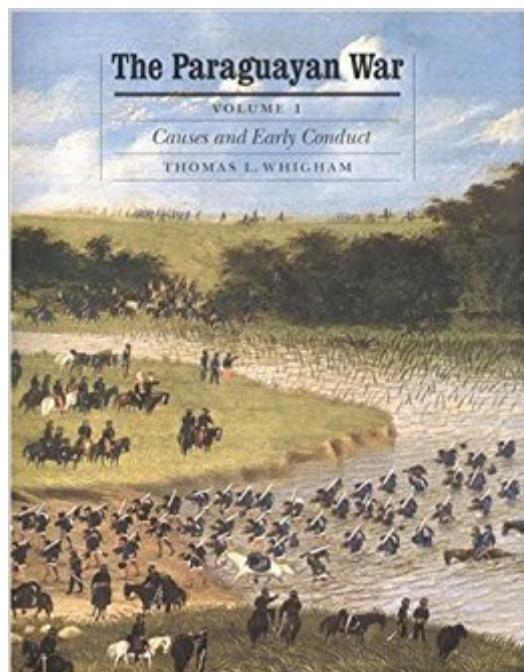


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# The Paraguayan War, Volume 1: Causes And Early Conduct (Studies In War, Society, And The Militar)



## Synopsis

The Paraguayan War (1864-70) was the deadliest and most extensive interstate war ever fought in Latin America. The conflict involving Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil killed hundreds of thousands of people and had dire consequences for the Paraguayan dictator Francisco Solano López and his nation. Though the Paraguayan War stirs the same emotions in South Americans as does the Civil War in the United States, there have been few significant investigations of the war available in English. In this first of two volumes, Thomas L. Whigham provides an engrossing and comprehensive account of the war's origins and early campaigns, and he guides the reader through the complexities of South American nationalism, military development, and political intrigue. Whigham portrays the conflict as bloody and inexcusable, though it paved the way for more modern societies in the continent. The Paraguayan War fills an important gap in our understanding of Latin American history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Whigham deserves praise for his exhaustive archival research in several countries, lucid prose, and constant concern that readers understand the context of his narrative analysis. . . . The University of Nebraska Press, long committed to publishing important works in Latin American studies, should be commended for taking on this project and producing such a handsome, hardbound volume." "Choice (Choice)" Whigham's contribution is a detailed narrative that reveals a Lopez whose strategic and geopolitical instincts were sound but whose arrogance undercut his ability to lead. The description of the geographic setting and the vivid thumbnail sketches of many of

the officers further elevate the account beyond that of one man's blindness. The reader understands the full history of a tragic war, lengthened because of incompetence and errors on all sides." Judith Ewell, *Journal of Military History* (Judith Ewell *Journal of Military History*)"The longest and fullest ever written, destined to remain a standard text for decades. The author displays great command of his multiple sources." David Rock, *The Historian* (David Rock *The Historian*)"Whigham has produced a magnificent book. . . . A powerful and lucid narrative of the war's developments, with all its complexities: its military manoeuvres, internal politics and diplomatic exchanges, and its horrors and cruelties on the battlefield." Eduardo Posada-Carbo, *The International History Review* (Eduardo Posada-Carbo *The International History Review*) Thomas Whigham's new history is greatly to be welcomed. Charles J. Esdaile, *Hispanic American Historical Review* (Charles J. Esdaile *Hispanic American Historical Review*) It is rare to come across a work of traditional diplomatic history among new books appearing on Latin American history. It is also most unusual to find that the same study will be spread out over two volumes. The Paraguayan War is certainly a fitting topic for such extensive and in-depth treatment. Professor Whigham's first volume explores the causes and recounts in detail the early part of the conflict up to New Years Day 1866. Joseph Smith, *Journal of Latin American Studies* (Joseph Smith *Journal of Latin American Studies*) A well-written traditional history based on extensive research. . . . Those interested in a military history of the Paraguayan War and gaining insight into the personality of Francisco Solano Lpez, will find Whigham a good storyteller. Americas (Americas)

Thomas L. Whigham is a professor of history at the University of Georgia. He is the author of *The Politics of River Trade: Tradition and Development in the Upper Plata, 1780"1870*.

The Paraguayan War (sometimes called the War of the Triple Alliance or the Lopez War) frequently appears as a line or two at most in military histories and is immediately dismissed as not worthy of note. Thom Whigham has rightly rescued this fascinating and tragic story and given it its rightful place among the great wars of the 19th century. The story is placed in context with a thorough exploration of the politics of the Plata in the decades leading up to the war; politics which can be most generously be described as "byzantine". The early conduct of the war is also both described and dispassionately analyzed. I do wish there were more and better maps. Also as a hard-core military buff it would be nice to have more notes on uniforms, equipment and orders of battle (as an appendix, of course). My other wish is for Dr. Whigham to finish the next volume, which I understand

will be in a couple of years. Until then I will have to satisfy myself with "I die with my country".

One of Latin America's bloodiest wars is the subject of this book. For most, the war is either obscure or unknown, which makes it a great buy for those who like to read about little known wars. As a student of South American history, I found the book very detailed in covering the early history of the region and the events that lead to the conflict. And, his coverage of the early military campaigns is excellent. I've read Kolinski's "Independence or Death", which is good for starters, but Whigham's book answered all the questions I had after reading Kolinski's work. The author's chapters on the Mato Grasso Campaign and the Battle of Riachuelo were of particular interest to me. As with the previous reviewer an appendix with orders-of-battle would be nice, and that is my only complaint. The maps help for those not familiar with the area. I highly recommend this book for those either interested in a little known war or for those who want the best English language book on the subject. I anxiously await volume 2.

This history of the Paraguayan War is probably the only one available in English, and it reads very well. It starts with an in-depth analysis of the political background starting with the Spanish/Portuguese colonization and how it led to the formation of the different South American nations, which I found very interesting. The author obviously knows the history of the area very well and has conducted research in all involved countries. This volume ends on December 31, 1865, with the withdrawal of the Paraguayans from Argentinian territory. Be aware that this book is not a military history: I found the military study a bit disappointing, and it was difficult to keep track of the size of the armies and navies involved. There is not much on armament, tactics, organization or equipment. It would have been nice to have an Order of Battle for the Paraguayan and Brazilian armies in particular. I understand from the author that this could appear in the second volume (to be published in a few years).

The Paraguayan war which lasted from 1864-70 was one of the bloodiest wars in Latin American history. More than 70% of the men of Paraguay perished in a terrible war that destroyed the country to such an extent that it has not recovered to this day. The Paraguayan war was launched due to political machinations involving a civil war in Uruguay and this wonderful book delves into the root causes and opening campaigns. This is simply a must read and a needed contribution to a period of history that has been totally neglected by historians. Any student of Latin American history will be happy with this work. Seth J. Frantzman

While looking for background information on Paraguay I stumbled across Mr. Whigham's book. The book focuses on the Triple Alliance War fought in the mid-1800's. I found that he has a great writing style and I found myself not wanting to put the book down. The text is packed with the history of South America, but put in a way that was cohesive and interlinked. If you're interested in the history of South America from colonial times to the mid-1800's pick this book up you won't be sorry!

The Great Liberator of South America, General Simon Bolivar, had a dream of an all-encompassing, Spanish-speaking, Latin American Federation of Nations, based upon the concept and reality of the United States of America. Yet, four decades later, the 1864-1870 Paraguayan War shows that then, and even now, this wonderful dream of Simon Bolivar is still many decades away. Bolivia still wants its pre-1879 seacoast returned. The Chaco War 1932-1935 shows this "irredentism" spirit of revenge has followed Latin America into the new 21st Century. Paraguay has yet to recover from the 1864-1870 War of Disaster. The 1826 speech of General Bolivar, in Panama, was and still is a great hope for all of Latin America, but the mechanics of Latin American Unity is "just not in the cards". The continuing tragedy of Paraguay haunts still--135 years later. May Paraguay find healing. In terms of this fine book--This book, the Paraguayan War is 10,000% "on target". A "MUST READ" for old history-buffs, and all serious students of Latin American History, and Social Structures. A most-excellent work of historical literature. BUY IT!! VIVA PARAGUAY Y Libertad!! from Dr. Nick Stage-PHD History--Zionville Indiana

I picked this up since none of the libraries in America have it. A wonderful read, you'll be quite curious at the end.

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