further settlement of coloured people from the *pueblo de pardos* of Tavapy, Indians from the *pueblos* and delinquents, but the village and its surrounding area did not comprise more than about thousand persons in 1847 (see Chapter 35).

Another measure concerned the Valle de Naranjaty, near Horqueta, the territory of the Tereno-Chané tribe. According to González Torres, the greater part of this tribe was transferred to Santa María in Misiones in 1843. The aim of this transfer was to increase peace and order in the region. Moreover, in conformity with the decree of 22 May 1843, four new *fortines* were built at strategic points along the border (Apatuyá, Gavilan-cué, Ybyruguá and Apadesgracia). The fortifications were provided with garrisons of one hundred men, recruited in the three northern *villas* (Villa Real, San Isidro and Villarrica) or elsewhere in the country, among *vagos sin tierra*.

Once he had been elected president, C.A. López devoted attention in his first *mensaje* to parliament (1844) to the problems of the northern region. He noted that Tevegó had been refounded and that it was protected this time by a number of forts with sufficient troops. All the important crossings of the Río Apa were protected by permanent fortifications. The permanent character of the line of defence was, moreover, enhanced by a number of private *estancias*
which had been established just south of the river. The yerba camps also made their contribution to the opening up of the previously avoided northern areas.

The laws under which lands in the northern region could be leased to interested colonists also dated from the late 1840s (see Chapter 18). The underlying consideration was again that a larger number of inhabitants would increase the security of the region.

In 1845 and 1846 hundreds of black and other colonists were sent to Divino Salvador. In 1846, 21 estancias or smaller puestos were already situated near the fortified core of the colony. By 1847, the Paraguayan population between the rivers Ypané and Apa was approaching 10,000 (see Chapter 35). The Mbayá nevertheless continued to attack the colonists and yerbaters, often in cooperation with Guanás and Brazilians, and this sometimes led to the flight of the yerbateros. President López therefore ordered in mid-1848 that deserters from yerba camps should be punished. He condemned the cowardice of the managers and workers who fled as soon as they saw an Indian. In his view, every man in the north must be armed and assume that he was in fact a soldier and living under military command. Life in the north was to be regarded as a form of strict 'national service', even if one was an ordinary peasant. In other words, President López considered it self-evident that the local working population should cooperate fully in keeping the aggression within limits.

The fuertes of Rinconada, Bellavista, Observación, Estrella (Apatuyá) and Confluencia were founded or rebuilt in 1850 and a number of pickets were also stationed in the intervening area. Between 1852 and 1854, the fort of Ytaguí was built to protect the state cattle ranch of Bellavista and the empty territory between the Arroyo Hermoso and the Arroyo Quiensabe. The fuerte of Quiensabe and the fuerte of Tarumá (between the fort of Bellavista and the Serranía de Tacurupitá) were also built at that time. Villenos again gave support in building them. Confluencia was later rebuilt and Tacurupitá was founded with Indians and mestizos from Belén. In about 1854, the Río Apa line was studded with bayonets against incursions from Mato Grosso. Each important ford was guarded by a fort. Proceeding from west to east, there were eight major installations: Arrecife, San Carlos, Observación del Apa, Observación de
Quien Vive, Ytaguí del Apa, Rinconada del Apa, Bella Vista and Estrella. Near another Bella Vista, about 15 leguas south of the river, there was a large permanent military headquarters, connected with Concepción by a simple road. Thanks to constant surveillance by small patrols, a total of 20 new estancias had been established within 25 leguas of the Apa by 1854. In 1858, besides four state estancias and 1 puesto with nearly 6,000 animals, there were 88 private livestock ranches with over 35,000 head of cattle, oxen and horses - all situated very close to the Apa frontier. Besides protecting the livestock industry, the improved defences also had a positive effect on various other activities in Concepción: according to Gelly, new artisan enterprises were established and quarries opened in the 1840s. This showed, in his view, that much progress had been made in the past fifteen years in populating the region and making it secure. The Portuguese pressure on the Apa border nevertheless continued under President López and the region of Villa Real remained a dangerous area, because the Indians there were not wholly under control.

Nor did Paraguay under President López succeed in regaining possession of the area north of the Río Apa. The country was too weak militarily and demographically to achieve this and nor did it have sufficient interest to take the risks associated with a reconquest. South of the Río Apa, however, security in Paraguay had become considerably greater.

After a number of years, Divino Salvador de Tevegó again ceased to exist. It fell into decline, although a fortified core remained, but it disappeared during the war with the Triple Alliance. Not only was Paraguay then criss-crossed by ravaging invading armies, but many Negroes and mulattoes were placed in the front lines during the war, where they perished.

The foundation of Villa Oliva

A second relatively important new settlement was Villa Oliva. This originated from Saladillo, a village, or rather, a hamlet situated on the Río Paraguay south of la Villeta. It had grown up there when the authorities had begun to grant land in 1766 to the few people
who asked for it. The underlying idea was that any expansion of settlement near the river might reduce the danger of Indian aggression from the Chaco. Since the site was not suitable for arable farming, but more for livestock rearing, the number of inhabitants remained small. Partly because of this, the Indian attacks continued. The population led a difficult existence. At the beginning of independence, Saladillo was therefore regarded as one of the poorest settlements. Under Francia, too, the Indians continued to target the few possessions of the inhabitants of Saladillo. It was eventually decided in 1844 to relocate the settlement. It was then built on its new, permanent site and was first called Mirindi and, later, Villa Oliva de Nuestra Señora del Rosario. It is known that the settlement was under full construction in May 1845, after which it gradually grew further.29

The foundation of Villa Encarnación and the village of Carmen del Parana

The former Jesuit mission of Itapúa had gradually declined after the expulsion of the fathers in 1768, as had all the other villages which had once been entrusted to their care. When the Robertsons visited the place in 1815, they described it as sad, gloomy and desolate. Many buildings and houses had fallen into ruin. The population was steadily declining and the Indians who still lived there were poorly nourished and badly clothed. The ferry to maintain the connection with Candelaria on the opposite bank had fallen into disrepair, but there was so little traffic that no-one had considered providing a new ferry.30 Under the regime of Francia, the pueblo revived from the beginning of the 1820s, because it began to play an important role in the service of the - restricted and geographically highly concentrated - export trade (see Chapter 31).

It was decided in a decree of 8 April 1843 that Itapúa should become a modern, planned Paraguayan villa, with the functions of a frontier port and departmental capital. The new settlement would be called Villa de la Encarnación. It was decided to move the population of natives and mestizoes about 6-8 leguas to the west to a site known as Tupuraf where, shortly afterwards, the village of Carmen del Paraná was built for them, not far from the river. When the relocation had been completed, Consul C.A. López sent 24 households from Capiatá as colonists to Encarnación.

Part of the land which was to form part of the jurisdiction of the new villa was reserved for laying out a plaza central, on which the principal public buildings, such as the church, were erected. The church, the colegio (then a barracks), a few blocks of houses and the churchyard from the Jesuit period constituted the nucleus of the new Encarnación. There was also an ejido, which was demarcated immediately after the distribution of chacras. A grazing area was also reserved, 15 to 20 cuadras long and of a corresponding width, with permanently flowing water, on which the livestock serving the settlement (such as draught oxen) would be able to graze. Lastly, campos were demarcated for estancias del estado on the site known as San Juan. Thus, some of the land became publicly owned, while another part became private property and was granted out free in solares of 50 x 50 varas, and in chacras of 100 x 100 varas. Industrious inhabitants could, if they wished, exploit up to three parcels. Those people who wished to become eligible for the ownership of solares and chacras had to submit a request, after which an investigation was made into whether they could be accepted as pobladores de la villa. The new owners were obliged to fence their land within eight months of its allocation con cerco fuerte y seguro. The beneficiaries could not surrender, give away or sell their solares or chacras before they had stocked and enclosed the land in the manner laid down in the decree. Barbed wire was then not yet in vogue, so that they evidently - according to Martínez Cuevas - had to enclose it some other way. In 1853, the port of Encarnación was equipped to accommodate foreign traders.

In 1861, the town was found not to have grown in the planned manner that had been provided for. Despite control from above, parcels had been subdivided and spontaneous occupation had
Changes in the settlement pattern in the period 1811-70

The overall picture was rather chaotic. Two parts of the town could be distinguished at that time: the older, higher-lying nucleus of the former mission, and the newer, lower-lying part around the port.\(^{31}\)

The indigenous population that was transferred to Tuparaf found itself living on a rather swampy, bog-like site. The location was generally not regarded as very favourable. Several Indians therefore asked for relocation or compensation. Others accepted their new village as the lesser of two evils; they had little other choice. Carmen del Paraná did have a cabildo, just as Itapúa had. According to Martin de Moussy, Carmen del Paraná was a kind of ferme (farmstead), of the usual square form. Only the mayordomo's house had any pretensions. In 1848, the lands of the village were declared state property and Carmen lost its special status, like all the other pueblos de misiones. According to Martin de Moussy, who later visited the settlement, the land that the Indians had received was 'healthy' and 'fertile', but they grew little. The straw huts which they had erected on their small properties were rather wretched. The author believed, however, that they did not find it so bad that they no longer lived in Itapúa. The village had some 800 inhabitants in 1860.\(^{32}\)

The first colony of foreigners: Nueva Burdeos

A fourth new settlement which merits discussion because of its importance is Nueva Burdeos. Its origins can be partly traced back to the reduction of Melodía. This reduction unfortunately did not survive for very long. It disappeared in 1817, after the death of Father González; what remained was an uninhabited site which came to be called - in memory of the reduction's founder and pastor - Amancio-cué. The cattle ranch of Ascensio Flecha, that

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\(^{32}\) Martin de Moussy 1864:58; Whigham 1995:179.
was situated in the vicinity, also had to be abandoned, because the Indians made so many attempts to steal the cattle.

Despite the unfavourable settlement climate, the authorities still wished to colonise the Chaco further, or at least that part of it immediately west of Asunción. This explains why the Junta Superior Gubernativa (1811-3) granted José Gregorio Flecha - perhaps a relative of Ascensio Flecha - a concession of two leguas of land, directly opposite the capital, on which to set up a cattle ranch. There was, however, no further occupation of the Chaco. The area remained unsafe, so that the area between the Río Confuso and the Río Pilcomayo had regularly to be patrolled in order to protect Asunción and its surrounding villages. Several guard posts were also established in the 1820s between the Pilcomayo and the Bermejo, insofar as they were not already present.

In the 1840s and '50s, the settlement climate had not essentially improved, but the physical occupation of the Chaco nevertheless appeared all the more urgent. Argentina was claiming the whole of the Chaco as its territory and Bolivia was also making claims. Aside from that, it was, of course, also attractive to make more intensive use of the economic potential of the Chaco. President López therefore began with the establishment of some state estancias and military posts, which formed their own cattle herds and occupied the necessary land. In 1844, he created a small village of Paraguayans called San Venancio on the former lands of Flecha, complete with a small church and provided with a large contingent of soldiers to protect the inhabitants. Another potrero was founded in 1845 in Amancio-cué, which was stocked with cattle brought from Emboscada, situated at the same latitude on the opposite side of the river. Another barracks at that time was that of el Cerro, which had a smithy for the manufacture of lances. Small enterprises were set up at other places for the extraction and manufacture of building materials, and a guarded cattle ranch with a small settlement was established on the Río Pilcomayo.33

In the early 1850s, fresh opportunities arose to people the Chaco. Before he left on a mission to Europe, Francisco Solano López,

the son of President C.A. López, had been given as one of his tasks the recruitment of colonists, so that agriculture could be expanded and modernised, and population growth in Paraguay would be accelerated. He unfortunately did not succeed in recruiting emigrants in Spain, but did conclude an agreement in Paris with the Bordeaux shipowner, Antonio López, on 15 September 1854. The latter undertook to recruit 800-1,000 persons of both sexes and all ages in the Basque country and Béarnais, who would be prepared to settle as colonists in Paraguay. Apart from a small number of immigrants with artisan skills, the remaining colonists would have to be good farmers.\(^{34}\)

When the contract had been completed, President López decided that the colonists should settle near the site where Melodía had once been situated, in Amancio-cué, on the extensive grasslands of el Cerro, about 30 km northeast of the capital. He also decreed that the new colony should be called Nueva Burdeos, not only because the immigrants originated from the hinterland of Bordeaux, but also because this was their port of departure. The colony was officially founded by decree on 14 May 1855, with, according to Sosa Escalada, 120 families from Bordeaux, comprising a total of 410 men, women and children.\(^{35}\) The site of the colony extended over a width of 4,500 metres along the Río Paraguay and over a length of 9,000 metres into the Chaco.

The engineer, Marchaix de Laberge, subdivided part of the site in advance into solares, planned the street layout and demarcated quintas and chacras in the vicinity of the village. About 100 Paraguayan labourers cut down trees, laid out streets and built houses. Provision was made for a site for the chapel, a plot for the priest’s house and a cemetery. Land was also provided on which puestos de estancias could be laid out.

\(^{34}\) In order to be allowed on board ship, the emigrants had to possess a passport, an extract from the register of births or baptisms, a certificate of good conduct signed by the mayor of their home town and 100 francs (Choay 1977:35; Quentin 1865a:68).

The first contingent of colonists arrived in several ships: some of them in the steamship L'Astronome; others made the voyage to Buenos Aires in the sailing ship Amants Rose-André and continued the voyage to Asunción in the steamship Río Negro which had been purchased by Paraguay; a third group arrived in the steamship L'Aquitaine, that had also been purchased by Paraguay and was subsequently renamed Río Blanco.

Under the detailed decree drawn up by President López for the colonisation project, each colonist of 16 years and older was eligible for a free solar in the village and a lote agrícola of 4 square cuerdas (about 13 ha), of which he would become the owner after paying off his debts. Where necessary, people could become eligible for more land on the grounds of age and family composition. The single men among the colonists were also entitled to a lote agrícola, which they had to take into use before they could build upon their solar. Paraguayans and other foreigners were allowed to rent or purchase lotes in the land bordering on the colony and, in the latter instance, could pay for it by instalments. All the beneficiaries had to start to cultivate the land within a year. The French colonists would receive a house and also food during the first year; they would receive draught animals, as well as a number of cows, sheep, pigs and chickens, together with seeds and implements to enable them to begin arable farming. The colonists could make free use of the produce they grew and did not have to pay tax on it during the first ten years. Those who were not farmers (including cartwrights, carpenters, shoemakers and blacksmiths), would be able to practise their crafts in the colony. The colonists would have to start paying off their debts from the third year. They would be required to hand over a quarter of what they might be able to sell from that time, partly to pay off the advance on the fare for the voyage, and partly in payment for other facilities which had been provided by the state (house, one year’s subsistence, livestock and implements). Besides freedom from taxes, the colonists enjoyed exemption from military service; although they had to help to guard their own colony, if necessary, and - supported by the presence of a garrison - try to live in harmony with the Indians.

According to the authorities, the land which would be taken into use for arable and livestock farming was of good quality. They also
claimed that Amancio-cué had a healthy living climate and that there were good communications with the nearby capital. In other words, the area was very suitable for settlement. This was also partly true. In order to reduce the labour shortage, lists were drawn up in Luque, San Lorenzo del Campo Grande, Capiatá, Itauguá and Pirayú some time after the arrival of the colonists, in conformity with the decree of President López, of vagos y mal entretenidos (unemployed people and paupers), who could be sent to the colony to serve as labourers in return for a modest wage, with the possibility of settling there later independently.

The French colonists were soon unhappy about the selected site. The colony was not wholly ready when they arrived and they had to remain for some time in Asunción, where they were maintained by the government (which aroused the envy of the poorer population). They were not very enthusiastic about settlement in the Chaco; a number of them showed a preference for a colony near Pilar, but their wishes were not taken into account. Once they had arrived in Nueva Burdeos, a food shortage quickly arose and the farm implements provided proved to be of poor quality. The immigrants were bothered by insects, felt threatened by Guaycurú Indians, despite the garrison, and gathered poor harvests because of drought. They considered the land to be of poor quality. A number very soon wanted to leave the colony. They first complained to the French consul, Lucien de Brayer, and there was resistance, after which a number deserted. A number fled to Argentina via the Chaco, others moved to Asunción, where they were arrested - if recognised - for breach of their contract (which most of them had not even seen). The discontent became even greater when a colonist was improperly treated by the authorities (his head was held under water a couple of times when he was being interrogated, causing him to lose consciousness) and when the immigrants began to fear that they would have to surrender their French nationality for Paraguayan citizenship. The discontent arose so quickly that it did not even prove possible to distribute the suertes de estancia. It was found at the end of 1855 that no fewer than 339 persons (including 72 households with children) wished to leave. There were also 9 French people in the hospital wanting to do the same, which brought the total up to 348. In December 1855, President López
agreed that the colonists could leave. Eventually, only five French people remained in the colony: a family of four persons and a widower.

Although President López did eventually agree to the departure, he made it conditional on the colonists first paying off their debts within fifty days. Everything that they left behind would benefit the national exchequer. When it became clear that the newly arrived colonists, who had, moreover, gathered a poor harvest, were unable to repay the costs they had incurred, they were informed that they would have to work temporarily in the iron ore mines around Ybicuí or in brickyards, in which case, they would be able to retain a quarter of their wages to provide for their sustenance. According to Susnik, some were sent to the obras estatales of San Roque and Encarnación; deserters who had been taken prisoner had to work still farther away. The treatment of the workers was sometimes bad.

President López finally dissolved the colony by decree of 13 June 1856 under pressure from the French press and he allowed the colonists to leave, if they so wished. Those who wished to leave the country received a free passport and did not have to pay off their debts. This marked the official end of the French colony of Nueva Burdeos. To justify his decision, President López argued that, with the departure of the French, the Paraguayan people would be freed of a grupo de zánganos gravosos a la sociedad con sus demandas de limosna para vivir (a group of idlers, who through their need for support constituted a burden on society).

The cause of the fiasco lay partly with the Paraguayan government, which wished to settle the colonists at all costs in an area completely lacking in relief, alternately plagued by drought or an excess of moisture and where the land was, in any event, not so fertile as had been thought. Some of the land had not yet been cleared when the colonists arrived. The colonists were also troubled by insects and felt threatened from time to time by Indians. Because of all this, they felt far from home. Nor did they like the manner in which they were treated. The garrison that was supposed to protect them showed little respect (and used the posting to deal themselves in hides and skins). One of the commandants tried to impose a more or less military regime on the colonists. There was little
freedom; the colonists felt themselves to be continually supervised by the military. Nor was the authoritarian manner in which President López himself sometimes acted conducive to the success of the project. At least equally important, however, was the fact that the majority of the colonists were, in fact, not farmers at all, but had practised a wide variety of other occupations, such as bricklayer, carpenter, barber, weaver or musician; even a carver of marble had been recruited. Among the company of 410 persons (of whom 167 had an occupation) there was a total of only 86 farmers. Some of the colonists were also of more advanced years and had large families. In his keenness to complete the commission as quickly as possible and receive payment, the shipowner López had simply collected a number of people together. By no means all of them possessed the necessary qualities to begin a pioneering existence.

The failure of the whole enterprise did not benefit relations between France and Paraguay. The Paraguayan government lost considerable prestige with the French authorities. France temporarily suspended the issue of passports to those wishing to go to Paraguay and even sent a ship up the Río Paraguay, after a rumour about a punishment expedition had first been aired. However, France eventually desisted from taking harsh actions in order to avoid the French people living in Paraguay suffering in consequence. And President López found it inadvisable to enter into a confrontation with France. It was not until 1858 that the difficulties were eventually resolved by diplomatic means.

36 Sosa Escalada (1934:118-9) states that the colony was founded with 120 families, consisting of 410 persons, and that, among the men, besides 86 farmers, there were: 14 carpenters, 14 cobblerors, 9 tailors, 5 weavers, 4 bricklayers, 4 blacksmiths, 4 bakers, 2 cartwrights, 2 brick makers, 2 tanners, 2 brush makers, 2 gardeners, 2 musicians, 1 locksmith, 1 coppersmith/boilermaker, 1 stone carver, 1 chair maker, 1 printer, 1 tinsmith and 1 passementerie maker, giving a total of 159 economically active men. Among the 77 women there were 8 seamstresses. It is not known to what extent the persons concerned could indeed perform the farm work and crafts or whether occupations had been made up to make them eligible for acceptance. According to Du Graty, cited by Sosa Escalada, the people recruited were not farmers, but industriales, and therefore of urban origins, which meant that, in Paraguay, they fell from the frying pan into the fire.
According to Choay, 367 of the 419 French eventually left the colony; 22 died and 30 remained in Paraguay.\(^37\) Of those who left, the majority decided not to return to France: 225 settled in Argentina (including Rosario and Corrientes), and a smaller number in Uruguay.\(^38\) The second contingent of about four hundred French people recruited by the shipowner, López, arrived in Buenos Aires when the discontent about the situation in Nueva Burdeos was at its peak. These immigrants preferred not travel on to Paraguay, but to settle in Entre Ríos.

Nueva Burdeos did not disappear completely from the map with the departure of the French. That was also certainly not the wish of President López. The Chaco had to be settled, certainly in view of the claims of Argentina. The continuation of the colony was assured with Paraguayan colonists. As the French were leaving, Paraguayan families were already beginning to settle in the colony (including 19 families from Pirayú in 1855). A number of soldiers also quite quickly made use of the opportunity to settle and acquire land. When the colony threatened to become depopulated, President López ordered that the houses which fell empty had to be occupied by eligible soldiers. They could acquire the houses and \textit{lotes} on the same terms as the French. Besides ex-soldiers, people from the nearby \textit{partidos} on the other side of the river also settled in the colony, including 30 families from the Luque district. The two López presidents also continued to send small numbers of vagrants (\textit{vagos}), convicted persons and other ‘marginals’ to the colony. They also placed some Indians from reductions there. The prisoners could stay if they wished after completing their sentence and become honest farmers. In view of all these changes, the name Nueva Burdeos was obviously no longer applicable, and so the colony was renamed Villa Occidental.

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\(^{37}\) The number of persons who settled in the colony was 410; while 9 found themselves in the hospital, which may explain the figure of 419 given by Choay.

\(^{38}\) Williams (1979:193) gives somewhat different information. He states that the majority returned to France with support from compatriots in Asunción and also reports that the Paraguayan government later paid a small compensation sum to the few who remained in Paraguay.
During the war with the Triple Alliance, Villa Occidental passed temporarily into Argentinean hands. When a peace treaty was concluded with Argentina on 3 February 1876, the part of the Chaco situated between the Bermejo and the Pilcomayo passed into Argentinean hands. The area lying between the Pilcomayo and the Río Verde became the subject of arbitration and the area situated north of the latter river remained in Paraguayan hands. The American President Rutherford B. Hayes undertook the arbitration and issued the decision on 12 November 1878 that the area between the Río Pilcomayo and the Río Verde should also remain Paraguayan territory. As a result, the Pilcomayo became the border river and Villa Occidental remained a Paraguayan settlement. As proof of Paraguay's appreciation, the colony was renamed Villa Hayes. The whole of the Paraguayan Chaco became a single department (departamento Occidental) and Villa Hayes became the seat of the departmental institutions.39

39 Another name change was made about 50 years later under President José Patricio Guggiari. The Chaco colony situated in the partido of Villa Hayes, which was known as Monte Sociedad, was then renamed Benjamín Aceval.
The growth, structure and function of Asunción

If there is one Paraguayan settlement which merits separate attention, it is obviously Asunción, the only *ciudad* during the period 1537-1870. We have already discussed in the preceding chapters the role played directly or indirectly by the capital of Paraguay in the development of the settlement pattern, but it has otherwise remained largely out of the picture. This chapter is devoted mainly to the growth, structure and function of Asunción. This marks the completion of Part II of this study which has concentrated on Conquest, Colonisation and Settlement.¹

**From casa fuerte to ciudad**

When Paraguay’s future capital was founded on 15 August 1537 by Juan de Salazar Espinoza, Gonzalo de Mendoza and 57 *hombres de armas*, it received the official name of Nuestra Señora Santa María de la Asunción (on the understanding that it would be called Paraguá-y in Guaraní). Several indigenous hamlets were situated on the site or in its immediate vicinity (Cupiraty, Ytambucú, Yobrá, Moqueratí and Mayrarú).² No town was built in 1537, but only a timber *casa fuerte*, while the early documents also referred to *el puerto, la casa* or *el fuerte*. As previously mentioned, the founda-

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¹ There have been various publications on Asunción; for these, see the Index to Section B of the Bibliography. More sources will be found in Kallsen’s bibliography (1987).

The growth, structure and function of Asunción

The growth, structure and function of Asunción was intended to be a support point in the interior on a navigable river and near friendly Indians from which the route to the ‘Sierra de la Plata’ could be further reconnoitred. Just as the adelantado Pedro de Mendoza had not intended to found a permanent settlement on the la Plata estuary, Salazar de Espinoza had not wished to allow Asunción to grow into a town. His fuerte was intended more as a temporary structure to provide expedition members with protection and an operations base and to denote the possession of the area. Like every fuerte, Asunción was initially administered in a military manner: the population lived under the authority of the adelantado or his immediate representative.

The casa fuerte was built on the left bank of the Río Paraguay, on the highest point of the hill which was called Loma Cabará (near the modern Calle 15 de Agosto). It was bordered on the east by a small bay (el Riachuelo). The first dwellings around the casa fuerte were built according to the model of the Indian straw huts: the walls consisted of stakes (estacas), bound together with flexible branches and lianas, and a roof built of timber and covered with straw and reeds. The roofs extended down close to the ground.

In 1541, all the Spaniards present in the la Plata region were concentrated in Asunción by Governor Martínez de Irala; the support points of Buena Esperanza and Nuestra Señora del Buen Ayre were abandoned. The decree was put into effect in June 1541; on 2 September of that year the very last inhabitants from Buen Ayre arrived in Asunción. The concentration meant that Asunción was now regarded as a permanent settlement, so that it was only logical that it should be granted a different status. The casa fuerte was therefore elevated to a city by Governor Martínez de Irala in 1541. From that date, the documents no longer refer to a casa fuerte, but to a ciudad. They also subsequently refer to the province of Paraguay. With the elevation of Asunción to a city, Governor

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3 It was the place where the monastery of Santo Domingo would later be founded and the second church bearing the name ‘la Encarnación’ would be built. The hill was subsequently dug out and the Comuneros stadium (since disappeared) was built on the site (Sánchez Quell 1957:52).

4 Moreno 1985:10; Sánchez Quell 1957:52.

5 Gandía 1932a:14.
Martínez de Irala legalised and consolidated the *conquista* as it had been realised to that date and he drew up a deed to establish *de jure* the Spanish authority over the region.⁶

It was not essential for the qualification ‘city’ in colonial Spanish America that a settlement should have a certain number of inhabitants, a market function for its hinterland or a certain importance as a centre of industry, trade or traffic. The only essential feature was the presence of an urban administrative body (*cuerpo municipal*; *cabildo*) and a defined municipal territory (*jurisdicción*), over which the administration was exercised from the settlement, even if that jurisdiction was only partly or not yet colonised. The creation of cities implied, in other words, that a certain territory had been integrated into the Spanish colonial political and administrative system. Every Spaniard who lived within the jurisdiction of a city belonged to that city; acquired *ciudadanía* and *vecindad*, and so became a citizen (*ciudadano*), even if they were in reality country dwellers and the city was really no more than an encampment or fort. The Spanish rulers exercised their authority over both the urban and the rural population through the *cuerpo municipal*.

Legally, there was in principle no difference between a *ciudad* or *villa*. The designation *villa* was used, however, for smaller centres with the characteristics just described and that of *ciudad* for the larger ones, or for settlements which were deemed to perform a more important function. The *cabildo* of a *villa*, however, did generally consist of fewer members (*cabildantes*) than that of a city. *Ciudades* and *villas* were founded with the intention that they would grow into permanent settlements. A *fuerte*, on the other hand, was often regarded as a temporary support point.⁷

The *Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento y Población*, which Philip II issued in 1573, gave instructions about the physical structure of *ciudades*, *villas* and *pueblos* and about the facilities which they should provide to the inhabitants. For example, the streets had to be laid out on a chequer board pattern and *ejidos*, *montes* and *dehesas*

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had to be demarcated within the jurisdiction of a city. In order to
give the cities a good subsistence basis, they had to be founded in
areas where there was suitable agricultural land and where enough
Indians were living. The Ordenanzas were partly a reflection of
what had already been done in practice and of regulations which
had already been promulgated earlier. Asunción had already been
founded, however, at a time when the Ordenanzas did not yet
exist.8

The cabildo which had to give Asunción the status of city was
instituted by Governor Martínez de Irala on 16 September 1541. He
also arranged for the election of the people who were to perform
administrative functions as cabildantes. This gave the city a civil
administration. The cabildo had no building of its own at first and
therefore met in the church.9

According to Warren, one should refer technically to cabildo, justicia
y regimiento. As cabildo, the corporation was a deliberative, executive
and legislative body; as justicia, it heard and decided civil and criminal
cases in original jurisdiction; as regimiento, it maintained public order.
I have already enumerated the officials comprised in a cabildo when I
discussed the administrative organisation of the pueblos de indios and
the pueblos de misiones. Asunción was given two alcaldes ordinarios,
whose function was roughly comparable with that of justices of the
peace. There were also alcaldes de la hermandad, justices who hand­
led criminal cases primarily and who at times acted as constables. The
function of alférez real was more than that of carrying a flag in
processions; the alférez also protected the interests of widows and
orphans, and helped in the supervision and planning of military opera­
tions. Regidores were councilmen for barrios or wards. As elsewhere,
the cabildo also had various officers, such as a city attorney, a proper­
ty custodian, a controller, a supervisor of weights and measures, and a
secretary.10

Governor Martínez de Irala decided that the jurisdiction of Asun­
ción should extend in a radius of 100 leguas (433 km) around the

9 Moreno 1985:12.
city. He also distributed solares and chacras among the vecinos present there, or rather, mainly sanctioned the existing situation, because the Spaniards had already been living for several years around the fort at places which appeared to them the most suitable. He also designated the sitios where the public buildings were to be erected and fixed the city plan (planta de la ciudad). He had the palisade demolished to create more space. A plaza mayor was laid out, on which were built the governor’s house and a church. The houses of the principal pobladores (vecinos) overlooked it. They preferred the neighbourhood of the river in the beginning and also that of the casa fuerte on security grounds. The foundation of a city in Spanish America was often accompanied by the allocation of the Indians living within the jurisdiction to encomenderos, but Governor Martínez de Irala did not proceed to do this until 1556 (see Chapter 13). The many women which the Guaranies placed at the Spaniards’ disposal as a sign of friendship and intended as a service to the conquerors, very soon came to live near the Spaniards’ huts.11

According to Cardozo, Martínez de Irala actually did something unlawful in creating a ciudad. The capitulaciones of 21 May 1534, issued for adelantado Pedro de Mendoza, refer only to the foundation of three fortalezas (which were indeed built - Buen Ayre, Buena Esperanza and Asunción), but not to the foundation of cities. Charles V was even emphatically opposed to this being done without his permission.12 Thomás de Krüeger does not agree with Cardozo’s view. However this may be, the foundation of a city was not a superfluous luxury in the la Plata region, but highly desirable, because a city founded officially was the clearest and unique proof of the formal occupation of the territory. Martínez de Irala’s act was therefore not disapproved, but received the approval of veedor Cabrera and the king. Asunción became the first city in the la Plata region and the first settlement intended to be permanent. From

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1541 it exercised formal authority over a *provincia gigante*, while it still had only the scale of a hamlet.

**Further development up to c. 1780**

*Extent and appearance*

As we have said, the Spanish population of the city of Asunción was not very large. The large army of conquest which had arrived with Pedro de Mendoza had been decimated by disease, warfare and accidents and no Spanish women arrived in the first few years. No more than 250 Spaniards were living in Asunción in March/April 1538.13 After the concentration of the *conquistadores* from Buen Ayre and Buena Esperanza, the whole Spanish population of Asunción consisted of no more than some 400 persons. But that number soon rose sharply when *adelantado* Núñez Cabeza de Vaca arrived in Asunción in March 1542 with some 390 *peninsulares*. Even after this ‘explosive’ increase, Asunción still had no more than about 750-800 Spaniards.14 According to Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, they inhabited with their Indian wives (certainly already 700 in about 1540) some 260 houses, or rather, huts (*ranchos*) at the end of 1542.15 The houses formed rather a jumble, because Martínez de Irala had not decided to lay out the settlement on the chequer board or any other regular pattern.

About three-quarters of the settlement was destroyed by fire on 4 February 1543. The fire started during a period of dry weather, so that it burned for four days. Besides part of the (originally dense) vegetation and over 200 homes, the two churches (that of la Encarnación and of la Merced), the *casa fuerte* and the government building went up in flames. Only the section on the other side of the Riachuelo de Jaén, where there were about 50 *ranchos*, was spared.

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13 Gandía 1932a:9-10.
14 Other sources refer to some 600 Spaniards (see Cáceres Zorrilla 1962:11; Moreno 1985:27; Service 1954:20).
Besides homes and public buildings, many provisions (including 4,000 fanegas of maize), textiles, household goods, pigs, chickens and other animals were lost. The arms were saved. Another fortu-
nate fact was that the Carios did not take advantage of the disaster to rise in revolt.  

The city was rebuilt immediately afterwards, with the help of the Indians. Several new public buildings were built around the plaza, including a brick real where the arms were stored. A new and larger church was built on the site of the former casa fuerte. There was still, however, no question of a properly planned layout, since the solares had already been allotted and, since 1537, the many watercourses in the sandy terrain had been able to perform their erosive work all the more intensively, so that the site was irregularly dissected in 1543 by numerous gullies. Asunción, in fact, retained its rather formless layout until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In contrast to nearly all the other officially founded Spanish colonial cities and in contrast even to the mission villages which were founded by the Jesuits in Paraguay, its streets were not built on a grid pattern. It is known that Governor Martínez de Irala did nothing during his period of administration to give Asunción an urban scale and an ordered appearance; his friends could even build upon streets and plazas.  

The houses were again built of wood, straw and other plant materials after the fire, although adelantado Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, in whose period the city was rebuilt, did order that the roofs should no longer be allowed to slope down close to the ground and that the walls should be finished with clay, in the hope that this would reduce the risk of further fires. It was also decided that the roofs should in future no longer be covered with straw, reeds or similar materials, but with palmas cortadas (palm trunks halved lengthwise). The houses also had to be built at a greater distance from each other and separated by vegetation, to reduce the risk of fire spreading. The houses were surrounded by a stout wooden fence, which created a kind of corral, in which chickens and pigs wandered around and some vegetables were grown. The settlement acquired a somewhat broader perimeter with the removal of the

17 Cardozo 1989:70; Gandía 1932a:36,39; Vives Azancot 1979:211.
palisade, but was soon surrounded by a another palisade (palo a pique) and a ditch (foso) with lookout towers from which to observe the Indians on the other side of the river. The plaza mayor, with various public buildings and facilities such as the church, the official dwelling of the governor and the local smithy, was laid out on the site where the Plaza de la Independencia is now situated and extended from the governor’s house as far as the Barranca del Río, or from the present-day Calle 14 de Mayo to the Calle de Chile. A simple shipyard was situated on the Barranca.\textsuperscript{18}

The inhabitants of the settlement originally (c. 1557) occupied an area more than a legua in width and it was a mile long, although there were still many empty sites within that area. In about 1610 - in the time of historian Ruy Díaz de Guzmán - it was of smaller extent.\textsuperscript{19}

The buildings of Asunción remained very simple and somewhat jumbled during the greater part of the colonial period, standing along irregularly winding streets of varying width. López de Velasco (1574) wrote that the walls of the houses were made of tapía, a mixture of clay and straw (adobe), a building material that was very firm after it had been dried. The houses did not have tiled roofs, but a covering of palm trunks split in half (‘unas canales hechas de palmas’), which were so hard and strong that they were preferred to the tiles which could have been manufactured.\textsuperscript{20} Bricks were hardly used throughout the seventeenth century. All the buildings in Asunción were constructed of clay and timber (often hardwood); most of the roofs on the periphery were of straw or palm leaves. In about 1700, even a building like the cathedral still had walls of adobe and a roof of straw and palms supported on hardwood beams. There was a great shortage of iron at that time, so that it was expensive and used as little as possible. The latticework of the windows and doors was therefore also usually made of wood.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{19} Moreno 1985:19,103; Quevedo 1986:29.
\textsuperscript{20} Gandía 1932a:112; López de Velasco 1971:283.
\textsuperscript{21} Ministerio 1987:30; Velázquez 1966b:12.
and other buildings could be relatively quickly rebuilt, which was important, because floods, caused by high river levels or torrential rainfall, sometimes washed them away and the tooth of time did its work quickly.

**Borders**

It is sometimes suggested in the literature that the jurisdiction of Asunción was first delimited by Governor Hernandarias in 1598. This is incorrect; as we have said, this demarcation had already been carried out in 1541 by Governor Martínez de Irala, who gave the ‘municipality’ a territory extending for 100 *leguas* around the core. In 1598, however, an adjustment did take place. This was necessary because several new settlements had been founded from Asunción. They had been granted the status of *villa* or *ciudad* and therefore had their own jurisdictions, which had resulted in some confusion. The *procurador-general* of Asunción, Diego de Olabarrieta, therefore requested Governor Hernandarias to redefine the borders of the jurisdiction of Asunción and so give each *ciudad* or *villa* a well-defined territory of its own. This request was granted in the *auto de deslinde* of 7 December 1598. Governor Hernandarias limited himself to defining the course of the new border between Asunción, on the one hand, and Concepción del Bermejo, Corrientes and Santiago de Jerez, on the other. A new demarcation of the municipal territory in relation to Santa Fe and Buenos Aires was not necessary, since their jurisdictions did not border directly on that of Asunción, from which they were separated by the territory of Corrientes. The respective ‘municipal’ areas were demarcated in such a way that they bordered on each other and were thus not separated by areas of ‘no man’s land’.

The demarcation which Hernandarias carried through also served economic purposes to an important extent. It had to make clear to which ‘urban’ territories the indigenous rural population

22 Cardozo 1967:464-5; Cardozo 1989:200-02; Moreno 1985:147-50; Thomás de Krüeger 1996:77-81. See these sources for further details of the course of the new borders.
which had already been brought under control or would be placed under Spanish authority through the foundation of *pueblos de indios* belonged. The interests of the *encomenderos* - their urban-rural relationships - therefore also played a role in the redrawing of the municipal boundaries.

The demarcation carried out by Hernandarias was confirmed by Philip II in the *Real Provisión* of 16 December 1617 but, at the same time, the king used the boundaries between Asunción, Concepción del Bermejo and Corrientes to define two new provinces, those of Paraguay and Río de la Plata. His measure was mainly based on considerations of administrative efficiency. From that time, Asunción was no longer the capital of the *provincia gigante del Paraguay*, but of a far smaller landlocked province.

But this was not the end of the story. Because of the incursions of the *bandeirantes* and the aggression of the Indians, large areas had to be abandoned in the course of the seventeenth century and the area over which Asunción could exercise *de facto* power contracted considerably. Parts of the jurisdiction were also lost *de facto*, because the Jesuits acquired a far-reaching autonomy behind the Río Tebicuary-Río Yguazú. This obviously gave rise to discontent. The governor of Río de la Plata, Pedro Esteban Dávila (1632-37) and, somewhat later, *visitador* Andrés Garabito de León therefore suggested to found one or more new town near the missions, in order to improve their protection and tighten the grip of the colonial authority, but the Jesuits, who preferred to restrict the contact with the Spaniards, saw no reason to do so. Further contraction of the territory of Asunción took place through the foundation of various new *villas* in the eighteenth century.23

*Functions and activities*

Thanks to its capital city status, Asunción began to perform an administrative function. It was the seat of the governor; before 1617, the latter by no means always stayed in Asunción, but lived

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for long periods in Buenos Aires. Hernandarias stayed much of the time in Santa Fe. After the split, this was no longer possible; each of the two provinces was given its own administrator. As the capital, Asunción was the place where the royal decrees arrived and where the local ordinances were drawn up. Part of the lower judicial power was also concentrated here. Besides the administrative apparatus that exercised authority over the whole province (actually little more than the governor and a few officials, oficiales reales), there was also the municipal administrative apparatus - the cabildo of Asunción.

Besides administrative tasks, the city also performed a military function, in the sense that the defence of the province with the help of fuertes and fortines and the expeditions which had to be fitted out to take action against aggressive Indian groups, Portuguese bandeirantes or infiltrators was organised in and from Asunción. Here lived, if not in reality, at least officially, the persons who performed important functions in the militias (principally encomenderos).

In the third place, as provincial capital, Asunción performed an important religious function. On 1 July 1547, the diocese of la Plata was instituted at the request of the adelantado Juan de Sanabria, and Asunción became the seat of a bishop. The cathedral church of la Asunción del Río de la Plata was consecrated on 10 January 1548. The first bishop incidentally did not arrive until April 1556. Because of its importance as a regional urban centre, various religious houses were also soon established in Asunción (see below) and, from 1583, the city also had a seminary, where Creoles and mestizoes who were fluent in Guarani were prepared for the priesthood.\(^2\)

In the economic field, the capital acted mainly as a collecting and distribution centre for goods entering and leaving the province. Much of this goods traffic used the waterways, which meant that the port of Asunción served not only the local river navigation, but also the interregional (interprovincial) shipping. The harbour was originally situated at the foot of the Loma Cabará, on the left bank.

of a *riachuelo* which flowed into the Río Paraguay. This water was also referred to as ‘the bay’, but this bay was not the one we know today.

The *bahía* of that time was a small river inlet referred to as el Ria­chuelo and had been created by the confluence of two streams - the Arroyo del Pozo Colorado and the Arroyo de los Patos - which formed an area of water that was sufficiently wide and deep to afford shelter to the caravels. The present bay did not appear until the later seven­teenth century, when some sandbanks formed under water south of the present *Jardín Botánico*. They slowly grew in the direction of Asunción and combined into an elongated island that became known as the Banco de San Miguel. The bed of the Río Paraguay was then displaced towards the Chaco and that of the Riacho Caracará (which has now practically disappeared) eastwards. An area of sheltered water was formed behind the banks that came to be called la Laguna and is now known as la Bahía de Asunción.

As the province was further populated by the Spaniards, more activities were developed in the hinterland, and activity also grew in and immediately around Asunción, shipping was not limited to one port, but several harbours came into use. They were individually small and almost completely lacking in facilities. They were, in fact, simply mooring places along the bank, where goods were loaded and discharged and, where necessary, temporarily stored on the bank. Each of the harbours had its own name.\(^{25}\)

The contacts with the rest of the province and the la Plata region were maintained not only via the Río Paraguay, the Río Paraná and their tributaries, but also overland along the *caminos reales*. These connected Asunción not only with a number of important points in the immediate vicinity (such as Tapuá, Luque and Lambaré), but also with the remote corners of the province.\(^{26}\)

As the capital and military, religious, economic and transport centre, Asunción did not really face any serious competition from other cities. At first, there were none and, when they did appear, they did not acquire the importance of Asunción. Moreover, after

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26 For further details, see Gill Aguínaga 1973 and Chapter 30 of this study.
1621, Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Santa Fe and Concepción del Bermejo found themselves outside the territory of the province of Paraguay. In other words, Asunción was the unchallenged primate city of the province. Its inhabitants were not rich, but nevertheless felt themselves more or less privileged above those of the modest settlements in the neighbouring gobernaciones, which were by no means all situated in a region with favourable natural conditions for production. In about 1635, according to Garavaglia, the other urban settlements - with the exception of Córdoba - were simply struggling to survive.27

Insofar as there could be competition within the province, this could only come from Villa Rica. In the beginning, this settlement was situated at a considerable distance from Asunción and favourably located relative to the yerbales which were its principal source of income. There were various pueblos de indios in its neighbourhood, which provided the Guaireños with labour. All these circumstances were propitious for a relatively autonomous development. The situation changed after 1632, however. From that time, the location was so unstable that Villa Rica was more concerned to survive as an urban centre than to grow into a redoubtable competitor of the capital. When it finally came to be situated relatively close to Asunción in 1682, after several relocations, this did not greatly improve the situation. The distance between the two towns was then no more than about 130 km (30 leguas), which meant that Villa Rica found itself more than ever within the capital’s sphere of influence. The post-1682 Villa Rica was not situated on a good navigable waterway, it no longer had any pueblos de indios in its immediate vicinity (while Asunción did have) and it was, moreover, rather far from the yerbales. The development of the small town was inhibited towards the south by the presence of Itapé, Caazapá and Yuty, pueblos de indios with which the Guaireños had few relations, and towards the north by the Río Tebicuary-mí. Through all this, Villa Rica risked becoming a satellite of Asunción rather than competing with it.28 That was also how many Guaireños

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experienced the new reality. It was therefore not surprising that they were happy with the presence of various Jesuit villages, since it meant that they were not wholly dependent on contacts with traders in Asunción for their trading activities.

The inhabitants of Asunción found employment in trading and transport activities, centred on the rivers and roads, in the administrative sector, in religious offices and in services. But agriculture was nevertheless by far the most important source of employment. Asunción was to a large extent a 'city of peasants'. The inhabitants possessed their own chacras and other lands to provide for their subsistence.29 The agricultural land was cultivated - certainly in the beginning - with the help of Indians and was used for the production of a variety of crops, of which maize, manioc and pulses were the most important. Livestock were also kept, beginning with small livestock (pigs, chickens), and also dairy cows, oxen, horses and sheep after 1550. The fields were originally situated close to the urban core (or what passed as such), because of the safety that this offered and the time this saved in travelling to the fields.

The fields formed a broad strip along the Río Paraguay and extended in the early 1540s as far as Tapuá (Limpio) on the north, to Tacumbú and the valley of Guarnipitán on the south, and from Ñu-Guazú (Campo Grande) to Ñemby on the southeast (see Fig. 7.3) Each of the areas was originally the territory of an important cacique, whose daughters entered into relations with the leading conquistadores and subsequently became mothers of a large generation of mestizoes. Numerous small population clusters sprang up in this area.30 As the population grew, the solares and chacras came to be situated farther away. At the end of the sixteenth century, there were 185 alquerías (farmsteads) around Asunción and seven years later - at the beginning of the seventeenth century - Hernandarias counted 399 granjas in and around the city.31

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31 Moreno 1985:115.
Already at that time, Asunción fell into two not very sharply divided parts: the núcleo urbano (the centre) and an extensive, more rural outer zone (arrabal), which performed different functions. The ‘old’ core was formed by a polygon which was situated along the river and at the corners of which were situated the religious houses of la Merced, San Francisco and Santo Domingo and the parish church of la Encarnación. In this core lived the government officials, the clergy, prominent figures from the militia and other more well-to-do persons. There were to be found, from the beginning of the seventeenth century, the few somewhat taller buildings (incidentally still without upper storeys), constructed from rather more durable building materials and provided with tiled roofs. Their architecture was not impressive and there were few facilities. Behind them - already in the extensive arrabal - lived the more ordinary citizens, impoverished hidalgos, small traders and others. The buildings here were also low, and simpler, without incidentally differing radically from those in the city centre. Here there were many chacras.32

Already during the first period of Martínez de Irala’s governorship (1539-42), industrial activity began to develop alongside agriculture. A simple shipyard was established on the river bank, where Spanish and Portuguese shipbuilders began to construct brigantines, caravels and other craft, assisted by Indian labour. A simple smithy was also established close by, where not only were the first scarce coins to be circulated in the province struck, but also various useful objects. A textile industry was started using cotton grown by the Guaranies and woven on Spanish looms. People began tanning deerskins, from which leather could be processed.33 All kinds of products were obviously also fabricated from wood and other plant materials. The city became largely self-sufficient in simple industrial products, because European goods arrived rarely, if at all.

Quevedo Pfannl analysed the occupations which Asunción possessed according to a padrón of 1622.34 It appears from the details which he provides that many activities had begun to develop

34 An earlier padrón, of 1615, showed that there were 27 vecinos feudatarios (encomenderos), who exercised military and administrative functions in the cabildo.
in the capital at that time. 27 clergy were mentioned in the padrón (including those in the religious houses). There were also 27 comerciantes or tratantes and 20 estudiantes. The farmers were the most numerous group: 55. Then followed in importance various groups of craftsmen. The padrón listed: 17 carpenters with 8 apprentices, 9 smiths with 2 apprentices, 12 shoemakers, 8 tailors with 1 apprentice, 5 cooperers with 2 apprentices, 4 cartwrights, 4 sugar makers with 1 apprentice, 3 saddlers, 1 turner, 1 potter and tile maker, 1 tinsmith, 1 vinegar manufacturer and sardine vendor, 1 ship’s rigging maker, and 1 silk maker. One person made a living from ternear (?) and another stated that he engaged in vaquerías (hunting of cattle which had run wild). The city also had an oficial platero (silversmith).\textsuperscript{35} It must be assumed that not all these people practised just the stated occupation. The majority probably did so only part-time and also had a farm.

Salt was also extracted in the neighbourhood of Asunción. There was a site south of the city, near Lambaré, where this job was performed by Negro slaves.\textsuperscript{36}

\textit{Population growth}

The population of Asunción remained modest in size throughout the colonial period. In 1545, the city had 5-600 mestizo children and, an unknown number of women; nor was the number of men stated, but there will have been about 700.\textsuperscript{37} Moreno (cited by Gandía) estimated the population between 1560 and 1565 at 3,500, made up of several hundred Spaniards and the remainder of Indians and children living with them.\textsuperscript{38} According to López de Velasco, the city had 300 vecinos in c. 1570, who were nearly all encomenderos, and more than 2,900 children of Spaniards born in the country (hijos de la tierra), giving a total of about 3,200 inhabitants, although this

\textsuperscript{35} Quevedo Pfannl 1963/65:97. The word ternear could not be found in the dictionary; probably, it should be tornear, which means that the person involved was a turner in wood.

\textsuperscript{36} Gill 1987:90; González Torres 1995:139.

\textsuperscript{37} Gandía 1932a:24.

\textsuperscript{38} Gandía 1932a:115.
The growth, structure and function of Asunción

figure excluded women. In other words, there were then only a few of the original conquistadores still alive. The population consisted mainly of Creoles and mestizoes. Pastore states that the Creoles and mestizoes nursed a certain resentment towards the Europeans, because they were discriminated against in various ways. For example, the mestizoes had obligations in the area of defence, but they received no land grants and were excluded from public functions. A number of them tried to improve their position by participating in the foundation of new settlements. These foundations took place after 1570, which helps to explain why the population of the capital remained roughly stationary. According to Governor Juan Ramírez de Velasco, fewer than 200 men were living there in about 1597, although there were about 2,000 women, which is evidence of a marked imbalance and shows why people still referred to the paradise of Mohammed. Ramírez, however, did not state the number of children. Mora Mérida assembled the following (fragmentary) population data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>200 men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1608</td>
<td>300 vecinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1615</td>
<td>316 vecinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620</td>
<td>600 Spaniards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1622 (March)</td>
<td>401 vecinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1622 (May)</td>
<td>531 vecinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680</td>
<td>2,000 vecinos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He calculated a total of 1,306 inhabitants for 1615 and reports for 1622 that, besides the 401 vecinos, there were 256 lawful spouses (esposas declaradas) and 509 sons (hijos declarados), which would give a total of 1,166 persons, subject to the proviso that daughters (hijas declaradas) were missing from this return. It is quite

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possible that, between 1597 and 1628, about a half of the Spanish vecinos of Paraguay lived in Asunción.\textsuperscript{43}

With a few exceptions, the conquistadores of the sixteenth century were not well-to-do. They lived in an isolated outpost of the Spanish empire. Besides their weapons, their simple leather and/or cotton apparel, plus some spare clothing, they owned little more than a simple house and a plot of land, with one or more Indian wives, who gave them children, wove for them, cooked their food, helped to cultivate the land or performed other tasks.\textsuperscript{44}

Vázquez de Espinosa calculated that there were more than 650 vecinos in the city in about 1628, including 250 encomenderos, and added that, judging by the parish registers of 1623, Asunción must have had over 11,000 mujeres de manto.\textsuperscript{45} According to the Jesuit, Nicolás Durán, Asunción had a population of scarcely 1,000 persons in 1637, both men and women, but this figure appears incorrect. The Jesuit, Ruiz de Montoya, stated in his \textit{Conquista Espiritual} (written in c. 1640), that the city had fewer than 400 vecinos, but that it was generally known that there were ten women to each man.\textsuperscript{46} The whole population must therefore have been 4,000-4,500, excluding children. Buenos Aires had 500 vecinos at that time, but had by no means such a large female Indian and mestizo population as Asunción. Whatever the true figure, Asunción was not particularly large, but compared not unfavourably in this respect with various other Spanish cities.

The colony passed through difficult times in the seventeenth century because of the aggression of the bandeirantes and the Chaco Indians, causing Manuel Domínguez to speak of a 'nearly mortal decline' (\textit{casi mortal decadencia}).\textsuperscript{47} This also affected the size of Asunción. According to the census of Bishop Casas, the capital (including its environs) had no more than 9,675 inhabitants in 1682 (6,480 Spaniards, 1,120 Negroes and mulattoes and 2,075 Indians). According to the survey of Bishop de la Torre, the popu-

\textsuperscript{43} Vives Azancot 1980a:181.
\textsuperscript{44} Gandía 1932a:62.
\textsuperscript{45} Vázquez de Espinosa 1969:447.
\textsuperscript{46} Gandía 1932a:116.
\textsuperscript{47} Domínguez 1996:40.
lation of the capital in 1761 was 6,475. If we add the population of the surrounding villages in the present Central department, however, the number of inhabitants rises to 17,143; and to 27,270 if the area of la Cordillera is included (for more details, see Chapter 32).

**Educational and ecclesiastical provisions**

As far as religious provision is concerned, the city was divided into several parishes in the colonial period and there were several religious houses.

According to López de Velasco, - apart from the cathedral - there were two parish churches in around 1570: those of la Encarnación and San Sebastián y San Blas.⁴⁸ There was also a religious foundation (casa) de la Merced y Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of the frailes Gerónimos (Order of Saint Hieronymus). No religious stayed in this house and only a few clergy. Ruy Díaz de Guzmán lists three casas de religión at the end of the sixteenth century: those of Nuestro Padre San Francisco, Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes and the Jesuits.⁴⁹ He also referred to a home for orphan girls, founded by a pious woman, housing over 100 young orphan girls, widows and married women. The virtuous woman who had opened the house for orphan girls and recogidas was Mother Francisca de Bocanegra. At the time of Governor Hernandarias, who protected the institution, it sheltered 60 unmarried women, poor people and orphan girls.⁵⁰

In about 1750, the picture still had not really changed, which points to limited growth and spatial expansion. Besides the cathedral, there were then still only two parishes. That for the Spaniards was then called la Anunciación. The parish of San Blas was from the seventeenth century no longer only for the Indians (yanaconas), but also for the black population (slaves and free Negroes). The

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⁴⁸ According to Ruy Díaz de Guzmán, the parish for the Spanish population at the end of the sixteenth century was called Santa Lucía and that for the natives Bienaventurado San Blas. Vázquez de Espinosa called the parish for the Spaniards Nuestra Señora del Rosario.


clergy of the two parishes also served the population living outside the city in remote valles and pagos. The pueblos de indios formed separate parishes with their own clergy. In about 1750, there were also five religious houses in addition to the above churches: 1) the Convento de San Francisco (Convento de Observancia), that was moved in 1740 from the Barranca to a better site and subsequently covered four manzanas (those of the present Iturbe, 25 de Mayo, México and Eligio Ayala streets) and was situated not far from the church of San Roque; 2) the Convento de la Merced (on the site where hotel Guarani now stands); 3) the Convento de Santo Domingo (where once the estadio Comuneros stood); 4) the Colegio of the Jesuits (on the site of the Colegio Militar); 5) the Franciscan priory of la Recoleccion of about 1740, situated at a distance of half a legua from the city, on a low hill rising above the valley of the Arroyo Mburicaó (the zone which, at the end of the century, was already known as la Recoleta). One of the first religious houses of Asunción was that of San Gerónimo, but that had disappeared at the end of the seventeenth century. The Convento de San Francisco was built on the site.

The parish churches were rebuilt several times and not always on the same site, as the following details show.

The church of la Encarnación was the first in Asunción. It was already completed as a chapel in 1539, at which time it was built of clay and timber and situated east of the casa fuerte (near/on the modern Estrella and Ayolas streets). After it had been destroyed in the fire of 1543, a new church building was erected with the same name in 1544. This building was erected on the site of the former casa fuerte, on the Loma Cabará. Because of its ruinous condition, the building was demolished at the end of the seventeenth century and replaced by a new church, which was erected on the site previously occupied by the ermita of Santa Lucía (in the present Calle 15 de Agosto, close to the Calle de Palma). But nor was that the definitive location, because the dictator Francia ordered in 1827 that the church should be moved to the parcel of the former convent of Santo Domingo, the Loma

52 Gill 1987:82-3; Velázquez 1966b:55-6. The Plaza San Francisco, now known as Plaza Uruguaya, was situated in front of the Franciscan priory.
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Cabará. It should be mentioned for completeness that the church of la Encarnación did not arrive at its present site until 1889, after it had been destroyed by fire.

The church of San Blas was also among the first churches of the city. It was situated within the manzana which was bounded by Iturbe, Coronel Bogado and Caballero streets and a churchyard. The church was originally a parish church for the Indians living in Asunción, but in the seventeenth century it was already maintained by Negroes and mulattoes. The church was always situated on the same site, but was rebuilt in 1606 and demolished in 1790 because of its poor structural condition.

The first cathedral was completed in 1556 (after the first bishop had arrived) and was situated on the Barranca, in the neighbourhood of the present Calle Alberdi. In 1607, the old building was replaced under Governor Hernandarias by a better one, situated farther to the south-east, in order to reduce the risk of erosion and flooding. In about 1628, Vázquez de Espinosa described the church, which then consisted of three naves, in laudatory terms. It was built wholly of urundey wood, a very valuable timber; the best that was to be found in 'las Indias'. The cathedral church was moved again in 1687, still farther from the Barranca and still farther to the east, placing it somewhat behind the present cathedral. The new building was completed in 1689. The present cathedral church incidentally dates only from 1849 and was built under the presidency of President C.A. López.

The church of San Roque was of a later date. Originally, there was only an ermita, a small chapel on Iturbe and Eligio Ayala streets, on the fringe of the city. It was mentioned by Vázquez de Espinosa. The building was erected on its present site in about 1745. In 1781, the chapel was elevated to a vice-parish of the cathedral and, in 1793, a new church was dedicated on the same site. In 1828, the church was granted the status of parish, to replace the parish of San Blas which had then already been abolished. The present church dates from 1853.\(^53\)

Besides the provisions for spiritual wellbeing, Asunción also had educational facilities. These were, in fact, limited to elementary schools. No university was opened and nor were there institutions for secondary education, although this gap was partly filled by the

\(^{53}\) Gill 1987:74,81-2; Sánchez Quell 1957:55.
casas de religión: the foundations of the Franciscans, Dominicans, Mercedarians and Jesuits.\footnote{Velázquez 1966b:13.}

**Cabildo and urban élite**

The administration over the city was exercised by the cabildo, the only representative political body in the colonial period. Together with the more senior militia officers, its members (cabildantes) formed the ruling élite of the city. Many of them were encomenderos, belonged to the economically more influential part of Asunción society and were linked together by family ties. And they all held, or had held, senior military rank. The members of the cabildo sometimes used their administrative positions (as did other members of the élite) to further their own vested social and economic interests, especially if these were threatened, e.g. by the ideas of the Jesuits, who increasingly consolidated their position in Paraguay after 1630.

Thomás de Krüeger has emphasised that the upper class within Asunción society possessed a strong feeling of its own worth. Most of the members of this class were descendants of the conquistadores and had defended the province several times when it had been in danger. The estamento superior despised manual labour, but was all the more attached to military rank for its status. Their comparable backgrounds, activities and interests (e.g. those of encomendero) gave the group the necessary cohesion and its own 'esprit de corps'.

Thomas de Krüeger has also emphasised that this Asunción élite did not consist mainly of mestizoes. The mixing of Spaniards and Indians had occurred mainly among the first generation (that of the conquistadores), but when a relatively large number of Spanish women arrived in 1555, the Spaniards showed a preference for marriages with Spanish women (including Creoles). In the influential and well-to-do élite the traces of racial mixing consequently quite quickly disappeared; in later censuses, the persons concerned were simply regarded as Spaniards.
This incidentally does not mean that the population layer from which the members of the cabildo originated formed a completely closed oligarchy. Peninsulares and Creoles from neighbouring provinces also formed part of the urban administrative apparatus in the course of time. Although the Asuncenhos predominated, it was not impossible for foreigners who so wished to become integrated into public life, certainly not if they were from a lineage of conquistadores, belonged to a prestigious family and had already been living in Asuncion for a long time.

As will be shown later in this chapter, the composition of Asuncion’s elite changed after 1780 and, as a consequence, also that of the cabildo.55

Asuncion in the late colonial period

The harbour quarter

The end of the eighteenth and the first decade of the nineteenth century formed a period of increasing commercial activity. From 1780, therefore, the harbour quarter of Asuncion was characterised by a growing activity. New loading and discharging berths, wharves and warehouses were built. Sufficient hardwood was available in the near vicinity that could be used as building material. Ships were constantly arriving and departing. Rafts of tree trunks lashed to each other were piloted into or out of the bay. On the edges of the bay and the river, the shipyards employed the labour elite of Paraguay - the carpinteros de ribera (shipwrights). Near these yards and dispersed throughout the port area were small sawmills, with still unsawn tree trunks and piles of sawn timber. In various places along the shore lay timber that still had to be processed by the sawyers of the city into end products or transported downstream. Semi-naked Payaguá Indians brought horse fodder,

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55 Krüger 1981:42; Thomás de Krüeger 1996:111,116,146,170-2; Whigham 1991a:10. For further details of the cabildo, see the study by Thomás de Krüeger.
firewood and fish from the Chaco for the inhabitants of Asunción, and also provided them with salt which was collected at several places in the vicinity of the capital. And along the waterside lay, of course, the establishments traditionally associated with seaman and skippers, such as brothels, pulperías (taverns with general stores) and gambling dens. On the harbour were situated simple timber wharves, other port facilities, sheds and warehouses for the storage of goods, with tiny skiffs or rafts sometimes being used to ferry the cargo between the vessels and the shore. The celador (constable) of the city maintained public order and kept a lookout for fires in the neighbourhood of the ships and warehouses. He kept a special watch on slaves loitering in the vicinity of the warehouses, because they had a reputation for stealing from the ships and the warehouses, to enable them to indulge in their nocturnal drinking bouts at a quiet, isolated spot somewhere along the waterside. The constable also kept a watch on the sailors, but had instructions to be lenient with craftsmen and shipping folk - a valued group of workers - when they indulged in their crude pleasures.

The harbour quarter was known for more than a century as Barrio de las Barcas. The quarter was situated between the playas (riverbanks) now known as Montevideo and Convención and the present Palacio de Gobierno. Or, to quote Vives Azancot: approximately between the monastery of Santo Domingo and the zone which was populated at the end of the eighteenth century by the Payaguáes, who performed all kinds of statute labour (Fig. 12.2). The leading cabildantes and members of the provincial militias had always had their houses in this quarter, even though they also lived on their chacras for a great deal of the time. But the transient riverine population was of at least equal importance, because the harbour quarter was also the point of arrival and departure "of 5,000 to 7,000 sailors ...coming, going, unloading, or roistering somewhere on the vast Paragua-Paraná river system".56

An interesting activity in the old city was the sale of provisions and drinks by the pulperías. One of the first registered pulperías

was that of Juan Ferreira in 1786. In 1797 there were 5 *pulperías* (taverns) and two *tiendas* (shops) with *pulperías* attached in the city, plus a further 40 *tiendas*. These figures point to an increase in the service provision.\(^{57}\) For 1807, there is a list of the *pulperías de composición* in the city, which shows that 31 persons were then running one of these establishments. They sold a large quantity of strong drink, not only to the local population, the ships' crews, the port workers and others, but also to the *peones* who came to the city from the *estancias*, partly to make their purchases. *Aguardiente* was one of the main products on their shopping list.\(^{58}\)

**The street plan of the city**

Except for the harbour quarter, the city underwent few external changes, despite the increasing activity. At the end of the eighteenth century, Asunción was still a not very prepossessing centre and would remain so until well into the nineteenth century. A city plan drawn by Julio Ramón de César dates from the mid-1780s. César was an engineer who was a member of the demarcation commission chaired by Félix de Azara and mapped Asunción at the request of Bishop Luis de Velasco.\(^{59}\) The plan gives a picture of the situation in 1787 (Fig. 12.2).\(^{60}\) The city extended around the bay in a kind of amphitheatre. The slopes were quite steep in some places. One of the most striking characteristics of the plan was still the rather chaotic, irregular character of the built-up area. The various houses and buildings were scattered, partly in order to prevent fire as much

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\(^{57}\) Velázquez 1966b:84; Williams 1979:14.  
\(^{58}\) Rivarola Paoli 1993:331-4.  
\(^{59}\) See Azara 1904, 1941/1809; Published subsequently in, *inter alia*, Album 1983 (1911):305; Gutiérrez 1983:32; Sánchez Quell 1981:15; Vives Azancot 1979:213. The map was published by Azara, but was not drawn by him, nor was it made for him.  
A: Plaza Grande; B: House and meeting place of the Cavalry and Infantry; C: House of the Governor and Royal Treasurer; D: Seminar and College of the Jesuits; E: Real Renta de Tabacos; F: Monastery of Santo Domingo; G: Church of

Fig. 12.2. Plan of Asunción, c. 1785.
la Encarnacion; H: Cathedral; I: Monastery of la Merced; J: Church of San Blas; K: Monastery of San Francisco; L: Church of San Roque; M: Powder Magazine; N: Abattoir; O: Butcher's shop; P: Piedras de Santa Catalina; Q: Payaguás.
as possible. And fires were by no means an imaginary danger, because the majority of the houses still consisted wholly or partly of inflammable materials and there was often a stiff wind. The influence of the sandy terrain and of the topography were clearly discernible. The streets were adapted to the nature of the terrain (such as ravines) and to the location of the houses.

The heart the city was formed by the *plaza mayor* or *plaza de armas*. There were only two places where the development was continuous enough to allow one to speak of streets: those which are now called Palma and Paraguay Independiente.\(^6\) Palma had a long, covered gallery (*corredor*), supported by stone pillars, which, according to the description of John Parish and William Parish Robertson of shortly after 1811, resembled the rows of Chester. The covered pavement protected the houses, shops and people against rain and sun. The remainder of the ‘streets’ consisted of short alleys (*callejones cortos*), which ran somewhat hidden through the scattered development. The majority of the streets not only followed a winding course, but were also rather narrow. On the site of what is now Calle Benjamín Constant there was a lagoon, the water of which formed a stream that flowed along what is now Calle 15 de Agosto, passed under the Santo Domingo bridge and emptied into the bay. On the Loma Cabará (where the *casa fuerte* had been built in 1537) rose the belfry of the monastery of Santo Domingo. Crossing the bridge (see César’s *plano*) and following the shore, one arrived at the *Real Colegio y Seminario de San Carlos* (of the Jesuits until 1768), and soon afterwards one arrived at the Plaza Mayor. On this square stood the *Cabildo* (now *Palacio Legislativo*), the *Cuartel de la Ribera* (of the infantry), the cathedral, and the *Real Factoría de Tabacos* (the former Escuela Militar). In the middle of the square stood the governor’s residence (*casa del gobernador*), dating from 1776, which was the centre of the colonial administration, into which the dictator Francia would

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\(^6\) Sánchez Quell (1957:54) states that both of these streets were called Palma and Buenos Aires, which is correct. The name of the latter street was changed into *el Paraguayo Independiente* in 1959 (Kallsen 1974:27).
The growth, structure and function of Asunción also move after 1811.62. The streets between the plaza and puerto formed a busy traffic axis.

The plan further makes clear that the city did not extend further than the streets now known as Colón, Haedo, Herrera y México; the rest was suburban territory.63 The urban development extended beyond this perimeter between Calle 15 de Agosto and Calle Yegros, as well as at Coronel Bogado y Sebastián Gaboto streets, but the southeast corner within the perimeter was, by contrast, not wholly built up. Along de Camino de Samahú-peré (later Calle de España) were situated the homes of well-to-do citizens. Their parcels had large patios which extended to the river. The development here formed the extension of the casco urbano and was situated more or less around the church of San Roque. Samahú-peré (now Calle Juan de Salazar) was, in fact, no more than a very old tree, but it was a special one: according to Aguirre, the city proper extended from the Barrio de las Barcas as far as this tree.

Near the port - in the angle of the present Paraguayo Independiente and Montevideo streets - was situated Machaín-cué, the original governors’ residence. Farther to the west, and already on the edge of the city, were to be found the powder magazine, a brick kiln, the piedras de Santa Catalina, the observatory and the huts (tolderías) of Payaguáes.

Near the river, on the fringe of the city, were the ranchos inhabited by the service personnel of the religious houses and the Negroes and mulattoes of the parish of San Blas. Another part of the periphery was formed by the toldos of the some 1,000 Payaguáes who lived west of the city and made a living from the sale of all kinds of products, such as fish, horse feed and canoes, and from

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62 The residence was later known as Correo-cué. It was situated at the corner of Alberdi and Buenos Aires streets (Sánchez Quell 1957:54). In 1959 Buenos Aires street was given a new name: Paraguayo Independiente.

63 Velázquez (1966b:51-2) states that the borders of Asunción in 1811 were formed by Colón, General Díaz and México streets, and by the Barranca del Río, which amounts roughly to the same. Calle Colón was called Calle de la Aduana Ribera in the time of President C.A. López, while Calle México was called Calle Loreto (Kallsen 1974:58,198).
providing services. Their living conditions were poor. The city then already had its marginal neighbourhoods.

Small springs came to the surface in many places, so that there were numerous small streams or pools of water. Moreover, the soil of Asunción was sandy and the terrain sloped. All this was sufficient to give rise to erosion and the creation of stream beds and small ravines in many places. The rainwater had eroded gullies in nearly all the streets which had a slope. This made it difficult to pass along many of the streets, while many buildings also suffered damage to their foundations. Because of the erosion, some houses could only be entered via a small flight of steps. The street pattern was also still largely determined by the streams and the irregular gullies which they had created. The plaza mayor and certain smaller 'plazas' (little more than open areas with a few shoots of grass) also showed the inevitable traces of erosion. An additional inconvenience was that the streams of water which ravaged the city after every shower of rain carried along everything with them, particularly household refuse, mud and excrement. All this was carried down from the higher (more well-to-do) areas of the city and deposited in the lower (poorer) quarters near the river. Julio Ramón de César considered it desirable - just as the Jesuits had done 20 years earlier - that retaining walls should be built to compensate for the height differences, in order to prevent further erosion of the sandy soil. The sandy soils were incidentally also responsible for the carriages and carts (which further aggravated the erosion) having difficulty in passing along the streets. Traffic was often also hindered by dogs, pigs, chickens or other animals roaming the streets. The Paraguay river itself also caused much inconvenience, since little had been done to provide protection against the regular floods and high water levels. Some levelling out of the ground had been carried out under Governor-Intendant Alós, who also widened the embankment created by the Jesuits in 1760.

The administrative, ecclesiastical and other provisions were very limited, so that there were few public buildings in the city and such
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as there were, were not very impressive. As we have seen, the streets were very rudimentary and often not even worthy of the name. There was no street lighting; this would not be installed in a few places until around 1818. The drinking and other water was drawn from streams and springs, although a start was made with the sinking of wells in around 1800.

Centre and periphery

Although the street plan of Asunción did not conform with the instructions laid down in the Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento y Población in 1573, that did not mean that there was complete chaos. Vives Azancot has pointed out that, despite the rather irregular street plan, there was nevertheless a certain structure. He observed that the city could in any event be divided into a core and a periphery. In the central core were situated the barracks, the cabildo building, the Estanco y Renta de Tabacos, the governor’s house, the stores of the Real Tesoro and, of course, the cathedral. In the immediately surrounding urban zone were to be found the religious houses (Santo Domingo, la Merced and San Francisco) and the parish churches (la Encarnación, San Blas and San Roque). They were situated in what might be called the central or near periphery, since there were also two further types of periphery: a) that of arrabales, behind the urban core, where the population had its chacras and quintas (see below), which extended to the south and southwest, and b) that of the ‘services’ (where the troops were inspected, the abattoir was situated, as well as the tolderías of Payaguás), east and west of the city.66

Vives Azancot has stressed that the city in the narrower sense was very small and that the most extensive part of Asunción towards the end of the colonial period consisted of the arrabales, behind the central urban core. That was the zone of the chacras and quintas, where the majority of Asuncenños had their simple dwelling of timber, reeds, palm leaves and other perishable materials, with only two rooms, separated by skins; only those of the richer people

Densely built-up areas with concentrations of public buildings; services and market places; main ‘plazas’ and other meeting places; monasteries and churches

Densely built-up areas away from the city centre; principal residences (large ‘huertos’, gardens, etc.); monasteries and churches; governmental or public auxiliary branches

Areas with relatively low quality lands that are near the city centre or river, but are unused

Isolated and remote buildings

Residential areas with the first ‘chacras’, which become more numerous towards the south-east

Fig. 12.3. Functional division of Asunción, c. 1785 (after Vives Azancot 1979:219).

were more luxurious. By far the majority of Asunceños preferred to live in the suburbs. The centre was at that time relatively permanently inhabited only by civil servants, clergy and other officials. But these, too, had a second home on their chacra or estancia. The majority of the ordinary city dwellers stayed for the greater part of the time or permanently on their chacras, where they could live at least as pleasantly as in the city, where there were in any case not many facilities of which they could avail themselves. Moreover, they could also practise some subsistence farming there and, since production methods were not very advanced, this agriculture demanded a considerable amount of time. Social life, with its fiestas
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and other events was, in fact, largely played out in the zone of the *chacras*. Rural and urban life came together on the *chacra*. The clergy served this suburban zone through the local chapels, while the parish churches in the city were left rather empty, poorly equipped and impoverished. The schools also functioned better than in the city. Azara noted that there was a teacher in every *pago* or *valle*, so that many people could read and write.

This suburban-rural life style was incidentally not something new in the final decades of the eighteenth century. The small urban population had originally preferred to live clustered near the centre of Asunción, mainly on security grounds, but when security increased, a centrifugal residential pattern quickly began to develop. The decentralisation had, in fact, already begun to develop hesitantly in the late sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth century living on the periphery was already normal, even for the more well-to-do.

A consequence was that there was no sharp transition between town and country (*centro* and *arrabal*). The ‘urban’ way of living penetrated into the countryside, but the converse was also true, because the buildings in the more urbanised central part of the city were partly concealed in greenery. There were *patios* with trees and plants, *huertos*, small *chacras* and *frutales* with orange and other fruit trees, which imparted a rural look. In other words, the land use was not purely ‘urban’ in the centre of the city and so it was of relatively low density. As distance from the centre increased, the houses were spaced farther apart, the number of *chacras* and *quintas* increased and people felt themselves increasingly outside the city.\(^{67}\) This meant that Asunción presented a somewhat different picture from many other Spanish colonial cities, where the population lived predominantly in truly urban neighbourhoods and where the prominent citizens often had their only dwelling in the streets close to the *plaza.*

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\(^{67}\) See also Gutiérrez 1983:27.
The dwellings

As we have said, in most places, the houses were irregularly dispersed, with account being taken of the nature of the terrain and the pattern of permanent and temporary watercourses. They were detached and were generally surrounded by small enclosed gardens, trees and thickets (matorrales). By no means all the solares were inhabited in about 1790; many had been abandoned (some of them with ruins), through lack of money, according to Alós. Lázaro de Ribera therefore ordered in 1796 that uninhabited solares had to be built on within eight months.

Most of the houses in the ‘city’ had no upper storey and were therefore low. They were usually built around a patio. From 1750 and, especially, from 1790, construction improved and became more modern. The less durable building materials (such as adobe) were increasingly replaced by real roof tiles and brick. The walls began to be built partly of brick and partly of adobe. The first olerías (brickyards) were opened in the ‘costa de Tacumbú’ after 1750. Brick pillars replaced the wooden ones and brick floors were laid in place of clay ones, while more iron brackets and lattice work were used on the houses, the doors were given hinges, and the wood was more often worked. As before, the houses had a broad roof draining down on two sides. This was the rather modern form of building of late-colonial Paraguay. The city of 1700 had nearly wholly disappeared in 1800.

More on the periphery of the city were to be found the houses of the members of the lower orders. Their solares were surrounded by palisades (ybirápehby), reinforced with lianas and thorn bushes. The houses there retained their straw or palm leaf roofs, which rested on posts of urundey wood. According to Vives Azancot, at the end of the eighteenth century, one could already see from a distance that the city fell into a centre, where most of the houses were built of brick and had tiled roofs, and a peripheral zone with houses of wood, reeds and other plant materials, separated by generous greenery.

In the countryside, the culata yobai - the very simple rancho, with a roof of reeds or palm leaves, was without exception the only type of dwelling. The central section consisted of a completely open
area (galpón), where the inhabitants lived, received visitors, cooked and ate their meals and stored their provisions. At each end of the house there was a crescent-shaped room, with a door and a window. These two rooms served as bedrooms, at least if it was too cold or raining. With these houses, the roof was built first, and then the walls. According to Azara, the life of such houses was not very long; anyone who inherited such a dwelling often did better to demolish it and replace it by a new one.

**Ecclesiastical and educational provisions**

The ecclesiastical infrastructure had not yet undergone many changes in around 1785. The cathedral (of 1689) was, however, improved at the end of the eighteenth century, because images were placed there and five high altars (removed from the Jesuits' church) were installed in 1791. The church was, moreover, enlarged and the west front and some sections of the side walls were completed, making use of brick and lime. The church of San Roque, on the east side of the city, began to serve the new residential area on the Camino de Samuhú Peré and was therefore granted the status of vice-parish of the cathedral in 1781. The other two parish churches were those of la Encarnación and San Blas.

There were also still four religious houses at that time: that of Santa Catalina of the Dominicans (in the oldest part of the city), the monastery of the Mercedarians and two houses of the Franciscans (the Convento de Observancia and la Recolección) (see earlier in this chapter). The Colegio of the Jesuits, once the fifth religious house, was closed in 1767-8.

The educational facilities were modest. There were public elementary schools, a few schools of different levels run by the Franciscans, as well as private schools. The Real Colegio y Seminario de San Carlos, established in the former Jesuit complex and opened in 1783, functioned as a seminary and also provided secondary education. Some of the late-colonial élite received their training here.68

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68 Williams 1979:14.
Asunción's service and supply area was actually modest in extent. The inhabitants largely provided themselves with the necessary provisions by farming nearby holdings. There were also smaller *estancias* in the environs. The population was therefore dependent to only a limited extent on the supply of farm products from elsewhere (but to what extent and for what products still has to be investigated). Yerba was, in fact, the only product that was consumed in large quantities by the population, but not produced in the near vicinity. The transport of yerba to Asunción coincided, however, with the transport which took place to supply the export markets, because Asunción served as the main collecting centre. The city was also largely self-sufficient in the various industrial products it required; if not, these were obtained from the *pueblos de indios* in the vicinity or from the more distant former Jesuit missions, with which there was trade; few goods were imported. The countryside was largely self-sufficient. Asunción consequently did not function as an important industrial centre supplying a large part of its hinterland, although it did begin to serve more as a distribution centre of imported goods after 1780.

*Appearance and population*

It will occasion little surprise that the city had very little distinction at the end of the colonial period. It had more the appearance of a village than of a town, certainly in comparison with Buenos Aires, that, since it had become the capital of the viceroyalty of la Plata, had been transformed by the progressively minded viceroys into the *más opulenta ciudad del Virreinato*. But Asunción could also hardly withstand a comparison with the smaller la Plata towns, such as Santa Fe and Corrientes, which had been laid out - like Buenos Aires - on a chequer board plan. Sánchez Quell described the Asunción of the late colonial period as a settlement lacking urban scale; a random, extravagant collection of houses surrounded by trees, in an arbitrary and imaginative scatter, i.e. without rule or order, with
open patches, swampy areas, narrow and winding streets.\textsuperscript{69} Cardozo referred to a \textit{pobre caserío de paja} and Cooney said that the unplanned character of the city, with its simple houses, gardens and orange groves, may have been idyllic, but that, as a result, Asunción did not even have the appearance of a third-rate Spanish American capital. It exuded a rural atmosphere and was in a constant state of rebuilding. Only in the polygon along the bay was there any semblance of urban order. There were to be found the religious houses, the cathedral, the former Jesuit \textit{Colegio}, the \textit{cabildo} building (the only two-storey building) and the governor's 'palace'; and there were to be found around the \textit{plaza} the town houses of the élite. There, at least, were single storey buildings with tiled roofs, while elsewhere thatch predominated.\textsuperscript{70}

Despite its modest exterior, Asunción was nevertheless the undisputed political, economic, cultural and ecclesiastical centre of the province of Paraguay at the end of the eighteenth century. Thanks to the presence of not only a local, but also of a provincial administrative apparatus, it was the settlement which, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, most answered to the picture of a city. It was also the unchallenged main port for a vast hinterland. Nearly all imports and exports passed through Asunción. Whether the goods came by boat or by cart from the north or east, Asunción was nearly always the point through which they passed. Even the yerba which arrived from Villa Real had to be brought into the bay of Asunción for inspection. In Asunción, excise duties were paid and the official export documents (\textit{guías}) issued.\textsuperscript{71}

Although the economic revival had only a slight effect on the urban character of Asunción, it did lead to an increase in the population. According to Governor Pinedo, Asunción had 5,750 \textit{vecinos} in 1777, of whom 2,750 found a livelihood in yerba collection and shipping.\textsuperscript{72} Asunción lost some of its people at that time, because new settlements were founded on provincial territory, but

\textsuperscript{69} Sánchez Quell 1980:42-3.
\textsuperscript{70} Cooney 1987:78-9.
\textsuperscript{71} Cooney 1987:83.
\textsuperscript{72} Acevedo 1996:202.
nevertheless the capital had 7,404 inhabitants in 1799 (the whole province had 108,070) and 30,682 if the population of the department of Central is included. This means that there had been a considerable growth since 1761 as, in the latter year, the capital and the villages of Central together had only 17,143 inhabitants (see Chapter 32).

The population had increased to about 10-11,000 by 1811 and, according to Rengger, it was more than 15,000 in 1819 (Buenos Aires then had about 40,000 inhabitants). This growth obviously led to more work for the authorities (administration of justice, tax collection, police duties etc.).

The largest part of the population consisted of mestizoes and Creoles but, thanks to the economic revival, the city had also attracted several hundreds of *peninsulares*: traders, skippers, shipwrights and others who hoped to profit from the economic surge. According to Cooney (1987), the greatest Hispanicisation since the 1540s occurred in the period after 1770. In around 1800, *peninsulares* pulled the strings in the *cabildo* and so held political, economic and social control of Asunción. The policy of the governors-intendant further reduced the power of the old Creole élite. With some exceptions, the old families found themselves further and further removed from the sources of power. Only in the provincial militias, which were reformed and reconstituted in 1802 and 1803, did they retain prestige as officers and, even in these bodies, positions of high command often fell to non-Paraguayans. In other words, Asunción was no longer purely Paraguayan on the eve of independence. A new élite had emerged, which was not seeking for independence, because its interests were closely interwoven with the economic developments in the viceroyalty, and the *peninsulares* could expect a certain amount of privilege only from the Spanish rulers. The old élite, on the other hand, did have an interest in greater autonomy, or even complete independence, and grasped its opportunity when possibilities arose of freeing themselves from Spain.

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73 Domínguez 1996:40; Gill Aguinaga 1973:81.
74 Cooney 1987:86.
Asunción under the dictator Francia

Colonial Asunción underwent very radical changes under the rule of the dictator Francia. He abolished the *cabildo* in 1824 (as he did that of Villa Rica).

Far more radical was his modernisation of the city. The dictator considered it desirable that the winding streets, with their irregular width, should disappear and be replaced by a pattern of regularly laid out and improved streets. He already had the intention of drastically altering the street layout of Asunción in around 1820, and he began to carry out that intention in 1821. He had a large part of the greenery cut down and longitudinal streets running from northwest to southeast and transverse streets running from northeast to southwest set out. These streets were all given a width of 35-40 feet (about 15 metres) and were spaced 100 *pasos* apart. This gave the blocks or *manzanas* thus created an area of 100 by 100 *pasos*. This pattern made it easy to lay out new parallel streets behind or as an extension of the existing streets. In other words, the city layout could be realised more simply.

The dictator had the works carried out by a *maestro albañil* (master bricklayer), who acted as the city engineer, but he sometimes gave him personal instructions about the precise alignment of a street. The dictator sometimes also intervened personally in the execution of the works when he made his afternoon *paseo*. The standard dimensions were somewhat departed from only if it was found that a public building 'stood in the way'. There was no pardon for the houses of private citizens. They had to be wholly or partially demolished to ensure that the development fell within the building line. He ignored the question of the possible consequences of his town planning policy for the inhabitants. The house owners themselves had to take responsibility for the whole or partial demolition; if they were unable to, it was done by forced labourers (*presidiarios*), who took away everything that could be used else-

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75 Pastore (1994a:586) cites White, according to whom the *cabildos* continued to exist outside these two places, but Pastore himself believes that they also disappeared in other places.

76 1 *paso* is approximately equal to 1 metre.
where. As far as is known, compensation was paid in only two instances. The more well-to-do Spaniards were not eligible for compensation in any event. It sometimes happened that a decision was eventually made to allow the alignment of a street to run somewhat differently than had originally been planned, so that a further part of the house had to disappear, or that something that had already been demolished could be rebuilt. The rubble from the demolished houses was used to fill up gullies and to level out the streets. Slopes which were too steep were, if possible, wholly or partly eliminated by digging out the terrain. Three new squares were laid out and an existing square was widened. To prevent the streets being regularly flooded, the dictator ordered the inhabitants on whose land manantiales occurred to cover these springs with soil and rubble, so that the water could no longer come to the surface.

All these interventions - which were intended as improvements - were generally only slowly realised. These same operations had sometimes to be repeated, because a heavy downpour washed away in a short time the rubble and the soil used to fill in the gullies. The work of several weeks was sometimes undone in a few hours.

The street construction and the ensuing damage resulted in many places in the houses no longer being properly at street level. If the foundations were exposed, further erosion caused the houses to subside or suffer other damage. Some houses were also affected by damp or direct water damage, because the water from the stopped-off springs sought a new outlet and turned some solares into marshy pools. Where they had not yet been developed, this made the parcels unsuitable for development.

Rengger observed that, after four years of 'renewal', the city had assumed the appearance of a settlement which had been bombarded for several months. Hundreds of houses and altogether about a half of the buildings had disappeared. The inhabitants whose homes had been demolished, had to build up their solar again at their own expense, but that obviously did not happen immediately. And because Francia might perhaps find it necessary to make further alterations to a newly laid-out street, building was allowed only in certain calles apartadas. According to Rengger, there were many streets where it was possible to see the intended alignment only from the presence of fences of dried reeds on the two sides of
the street. There were still too few houses along them for one to speak of a street front.

Francia not only ordered many houses to be demolished, but he also ordered the owners of solares to develop them, where necessary, within a certain period, and this had to be done according to the regulations. If someone ventured not to build wholly according to the dictator's instructions, he ran the risk of having his house demolished or split into two or more parts without advance warning, according to the demands of symmetry. Roofs were reduced in size and the area of living rooms and bedrooms was sometimes reduced to half of their former area. According to Demersay, some of these 'unfortunate' structures were still to be seen in some places in around 1850.

Rengger, who had little to say in favour of the policy of the dictator Francia, observed that it was very good in itself that wider, straighter and cleaner streets were built, with house fronts along a straight building line, but that the original siting of the various houses and the fact that they were situated in the midst of greenery gave the city a much more pleasant and perhaps also healthier character than what was subsequently built. He also considered the irregular and more dispersed development to be better adapted to the tropical climate and the sandy, easily washed-away soil.

The modernisation of Asunción was carried out relatively cheaply. As we have said, compensation was not paid. The state paid only the expenses of the maestros artesanos (qualified artisans). It may incidentally be doubted whether these were always equally competent. Gelly remarks, in any event, that the streets were set out not only without any regard for the unevenness of the terrain, but also without scientific knowledge and by a simple bricklayer. Use was made of the free labour of prisoners for the carrying out of the work or of country people drummed up through the (colonial) leva system (see Chapter 16). If materials were needed, Francia had them supplied by the partidos, generally
without paying for them. He had forty houses built in the city with them, which were rented to poorer city dwellers.\textsuperscript{77}

Looking back on the operations of the dictator Francia, his successor, President C.A. López, had little to say in their favour. In his view, the capital looked very unprepossessing. The private homes were surrounded by piles of rubble or buildings on the point of collapse. Only a small part of the demolished areas had been rebuilt, leaving many empty spaces, which produced a cheerless aspect. The churches, with one exception, were dilapidated and were propped up to prevent collapse. The barracks were dirty and unhealthy and lacked comfort. Most of the streets were nearly impassable because of the deep gullies caused by heavy downpours. The periodic high water levels undermined the part of the city along the river in various places. Underground watercourses or pools had formed in many places in the capital, making the houses unsafe and unhealthy. And the \textit{casa del gobierno} lacked dignity both on the outside and the inside.\textsuperscript{78}

According to Rengger, Asunción had some 14-15,000 inhabitants when he arrived there in 1819. Thanks to its flourishing commerce, which had attracted many Spaniards and Creoles, and the general economic prosperity which the capital experienced in the final decades of the colonial period, the population had roughly doubled since 1795 and many new buildings had been erected since then. The plan of 1785, published by Azara, accordingly showed only half of the number of houses that Rengger found there in 1819. After 1820, however, the population had rapidly declined, because of a marked recession in commerce and industry and because some \textit{Asunceños} left the city to live in the countryside, beyond the reach of the eyes and ears of the dictator. It became increasingly quiet in the port of Asunción. Commerce largely collapsed and the old peace - or even more than that - returned. A hundred ships lay rusting in the port. Because of all this, the city


\textsuperscript{78} Pastore 1972:108; Wilhelmy & Rohmeder 1963:409.
Box 12.1. The market of Asunción in about 1838

"... I repaired one morning, at five o'clock, to see 'the gathering' of the people who supplied the city with its daily wants. In, at every entrance from the country to the square, poured hundreds of females, dressed, without an exception, in white cotton. Some carried jars of honey on their heads, some, bundles of the yucca-root, and some, raw cotton. Others were laden with candles, sweet cakes, flowers, jars of spirits, pies and pastry, hot and cold, onions, red pepper, garlic, and Indian corn. Some had canisters of salt on their heads, and others large rolls of tobacco and bundles of cigars. Here was one driving an ass with panniers, filled with poultry and eggs; and there another, bringing, by the same means, musk and water-melons, figs and oranges, for sale.

Many were laden with the sugar-cane, stripped of its outer rind and cut into short pieces, ready for suction. Then came the butchers' carts, with indifferent beef, badly killed, hang up in large pieces in the straw-thatched waggon, without any deference to cleanliness, and cut up with a total disregard of anatomical precision. There is no mutton eatable in Paraguay; and, with the exception of the yucca-root, the vegetables are few and bad. Nobody, almost, partakes of them. After the groups mentioned, came the Payaguá Indians, hale and athletic, with their fish suspended from long paddles, carried on their shoulders. Others followed them with bundles of chala, or grass, brought from the Chaco for the horses of Asumption. When all these various parties congregated in the market-place, to the number, I should conceive, of nearly five hundred, they distributed themselves and their productions, in rows, leaving just space enough between, through which purchasers might pass. There were no stalls nor any chairs there. The articles were laid out upon mats on the ground and their owners sat squat behind them. Of the whole mass of vendors, at least three-fourths were women, and of the purchasers an equal proportion; so that the ground was covered with a dense mass of figures, clothed in white, chattering, higgling, disputing, and exclaiming, in Guarani, till the air resounded with the buzz and clatter of the busy scene...".79

79 Robertson & Robertson 1970/I:293-5.
had no more than about 10,000 inhabitants in 1825, according to Rengger, consisting for about two-thirds of ‘whites’ and for the rest of various other groups (including very few Negroes, but many mulattoes, of whom a half were still slaves).  

Despite all the dictator’s ‘modernisation’ activities, the city continued to function as normally as possible until 1840 as the economic, administrative and spiritual centre of the country. The population supplied itself with the necessary industrial goods, thanks to the presence of local artisans and, as before, a large part of the agricultural products came from the chacras which the city dwellers themselves owned within or immediately outside the urban area. And for what they lacked there were the state shops (where certain goods which the dictator had allowed to be imported could be bought at fixed prices), the private shops (where the prices were uncontrolled) and the market (see Box 12.1). The Mercado guazú (at scarcely three cuadras distance from the casa del gobernador) was the only place where the goods were sold at fixed prices. The articles were generally sold by women, who displayed their wares on mats on the ground. They offered virtually everything for sale: honey in earthenware pots, bunches of manioc, unginned cotton (algodón en rama), tallow candles, sugar loaf (pan dulce), flowers, jars of aguardiente, pastries, hot and cold pasta (masas), onions, chillies, garlic, maize, tobacco, cigars, chickens, eggs, melons, water melons, figs, oranges, peeled sugar cane and even bunches of grass from the Chaco, to be used as fodder for the horses in the city. There were obviously also butchers. They operated directly from their carts, but some also had hawkers who went along the houses with small filled-up carts until they had sold out. Most of the merchandise was brought from the immediate vicinity by carts, on mules or just carried on the head. In other words, the provisioning of Asunción more or less continued as usual; the daily needs, however modest, still had to be supplied.

Little can be said about the extent to which Asunción started to perform a different service function for its hinterland under the

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81 Martínez Cuevas 1987:145-6, based on Robertson & Robertson.
dictator, except that imports became more restricted and so there were fewer foreign goods for distribution from Asunción. But this cannot have been very dramatic for a countryside that was already largely self-sufficient.

Asunción under the rule of the two López presidents

The ‘ruins’ which the dictator had left behind were transformed into a modest city under the rule of President C.A. López. The terrain was further levelled, where necessary, the first rampas were built, road surfaces were improved, several streets were even paved and they were all given a name. The city was provided with modest street lighting. President López also smartened up the prisons, built new barracks, had some new parks laid out and had some solid, stone embankments erected opposite the cabildo building to give the city better protection against flooding during periods of high water levels. The construction of the first two embankments was started in 1842; and five further embankments were built, which were completed in 1849. A stone jetty (muelle de piedra) was built in 1854. Demersay commented that it was undoubtedly quite an impressive piece of masonry (obra de mampostería), but that it would nevertheless be insufficient if Asunción recovered its foreign trade. A new government building, the Palacio de Gobierno (now Palacio Legislativo), was erected on the site of the former cabildo building. The customs and the law court also moved into newer accommodation, a presidential palace (close to the cathedral) and a theatre (that was intended to be the largest in the world) were built, and in 1864 (under Francisco Solano López) construction was started on a national house of worship (Oratorio or Pantheon), that was incidentally not completed until 1936. The old cathedral was demolished.


83 Demersay 1946:69.
and a new one built not far away. It was consecrated in its uncom­
pleted state on 27 October 1845 and finally completed four years
later.84 Five new churches were also built: San Roque, la Encar­
nación, Trinidad, la Recoleta and Lambaré.85 In the 1850s, an
arsenal was built near the port and, at the end of that decade, a start
was made on the building of the station, that was intended as the
terminus of the proposed railway. Other necessary amenities were
also provided for the city, which made Asunción more handsome as
a result and gave it more the air of a city.

Nearly all the houses continued to consist of a single storey, but
Demersay reported that there were a number of large and well-built
homes, with as many as 6-10 well-ventilated rooms, opening onto a
patio. The better houses were built of natural stone or brick and
had tiled roofs, which extended three to four feet over the walls.
Demersay also reported that the builders first constructed the roof,
which was supported on posts, and only then built the walls. The
simpler houses, which were situated mainly on the periphery, had
more the character of *ranchos*; they had adobe walls and still had
straw or palm leaf roofs. Building at that time gradually became
more modern, possibly as a result of Francisco Solano López’ visit
to Europe. Houses were also built with an upper storey (which
somewhat broke up the monotonous townscape). The doors and
windows with their latticework became larger, and the latticework
in front of the windows was gradually replaced by balconies with
marble posts. Various types of columns were incorporated into the
façades, the vestibules were decorated and glazed doors replaced
the iron entrance doors.

The city was not much larger under President López than under
the dictator Francia and during the colonial period. The city plan
that was drawn by Roberto Chodasiewi and Enrique Mangels in
1870 shows that the city did not extend further than what are now
Colón, 25 de Diciembre, José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia and

84 For details of the cathedral, see: Cardozo 1967:60-1; Gutiérrez 1983:206.
85 Gutiérrez 1983:67. Asunción was subdivided at that time into six districts,
each with its own church: Catedral, Encarnación, San Roque, Santísima
Trinidad, Recoleta and Lambaré (Massare de Kostianovsky 1970:225).
The growth, structure and function of Asunción

Brasil streets. This meant that the urban area covered about 2,000 x 1,250 metres, or 2.5 km². \(^8^6\)

In the Catedral quarter, inhabited mainly by the more well-to-do Paraguayan families and foreigners, there was a considerable concentration of industrial, commercial and service activities (see Table 12.1).

Table 12.1. Summary of the traders, artisans and other economically active persons in the Catedral quarter, 1843.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shopkeepers</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>sombrero makers</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>innkeepers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>hairdressers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>street traders</td>
<td>&gt;50</td>
<td>barbers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notaries/writers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>clock &amp; watchmakers</td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carpenters</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>jewellers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bricklayers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>playing card manufacturers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>painters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>chemists</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reed thatchers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>liquor distillers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smiths</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>river pilots</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silversmiths**</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>shipowners</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tailors and seamstresses</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>day labourers</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoemakers</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The person concerned was of German nationality.
** Ten years later there were nine silversmiths' workshops in Asunción, the largest of which had six skilled workers and eight apprentices.

The existence was reported for 1844 of 5 shops for materials, yarn and ribbons, a bazaar for glass and earthenware and a state pharmacy. These shops do not appear in the 1843 survey \(^8^7\), which leaves the impression that the return for 1843 may not be wholly complete. However this may be, it does illustrate the importance of the Catedral quarter as a centre for many activities and it also makes clear that there was a variety of activity in the capital, especially in

\(^8^6\) Sánchez Quell 1980:48. In his publication of 1957 (p. 62) he lists as the boundaries: Calle de la Aduana, Calle Pilcomayo and Calle Loreto. Calle Colón was called Calle de la Aduana Ribera until probably 1871, Calle Pilcomayo was called Coronel Martínez in the period 1889-1961 and Calle Loreto was renamed Calle México in 1921 (See Kallsen 1974:58,74,198).

\(^8^7\) Benítez 1990:33.
the Catedral quarter, Asunción's city centre. In the other neighbour­
hoods the number of craftsmen was considerably smaller.

Rivarola reported that a great deal of the trade in the 1850s was in the hands of immigrants. A large number of tinsmiths, shoemakers, apothecaries, bakers, silversmiths and millers who practised their occupations in the capital were also of foreign nationality (Spanish, Sardinian/Italian, French, Brazilian or Argentinean).

European goods were again being increasingly imported under President López, especially textile goods, which were sold in the city and in the countryside. As before, there was the local market to which the inhabitants of the hinterland brought their wares (see Box 12.2). The Payaguáes were also ever present. The fact that the dictator Francia and President López employed them as river guards, did not prevent them from following their traditional pursuits (hunting and fishing), nor keep them from their trading activities on the plaza of Asunción. As before, the men sold firewood, fish and livestock fodder; the women offered birds for sale and articles which they had made themselves, such as blankets, tablecloths, feather dusters, jars and drinking mugs. With the money earned, they bought, for example, food that they could not produce themselves. Foreigners sometimes bought bows and arrows from the Payaguáes as souvenirs.88

The activities of the port revived under President López, particularly after 1852. Many ships again arrived and departed, now even including steamships. The port facilities were improved and, after 1850, the number of docks was increased with the Puerto del Arsenal.89

Eventually, by the 1860s, a reasonably attractive city had again emerged. Brito, at least, gave a rather positive description of it.90 He reported that the streets were wide and straight; that the houses were in general spacious and well built, that there were many good public buildings, such as the cathedral, the government palace, the nearly completed theatre, the barracks, the military hospital, the

88 Ganson 1989:118.
89 Gill 1987:95.
90 Brito 1865:14-5.
Box 12.2. The market of Asunción in about 1852

"The market here is a very pretty sight, - such a contrast to that of Corrientes! In the first place, there is no market-building, as there is at the latter town, but there is plenty of traffic in it, which there is not there. The country-people who daily come in on foot, on horseback, and in carts, from all the country round, and some from great distances, bring their goods, - spread them on the ground in the open plaza, and for any shelter they may want resort to their carts (if they have them), which stand in rows in one part of the square. The wares for sale are maize, manioca, oranges (now scarce), water-melons, pumpkins, bread, cakes of various kinds (cheap and nasty for the most part, mostly made of coarse sugar); salt; grease, which they colour yellow, like the stuff used for rail-car wheels (butter is not made); combs, very nicely made of horn; and lastly, all sorts of rubbish, necessary or unnecessary, from England, which the poor people buy of the merchants and shopkeepers, and then sell again for a next-to-nothing profit. It is curious to see some of the countrymen of the better sort coming into town on horseback, with no shoes or stockings, the long fringes of their calzoncillos dangling about their bare legs, and their toes stuck in massive silver stirrups; silver also decorating their bridles and headstalls with a considerable weight of metal. But the market itself, as I said, is a very pretty sight, being crowded all the week round, Sundays included, with women in white (as snow) cotton dresses; their petticoats flounced with lace, coarse or fine according to the wearer, about a foot deep, and above the flounce a broad band of embroidery in black wool like that of the chemise, not to speak of the scarlet girdle; with here and there a man, equally in white, but with a scarlet or blue poncho slung over one shoulder". 91

arsenal, the railway station and a large permanent market building in the centre. He described the port as safe, commodious, well-defended and equipped with a broad quay for loading and dischar-

91 Mansfield 1856:380-1. He wrote his Letters, on which the text was based, in 1852-3.
ging. All this was largely the fruit of López' reconstruction work.92

According to Joseph Graham, American consul in the Argentinean Confederation, Asunción had 8-10,000 inhabitants in 1846. The English mariner, Charles B. Mansfield, gave a figure of 15,000 for 1852; in 1857, according to Demersay, there were 40,000 inhabitants and, at the death of President C.A. López, even about 80,000, according to Du Graty, but it is generally agreed that this last figure is greatly exaggerated, as is indeed the 1.3 million inhabitants which this author gives for the whole country in 1857 (see Chapter 35). It is a fact, however, that the population was larger under the rule of President López than under the dictator Francia, when many people had migrated to the politically safer countryside. Many returned after Francia's death. Moreover, the city began to revive in the 1850s, thanks to the new trading opportunities with overseas countries.93 The most reliable figure from the period 1811-70 is undoubtedly that of the census of 1846, according to which Asunción had 11,003 inhabitants (and the settlements in the department of Central 47,073). The most populous quarter was that of el Catedral, with 4,389 inhabitants (40 per cent of the population of the capital) (see Chapter 35). This incidentally still made Asunción a very modest capital, even by South American standards, of a predominantly rural country.

92 A rather ordinary chequer board plan of Asunción in 1870 is contained in Gutiérrez 1983:98.
PART THREE

LABOUR AND LAND
Introduction

The hostility of the Indians, the heat and the periodic lack of water in Western Paraguay caused the Spaniards to realise within less than two decades that the Chaco was no ideal link between the Río Paraguay and Alto Perú. Moreover, it became apparent to them at the end of the 1540s that further route reconnaissances from Paraguay no longer had any point. Potosí and the route to it had then been discovered from the north. From that time, the Spaniards who had migrated to Paraguay had to abandon permanently their dream that they would become the discoverers of the riches of the ‘Sierra de la Plata’.

No precious metals were found in the province of Paraguay itself, which meant that the Spaniards who wished to build up a livelihood there had little choice but to concentrate on arable farming, livestock rearing, or other agricultural activities. The possibilities for this were undoubtedly present. Governor Francisco Ortiz de Vergara (1557-67) even believed that Paraguay could develop into el agro del mundo. With every activity which the not very numerous Spaniards wished to develop, however, they came up against the shortage of labour. That problem had already been present from 1537. The large expedition army of Pedro de Mendoza had been greatly reduced by disease and the aggression of the Indians, as a result of which no more than some 400 men remained at the time of the concentration in Asunción in 1541. From 1537, the conquistadores therefore began to make use of the indigenous population. Until well into the colonial period, the Indians remained

the most important source of 'foreign' labour for the Spaniards (increasingly comprised of Creoles and mestizos). In the course of time, use was also made on a more limited scale of African labour (Negroes and mulattoes), partly within the framework of slavery. The wage labour performed by poor Creoles and mestizos did not become significant until during the eighteenth century.

The treatment of the theme of 'Labour' requires several chapters. A picture is first sketched in Chapter 13 of the informal manner in which the Indians were originally brought in and of their resistance. The *encomienda* system is then discussed. This is the institutional framework into which they were brought after 1556. What were *encomiendas*, why, how and to whom were these issued, what types of *encomiendas* can be distinguished, how did the Indians react to the *encomienda* system, and to what extent was there a specific situation in Paraguay differing from that in the remainder of Spanish America?

In Chapter 14 we shall first consider the many ordinances (*Ordenanzas*) which were issued in the period 1556-1611 to regulate as well as possible the rights and obligations of the Indians and the *encomenderos*. We shall then discuss certain other labour obligations of the Indians, examine the policy that was pursued from Madrid to have the *encomiendas* abolished, and give a summary of the growth in the number of *encomiendas*, *encomenderos* and *encomendados* in the province of Paraguay up to 1803. To the extent allowed by the data, we also examine a number of characteristics of the *encomiendas* and the *encomenderos*. The summary is based on the sometimes detailed, but generally less detailed surveys made by governors or bishops at set times. These have been included in a detailed Annex to the chapter.

In Chapter 15, the discussion of the *encomienda* system and the involvement of the Indians in the labour process is completed. Themes which are examined in that chapter include the roles played by the various actors in the continuation or elimination of the *encomienda* system, the deployment of indigenous labour within the *pueblos de indios*, and the manner in which the Jesuits used the labour potential in the *pueblos de misiones* (which were exempted from personal service, but had to pay tribute) both to satisfy their tax obligations and to keep the village economy running. Chapter
15 concludes with a brief balance sheet of two-and-a-half centuries of the encomienda system. This is not, however, the last word on the use of the Indians as workers. That use is also examined - albeit from a different approach - in Chapters 19 to 31, which deal with economic activities.

The employment of black workers (Negroes and mulattoes, as slaves or otherwise) is dealt with in Chapter 16, which also examines the gradually increasingly important use of free wage labourers.

The availability of labour was not the only condition necessary for the Spaniards to be able to engage in many activities. Access to land was also essential. Since the indigenous population was not particularly numerous in around 1537 and it, moreover, subsequently sharply declined, there was not an immediate shortage of land. The Spaniards could therefore occupy the lands which they needed for arable farming and livestock rearing without this causing particularly serious problems for the native inhabitants. There was also sufficient land for the setting up of mission villages. In ‘Spanish’ Paraguay, the occupation led to privatisation of part of the land and skewed property relationships were eventually created in the colonial period. In the pueblos de indios and pueblos de misiones, collective land rights were created. Radical changes in ownership and occupation relationships occurred in the post-colonial period; the principal change was the exceptional growth of the area of state land. The theme of ‘access to land’ is discussed in Chapters 17 and 18.
The use of Indian labour (I)

Reactions to the incorporation of the Indians

The Chaco Indians

The Indians were engaged selectively as workers. The Chaco Indians regarded the European newcomers simply as intruders and, from the beginning, forcefully resisted the Spaniards, Creoles and assimilated mestizoes, who formed the dominant population of Paraguay after 1537. The following were the peoples concerned: the Guató and the Guasarapos in Alto Paraguay, the Payaguá or Agaces (who, as practised canoeists, commanded the Paraguay river), the Guaycurú on the west bank of the Paraguay, and the Mbayá or Caduveos, who first lived in the Chaco, but began to cross the river from 1671 and settled in the region north of the Jejuy. In fact, all the unsubdued and unbaptised Indian groups constituted a more or less permanent and direct threat to the small Spanish colonial society, but particularly the Payaguá, other groups from the Guaycurú linguistic family and, from the end of the seventeenth century, the Mbayá most of all. We learned in Part II of this study that they regularly attacked villages and farms on the east bank to carry off cattle and farm crops. Ganson has pointed out that their strategy varied. They sometimes behaved aggressively towards the Spaniards and Guaraníes, because this offered opportunities for plunder, enabled some individuals to increase their prestige (because plunder and murder were individual deeds) or because it afforded the opportunity to carry off women and children in order to enlarge their own group. At other times, however, the Indians
preferred more peaceful relations. The northern Payaguás continued to constitute a threat throughout the colonial period and even subsequently.¹ For some time, the hostility of the Mbayás, who were skilled horsemen, increased rather than decreased. As well as being hunters and gatherers, they also lived from cattle rustling. They were a source of insecurity into the nineteenth century, although to a decreasing extent from about 1780. The same is true of certain other tribes who also took to horse-riding (see Chapters 3 and 22). Other Indian groups from the Chaco also crossed the river from time to time to plunder on the left bank. The dominant population continually tried to break the resistance of the Chaco Indians by organising expeditions against them (in which prisoners were sometimes taken), founding reductions for them and pacifying them with missionary support.² As we have said, various defensive measures were also taken. After 1676, settlement was - of necessity - concentrated as far as possible near Asunción, where forts were built and the pueblos de indios also provided protection. From the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, settlements were founded increasingly at strategic points in the eastern region, where they could function as an antemural to check the aggression.

Thanks to their resistance, the Indian groups in question succeeded in retaining their freedom for a long time, although their numbers decreased rather than increased as a result of their resistance. The Spanish population, on the other hand, grew in numbers, although slowly. Partly because of this, the situation gradually started to change after 1750. The Indian groups increasingly began to realise that it would be better and also more advantageous to maintain rather more peaceful relations with the Spaniards. It was therefore in that period that various Chaco groups were prepared to make peace or became less aggressive; a number of them even asked to be placed in reductions. From 1730, relations improved, on the initiative of the Spaniards, with a large part of the Payaguá.

¹ Ganson 1989:102.
² Cardozo (1991:192-3) states that no fewer than 114 expeditions entered the Chaco from Eastern Paraguay in the three centuries of Spanish rule; some even reached Peru. There was hardly a corner of the Litoral where there had not been fighting or blood had flowed.
The southern Payaguá preferred to behave peacefully and to engage in trade with the Spaniards and perform services for them. The feared river pirates of earlier days had become fishermen, traders, messengers and river guards in the second half of the eighteenth century, who regularly showed themselves in Asunción and its environs without causing any problems. Attempts by Father Ignacio Cañete to convert them to Christianity failed, however; no reductions were built for them, apart from a special site that was reserved for them on the fringe of Asunción in 1797. Other groups, such as the Mbayáes, Abipones, Mbocovíes, Lengua and Toba maintained their resistance for longer, but were also less aggressive than before by the end of the eighteenth century. Various groups had been concentrated not very successfully into reductions.

Apart from the improved defences of the Spaniards, the fact that the indigenous population of the Chaco began to behave less aggressively in the late-colonial period was largely related to the fact that they were considerably less numerous at the end of the colonial period than at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Apart from outright war and numerous punishment expeditions, various diseases introduced by the Spaniards, such as measles, chicken pox, dysentery and whooping cough, had also taken their toll, and nor did the occasional practice of abortion and infanticide assist the indigenous population growth. Moreover, some Indian groups had started to live more in the region north of the Río Apa, that was still de jure Spanish territory, but was de facto in the hands of the Portuguese in the eighteenth century.

The Indian groups who did not live in the immediate vicinity of the Paraguay river, but much farther away in the Chaco, more or less escaped Spanish control throughout the colonial period, although infectious diseases and incidental confrontations also took their toll here.

The Chaco, in fact, remained a dangerous and inhospitable region throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century and was
therefore scarcely used by the dominant population. As a result, the Chaco Indians were never incorporated as labour on any significant scale in the colonial period or in the years 1811-70. Where they were concentrated into reductions, the responsible authorities and clergy tried to persuade them to adopt a more sedentary existence, so that they would no longer depend wholly on nomadic activities such as hunting, gathering and plunder, but would be able to live mainly from farming. The authorities hoped that, in this manner, the natives would gain a more stable form of subsistence and so be less of a nuisance to the Spanish population. The sedentarisation was not, however, primarily undertaken with the underlying idea that the Indians could then be better involved in the production process. If things ever reached that stage, that would only be an additional gain. The Chaco Indians who were taken prisoner during punishment expeditions formed an exception. They were generally allocated to Spanish citizens (encomenderos) as yanaconas (see below) and incidentally also added to the population of the Jesuit mission villages.

The Guaraníes

The Guaraníes of the Región Oriental also resisted the presence of the Spaniards. The Spaniards first tried to break the resistance of the Guarambarenses, Tobatines, Acahayenses, Paranaenses and various other groups by opposing them with arms, then by concentrating them into mission posts with the help of Franciscan missionaries. After 1580, the inhabitants of these villages became increasingly a source of cheap labour. In other words, the Franciscans paved the way, through pacification and baptism, to incorporation of the natives into the labour process.

After the foundation of Ontiveros/Ciudad Real and Villa Rica, the Spaniards also started to exploit the Indian labour from el Guairá. In el Itatín they tried to do that from Santiago de Jerez.

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3 For the foregoing about the Chaco population, see, besides passages from the preceding chapters: Benítez 1985:15,159; Cardozo 1994:22; Ganson 1989:105;116, 120; Stunnenberg 1993:17; Ugarte Centurión 1983:39; Viola 1993a: 204.
From 1630, however, many Indians were carried off by the Portuguese and the Spaniards were forced to withdraw. The same fate befell the Jesuits who further pacified and Christianised el Guairá after 1610. Their activities had a more lasting effect, however, south of the Tebicuary. But in contrast to the Franciscans, the Jesuits objected to the Indian groups they had brought together being used as labour by the Spaniards. The fathers succeeded in having nearly all the mission settlements under their control exempted from these compulsory labour contracts (see Chapter 15). This meant that a large number of Guaraníes were eventually not incorporated by the Spaniards into the labour process.

The sequence of events was different for the Cario-Guaraníes, who lived in the environs of Asunción. They also resisted at first, because cacique Lambaré tried to stop the Spaniards, but the conquistadores quickly succeeded in breaking their resistance and subsequently lived on friendly terms with them. Both parties proved to have an interest in good relations. The natives regarded the Spaniards as demigods, saw that they were in the possession of firearms and horses and therefore hoped that they would be better able to fight their arch-enemies - the Agaces and other Guaycurú groups - with Spanish support. They also hoped, through an alliance with the Spaniards, to strengthen their already great prestige as warriors among their Chaco enemies. They would then be less troubled by their periodic attacks, in which they were robbed of food and women. In fighting their enemies, the Carios also hoped to be able to take prisoners; they would be able to use the men in their cannibalistic rites and the women as wives or slaves. After about ten years, another consideration came into play. The Carios then further hoped that the struggle which they were waging jointly with the Spaniards against the Chaco groups would yield them the necessary women. The latter were in short supply through the arrival of the Spaniards. Bertoni and Gorham have pointed out that the help which the Spaniards could offer in the struggle against the Chaco Indians was important, but should not be overestimated. The Guaraníes had a reputation among the Chaco Indians as capable and feared warriors, they were numerous and had successfully resisted their aggression until 1537, so that it may be assumed that they
would also have been able to do so independently after that date.\textsuperscript{4} The Carios originally also saw yet another important advantage in an alliance with the Spaniards. They hoped to reach more easily, with Spanish support and in exchange for the performance of various services, the foothills of the eastern Andes, the empire of the \textit{Rey Blanco}, where several groups of Guaranies had settled in the fifteenth and at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Carios also received from the Spaniards \textit{aves de corral} (poultry) and iron tools, such as hoes, fish-hooks and wedges, which were useful aids to making a better living.

The Spaniards, in their turn, greatly benefited from the cooperation with the Carios. In the beginning, they even relied wholly on them for obtaining food and were dependent on their knowledge of the region and the other indigenous population groups. They were not interested in farming and initially also considered it beneath their dignity to work the land themselves, so that they got the Indians to do it. They also made good use of the Carios as assistants during reconnaissance journeys, campaigns of conquest and punishment expeditions against aggressive Chaco Indians or rebellious Guaraní groups. The natives (and especially the friendly Carios) were, in fact, economically and militarily indispensable to the Spaniards.

The friendly relations and the military alliance immediately led to the Carios placing their daughters at the Spaniards' disposal. They came to work on the land, performed domestic tasks and also bore children. They became household companions (\textit{compañeras en el hogar}) of the Spaniards. The relatives of these women, in fact, often also helped to produce food or perform other services for the Spaniards, as they were also accustomed to do within their group and for their own caciques. They came to see the Spaniards as \textit{cuñados} (tovayás) (brothers-in-law) and regarded the performance of services and the presenting of gifts as a normal outcome of that. It was therefore natural for the men to clear land for the Spaniards, to hunt and fish for them, to produce weapons and to accompany them on their expeditions. Garavaglia therefore argued that the

\textsuperscript{4} Bertoni & Gorham 1973:111.
'accumulation' of women, in fact, also meant for the *conquistadores* the accumulation of relatives (*tovayás, hermanos*) who were helpful to them, just as they were helpful to the *mburuvichá*. They regularly visited the Spaniards or hung around them. The Guaranes scored a number of victories over their enemies under Spanish leadership, which increased the prestige of the Spaniards and created a willingness among the Carios to supply large numbers of men for distant expeditions to the West.

The Guarani women compensated for the shortage of Spanish women. They, in fact, even more than compensated for it. The Guarani placed the Spaniards on a level with the *caciques*, and considered it normal for them to keep several wives. The Spaniards, in their turn, were fully prepared to brush aside the moral objections to polygamy which they should have had as Christians. In around 1540, many Spaniards had several dozen Indian women at their disposal, not only as labour, but partly also as concubines. According to Martínez de Irala, more than 700 Indian women were already living among the Spaniards in Asunción in the early 1540s. They did domestic work, cultivated the land and performed many other necessary tasks. When *adelantado* Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca arrived in March 1542, some Spaniards had at their disposal 30, 40 or even 50 women. Some might even have had 70-80. Some of the women had been offered to them, possibly in exchange for axes and other coveted goods, they had appropriated others, sometimes by force, while others had come with relations. Large Spanish-Indian households were created in contravention of any Christian norm. Not for nothing did people speak of the 'paradise of Mohammed'. The upshot was that nearly all the Indians in the neighbourhood of Asunción were soon apportioned and related to the *conquistadores* in a relatively peaceful manner.

The friendship and kinship relationships (also referred to as the *pacto de sangre*) were not only an enormous support for the Spanish conquerors and colonists in Paraguay in the initial phase, but also gave them a feeling of safety and security, since they were very few in number in comparison with the indigenous population.

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and relatively poorly armed. They also knew only too well what had happened to the soldiers in the fort of Sancti Spiritus in 1527, that the fort of Buena Esperanza had been set on fire by local Indians in 1539 and that the few Spaniards who lived in Buen Ayre from 1536 had to be constantly on guard against native aggression. In 1541, Asunción even became the only Spanish settlement, which meant that, in an emergency, the population could no longer count on any support from elsewhere.6

During the first two or three years after the foundation of Asunción, the Carios still found relations to be predominantly reciprocal. The Spaniards still had the idea that Asunción was only a temporary base of operations for reaching the ‘Sierra de la Plata’, they were still unfamiliar with the region and were also highly dependent on the Indians for supplies. They treated the Indians with a certain respect. But the Guaraníes soon had their reservations. They observed that they were not treated by the Spaniards as equals. In other words, there was very little reciprocity. On the contrary, the Spaniards very soon behaved as the dominant party, as lord and master; they tended increasingly to regard the Indians as their labour and to treat them as inferiors, giving very little in return. They believed that they had all the rights, while the Indians had only obligations. Moreover, there was of course no need for constant protection against the attacks of hostile Chaco groups, which meant that the presence of the Spaniards was not always essential. There was really no question of reciprocity from both sides, but rather of exploitation from one side. After a few years, however, numerous marriage and other personal relationships had been created, which reduced some of the tensions and discontent.

Illustrative of the rapidly changing situation was that tensions had already arisen in 1538 and, in 1539, a stratagem had been

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devised by about 8,000 Carios who had come to Asunción to liquidate all the Spaniards who would be gathered in the church on Maundy Thursday. An important underlying cause was annoyance at the fact that the Spaniards constantly took women from the indigenous villages, regarded them more or less as slaves and exchanged them among themselves for clothing, horses or other goods. The Spaniards, however, succeeded in avoiding a bloodbath, because one of the Indian women betrayed the conspirators. The plotters were dealt with harshly. Several native leaders were eliminated; the Spaniards became lord and master over still more Indian women. This was, in fact, already the second manifestation of resistance; the first had been that of cacique Lambaré, who had opposed the conquistadores who had sailed up the river to near the later Asunción in 1537. The confrontation had then also ended unfavourably for the Indians; after the defeat, the latter handed over women and provisions to the Spaniards and promised military support for the attempts to penetrate into the Chaco.

The resistance that arose in 1542 and 1543 was far more serious. It occurred in the region between the Jejuy and the Ypané, the territory of the Guarambarense, who had been used by the Spaniards to help to supply and accompany expeditions to the 'Sierra de la Plata'. The Guarambarense were rather warlike in nature and possessed at that time several powerful leaders, including Aracaré and Tabaré. In 1542, they rose in opposition. The occasion for the revolt was the fact that cacique Aracaré and his subjects no longer wished to accompany Martínez de Irala on the expedition which he had undertaken to reach the Andes via the Chaco. The Guaraníes returned to their territory near the Jejuy. The reason for their discontent was not only the time-consuming nature of such expeditions, but also the fact that they contributed to a partial depopulation of the guára, because some of those who travelled to the west were expected to remain behind in the territory of the Chiriguanos.

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