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## Paolistas, Soldiers of the East Bank of the Plata.

These soldiers are represented at the door of a *pulpería* at Monte Video. One of them is taking *matté* [...], the leaf and fine shoots of a Paraguayan shrub, dried and coarsely pulverized, from which a beverage is made by putting a small quantity into a cup, and pouring hot water on it. [...] It is in use in every house all day long, and the compliment of the country is to hand the *matté*-cup to every visitor, the same cup and tube serving for all.

(E. Essex Vidal, "Picturesque Illustra-

tions of Buenos Ayres and Monte Video etc.", London: R. Ackermann, 1820, p. 107)



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## **The Irish in Uruguay and Paraguay**

By Edmundo Murray

Adapted from: Jim Byrne, Philip Coleman and Jason King (eds.), *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics and History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, forthcoming 2006)

### **Uruguay**

Known as Banda Oriental until the 1900s, Uruguay was a part of the Spanish colonial Viceroyalty of the River Plate. In 1814, José Artigas and other leaders broke with the governing junta in Buenos Aires, initiating a struggle for independence which lasted until Brazil's annexation of Uruguay in 1821. The Eastern Republic of Uruguay was constituted in 1830.

In 1762 the Irish-born captain John McNamara led a British force to occupy Colonia del Sacramento, a stronghold alternately held by the Portuguese and the Spanish. The expedition ended in failure and McNamara lost his life in the attempt, together with most of his men. Brigadier-General Samuel Auchmuty occupied Montevideo in 1807 with a regular force of British and Irish officers and rank and file. British rule in Uruguay lasted fourteen months, a period during which prominent merchants from Britain and Ireland settled in the city, influencing its culture. One Irish soldier enlisted in the 71st Regiment, Peter Campbell (1780-c1832), remained in the River Plate and served in the patriot ranks. He fought under Artigas and was appointed deputy governor of Corrientes province. Campbell is credited as a founder of the Uruguayan navy.

Often perceived by the English and Irish press as part of the same country as Buenos Aires and Paraguay, Uruguay started to receive a steady flow of Irish immigration in the decades subsequent to independence. The countryside, especially in Rio Negro district, was settled by sheep-farmers from Kilrane parish in County Wexford. Paysandú, in the same district and close to the Argentine province of Entre Ríos, was settled by immigrants from Westmeath and Longford.

In the 1840s, following Juan Manuel de Rosas' dictatorship in Buenos Aires, which was favourable to British settlement, many Irish sheep-farmers moved from Uruguay to Buenos Aires province and leased or purchased land in counties such as Carmen de Areco, Salto, and Pergamino, and later Nueve de Julio and Lincoln. Landowners such as James Gaynor (1802-1892) and John Maguire (d. 1905) moved to Argentina but maintained their properties in Uruguay and when they died left important estancias on the eastern bank of the River Plate. Other Irish settlers worked in Entre Ríos in Argentina and Rio Negro in Uruguay. William Lawlor (1822-1909) of Abbeyleix, County Laois, married in Gualeguay, Entre Ríos and died in his ranch "Las Tres Patas" in Uruguay. It is likely that other Irish ranchers owned land on both sides of the Argentine-Uruguayan border, speculating on the prospects of political and financial stability in each country. However, simultaneous management on both sides of the River Plate did not initiate migration chains from Ireland to Uruguay as it did in Argentina.

Two distinguished Irish physicians in Uruguay were Constantine Conyngham (1807-1868), who rendered important services during the epidemic of 1856 in Montevideo, and Dublin-born Louis Fleury, surgeon-general to the army in Charity Hospital. Among the rural settlers were J. Hughes in Paysandú and several Irish foremen working for Robert Young in what is today Young city in Rio Negro district. In the 1870s Young purchased ten square leagues of land in Estancia Bichadero and planted a magnificent quadrangle of ombúes, the typical tree of the pampas, near the house. In 1875 he owned 100,000 sheep and horned cattle, implementing improved methods for farming and agriculture. The life of Irish sheep-farmers in rural Uruguay in the nineteenth century is described in Hugh Fitzgerald Ryan's novel *In the Shadow of the Ombú Tree* (Enniscorthy: Chaos Press, 2005).

In the twentieth century, the Irish presence in Uruguay included missionaries and educators. Alfie Lamb of the Legion of Mary lay missionaries established a Legion praesidium in Montevideo in 1956. The Legion of Mary had been successfully launched in Colombia, and many people were attracted to contribute to its work in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay. Furthermore, Uruguay was one of the Latin American countries chosen by the Irish

Christian Brothers to establish one of their schools. In May 1955 Br. Patrick C. Kelly opened Stella Maris school in Carrasco, Montevideo. Stella Maris is a distinguished education centre aimed at the sons of Catholic families. The school achieved some renown when a Uruguayan aircraft carrying the Old Christians rugby team composed of Stella Maris graduates crashed in the Andes. Sixteen of the forty passengers survived and were rescued in December 1972.

## Paraguay

Under the Spanish colonial regime Paraguay included the Argentine provinces of Tucumán, Córdoba and Buenos Aires, all of which were subject to the Adelantado of Asunción. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the Jesuits were introduced by governor Fernando Arias to check the cruelties of the Spanish conquistadors. For almost two hundred years the Jesuit missions received admiration from European travellers, and as Voltaire declared, they were a triumph of humanity. They comprised thirty self-governing cities of native Guaraní people scattered along both sides of the Paraná river which today forms the border between eastern Paraguay and northern Argentina. Raids committed by white slave traders from southern Brazil convinced the Jesuits of the need to establish these missions. In the late sixteenth century three members of the Society of Jesus, among them the Irishman Thomas Field (1547-1626) from Limerick, ventured into the area to work with the Guaraní. Fr. Field had entered the Jesuits in Rome in 1574 and landed in Brazil on 31 December 1577, where he spent ten years as a scholar at Piratininga, present-day São Paulo. In 1587 he moved to Paraguay, arriving in Asunción in the company of Fr. Ortega from Portugal and Fr. Saloni from Italy. Thomas Field became acquainted with Guaraní people through his missionary travels, and his recommendations concerning their evangelisation were to have a major influence on the setting up of Jesuit missions. He attended the crucial synod of 1603 where decisions were made to set up the missions, or Reductions as they were called. Fr. Field died in Asunción in 1626 and is credited by the Irish Jesuit historian, Fr. Aubrey Gwynn, with being the first Irish priest to celebrate a Roman Catholic service in the Americas.

Murray, *The Irish in Uruguay and Paraguay* .....3

Other Irish Jesuits followed Thomas Field in working in the Paraguayan missions. They were Fr. Thomas Browne of Waterford (1656-1717), Br. William Leny of Dublin (1692-c1760) and Fr. Thaddeus Ennis, who was working in the Reductions at the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits. Br. Andrew Stritch arrived in Paraguay when the Jesuits were being expelled and was deported to Italy, where he died in 1773. The governor of Paraguay from 1766 to 1772, lieutenant colonel Carlos Morphi, was a Spanish officer related to the Murphy family of southern Ireland. Morphi founded the city of Caacupé in April 1770. When he received the order to expel the Jesuits, Morphi helped the priests to conceal and destroy documents, and he himself escaped from Paraguay. He was prosecuted on foot of this action and sent back to Spain. Culture and music flourished in the missions; they possessed some of the earliest printing presses in the Americas and published books in the Guaraní language. Angered by the Jesuits' defence of the native people, the colonial authorities finally persuaded King Charles III of Spain to expel the order from his territories in 1767. This paved the way for the collapse of the Jesuit missions in Paraguay. However, their legacy lived on as the absence of a land-owning class in this part of South America made Paraguay the most progressive state in the Americas. Paraguay achieved independence in 1811 and today Guaraní is the only vernacular indigenous language in any American state.

Undoubtedly the most colourful Irish person to appear in Paraguayan history was Cork-born Eliza Lynch (1835-1886), who met Paraguayan dictator Francisco Solano López when he was visiting Paris in 1853. She returned with him to Asunción and in 1862 López became president and Eliza Lynch the first lady of Paraguay. She played an active role in the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870), or Guerra Guazú, as it is known in Paraguay. Some historians argue that many of the atrocities that characterised López's rule were attributable to his mistress.

Among Irish-Paraguayans prominent in public life were López's successor as president, Juan B. Gill (1840-1877), who was murdered on 2 April 1877, and Juan O'Leary (1879-1969), historian and foreign minister in Alfredo Stroessner's administration.

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Montevideo (E. Essex Vidal, 1820)



Peter Campbell (1780-c1832)  
 (by F. Reilly, 1973)



The Jesuit mission of San Ignacio Miní,  
 present-day Misiones province,  
 Argentina (Misiones Tourist Board)



Eliza Lynch's mausoleum in Asunción  
 ([www.johngimlette.com](http://www.johngimlette.com))

**Fernando O'Neill (1924-2005)**  
**Revolutionary and Historian of Anarchism in Uruguay**

By Carlos Caillabet



**Fernando O'Neill (1924-2005)**  
(*Photograph by Carlos Caillabet, 2003*)

O'Neill Cuestas, Fernando [Zapicán] (1924-2005), revolutionary and historian of anarchism in Uruguay, was born on 15 September 1924 in Mercedes, capital of the Department of Soriano, Uruguay, the eldest son of Fernando O'Neill Parada (1890-1976) and his wife, Aurora Cuestas Acosta (1897-1977). O'Neill's first known ancestor in Uruguay on his father's side is his grandfather, Daniel O'Neill. Daniel O'Neill, an Irish immigrant and non-practising Catholic, settled in the countryside of the Department of Flores around 1870. There he married a Spanish-Uruguayan, Rosa Parada, and the couple had eleven children. The second youngest, Fernando O'Neill Parada, worked as an *estancia* foreman before becoming a landowner and attaining a comfortable economic position in Soriano. Fernando O'Neill Parada married a woman from Mercedes, Aurora Cuestas Acosta, with whom he had four children: Fernando (1924-2005), Amanda

(1927-2003), Jorge (1929-1999), and finally, Teresa (b.1934), a piano teacher living in the city of Paysandú.

Fernando O'Neill Cuestas, nicknamed Zapicán since his early years, attended primary school in the Salesian College of San Miguel de Mercedes and received a Catholic education, which he later renounced. Of a rebellious character, he did not complete his secondary education as he was expelled from school for bad behaviour. Many of O'Neill's relations were involved in violent incidents; an uncle on his mother's side was stabbed to death in a dispute with a neighbour, two uncles on his father's side committed murder and a third was killed in the battle of Tupambaé (24 June 1904) during the last Uruguayan civil war. Before reaching the age of twenty, O'Neill was involved in many knife fights in Mercedes, earning him fame as a man of arms from a young age. In the course of various confrontations and in defence of what he considered family honour, O'Neill killed one person and gravely injured two. Convicted of murder and grievous harm, he was incarcerated in Miguelete Prison, and subsequently in Punta Carretas Penitentiary.

O'Neill acknowledged that before serving time in Miguelete Prison, he had had little interest in political activism and that his life 'was that of a middle-class boy who felt a deep rejection of, or indifference to, the moral values of his class: economic success, attainment of a respected position in society and a university profession' (O'Neill 1993: 57). In Miguelete Prison, the Catalan anarchist Pedro Boadas Rivas developed a friendship with O'Neill. Boadas, together with other active anarchists, served a sentence for various attacks, murders and armed robberies, among them that of Cambio Messina in 1928 in Montevideo. This group was recaptured subsequent to undertaking a bold escape in 1931, led by Argentine anarchist Miguel Arcángel Roscigna and Italian anarchist Gino Gatti. The group had escaped through a tunnel leading to Carbonería El Buen Trato, a coalyard situated opposite the penitentiary. On foot of conversations with these anarchists and reading the books with which they provided him, O'Neill adopted a libertarian ideology and supported direct action as a method of political agitation. This was despite the fact that during that era in Uruguay, anarcho-

syndicalism - a movement pursuing industrial actions, especially the general strike  
- predominated over active anarchism.

Released in 1952, O'Neill joined the ranks of Libertarian Youth in Montevideo. That same year he published a 48-page pamphlet entitled *Un ex penado habla* (*An ex-prisoner speaks*) in which he denounced the terrible treatment meted out to prisoners in Uruguayan prisons. He further accused the police and political authorities of committing acts of corruption. The pamphlet, which was widely distributed, provoked a debate in the press. O'Neill's accusations landed him with a lawsuit for defamation and slander.

During those years, O'Neill went to live with his family, who in 1951 had settled on rented land about fifteen kilometres from the city of Paysandú. There he cultivated sugar beet and established contacts with a group of independent leftist intellectuals, whose principal reference was Carlos Quijano (1900-1984), lawyer and founder-director of the Uruguayan weekly paper "Marcha".

Returning to Montevideo in 1956, O'Neill participated in ten days of debate culminating in the foundation of the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation (FAU). Catalan anarchist refugees from the Spanish revolution (1936-1939) and some Argentine active anarchists had a particular impact on this organisation. The Uruguayan anarchists who had founded the Community of the South in 1955 did not join the FAU. They set up a printing press and moved to the outskirts of Montevideo, where they dedicated themselves to working the land on a communal basis. Others, dubbed orthodox or pure anarchists, similarly refused to join the FAU as they opposed an organisation which required obedience to leaders. O'Neill, despite voicing his dissatisfaction with the lack of clear and concrete political projects on the part of the FAU, remained within its organic structure until 1968.

Because of his methodical character and his passion for books, between 1965 and 1967 the FAU entrusted O'Neill with sorting and categorising the International Anarchist Library Archive with headquarters in Montevideo. This undertaking had been commenced by the Romanian Eugen Relgis (1895-1987), an anarchist and pacifist intellectual taking refuge in Uruguay. At the same time, O'Neill

worked in a union with an anarcho-sindicalist slant, centred around the workers of FUNSA, a Uruguayan tyre factory. During this period, he established close relations with some of the most prominent libertarian activists of the era: brothers Gerardo and Mauricio Gatti, Carlos Mechoso and Ruben Barcos, among others.

The triumph of the Cuban revolution and the subsequent ideological and political declarations of its leaders provoked divisions in the Uruguayan anarchist movement, despite the fact that all of those involved supported some of the political measures adopted by the Cubans, such as agrarian reform. In 1968 O'Neill found it contradictory to consider himself an anarchist and at the same time to support the Cuban revolution. The revolution was defined as Marxist-Leninist and had embarked upon a process to consolidate a State sought to combat all forms of opposition.

The anarchist doctrine negates the existence of the State whether it be capitalist or socialist and the FAU proclaimed that 'its fundamental political aim is the destruction of the State in the form of institutional political domination, as well as the suppression of governmental forms of power' (FAU 1986: 18). For this reason, and because the anarchists' aims seemed to him confused, O'Neill decided to distance himself from the FAU. In 1968 he approached the Tupamaros National Liberation Front (MNL), an urban guerrilla organisation founded in 1966. The organisation was initially intended as a form of resistance to the repressive excesses of political power and to the threat of a coup d'état.

The Tupamaros, a revolutionary leftist organisation, predominantly comprised middle-class activists with university education. O'Neill felt comfortable within this organisation in spite of the fact that distancing himself from his old comrades in the FAU had produced a conflict of loyalties that plagued him throughout his life. O'Neill participated in Tupamaro activism such as bank robberies, and worked for the information service of that organisation. Despite being detained by the police in 1969 and confined to a barracks, his connections with the Tupamaros could not be proven and he was released after a few months.

In 1972, faced with a military offensive against the Tupamaros, O'Neill decided to move to Chile, carrying a letter of recommendation from the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano addressed to the then socialist president Salvador Allende. When general Augusto Pinochet staged a military coup on 11 September 1973 and overthrew Allende, O'Neill managed to obtain refuge in the Argentine embassy and was moved to that country in January 1974. O'Neill settled in Buenos Aires but did not participate in Argentine guerrilla movements. His intention was to enter Uruguayan territory via the north coast, but he desisted when he learned that his name was included in the list of people persecuted by the Argentine-Uruguayan paramilitary commandos which operated in that city. When a number of his companions were kidnapped and 'disappeared', O'Neill took refuge in the Swedish embassy in November 1974. In December of that year he arrived in Sweden as a political exile and settled in Stockholm.

From Europe, O'Neill repeatedly planned to return to Uruguay in secret to join the resistance movement against the dictatorship in power in Uruguay since the coup d'état of 27 June 1973. Nevertheless, his attempts to return failed because of practical impediments and the defection of some of the exiles who accompanied him. O'Neill then concentrated on becoming active in campaigning for the release of Uruguayan political prisoners and denouncing his conditions in prison. In 1982 he moved to Spain. In Madrid O'Neill sold toys, and later in Málaga he sold refreshments on the beach. There he contacted anarcho-syndicalist elements and initiated and collaborated enthusiastically in the first stage of the publication of the *Rojo y Negro* newspaper. 'O'Neill was a person much loved by the CNT activists of those years in the city of Málaga, where he left his mark and was exemplary for his honesty' (Peña 2005). In 1984 O'Neill travelled to Portugal. In Lisbon he made the acquaintance of Otelio Saraiva de Carvalho, one of the leaders of the Claveles Rojos' revolution of 1974, and engaged in activities for this movement.

In 1985 Uruguay recovered its democratic institutions and in mid-1986, O'Neill returned to his native country, settling in the Montevideo district of Cerro. There he re-established relations with members of the Tupamaro movement and FAU activists, organisations which had been legalised by the government chosen in the

national elections of November 1984. In Cerro, O'Neill organised a residents' civil defence movement to combat delinquency in the district, for which he was questioned by his anarchist companions. Distanced from them, in 1997, he settled in Paysandú, where he gradually abandoned political activism, but supported the leftist coalition of Frente Amplio, which triumphed in the 2004 elections.

He wrote and published *Un ex penado habla* (Montevideo: author's edition, 1952), *Anarquistas de acción en Montevideo 1927-1937* (Montevideo: Recortes, 1993); *El caso Pardeiro: un ajusticiamiento anarquista* (Montevideo: Testimonio, 2001) and *Búsqueda y captura del comandante Doblas* (Montevideo: Fin de Siglo, 2004).

O'Neill was a particularly slim man and his friends gave him the nickname "Finito" (Little Thin Man). He was a kind and formal person, methodical in the extreme and possessing incisive reasoning. O'Neill was a compulsive reader, an autodidact who searched tirelessly and in vain for responses to the ambiguity of the human condition. During the closing years of his life, O'Neill concluded that humanity was still not mature enough to generate just and peaceful societies and he disavowed totalitarian world views.

In his last testament Fernando O'Neill stipulated that religious symbols should not be used during his wake, that any feelings of sadness should be avoided and that those attending should take their leave of him simply as a departing friend.

Carlos Caillabet

(translation, Claire Healy)

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## Beauty and the Beast: A Beautiful Irish Courtesan and a Beastly Latin American Dictator

By Edmundo Murray

*Once upon a time in a faraway land, there lived an ugly Prince  
who dreamt of a beautiful Irish Princess.*

Whether as a result of lack of direct knowledge of Latin American cultures or due to plain ignorance, European imagery of the continent abounds with legendary narratives and prejudicial accounts, frequently manifesting themselves as portrayals of natural anomalies. According to Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'it is likely that the term barbarous etymologically refers to the confusion and lack of articulation perceived in the voices of certain birds, as opposed to the signifying value of human speech. Similarly, wild (*sauvage*) means "belonging to the forest", and refers to the animal kingdom, as opposed to human beings. In both cases the fact of cultural diversity is neglected, and all that is not within our world is rejected and located outside of culture, in the natural world.' (Lévi-Strauss 1987: 20).

Few aspects of relations between Ireland and Latin America have been as popular as the fate of the San Patricio battalion in the United States-Mexican War (1846-1847) and the life of Eliza Lynch (1835-1886). In accordance with Mikhail Bakhtin's categories for literary criticism, the San Patricios and Eliza Lynch are the only Irish-Latin American *chronotopes* who are the subjects of the work of historians as well as spawning a number of fictional works. The San Patricios battalion even inspired a Hollywood film, *One Man's Hero*, directed by Lance Hool in 1999. However, most texts relating to the San Patricios are historical studies, or at least popular history books.

The prolific bibliography on Eliza Lynch, a Cork-born courtesan in Paris who became the unofficial first lady of Paraguay during the rule of Francisco Solano López (1826-1870), covers not only history books and essays, but also novels, short stories and poetry, and spans the period from the era of South American historical revisionism in the early twentieth century to the exploitation of the lucrative market for historical novels in present-day Ireland and Irish North America.

The fertile field for both historiography and fiction writing in Spanish, English, French or Guaraní, one of the most important indigenous languages of Paraguay, presents at least three possible levels of audience analysis of Eliza Lynch's story. First, that Lynch lived a hazardous life, characterised by numerous exciting episodes with manifold concrete and psychological meanings which historians take pleasure in recording and accounting for in an endless series of biographies. Second, novelists relish the challenge of using fiction to fill in the gaps in the recorded periods or aspects of her life, enriching with their craft an already colourful life. Finally, the readers of biographies and novels based on Eliza Lynch's life enjoy the freedom of inventing a place and a period in which everything, or almost everything, is perceived as possible to a creative and wilful mind.

There are underlying aspects of the fascination with the history of Eliza Lynch which merit closer examination. In societies where women are considered inferior to men by the vast majority of people, whether men or women, it is attractive and somehow comforting to read the story of at least one woman who, availing of her seductive and intelligent personality, managed to attain the highest position in a country, even if she subsequently lost that position. Another interesting aspect is the juxtaposition of Eliza Lynch's presumed humble origins and her attainment of a high social rank. Despite the fact that her father was a physician and she came from a middle-class family in Cork, the relatively impoverished context in which she lived during her formative years is frequently emphasised to create the illusion of a strong character capable of changing her life and achieving social mobility. Finally, the fact that she was European, and more precisely Irish, should not be overlooked in the context of her cultural contact with a post-independence South American country. It is here that many works about Eliza Lynch, fictional works in particular, frequently have recourse to the beauty-and-the-beast paradigm.

According to this paradigm a couple, traditionally a man and woman, are united by some circumstance and become lovers. The peculiar quality of this relationship is that one of them, usually the man, less frequently the woman, is a monster or belongs to the world of the supernatural. Most renderings of beauty and the beast portray the latter as essentially a civil and kind being, who only appears superficially to be brutal or repulsive. Therefore the beauty's efforts are not aimed at

changing the beast but at discovering and falling in love with the gentle spirit hidden behind a fierce appearance. Typically in the closing passages of these narratives, the uglier of the two turns into a handsome - and frequently wealthy - person through the healing benefits of love. Incidentally, I was unable to locate any version in which the ex-monster subsequently reverted to its previous state, a fact that would be quite logical yet rather disturbing for the reader.

The first recorded fictional beauty-and-the-beast couple featured in Madame de Villeneuve's collection *La jeune Américaine et les Contes marins* (The Hague, 1740). However, a more inclusive account should include almost all Indo-European cultures. According to the Swedish anthropologist J-Ö. Swahn, there are over 1,100 variations of the beauty-and-the-beast narrative. In the animal kingdom, women fall in love with butterflies, dogs, wolves, snakes or toads, and men with ravens, goats, warblers, frogs or cats. In the world of fantasy, the combination of animal body-parts, for example a wolf's head with a snake's body, or of animal and human bodies, has generated an endless series of monsters. One common feature of the monsters is that they are mute, or unable to communicate through a human form of speech.

Glen Keane, the supervising animator of the Beast in Walt Disney's movie *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) 'spent months surrounded by a bestiary of animals for inspiration, including a mandrill in the London Zoo named Boris and a gorilla named Caesar in the Los Angeles Zoo' (*Disney Online*, 2003). Beast was inspired by the mandrill and later developed to incorporate elements of the bear and the wolf, but was principally based on the buffalo.

### The Irish Beauty and the Paraguayan Beast

One recent biography of Eliza Lynch, *The Empress of South America* by Nigel Cawthorne [1], represents a telling illustration of the beauty-and-the-beast paradigm. The author describes Lynch in exuberant language, 'she was tall and supple with a delicate figure admired for its beautiful and seductive curves. Her hair was reddish gold, her skin calcium white and her eyes "a blue that seems borrowed from the very hues of heaven"' (Cawthorne 2003: 63). In contrast, Francisco Solano López was 'the most unappealing of an unattractive family, [...] short, fat, ugly, barrel-chested and bandy-legged from learning to ride early in life. [...] He had a gross animal look that was repulsive when in repose. His forehead was narrow and his head small, with the rear organs largely developed. His teeth were very much decayed, and so many of the front ones were gone as to render his articulation somewhat difficult and indistinct' (47). There is no doubt as to who is depicted as the beauty and who as the beast, particularly as the latter demonstrated the traditional feature of the beast, that of the inability to speak.

Lévi-Strauss has explained that 'the original sin of anthropology is the conflation of purely biological notions of race – if these notions have any validity, a suggestion that modern genetics rejects – and the sociological and psychological productions of human culture (Lévi-Strauss 1987: 10). According to Cawthorne, the moral qualities of his characters reflect their physical features. Eliza Lynch was 'strong and independent-minded' (Cawthorne 2003: 59) and, citing Héctor Varela, she 'had an expression of ineffable sweetness' (64). To illustrate her intelligence, Cawthorne mentions that she was 'educated, cultivated and sophisticated' (77), 'mastered French, Spanish and Guaraní, the tongue-twisting Indian language of Paraguay and she was the cultural superior of even the most highly educated in Paraguay at the time' (54). In fact the author also acknowledges Eliza Lynch's profession in Paris as that of *grande cocotte* (courtesan), along with describing her endless ambition and greed in her relations with Solano López, and her cruel treatment of the Paraguayan people. Though Irish-born, Eliza 'thought of herself as an Englishwoman' (211), was proud of being a British

subject and her 'sympathies seem to have extended only to English speakers' (205). Perhaps influenced by Eliza's charisma and their common Irish origin, the United States consul Martin T. McMahon, who according to Cawthorne conducted a romance with Lynch, reported that she was 'a lady of Irish parentage, of English birth, and of French education' (244).

As for Solano López, his negative definition in opposition to the beauty suffices to characterise the beast. However, Cawthorne further relates that he was 'spoilt, arrogant, boastful and greedy. [...] He had no knowledge of music, art, literature or the classics' (48). He 'did not understand [...] the use of Latin quotations, [and did not hear of] classical authors' (236). His moral profile was characterised by a 'weakness for young aristocratic virgins' (49). While in Paris, 'he went drinking, gambling and whoring' (52). His imperial ambitions led him to initiate the calamitous war against Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, and, in conclusion, he was a 'vain, credulous, and greedy savage' (133).

The author's characterisation of the dictator as *savage* identifies Solano López with Paraguay in particular and with South American in general. His views on Paraguayans are evident in Cawthorne's narrative, and illustrate his beliefs not only with regard to the cultural differences between South American and European - particularly Irish and British - culture, but also concerning the perceived superiority of the latter. In Eliza's time, Paraguay was inhabited by 'ferocious Indians' who were invariably 'barefooted' and spoke 'in nasal Guaraní' (74). They 'preferred their native folk songs to Bach and Beethoven' (93), and in a remote village *even* the Indians mocked his [Fr. Palacios's] ignorance of the scriptures' (89, my italics). Also, the Brazilians were 'superstitious' (165), and the Argentines lawless. In fact other Europeans - though never the British - also bear the brunt of Cawthorne's insensitive irony and belittling adjectives. According to Cawthorne, the Italians would envy the Paraguayan record of having three heads of state in one year (279), and Irish women, citing Cunningham Graham, are 'often marked by untidiness' (288).

### Marketing Historical Fiction and Fictional History

Cawthorne's is not the worst biography of Eliza Lynch. When it appeared in 2003 critics were bewildered by the publication of Siân Rees' *The Shadows of Eliza Lynch* in the same month, on the same subject and with the same number of pages and identical opening scenes. A few months previously Anne Enright's *The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch* was published but did not achieve notoriety in spite of its deliberately distasteful opening sentence, 'Francisco Solano Lopez put his penis inside Eliza Lynch on a lovely spring day in Paris, in 1854.' This was undoubtedly a real incident but was erroneously situated one year later. [2]

Many reviewers agree that Cawthorne's language is fiery, that Rees' narrative is less passionate - and abounds in errors - and that Enright's novel reveals the reality of Eliza as a human being. Lamentably critics do not remark upon the authors' frequent use of the beauty-and-the-beast dichotomy between Eliza Lynch and Francisco Solano López, and the fact that it in turn is analogous to the civilisation versus barbarism model which juxtaposes a seemingly uncivilised Latin America with an ostensibly modern, industrious and refined Europe.

There is nothing sinister about historical fiction and fictional history. I personally enjoy both very much, particularly books written by authors of the calibre of Cawthorne, Rees and Enright. The problem occurs when editors at publishing houses commission books from professional writers solely for profit. This process renders the pleasure of writing and researching secondary to the demands of budget sales. As Cawthorne puts it in his website, 'unlike other writers, I don't see the point in writing for myself, an audience of one. My duty is to service my readership' (*About Nigel Cawthorne*, 2002). Unlike Cawthorne, most writers of high-quality historical novels and biographies write for themselves and their friends. If they are fortunate, an intelligent editor discovers them and markets their books.

Writing for clients instead of for readers requires adapting to and incorporating their values and beliefs so that the book is easy to advertise and to sell. Clients simply purchase the book; readers are capricious and are not always easy to convince. The utilisation of the beauty-and-the-beast paradigm is a simple

technique to appeal to the clients' principles and prejudices. Paraphrasing José Luis Corral Lafuente, the Spanish medievalist and successful writer of historical novels, it is 'a show-off history, a weak-spirited history, a fictional history à la carte [which] becomes a vehicle for political alignment' (Corral Lafuente 2005: 129). Publishers, authors and critics of these biographies about Eliza Lynch do a disservice to history and literature when they simply respond to the exigencies of the market instead of making an effort to try to understand and learn from different cultures.

The good news is that even if a historical topic climbs to the top of the best-seller list, there is always a demand for well-researched and well-written books. Ultimately, it is always possible for the beast to become the beauty.

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### Notes

[1] On his personal webpage ([www.nigel-cawthorne.com](http://www.nigel-cawthorne.com)) Nigel Cawthorne explains that he has 'written, contributed to and edited more than sixty books on subjects as diverse as skiing, computing, finance, fashion, sex, war, politics, art, music, engineering, science, history, crime and American football.' He lives 'in a flat girlfriends have described as a book-writing factory in Bloomsbury, London's literary area.' His reputation is such, according to himself, 'that people will tell you I am a more often seen drinking in Soho's famous bohemian watering hole, the French pub - still known to some denizens as the Yorkminster - with a beautiful young black woman on my arm' (*About Nigel Cawthorne*, 2002).

[2] Even John Hoyt Williams in his excellent account of modern Paraguayan history applies the beauty-and-the-beast dichotomy when he argues that Eliza Lynch 'was almost the exact opposite of Francisco Solano' (Williams 1979: 173).

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Eliza Lynch (1835-1886)  
 (from Williams, 1979)



Some of the biographies of  
 Eliza Lynch: Cawthorne  
 (2003), Rees (2003),  
 Enright (2002), and Varela  
 (1997).



Francisco Solano López  
 (1826-1870)



House of Eliza Lynch at Asunción (at present the Law School).



([www.johngimlette.com](http://www.johngimlette.com))

## Peter Campbell (1780-c1832): Naval Officer and Founder of the Uruguayan Navy



**Peter Campbell (1780-c1832)**

*(Centro de Estudios Históricos, Navales y Marítimos del Uruguay)*

**Campbell, Peter** (1780-c1832), naval officer and founder of the Uruguayan navy, was born in Ireland in 1780. Little is known about Campbell's early years in Ireland, except that he was probably apprenticed as a tanner. He enlisted in the 71st Highland Regiment, one of the divisions that in July 1805 sailed for the Cape of Good Hope. In 1806 these troops invaded Buenos Aires under William Carr Beresford. After the British campaigns failed in their attempt and the regiment withdrew, Campbell was one of the soldiers who managed to remain in

the River Plate. He joined the patriot ranks as a guerrilla leader, harassing Spanish forces both on land and on the Paraná river. He was notorious for his dexterity in *gaucho*-style duel, wielding a long knife in one hand and using a poncho wrapped around the other arm as a protective measure. He carried two riding pistols, a sabre, and a large knife in a leather sheath for his personal protection, and was assisted by a Tipperary-born *gaucho* known as 'Don Eduardo'.

Campbell rose to prominence as a superb guerrilla fighter, serving under José Artigas, the *caudillo* of a region which encompassed the present-day Argentine provinces of Entre Ríos and Corrientes, and much of Uruguay, a man regarded as one of Uruguay's founding fathers. Peter Campbell played a prominent role in the affairs of Corrientes province, and for a period after 1819 acted as its deputy governor. He had a notable influence on the tactics employed by the local military forces, first against the Spaniards during the War of Independence, and later against Buenos Aires in the civil wars that followed Argentine sovereignty.

Peter Campbell was responsible for establishing a regiment of mounted Tapé indigenous people, who were feared both as a cavalry and infantry force because their tactics were so difficult to counteract. Armed with rifles with long bayonets attached to them, his indigenous force was trained to charge the enemy on horseback at great speed before dismounting and opening fire with their rifles. Campbell's military prowess and organisational ability were not confined to terra firma. In 1814 he began putting together a squadron of river vessels to support Artigas on the Paraná. In 1818 Peter Campbell took charge of the second squadron of the Uruguayan naval forces, based in Goya and Esquina. He became naval commander-in-chief of the region and the scourge of the Paraguayan dictator Francia's river fleet. On 21 August 1818 Artigas appointed Campbell as the first naval commander of the patriot fleet. It is on the basis of this appointment that the Irishman is acknowledged as the founder of the Uruguayan navy. In September 1818 Peter Campbell managed to seize two vessels carrying arms for the Paraguayan army. Between January and March 1819, together with the land forces of governor López, Campbell besieged the town of Capilla del Rosario. On 10 March 1819 the Uruguayan army won the Battle of Barrancas

against the army of Buenos Aires. Advancing on the Argentine city, the combined federalist forces defeated the *porteños* at Cepeda (1 February 1820) and San Nicolás (13 February 1820).

However, in the final naval battle against Monteverde on 30 July 1820, Artigas was defeated by Ramírez, a rival warlord from Entre Ríos province. Campbell, who initially succeeded in escaping, was captured and banished in shackles to Paraguay. The dictator Francia, instead of putting his former foe to death, spared Campbell's life, possibly out of respect for his adversary's courage and military prowess. Peter Campbell was allowed to settle in the Paraguayan town of Neembucú, where he returned to his former trade of tanner. There is disagreement over the location and date of his death, which occurred around 1832. After his burial place in Villa del Pilar was discovered in 1961, his remains were handed over to Uruguay for reinterment in Montevideo on 18 May 1961, as befitted the founder of that country's navy.

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Adapted from: Jim Byrne, Philip Coleman and Jason King (eds.), *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics and History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, forthcoming 2006).

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## Robert Gore (1810-1854): Naval Officer and Diplomatist

**Gore, Robert** (1810-1854), naval officer and diplomatist, was born in Saunders Court, near the town of Crossabeg in Artramon parish, County Wexford, the fourth son of Colonel William J. Gore (1767-1836) and Caroline Pym-Hale (d.1853). Robert Gore's brother was the fourth Earl of Arran, Philip Yorke Gore (1801-1884). The family lived in a ten-bedroom house with an estate covering eighty acres of land.

On 4 September 1823 Robert Gore entered the Royal Navy and in 1832 was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. From 1832 to 1834 Gore sailed in the *Melville* and the *Andromache* under Admiral Henry Ducie Chads. Robert Gore saw action in combat with Malay pirates, and for this reason on 15 July 1837 he was presented with a sword by grateful British merchants and agents in Bombay. On 9 May 1839 Gore was promoted to commander and was put in charge of the *Serpent* at the West India station. He became MP for New Ross, County Wexford. The MP declared himself to be 'a cordial supporter of the Melbourne ministry, the only government that ever endeavored to do justice to Ireland'. Gore was an 'advocate for free trade and abolition of monopolies'. He insisted that 'Ireland should be placed on an equal footing with England and Scotland' (Stenton 1976). Robert Gore returned home to Ireland in 1841. On 23 October 1846 he was appointed chargé d'affaires at Montevideo, Uruguay. His most important intervention in the River Plate was in March 1848, when he successfully put an end to the Buenos Aires blockade that had been implemented by British and French forces since 1845. On 29 August 1851 Gore was appointed British consul at Buenos Aires.

Robert Gore is remembered in the River Plate for saving the life of Buenos Aires governor and totalitarian Argentine leader Juan Manuel de Rosas after the Battle of Caseros, and for facilitating his subsequent exile in Southampton, England. When he arrived home on the afternoon of 4 February 1852, Gore found Rosas sleeping in his bed. He spoke to Admiral Henderson, who consented to accommodate Rosas on the *Locust*. Rosas' daughter Manuelita disguised herself as a sailor, and on the night of 8 February 1852 the family fled Buenos Aires. British

merchants in Buenos Aires, who had a poor relationship with the consul, accused Gore of the receipt of a sum of money in return for aiding Rosas. After the fall of Rosas, in January 1853, Robert Gore was expelled from Buenos Aires when he alleged that arms and ammunitions were being distributed among British subjects. He returned to Montevideo.

Travelling from Uruguay, Robert Gore met with General Justo José de Urquiza in Entre Ríos province, who told him of his plans to develop Argentina, to open its rivers to the commerce of all nations, and to attract 'Saxon', that is, English-speaking, immigrants. In the conflict between Buenos Aires and the Argentine Confederation that ensued after the Battle of Caseros, Gore was perceived as a friend of the provinces. Robert Gore died on 4 August 1854 in Montevideo.

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## Eliza Lynch (1835-1886): Courtesan and Unofficial First Lady of Paraguay



Elisa Alicia Lynch (1835-1886)  
(*South American Pictures*, in Nigel Cawthorne, 2003)

**Lynch, Eliza** [*bap.* Elizabeth, *known as* Elisa Alicia] (1835-1886), courtesan and unofficial first lady of Paraguay, was born on 3 June 1835 in County Cork, the daughter of John Lynch and Adelaide Schnock. John Lynch was a physician and the family were from a Church of Ireland background. Little is known of Eliza Lynch's younger years but she probably received a good education.

Eliza Lynch's eldest sister Corinne was living in France in 1847. The family left Ireland that year and settled in Paris. On 3 June 1850, at the age of fifteen, Eliza Lynch married Jean Louis Armand de Quatrefages, a French military surgeon. The unhappy marriage led to a divorce within three years, after a residence in Algiers. Lynch was living in Paris with her mother, and perhaps a Russian nobleman, when in 1853 she met Francisco Solano López (1826-1870) of

Paraguay. It was love at first sight; Solano López was overwhelmed by her beauty and Lynch was attracted by the security he offered, with his position as heir to Paraguayan leadership. Shortly thereafter, Lynch became pregnant. Despite arguments with his younger brother Benigno, who did not want the affair to be carried on across the ocean, Solano López left his mistress with the financial resources and necessary instructions to travel to Paraguay, and departed for South America.

Eliza Lynch arrived in Buenos Aires in October 1855 and gave birth to a son, who was baptised in a private ceremony as Juan Francisco 'Panchito' López after her arrival in Asunción, Paraguay, in December. After an initial bout of depression and culture shock on encountering Paraguay and its people, Lynch learnt to take political and financial advantage of her status, despite the unofficial nature of her position and antipathy on the part of López family. By 1858 she was a social leader in the community, despite frequently becoming pregnant and being perceived by the bigoted local elite – particularly by patrician ladies – to be living in sin.

"Madame Lynch" – as she styled herself, though she was popularly known as "La Lynch" – was something of a snob and delighted in displaying her novel habits to the Paraguayans, refusing to ride sidesaddle and serving elegant French cuisine to guests. She became a lady to be emulated if not to have affection for, and her social reputation placed her on an equal footing with some foreign diplomats, for she did her part to modernise Paraguay. Thus began a cultural transfer of French, rather than English or Irish, customs to replace the native ones. She set the tone with her home and her lover's house, as well as clothing, cuisine, champagne, cosmetics, sewing machines, *de rigueur* music, formal dances, lithographs and other objects d'art.

Although in her youth Eliza Lynch had been a strikingly handsome woman, photographs taken around 1860 show her less as a young lady and more as a dowdy matron. Between 1855 and 1861 she gave birth to five sons, all of whom publicly bore the López name. She rose high in the world in a material sense, recipient of gift after gift from her admiring general. She became the world's largest female landowner. By 1865 she owned several large ranches and at least

twenty-six urban properties. During Paraguay's Triple Alliance War against Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, Solano López transferred vast properties into Lynch's name perhaps in order to protect some of his wealth in case he lost the war or had to abdicate. Solano López ordered the sale to Eliza Lynch of over 800,000 acres of state lands and forests located in the Chaco region. In addition, she acquired 12,000,000 acres in eastern Paraguay and another 9,000,000 acres of *yerbales* and forests in the contested area north of the river Apa. All of Lynch's landed property was confiscated in 1869.

In 1870 Solano López was killed in Cerro Corá. Eliza Lynch buried her lover and their son Panchito and fled to Paris with more than \$500,000 in jewels, gold and cash. In 1875 she returned to Paraguay on the invitation of president Juan B. Gill, who supported her claims to confiscated property. However, she was again deported to France and finally settled in Paris where she died in 1886, in penury and oblivion.

In the 1970s, under the influence of nationalist and revisionist historians, Eliza Lynch was proclaimed a Paraguayan national heroine and her remains were removed from a grave in Paris to her adopted country in South America. A central street in Asunción was named 'Madame Lynch' in her honour. The life of Eliza Lynch has fascinated modern writers of fiction and biography in English and Spanish. In 2003 two biographies by Nigel Cawthorne and Siân Rees, listed below, were published concurrently, with the same number of pages and identical duplicate opening scenes.

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See also *Eliza Lynch (1835-1886): A Bibliography*.  
[<http://www.irishargentine.org/elizalynchbiblio.htm>]

## Juan Emiliano O'Leary (1879-1969): Poet and Historian



Juan E. O'Leary (1879-1969)  
(*Raul Amaral 2003*)

**O'Leary, Juan Emiliano** (1879-1969), poet and historian of modern Paraguay, was born in Asunción on 1 June 1879, the second son of Juan O'Leary (b.1841?) of Salto, Uruguay, and María Dolores, daughter of Pascual Urdapilleta and Cesárea Carísimo of Asunción, and widow of Bernardo Jovellanos. Juan O'Leary Senior who had arrived in Paraguay during the War of the Triple Alliance to work as a travelling salesman, was the widower of Dolores Thedy, from a prominent family in Chivilcoy, Buenos Aires province. In Paraguay he conducted a relationship with Natividad Mercedes Moreno. Though unmarried, the couple had a son, Fulgencio Ricardo Moreno, who became a writer, historian, and Paraguayan minister for foreign affairs. Juan Emiliano O'Leary's grandparents were the Irish immigrant John O'Leary and Eladia Costa of Buenos Aires.

Juan Emiliano O'Leary was sent to study at the Instituto Paraguayo in Asunción, which operated from 1885 to 1902, and at the Colegio Nacional. He then

matriculated at the School of Law in Asunción. He actively participated in politics, supporting General Bernardino Caballero of the National Republican Association, the 'Partido Colorado', which dominated political life in Paraguay. O'Leary occupied key posts in the Party, as director of the National Archive, and later as a diplomatist. During a brief period he was foreign affairs minister in Alfredo Stroessner's administration.

O'Leary's major contribution to Paraguayan historiography was his reappraisal of Francisco Solano López and of his role in the War of the Triple Alliance, known as the *Guerra Guazú*, or "Great War" to the Paraguayans. Paraguay fought the Great War against Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay from 1864 to 1870. Initially, and most likely under the influence of his family, O'Leary was bitterly critical of Solano López. He achieved renown on the basis of a less than flattering poem about the dictator during his studies at the Colegio Nacional. However, by the age of twenty-five O'Leary had concluded that Solano López's regime, though tyrannical and authoritarian, was beneficial to the country in the context of the aggressive foreign policies of its neighbours. Juan O'Leary depicted the Marshall as a great hero, a great patriot and a great promoter of nationalism. He was a close personal friend of Enrique Solano, son of the Marshall, and for this reason some accused O'Leary of partisan scholarship.

Juan O'Leary distinguished himself as a pioneer of historical revisionism in Paraguay. The nationalist, and frequently overtly racist, views expressed in his narrative of Paraguayan history were effectively used by politicians to raise awareness of an indigenous identity among the population that remained after the catastrophic exactions of the Great War. Among his works of history are *Páginas de historia* (1916), *Nuestra epopeya* (1919), *El Mariscal Solano López* (1920), *El Paraguay en la unificación argentina* (1924), *El héroe del Paraguay* (1930), *Los legionarios* (1930), *Apostolado patriótico* (1933), *Historia de la guerra de la Triple Alianza* (1912) and *Prosa polémica*, published posthumously in 1982.

By the turn of the twentieth century Juan O'Leary had become a member of a group of poets who used their writing as a method of reaffirming national identity. O'Leary's name was linked with Rosicrán's (Narciso R. Colman)

Guaraní renaissance. In the magazine *Ocara Poty Cue-mi* O'Leary encouraged readers 'to preserve our language; we must develop Guaraní and protect it from the corrupting and intrusive effects of Spanish'. Several of his poems are epic ballads about the Paraguayan war of independence and the war against the Triple Alliance. He also researched oral legends and narrated them in the form of short stories or epic poems. O'Leary published the following poetry books: *El alma de la raza* (1899), *A la memoria de mi hija Rosita* (1918), *Salvaje* (1902), *Los conquistadores* (1921), and several poetry anthologies in the Guaraní language.

Juan E. O'Leary died on 31 October 1969 in Asunción. A street in the city and a district of Alto Paraná bear O'Leary's name.

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