

HEGEMONIES AND MODELS OF CULTURAL MODERNIZATION IN SOUTH AMERICA: THE PARAGUAY-BRAZIL CASE

MARÍA AMALIA GARCÍA

ASUNCIÓN BETWEEN BUENOS AIRES AND SÃO PAULO

Beginning in the nineteenth century, Buenos Aires was frequently understood in South America as a smaller version of Paris. A privileged destination for transatlantic migration, this city, with its broad avenues and academic architecture, strove to recreate fragments of the old continent on the South American shore. As the standard-bearer for “enlightened” culture within the region, Buenos Aires had no competitors until the Second World War, when the situation changed dramatically. South America did not remain unaffected by the reconfiguration of the global political-cultural stage. The alignment of Brazil and the United States, the two American giants, during the war continued into the postwar period, when Brazil grew at a dizzying pace, achieving a preeminent position within the economic landscape of Latin America. As a consequence, the different ways in which Argentina and Brazil took sides in the war not only brought political and economic consequences, but also had a strong impact on cultural practices.¹

In the late 1940s Brazil began to create complex systems of cultural management, with the goal of becoming a key player in the international art world. Between 1947 and 1949, three art museums

1 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto: Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2011).

opened in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, reshaping the Brazilian art scene as well as the regional art scene of South America. In addition, from 1951 onward, the São Paulo Biennial set up its own mode of cultural management, laying out a new geography for the art world. It prided itself on being the symbolic representation of the city of São Paulo, of modern business, and of the state. Through the Biennial, Brazil was defining its cultural, political, and economic hegemony in the region.²

Brazil's postwar military and political positioning became a key issue for Argentina's foreign affairs agenda. Even though, at the beginning of the postwar period, some sectors of the Argentine diplomatic community and government leadership were not aware of the upcoming changes, by the beginning of the 1950s, the traditional cultural supremacy of Argentina had been reduced, while Brazil, through a powerful program of cultural management, showed signs of becoming the holder of regional hegemony.³ The path taken by the Brazilian state and the bourgeoisie of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro regarding art had an impact on Buenos Aires's cultural initiatives, and the internationalist strategy of postwar Brazil represented a threat to the cultural hegemony that Argentina had previously enjoyed.⁴

During the 1950s, modern art played a major role in the way a city positioned itself politically, and in its regional and international alignments. Through new cultural endeavors, Brazil presented itself as a progressive state and as the torch-bearer of the continental avant-garde art. In 1959 an important exhibition of Brazilian art organized by the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ) with the support of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, colloquially referred to as the "Itamaraty," toured major European cities (Munich, Paris, London, Amsterdam, Milan, Barcelona, and Madrid). The MAM-RJ and the Itamaraty also sent five exhibitions of Brazilian art and architecture to

2 Paulo Herkenhoff, "A Bial de São Paulo e seus compromissos culturais e políticos," *Revista USP*, nº 52 (2001-2): 118-21; Maria Cecília França Lourenço, *Museus acolhem moderno* (São Paulo: EDUSP, 1999); Aracy Amaral, *Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, Perfil de um acervo* (São Paulo: Techint, 1986); Regina Teixeira de Barros, "Revisão de uma história: A criação do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo 1946-1949" (PhD diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2002).

3 García, *El arte abstracto*, 101-12.

4 Boris Fausto and Fernando Devoto, *Brasil e Argentina: Um ensaio de história comparada 1850-2002* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2004).

the National Museum of Fine Arts of Buenos Aires (MNBA), which, following the fall of Juan Domingo Perón's government, was headed by Jorge Romero Brest.⁵ The exhibition, entitled *Arte Moderno en Brasil* (Modern Art in Brazil), made the strongest political statement of them all by inaugurating the galleries of the MNBA, which had been refurbished in June 1957 under the new military government. This exhibition, which would also travel to Rosario, Santiago de Chile, and Lima, carried high expectations of a strong international interest in Brazilian art. In addition, the state's ongoing program of touring international exhibitions of Brazilian art internationally, together with the media coverage that surrounded these events, left little room for doubt about the Brazilian quest for cultural hegemony.⁶

A new political-cultural map was being drawn within South America; Buenos Aires, the Paris of the River Plate, saw its proud supremacy frustrated, while on the tropical side of the border, the seat of new art was being firmly established. In addition to the new museums and the Biennial that placed Brazil's principal cities at the forefront of modern art and culture, the international exhibitions of Brazilian art and architecture, as well as the regional promotion of programs to teach South Americans Brazilian Portuguese, formed an extensive network of cultural diplomacy and soft power designed to promote Brazil's hegemony throughout the region. In fact, this process of building supremacy could be seen not only in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo's competition with Buenos Aires, but also in the strong force with which Brazil projected itself in and on other countries of the region—most notably, for the purposes of this article, Paraguay.⁷

The field of Paraguayan art had been under the modernizing influence of Buenos Aires since the end of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth. This influence started to wane around the 1950s,

5 The exhibitions that were held in the Argentinean museum are *Arte Moderno en Brasil*, June 1957; *Arquitectura Brasileña*, October 1958; *Israel Visto por Portinari*, May 1959; *Roberto Burle Marx y Arquitectos Asociados*, November 1961; and *Wladyslaw*, September 1963. This last exhibition was dedicated to the graphic work of Anatol Wladyslaw, a member of the Ruptura group in Brazil.

6 García, *El arte abstracto*, 187–211.

7 In relation to the concept of hegemony, I follow the ideas set out by Raymond Williams: not only his Gramscian position about the distinction between hegemony and domination, but also his consideration of hegemony as an umbrella concept for culture and ideology. Raymond Williams, *Marxismo e ideología* (Barcelona: Peninsula, 1980), 129–36.

when it shifted to Brazil.⁸ The renewal of Paraguayan art beginning in the early 1950s was strongly associated with its Brazilian connections, due to the presence in Paraguay of Brazilian artists João Rossi and Lívio Abramo, as well as the institutional action of the Brazilian embassy in Asunción.

At that time, Brazilian models of cultural promotion reorganized Asunción's artistic milieu; especially significant was the work of the Paraguay-Brazil Cultural Institute (Instituto Cultural Paraguay Brasil), created in Asunción in May 1943 and known as the Brazilian Cultural Mission (Misión Cultural Brasileña) beginning in the 1950s.⁹ My intention in this article is to analyze the management and promotion of art through the activities of the Brazilian Cultural Mission in Paraguay

8 I base my argument on the hypothesis that Ticio Escobar offers, according to which the creation of the art scene in Asunción was essentially based on interrelations with Buenos Aires and São Paulo. According to Escobar, "Desde fines del siglo XIX hasta las primeras décadas del siguiente, la cultura paraguaya pasa a depender fundamentalmente de la rioplatense, que actúa a su vez como transmisora de influencias italianas, primero, y francesas, después. . . . El Paraguay recibe, pues, las pautas de las metrópolis filtradas por las submetrópolis regionales: básicamente Buenos Aires y, a partir de la década del 60, San Pablo". [From the end of the nineteenth century to the first decades of the twentieth, Paraguayan culture essentially became dependent on the culture of Buenos Aires, which in turn, acted as a transmitter of Italian influences first, and French influences later. . . . Therefore, Paraguay received the norms of the metropolis filtered by the regional sub-metropolis: basically Buenos Aires and, from the sixties onward, São Paulo]. See Ticio Escobar, "Pintura paraguaya: El ciclo moderno" in *Pintura del Mercosur* (Buenos Aires: Banco Velox, 2000), 106. See also Ticio Escobar, *Una interpretación de las artes plásticas en el Paraguay* (Asunción: Servilibro, 2007 [1st ed. 1984]). There is a consensus among other authors about changes in cultural influence on Paraguay: see Roberto Amigo, *Guerra, anarquía y goce: Tres episodios de la relación entre la cultura y el arte moderno en el Paraguay* (Asunción: CAV-Museo del Barro, 2002), 73; Javier Rodríguez Alcalá, "Modernidad y vanguardias en las artes plásticas paraguayas: El grupo Arte Nuevo o la reinención del J(F)uego," *Arara* 9 (2011); Ángel Mariano Jara Oviedo, "Influencia extranjera y auto gestión en la modernización estética paraguaya de 1950" (working paper, *Papeles de Trabajo* 3, nº 6, Instituto de Altos Estudios Sociales de la Universidad Nacional de General San Martín, Buenos Aires, 2010), <http://www.idaes.edu.ar/papelesdetrabajo/paginas/Documentos/6%20Jara.pdf>.

9 The distinction between the goals and functions between the Instituto Cultural Paraguay Brasil, on one hand, and the Misión Cultural Brasileña, on the other, are not very clear: it is assumed that both institutions coexisted first with relatively common powers and that the Mission gradually replaced the Institute. However, in the contemporary press, both names have come to refer synonymously to Brazilian cultural bureaucracy. Later, the name "Centro de Estudos Brasileiros" was adopted as a general title for this type of institution. See "Acta de fundación del Instituto Cultural Paraguay Brasil," Asunción, May 7, 1943. I want to thank Javier Rodríguez Alcalá for providing this documentation. See also "Acordo entre os Estados Unidos do Brasil e o Paraguai destinado a sistematizar as funções da Missão Cultural Brasileira em Assunção," *Mistério de Relaciones Exteriores, Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, March 3, 1952. CEB Archive.

during the 1950s, on the basis of archival material found in what is currently called the Center for Brazilian Studies (CEB) in Asunción, an institution whose roots lie in the earlier Institute and Mission. My hypothesis is that Brazilian cultural management sought to catalyze processes of artistic modernization in Paraguay during the 1950s and inscribe it in an internationalist promotional framework. More specifically, I will consider Lívio Abramo's activity as a key player in this development of Paraguayan modern art.

I want to develop two strands of inquiry: First I will evaluate existing research into the disputes between Argentina and Brazil over hegemony in the region, and in a second step I will propose an analysis of Brazilian cultural intervention in Paraguay. Investigating Cold War cultural history in Paraguay allows us to rewrite the region's art history by looking not only at the relationships between Latin American cities and those in Europe and North America, but also at the hegemonic ties present among South American metropolises. Ultimately I want to disassemble the supposedly fixed categories of center and periphery, proposing instead an approach that allows me to reconfigure these concepts at each stage of my analysis. Examining the Paraguayan case and its relationship with Brazil and Argentina opens the way for a discussion and rethinking of Latin American art's assumed marginality in international circuits. This research can then serve as the basis for further investigation into the diverse cultural positions in South America during the Cold War by analyzing the tensions between traditional hegemonies and the appearance of new centers of cultural diffusion and management within the region.

THE MODERNIST MISSION

The Brazilian desire for hegemony over Paraguay dates from the nineteenth century and had its most obvious manifestation in the Triple Alliance War. Between 1865 and 1870, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay fought against Paraguay in a cruel war that responded not only to the countries' goals of national unity and sovereignty, but also to the economic interests of Britain in the region. The complete defeat of Paraguay resulted in the loss of the greater part of its territory and in a demographic catastrophe.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Paraguay was a virtual geopolitical prisoner of Argentina. Paraguayan foreign trade was conducted along the Paraguay and Paraná rivers, both tributaries

of the Río de la Plata and under the control of Argentine shipping companies.¹⁰ This Argentine political and economic power over Paraguay was based on historic, cultural, and commercial bonds and on the close proximity of the countries' capital cities.¹¹

The balance of regional relations, which seemed inclined toward Argentina, shifted in the 1940s. Brazil sought to reverse its negative stigma among the Paraguayan population and to keep this landlocked country within its sphere, estranging it from Argentine influence in the region. The bonds between Paraguay and Brazil gained momentum when Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas visited Paraguay in 1941, after which ten cooperation agreements were signed concerning trade, transportation, infrastructure, border control, navigation of rivers, and cultural exchange.¹² Among the most important of these documents were the agreements that turned the city of Santos into a free port for Paraguayan foreign trade, which helped create systems of credit for bilateral commerce and the construction of a railway between Concepción and Pedro Juan Caballero.

Between 1941 and 1945, and in line with its Brazilian ties, Paraguay counted on the support of the United States, which tried to expel Nazi sympathizers from sectors of the Paraguayan army. The American scrutiny of Paraguay also helped restrain the influence of Argentina, which remained neutral during the Second World War but was suspected of being philo-fascist.¹³

It was in May 1943, within this complicated context, that the Paraguay-Brazil Cultural Institute was created in Asunción.¹⁴ The goal of the Institute was to encourage and strengthen the cultural, scientific, and educational exchange between Paraguay and Brazil. As the Paraguay-Brazil Cultural Institute stated in its founding charter, the

10 In relation to the Paraná River, see Graciela Silvestri, ed., *Paraná Ra'anga: Un viaje filosófico* (Rosario, Centro Cultural Parque España, 2011).

11 Fausto and Devoto, *Brasil e Argentina*, 121.

12 "Atos entre o Brasil e o Paraguai: Firmados no Rio de Janeiro a 14 de Junho de 1941 por ocasião da visita do Doutor Luiz A. Argaña," Ministro das Relações Exteriores do Paraguai, Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Nacional, 1941. CEB Archive.

13 Ricardo Scavone Yegros, "Guerra internacional y confrontaciones políticas (1920–1954)," in *Historia del Paraguay* (Asunción: Taurus, 2011), 226–27; Francisco Doratioto, *Una relación compleja: Paraguay y Brasil 1889–1954* (Asunción: Editorial Tiempo de Historia, 2011).

14 "Acta de fundación del Instituto Cultural Paraguay Brasil," Asunción, May 7, 1943. See also "Instituto Cultural Paraguay Brasil," médio gráfico sin identificar, mayo de 1960, CEB Archive; and "Atos entre o Brasil e o Paraguai: Firmados no Rio de Janeiro a 14 de Junho de 1941 por ocasião da visita do Doutor Luiz A. Argaña," Ministro das Relações Exteriores do Paraguai, CEB Archive.

earlier development of the Brazil-Paraguay Institute in Rio de Janeiro had triggered the foundation of the Paraguayan branch.¹⁵ During the 1950s, Brazil's cultural and institutional presence in Asunción further expanded with the creation of the Brazilian Cultural Mission. The founding of Brazilian Cultural Institutes and/or Cultural Missions was an endeavor carried out during the presidential administration of Getúlio Vargas, who encouraged the installation of centers dedicated to the teaching and diffusion of Brazilian language and culture in Latin American countries. By the end of the 1950s, these programs had been established in four South American cities: the first in Montevideo in 1940, the second in Asunción between 1941 and 1944, another in Buenos Aires in 1954, and a final one in La Paz in 1958.¹⁶

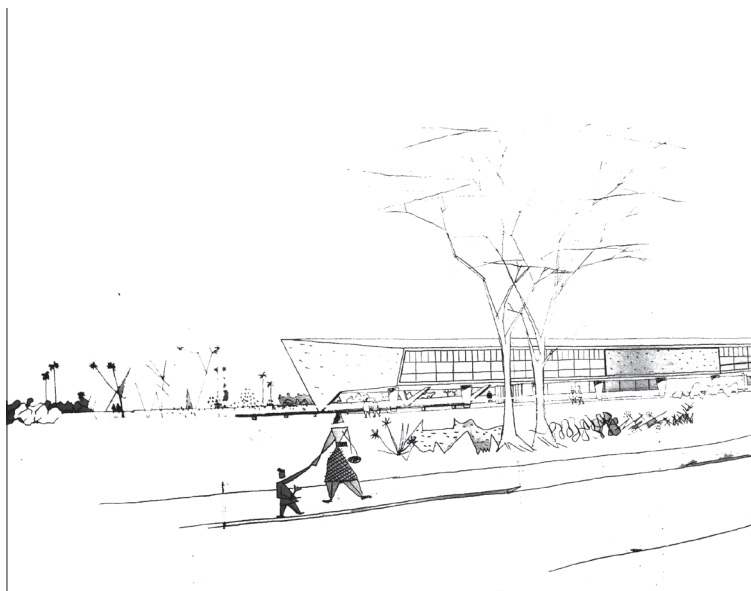
In March 1952 an agreement was signed to systematize the functions of the Brazilian Cultural Mission in Asunción.¹⁷ This agreement relaunched cooperation strategies that, in addition to the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese, included collaboration with the National University of Asunción by supplying it with teachers from Brazil. The agreement also facilitated scientific, literary, artistic, and musical exchange; it granted scholarships to Paraguayan students and professionals to attend Brazilian universities, and promoted the exchange of books and publications.

During the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, the Brazilian Cultural Mission experienced its golden age. The influence of Brazilian models of management on Paraguayan artistic production and exhibition during this period is very noticeable. In order to study this phenomenon, I focus specifically on issues related to art and architecture during the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, a period in which the Brazilian Cultural Mission was headed by Albino Peixoto and, more importantly, by José Edgard Estellita Lins. This analysis follows two principal lines of inquiry: architectural projects and art exhibitions as key means for displaying and promoting Brazilian modernism.

15 "Acta de fundación del Instituto Cultural Paraguay Brasil"; Daniele Reiter Chedid, "Aproximação Brasil-Paraguai: A Missão" (master's diss., Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados, 2010), <http://www.ufgd.edu.br/fch/mestrado-historia/dissertacoes/dissertacao-de-daniele-reiter-chedid>.

16 Maria Margarida Cintra Nepomuceno, *Lívio Abramo no Paraguai: Entretecendo culturas* (diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2010).

17 "Acordo entre os Estados Unidos do Brasil e o Paraguai destinado a sistematizar as funções da Missão Cultural Brasileira em Assunção," Mistério de Relaciones Exteriores, Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, March 31, 1952. CEB Archive.



Affonso Reidy.

Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil, 1952. Architectural drawing.

Image courtesy of Centro de Estudos Brasileiros, Asunción.

The most important undertaking within this framework of political-cultural links between the countries was the building of the Experimental School Paraguay-Brazil (CEPB). The project agreement was signed in 1952, and the school opened its doors in 1964. The Brazilian government's proposal for an educational institution was in line with Getúlio Vargas's visit to Paraguay in 1941.¹⁸ The agreement of the CEPB established the Brazilian donation of a high school that aimed to combine the best of Brazilian architecture and pedagogy. For this reason the architectural project was led by Affonso Reidy and the pedagogical project by Lourenço Filho. The building would function as a high school during the day, and in the evening it would host the Faculty of Philosophy of the National University of Asunción.

The agreement eloquently described the expectations driving this undertaking. It would "give concrete expression to the ideals of American fraternity that happily prevail in the relationship between Brazil and Paraguay."¹⁹ Moreover, the agreement concluded emphatically: "we would like to point out the obvious benefits to the student youth of Paraguay that will be brought about by the realization of the

18 Javier Rodríguez Alcalá, "Reidy en Cachinga: De la política del café con leche a la geopolítica del hormigón armado," *Arquitextos* 097.01 (June 2008), <http://vitruvius.es/revistas/read/arquitextos/09.097/132/es>

19 "Acordo sobre o oferecimento pelo Brasil do Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil a ser construído em Assunção. Coleção de Atos Internacionais, novembro de 1952," CEB Archive.



Affonso Reidy, Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil, Asunción, 1952. Photo by the author.

project for the creation of an Experimental School, whose construction is offered to Paraguay by the Government of Brazil, with its proverbial generosity and in a gesture of deep Pan-American and humanist intention.²⁰

Located in Ita Pyta Punta, on the margins of the Paraguay River, the construction of the CEPB was never finished. Only a third of the project—the classroom block—was actually built. Reidy had designed the CEPB's facilities as two different functional groups: on one side, along the length of the CEPB's north perimeter, the classroom block with a ramp for access, and the piles that free the ground floor. The other side, the (unbuilt) southern sector, was intended to be an area more open to the public that included an auditorium, a gymnasium, and a pool leading to a yard designed for commemorative celebrations.²¹

20 Ibid.

21 Alcalá, "Reidy en Cachinga"; Javier Rodríguez Alcalá et al., *Colegio Experimental Paraguay-Brasil* (Asunción: Embajada del Brasil, 2009).

The formal-structural solution of the CEPB classroom block, with its V-shaped piles, bears a strong similarity to the project carried out by the same architect for the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro.

Both the Brazilian and Paraguayan press praised the Itamaraty for the promotion of Brazilian culture and education in Paraguay. The CEPB was perceived as a symbol of Pan-Americanism, and as a high point in the bonds of friendship uniting Paraguay and Brazil.²² Nevertheless, the journal *O Globo* denounced the fact that the project remained unfinished as a failure of the Itamaraty. Reidy's death, which occurred a couple of months before the CEPB's opening, became an important motivation for completing the project. "If the Itamaraty does not protect Brazilian architecture, which is our strongest flagship in the international cultural field, and if they do not even respect the seal imposed by death upon a project that only its creator should have been able to change, we expect that they would at least have the decency to complete their donation as promised."²³

Undoubtedly, modern architecture was the most important cultural product that Brazil had "exported" since the end of the 1930s. As part of this phenomenon, and framed by the needs of the symbolic representation of the state, the construction of a new capital city became the perfect example of official cultural management.²⁴ The promotion of modern Brazilian architecture, boosted by the construction of Brasília, was therefore a key strategy of the Itamaraty to place Brazil in a leading cultural position within Latin America.

This context allows us to understand not only the CEPB project but also another important architectural endeavor in Asunción during the 1950s, the construction of the Hotel Guaraní. In 1957, the Paraguay Social Welfare Institute issued an international call for tenders for the architectural design of a hotel in Asunción that would stand as a touristic and architectural urban symbol of the city's progress. Out of the twenty-eight international projects submitted, only one was presented by Paraguayan architects. The jury, headed by Affonso Reidy, selected

22 Ver "Caderno de exercício 1964." CEB Archive.

23 Vera Pacheco Jordão, "Fiasco do Itamaraty," *O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro, August 24, 1964, 3. CEB Archive.

24 Adrián Gorelik, "Tentativas de compreender una ciudad moderna," *Block*, n° 4 (December 1999), 62–76; Lauro Cavalcanti, "Brasília: A construção de um exemplo," in *Anos JK: Margens da modernidade*, ed. Wander Melo Miranda (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial, 2002), 91–103.



Rubio Morales, Ricardo Sievers, and Rubens Vianna,
Hotel Guarani, Asunción, 1957. Photo by the author.

the project by the Brazilian architects Rubio Morales, Ricardo Sievers, and Rubens Vianna.²⁵ The Hotel Guarani has key features connecting it to the most emblematic buildings of modern Brazilian architecture: the double geometry produced by the rotation of the tower from the base; the projecting pile system of the lower platform; variable section piles; the incorporation of garden terraces inside the building; large cantilevers, and the use of *brise-soleil* on the façade. Undoubtedly, the architectural imprint is one of the strongest symbols of cultural reference: through the construction of the CEPB and the Hotel Guarani, Asunción was incorporating the modernist framework promoted by the Brazilian cultural model.

This *Brazilization* of Paraguayan life was further intensified in 1954 when Alfredo Stroessner became president. Stroessner's bonds with Brazil have often been pinpointed: he undertook some of his military studies in Rio de Janeiro and was decorated several times by his neighboring country. In fact, the political integration of Brazil and Paraguay in the 1950s involved an ever-closer relationship between

25 César Augusto Morra, "Hotel Guarani: La marca del lugar," *Drops* 033.05 (June 2010), <http://www.vitruvius.com.br/revistas/read/drops/10.033/3464>.

Stroessner's government and that of the new Brazilian president, Juscelino Kubitschek.²⁶ In 1958, the two presidents signed the agreement to build the International Friendship Bridge, which would span the Paraná River and link the cities of Foz do Iguazu (Brazil) and Ciudad del Este (Paraguay).²⁷ During the 1960s, further negotiations between the countries concerned the construction of the Itaipú Dam, which was designed to exploit the water resources of the Paraná River.²⁸ In addition, the growing waves of Brazilian settlers along Paraguay's eastern border during this period gave rise to the establishment of large agrarian estates—a phenomenon responsible, at least in part, for the inequity of land distribution and the conflicts related to agrarian reform in Paraguay.

BRAZILIANS IN ASUNCIÓN

Lívio Abramo, who had a strong presence in the Asunción art world, stands as the most important marker of the cultural exchange between the two countries between the time of his first visit in 1956 and his final settlement in the country in 1962. His activities have been read as a “true” bridge of friendship between Brazil and Paraguay. The interpretations of this engraver's development within the Paraguayan context are complex and still today loaded with strong symbolic and political connotations.²⁹ His affection for this country did not conflict with his civilizing enterprise as a modernist missionary. Nevertheless, the Brazilian presence in the Paraguayan art world began prior to Abramo's arrival.

To understand the background of Brazil's cultural influence over the Paraguayan art milieu, we should consider the role of São Paulo-based artist João Rossi, who arrived in Asunción in February 1950 to work as a physical education teacher for the Asunción Branch of the YMCA. His activities in Asunción were related to several important

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- 26 Ceres Moraes, *Paraguai: A consolidação da ditadura Stroessner—1954–1963* (Porto Alegre: Edipucrs, 2000), 99.
- 27 “Entrevista de Stroessner y Kubitschek,” *Patria*, Asunción, November 2, 1958; “Fraternidad Americana: Los jefes de Estado de Brasil y Paraguay se abrazan hoy y con ellos, los dos pueblos,” *El País*, Asunción, October 4, 1958. CEB Archive.
- 28 Ronaldo Alexandre do Amaral e Silva, “Brasil-Paraguai: Marcos da política pragmática na reaproximação bilateral, 1954–1973: Um estudo de caso sobre o papel de Stroessner e a importância de Itaipu” (master's diss., Universidade de Brasília, 2006), <http://repositorio.bce.unb.br/handle/10482/2363>
- 29 Justo Pastor Mellado, *La conjura-Colombino* (Asunción: Centro Cultural de España Juan de Salazar, 2004).



Olga Blinder. *Rio de Janeiro*, 1954. Oil on cardboard, 48 × 58 cm.
 Centro de Artes Visuales/Museo del Barro, Asunción.
 Image courtesy of Centro de Artes Visuales/Museo del Barro, Asunción.

events that prepared the terrain for Abramo's subsequent arrival.³⁰ First, Rossi authored a text entitled "Arte contemporáneo" (Contemporary Art), included in the catalogue of Olga Blinder's exhibition in the rooms of the Paraguayan American Cultural Center (CCPA) in September 1952. Two of the texts published in this catalogue, the one written by Rossi and another by the Spanish-Paraguayan artist Josefina Plá, are considered by Paraguayan art historiography as

30 "Actos de bienvenida en honor del nuevo secretario de la Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes." *La Unión*, Asunción, February 16, 1950, 1. Born in São Paulo in 1923, Rossi moved to Montevideo in 1949, where he was head of the Young Men's Christian Association in that city, combining, as later in Asunción, physical and pictorial training. Ticio Escobar points out the multifaceted activity undertaken by Rossi (he not only devoted himself to painting and physical activity, but also acted as a journalist, poet, accountant, and furniture designer) to highlight that the importance of his actions in Asunción was not due to the excellence of his artistic career but to his timely involvement in the scene. Rossi, during his three years in Paraguay, organized courses and lectures, showed films, photographs, catalogues, and books spreading modern art parameters throughout the Asunción scene (highlighting the work of Torres-García, Di Cavalcanti, Portinari, and Tarsila do Amaral).

manifestos of modern art within the national context and as a pioneering step toward the creation of the New Art Group.³¹ The New Art Group, which included Olga Blinder, Josefina Plá, Edith Jiménez, Ruth Fischer, Lilí del Mónico, and José Laterza Parodi, among others, sought to address the artistic modernization process in Paraguay. According to Escobar, although the Group advocated for artistic renewal rather than promoting a systematic avant-garde program, it precipitated a crisis within the long tradition of academicism still dominant in Paraguay at the time.

Second, in July 1954, two years after Blinder's exhibition, the members of the New Art Group presented the First Week of Modern Paraguayan Art, during which they exhibited their works in the shop windows of Avenida Palma, a traditional commercial avenue in Asunción.³² The event's title clearly evoked São Paulo's Modern Art Week of 1922, a festival of music, poetry readings, conferences, and art exhibitions that effectively renewed the Brazilian arts without necessarily forming a cohesive or systematic movement.³³

Moreover, the title also insinuated the process of modernization that Brazilian art historiography has come to associate with it. Even though these artists had been strongly influenced by Argentine modernism (the generation of the 1920s), it is important to point out that they had appropriated their way of inscribing the modern, the "logistics" of modernism, and the avant-garde, from the Brazilian model.³⁴ Thus, Rossi not only promoted Paraguayan modern art with his catalogue text for Blinder's exhibition, but also proposed strategies for inscribing it as a sign of novelty and modernization in the urban milieu.

31 João Rossi, "Arte contemporáneo," in *Exposición de pintura Olga Blinder de Schwartzman* (Asunción: Centro Cultural Paraguayo Americano, 1952).

32 Rodríguez Alcalá, "Modernidad y vanguardias"; Escobar, *Una interpretación de las artes plásticas en el Paraguay*, 392–93. A complete survey of news press and other documents has yet to be done. Some contemporary newspaper articles are mentioned here: Josefina Plá, "El movimiento renovador en nuestra pintura," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, April 11, 1954; Ramiro Domínguez, "Por un arte nuevo," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, July 4, 1954; "Exposición de obras pictóricas," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, July 7, 1954; "Nueva exposición," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, July 15, 1954, " 'Artísticas' posadas," *Voz de Misiones*, November 25, 1954; "La exposición en la calle Palma" [article from an unidentified source], 1954, archive Leonor Cecotto-Ticio Escobar, Asunción.

33 Aracy Amaral, *Arte y arquitectura del modernismo brasileño 1917–1930* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1975), XVII.

34 Amigo, *Guerra, anarquía y goce*, 73.

Third, Paraguay's participation in the Second São Paulo Biennial catalyzed the debate that led to the constitution of the New Art Group: during the Biennial, Paraguayan art was represented by traditionalist artists; the Paraguayan delegation contributed native landscapes, indigenous peoples, and local fauna and flora. The next generation of artists reacted against these nativist currents. In fact, Paraguayan art historiography considers this episode to be one of the triggers for the founding of the New Art Group and the exhibition of these artists' works.³⁵ This fact is also important for acknowledging how the Brazilian institutional apparatus attempted to incite artist renovation in the Paraguayan context. The São Paulo Biennial gave rise to debates about the institutionalization of modern art, not only locally, but also within the wider South American context.³⁶

It is important to keep these three episodes of Brazilian influence on the Paraguayan artistic milieu in mind in order to better comprehend the actions of Lívio Abramo. Abramo³⁷ studied engraving in the German expressionist style with Oswaldo Goeldi and incorporated into his work the transformations of visual vocabulary that the Brazilian modernist movement of 1922 had introduced. He went to jail under Vargas's government for his political activities in the PCB (the Brazilian Communist Party), and in 1951 he traveled to Europe to continue his artistic education at the Atelier 17 with Stanley Hayter. Linked to São Paulo's Modern Art Museum (MAM-SP), he won the first prize for engraving at the Second São Paulo Biennial in 1953. In 1956, Abramo was invited to exhibit his works at the Brazilian Cultural Mission, where he displayed xylographs, linocuts, and drawings. This exhibition was very popular with Asunción's artists, who were captivated by the avant-garde images, as well as by the technical aspects of Abramo's artworks.³⁸ Abramo stayed in Paraguay for two weeks and connected with the local art scene by giving engraving lessons attended

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- 35 Rodríguez Alcalá, "Modernidad y vanguardias"; Amigo, *Guerra, anarquía y goce*, 73; Escobar, *Una interpretación de las artes plásticas en el Paraguay*, 391. See also the following archive materials: "Conferencia," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, June 29, 1954; "Disertó sobre arte moderno el Profesor Jaime Bestard," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, July 3, 1954.
- 36 In the Argentine case, São Paulo's bet on new, abstract art served as an important booster for Argentina's official institutions, even though abstract art had been popular in local intellectual and artistic circles since the 1940s. García, *El arte abstracto*, 95–101.
- 37 Abramo was born in 1903 in Aranquara/São Paulo, and died in 1992 in Asunción.
- 38 María Gloria Echaui de Muxfeldt, *Lívio Abramo y su aporte a las artes visuales del Paraguay (1956–1992)* (Asunción: Fondec, 2012); Nepomuceno, *Lívio Abramo no Paraguai*, 149–55.

Lívio Abramo. *Operário*, 1935. Xylograph, 18,5 x 18 cm.
Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros–USP, São Paulo.
Image courtesy of Regina Duarte.



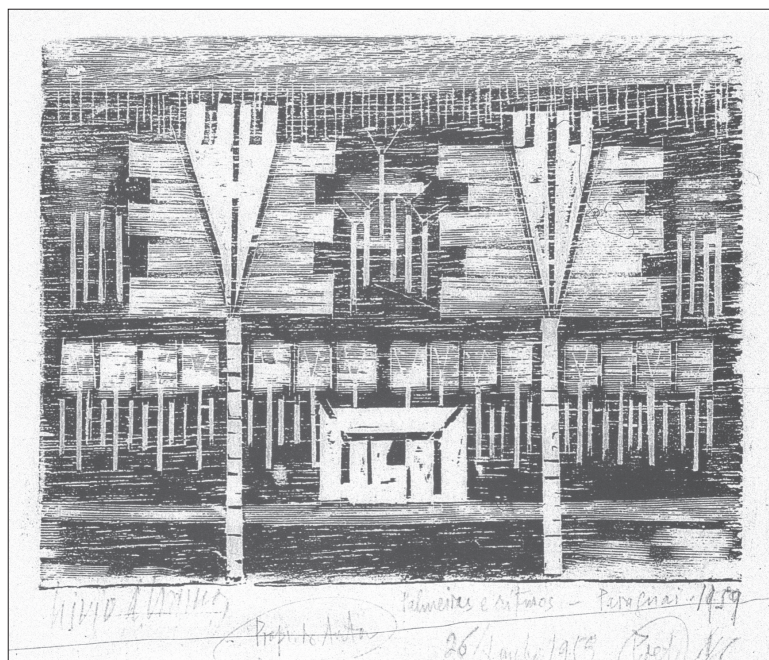
by the city's artists, enabling some of them to encounter for the first time a technique that would later become their main medium of expression. This was the case, for instance, with Edith Jiménez. Abramo's pedagogical experience in Asunción culminated in the creation of the "Julián de la Herrería" engraving studio, which was led (long-distance) by Abramo during its first years.³⁹ Artists including María Adela Solano López, Olga Blinder, Lotte Schulz, Jacinto Rivero, and Edith Jiménez took part in this endeavor. Beginning with this first visit, Abramo retained his links with Paraguay through the Mission and the embassy and took part in many exchanges until finally settling in Paraguay in 1962.

According to the Paraguayan critic Ticio Escobar, Abramo's arrival helps throw some light on one of the main debates that was taking place within the Asunción art world at the time: how to articulate universal (modern) languages and local, vernacular production. The artist's mature graphic work, which attempted to render Paraguay's

39 Echauri de Muxfeldt, *Lívio Abramo*, 35.

40 Escobar, *Una interpretación de las artes plásticas en el Paraguay*, 403–4.

physical and cultural environment, is illustrative of the relation between the vernacular and the universal.⁴⁰ In the series entitled *Paraguay*, he used symbols of Paraguayan popular imagery in a synthetic abstractionist approach. In the first engravings of this series, he took the plain, symmetric structure of popular native textiles and recreated them using the black-and-white contrast provided by the technique of xylography.⁴¹



Livio Abramo. Arriba: *Palmeiras e ritmos. Paraguai: Síntesis*, 1959. Xylograph, 13 × 18 cm. Centro de Artes Visuales-Museo del Barro, Asunción. Image courtesy of Regina Duarte.

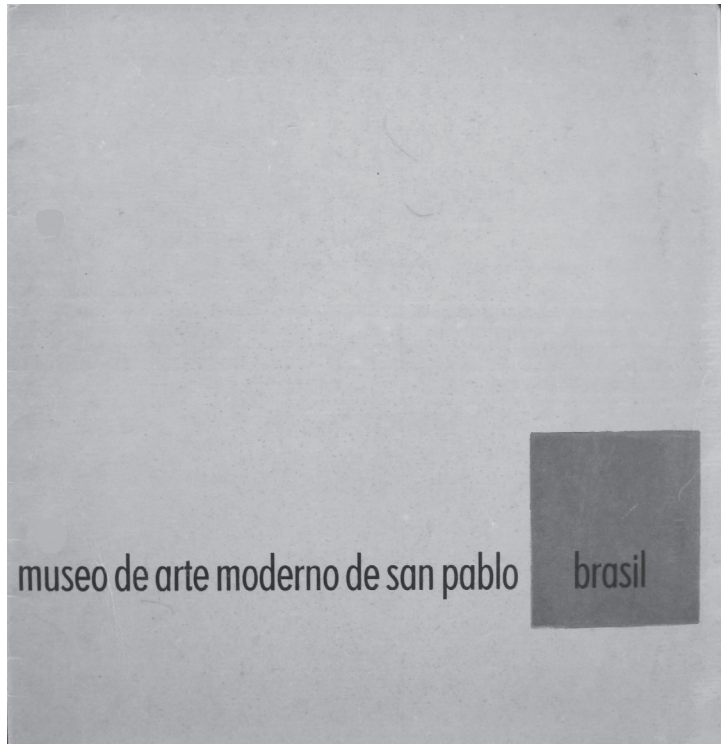
Abramo's strong ties to Paraguay are expressed both in his graphic work and in his role as a cultural manager. Beginning in the late 1950s, the Brazilian Cultural Mission became an outstanding space for cultural promotion in Asunción, supporting many endeavors in which Lívio actively participated. It was a moment of prolific artistic production and exchange, a time of splendor that combined Abramo's active cultural promotion with the dynamic management of José Estellita

⁴¹ Ibid.

Lins, who was in charge of the Brazilian Cultural Mission. The many cultural exchanges during this period give an account of a time of strong institutional activity that also helped to solidify Paraguay and Brazil's political relationship. The museums of modern art in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, together with the Biennial, functioned as important agents in the defining and spread of modern art throughout the region, in addition to being efficient collaborators with the Itamaraty regarding cultural policies abroad.

In 1959 an exhibition titled *Exposición de Obras del Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo* (Exhibition of Works from the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo) took place in Asunción, with works belonging to the collection of the MAM-SP. This project had been conceived in 1956 by the head of the Mission, Albino Peixoto, on the occasion of Abramo's exhibition in Asunción. Finally, under the management of Estellita Lins, and with Lívio Abramo as the official representative of the MAM-SP, the exhibition opened on July 9, 1959, in the Carlos Antonio López Hall, with President Stroessner as well as

Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo, Brasil
(Asunción: Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo, 1959).
Catalogue cover.



a number of ambassadors and ministers in attendance. The show included a selection of modernist works by both Brazilian and international artists. The catalogue's text, written by Paulo Mendes de Almeida, pointed out that, despite the exhibition's reduced size, the value of the artists gathered there was remarkable for its capacity to represent different stages in the development of modern art.⁴² With a grand total of sixty-eight pieces, the sixteen represented international artists stood out, among them Severini, De Chirico, Dewasne, and Metzinger. Among the Brazilian artists, the generation of the 1920s was represented by Malfatti, Di Cavalcanti, and Tarsila, and the generation of abstract artists by Volpi, Da Costa, Raimo, Charoux, and Ostrower. Abramo's own work included three xylographs inspired by Paraguay. This exhibition, in which the international masters were displayed side by side with Brazilian artists, did nothing but consolidate Brazil as a reference point in the field of modern art.

The Paraguayan press praised the *Exposición de Obras del Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo*, which was considered the first display of foreign works presented in Asunción, as a total success, stressing that it was the first time that the MAM-SP had organized an exhibition of its work abroad.⁴³ This, in fact, was wrong, because the MAM-SP had been organizing exhibitions abroad since 1953. One is left to wonder whether this was not a strategic move on the media's part to give more prominence to Brazilian activities in Asunción.⁴⁴

The main focus of this exhibition was educational, and for this reason it was accompanied by a free brochure written by Sérgio Milliet, and by several lectures by Abramo and Paraguayan critic Ramiro Domínguez. The brochure aimed to show what modern art was, and how it had evolved over a series of developmental stages for both general and specialized audiences. Referring to the exhibi-

42 Paulo Mendes de Almeida, "Introducción," in *Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo, Brasil* (Asunción: Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo, 1959).

43 "Valiosas obras del Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo serán exhibidas en Asunción," *Patria*, Asunción, May 28, 1959; "Importantes obras del Museo de San Pablo serán exhibidas en Asunción," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, June 1, 1959; "Inauguróse la muestra de obras del Museo de Arte Moderno, ayer," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, June 10, 1959; "Esta tarde será habilitada la exposición del Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo," *El País*, Asunción, June 9, 1959. CEB Archive.

44 "Exposições organizadas pelo Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo e apresentadas no exterior: Relatório das atividades do MAM-SP March 1949–October 1958." MAM-SP Archive.

tion's Paraguayan artists, Abramo argued in the Brazilian press that "the MAM exhibition would play a decisive role in their future works, encouraging these artists to go for more audacious undertakings."⁴⁵ Evidently, Abramo placed the MAM collection and the Brazilian artists in the Paraguayan modern art guides.

The definitions of modern art proposed by the *Exposición de Obras del Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo* gave rise to debates within the Asunción art world. For instance, during a round table organized as one of the exhibition's activities, artist Jaime Bestard discussed the concept of the modern with Abramo.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, artist Josefina Plá authored two long articles that appeared in the newspaper *La Tribuna* and that also reflected on this subject,⁴⁷ highlighting the show's importance for the local scene: "Our general audience—and also many of our artists or aspiring ones—have the opportunity to see and 'touch' some paintings of universal value for the first time."⁴⁸ Even though she was evidently grateful for the works sent to Asunción, Plá pointed out the partiality of the selection of European art; she was disappointed by the absence of the masters of the *École de Paris* and criticized the fact that Metzinger was the only representative of contemporary French artists. Her first article, which was focused on European painting, analyzed the exhibition's works in detail, while the second was devoted to Brazilian painting and to the graphic works section. In both texts, Plá emphasized the stature of the artists but was remiss about the quality of the pieces selected, considering instead the larger oeuvre of each of these figures. In short, the selection privileged the artists' signatures over the importance of the artworks. Plá's intervention is important because, even though she highlighted the relevance of the exhibition in the local context, she maintained a critical view regarding the selection of artworks. Over the course of these long articles, she sought to show that the Paraguayan audience was acquainted with modern tendencies in

45 "Exposição do acervo do Museu de Arte Moderna no Paraguai," *O Estado de São Paulo*, São Paulo, July 12, 1959. CEB Archive.

46 "La mesa redonda de pintores y artistas se desarrolló en forma interesante y amena," *El País*, Asunción, June 8, 1959. CEB Archive.

47 Josefina Plá, "El Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo en Asunción: Primer artículo," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, June 19, 1959; Josefina Plá, "El Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo en Asunción: Segundo artículo," *La Tribuna*, Asunción, June 26, 1959. CEB Archive.

48 Plá, "Museo de Arte Moderno de San Pablo: Primer artículo," trans. Vanesa Frejtman.



Escolinha de Arte (Asunción: Misión Cultural Brasileña, 1964). Catalogue cover.

art and capable of differentiating between the exhibition's achievements and its shortcomings.

In 1959 the collection of the MAM-SP contained artists and works of greater significance than the ones sent to Asunción. It was composed of the acquisitions of its founder, Cicillo Matarazzo and other private donors, as well as the donations of Nelson Rockefeller, and by the award-winning artworks from the first four Biennials. In fact, works by Kandinsky, Braque, Lhote, Picasso, Miró, and Léger that were absent in the Asunción show would have contributed more effectively to constructing a linear, canonical account of the history of modernism, to which the exhibition aspired.⁴⁹ Evidently, the MAM-SP underestimated the expertise of its Paraguayan audience, the purported subjects of its modernizing cultural mission.

Another crucial event for the Brazilian Cultural Mission occurred in 1959, when Edgard Estelita Lins organized a visit by Augusto Rodrigues, head of the Escolinha de Arte do Brasil (Little Art School of Brazil) in Rio de Janeiro. Rodrigues brought to Asunción an exhibition

49 Amaral, *Museu de Arte Contemporânea*.

of works by the Escolinha children and held lectures and courses. This led to the creation of a Paraguayan Escolinha de Arte in 1959, which was housed on the premises of the Mission. Artists María Adela Solano López, Olga Blinder, and Lotte Schulz joined Rodrigues in the establishment of the Paraguayan branch. The school followed the concept of the Escolinha in Rio de Janeiro, which was based on the ideas of Herbert Read, systematized in his 1943 book *Education through Art*. The Paraguayan Escolinha, following the Brazilian model of cultural promotion, participated in an international meeting and received an honorary mention for works that it exhibited in 1960.⁵⁰

In 1960, during a trip to Rio de Janeiro, Estellita Lins talked to several Brazilian newspapers about his achievements at the Mission and his projects for the future.⁵¹ In addition to the specific activities of the Mission (courses in language, literature, and music, as well as the engraving studio Julián de la Herrería), Estellita Lins's most significant initiatives had been the Escolinha



"Intensa e frutífera atividade da Misão Cultural Brasileira no Paraguai," *Correio da Manhã*, Rio de Janeiro, February 5, 1960.

- 50 "Premio Internacional para a Escolinha de Arte do Paraguai," *O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro, January 20, 1960. CEB Archive.
- 51 "Brasil exporta artistas e etnólogos para el Paraguai," *O Jornal*, Rio de Janeiro, February 7, 1960, 14; "Maior intercâmbio de cultura com o Paraguai," *Jornal do Commercio*, s/d; "Estellita veio a dinamizar a execução dos convênios entre Brasil e o Paraguai," *Jornal do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, January 31, 1960, 13; "Intensa e frutífera atividade da Misão Cultura Brasileira no Paraguai," *Correio da Manhã*, Rio de Janeiro, February 5, 1960. CEB Archive.

de Arte and the exhibition of the MAM-SP. With great national pride, Estellita Lins ended his statements to the Brazilian press by telling them: “It is moving, for us Brazilians, to hear in these celebrations and solemnities the Brazilian national anthem being sung with enthusiasm and good pronunciation by the Paraguayan children.”⁵² Estellita Lins also announced the upcoming opening of the contemporary Brazilian book fair in 1961. This fair was conceived as a tribute from the Brazilian government in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Paraguayan independence.⁵³ Even though the completion of the CEPB served as Brazil’s main endeavor in lending greater visibility to its cultural initiatives in Paraguay, the Itamaraty undertook many other projects to ensure its diplomatic relations with, and domination over, Paraguay. With this goal in mind, Paraguayan visual arts were lent an important space at the São Paulo Biennial of 1961.

The Biennial’s sixth edition included an exhibition entitled *Barroco Missionero* (Missionary Baroque) featuring religious imagery from the Jesuit missions of Paraguay. This exhibition was meant at once to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Biennial and to symbolize the twenty-year-old cultural and diplomatic relationship between the two countries. In *Barroco Missionero*, the exhibition of Jesuit art from the colonial period thus served to celebrate Brazil’s contemporary cultural mission in Paraguay. The idea behind *Barroco Missionero* dated from 1959, when an exhibition of Guaraní pieces was proposed as a diplomatic counterpoint to the artworks exhibited at the MAM-SP.⁵⁴ Abramo, together with critic Ramiro Domínguez and architect Fernando Saturnino de Britto, had then scouted various Jesuit and Franciscan missions in Paraguay (Yaguaron, San Ignacio, and Trinidad, among others) in order to find and select pieces for the exhibition, which ended up comprising more than sixty objects, including sculptures, oratories, and retables produced in the missions of Paraguay during the seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries.

Altars, angel heads, and wood carvings of the crucified Christ, along with Saints Elizabeth and Michael (among others), also

52 “Intensa e frutífera atividade da Missão Cultura Brasileira no Paraguai”; “Brasil exporta artistas y etnólogos para el Paraguai.”

53 “Exposición del libro brasileño contemporáneo,” *Patria*, Asunción, May 9, 1961; “Tres mil libros brasileños fueron donados al Paraguay,” *La Tribuna*, May 14, 1961. CEB Archive.

54 “Exposição do acervo do Museu de Arte Moderna no Paraguai.”



View of the Barroco Missionero exhibition, VI Bienal de São Paulo, 1961. Image courtesy of Fundação Bienal São Paulo.



Lívio Abramo at the Barroco Missionero exhibition, VI Bienal de São Paulo, 1961.
Image courtesy of Fundação Bienal São Paulo.

abounded in Niemeyer's modern architecture in Ibirapuera. This "ethnographic" edition of the São Paulo Biennial (organized by Mário Pedrosa) aimed to present a strong historic-anthropological profile, in which the Jesuit pieces were presented together with copies of Byzantine frescos, Australian aboriginal art, and Japanese calligraphy.⁵⁵ From this perspective, it is possible to understand the room dedicated to Kurt Schwitters in this Biennial as a break with the traditional concept of the work of art. This curatorship returned to Pedrosa's earlier research into forms of artistic expression, such as those of primitive cultures, children, and the insane, excluded by Western rationality.⁵⁶

The Paraguayan delegation to the Biennial included including supporters of the New Art Group: Blinder, Colombino, Di Lascio, Laura Márquez, Hermann Guggiari, and Edith Jiménez, who would obtain an Honorable Mention and the Silver Plaque. Guggiari was also recognized for the placement of his work *Escultura sonora* (Sounding Sculpture) in Ibirapuera Park.⁵⁷

The official recognition of Paraguayan artists at the São Paulo Biennial has its own history. At the 1959 Fifth São Paulo Biennial, Hermann Guggiari won the Honorable Mention for his sculpture *Hungría*, and at the same event, Abramo organized an exhibition of *ñandutis*, traditional Paraguayan lace. At the 1957 Fourth Biennial, Josefina Plá and José Laterza Parodi obtained the Arno Award with their sculpture *Ritmo Guaraní* (Guarani Rhythm). At the Biennial in 1963, Jiménez would again be awarded an Honorable Mention and Silver Plaque. Evidently, the awarding of Paraguayan artists implied recognition of the fact that they had accepted Brazilian cultural hegemony, and the artistic choices and this implied. Moreover, the Paraguayan artists' success invites us to question facile presumptions about the Brazilian dominance of visual art and culture over the region. Thus, a fruitful way of analyzing postwar Paraguayan visual art might be to reread it within the context of the modernizing (and colonizing) tendencies of Brazil's cultural and political intervention in the region.

In the postwar period, Paraguayan art embraced a process of

55 *Bienal: 50 anos 1951–2001* (São Paulo: Fundação Bienal São Paulo, 2001); Leonor Amarante, *As Bienais de São Paulo, 1951–1987* (São Paulo: Projeto, 1989).

56 Otilia Arantes, *Mário Pedrosa: Itinerário crítico* (São Paulo: Scritta, 1991).

57 Javier Rodríguez Alcalá, "Notas para una periodización contextual," in *Hermann Guggiari* (Asunción: Centro Cultural de la República El Cabildo, 2008).

artistic modernization and internationalist promotion under the influence of Brazilian cultural management. Throughout this study, I have attempted to dismantle the categories of center and periphery as fixed and stagnant concepts, proposing instead an analysis that might allow us to reconfigure these cultural, economic, and geopolitical divisions more dynamically. Studying the modernizing role of Brazil's cultural mission in Paraguay has allowed us to displace the alleged marginality of Latin American art in relation to its European and North American counterparts, thus relativizing how we understand the center-periphery binary.

Brazil, and more specifically the city of São Paulo, functioned as a powerful center of cultural patterns. Its centrality is manifest not only in the hegemony that it exerted over more peripheral spaces (such as Asunción), but also in its competition with other central art scenes within South America, such as Buenos Aires. The Paraguayan case enables us to study the tensions that exist between traditional spheres of hegemony and the flourishing of new centers of cultural promotion and production in South America.

NOTE *This work has followed a line of inquiry that began during my doctoral research into the disputes over cultural hegemony between Argentina and Brazil from the end of the Second World War onward. Paraguay becomes a highly interesting case for analysis regarding the tensions between the two South American countries in the struggle for cultural supremacy in the region. I have followed Ticio Escobar's outstanding book *Una interpretación de las artes plásticas en el Paraguay (An Interpretation of the Visual Arts in Paraguay)* in my core hypothesis and in several derivations. I thank Roberto Amigo, Lía Colombino, Javier Rodríguez Alcalá, and Aldo Solalinde (Centro de Estudos Brasileiros, Asunción) for all their collaboration provided during my work in Asunción. I also thank Andrea Giunta and Silvia Dolinko for their critical reading of this article. I add, as well, my special gratitude to Mónica Millán.*