

Jesuit Proposals for a Regulated Society in a Colonial World:
*the Cases of Antonio Ruiz de Montoya and Antonio Vieira.*¹

Early Modern utopianism fundamentally means the implementation of a regulated society. In classic (i.e. European) utopias, two concepts are crucial: regulation and self-sufficiency. Historically, this utopian political desire for regulation means a severe, indeed inflexible structuring of social roles and duties. It will also mean economically the always delicate construction of autarky, and juridically the double fight for a relative independence from central political powers (the Crown), as well as the negotiable achievement of a legalized exemption (for example, exemption from the tribute or labor payment to settlers or the Crown). To achieve this official exceptionality, the Early Modern construction of the city of equals will have to make claims not to be called literature (or fiction). That is, utopian fictionalization will always be claiming to make its lightness heavier, its diction harsher. Classic utopianism wants to be something other, something more than mere fiction (or literature), precisely by trying to get close to legalism. It will remain, however the sophisticated and minoritarian social force situated in the shadow created by the bigger sister of the repressive or normative culture (or law). It is responding to the crises and hesitations of legalism, that classic utopianism will seize its historical day. And it is mostly to make legalism more effective, that these elite or lettered sectors will be delivering a set of critical alternatives.

Around the political commonplace of the ideal city, European utopianism, or political reformism, in the original years of transatlantic clash between Europe and the Americas, will be giving us the insisting figuration of the island and the agriculture-based *negotium* of six working hours for every islander. By contrast, colonial utopianism, i.e. political reformism *in* the Americas, will have to leave fiction behind, and become quite undistinguishable from legalism. This article specifically addresses the Early Modern Jesuit proposals for a (Latin) American construction of such an alternative regulation and self-sufficiency within the larger inevitable framework of the European colonization of the Americas.

With no feelings for anarchy or randomness, Early Modern reformism finds politically desirable all those social patterns stressing a rather typified construction of social symmetries and predictabilities. Thus, we will have timeliness or synchronism, centralization of social

energies and enclosure. In the exemplary words of James Harrington, "the structuring of commonwealth upon the natural principle of the same is justice." To repudiate social unpredictability, the lettered construction of an alternative social model will have to be historically predicated upon radically non-individual and faceless, nameless features. Looking after the satisfaction of communal need, there is no place for psychologized or personalized deference. In fact, one early historical lesson of this Early Modern utopianism is that need is communal or not at all, and therefore needs are to be treated collectively.

It is desirable to render this classic utopian formulation a little bit more concretely. We may recall More's citizens, all dressed in identical monastic fashion in white and coarse cloth and with no access to money, following a round-the-clock regimentation of duties, and clock-work patterns of communal eating; and we may also recall Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1623), where the great Metaphysical dictator names all citizens according to their most salient physical or psychological feature, and arranges for (re)productive patterns according to astrological observations. And we may also bring to memory and desire the magnificent storehouse and alchemists' paradise in Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), which is also a miraculous social laboratory where bird flight imitations, organ transplants and resuscitations are within the realm of the ordinary; and finally also the rather tedious formalization of thirty sections or "orders" in Harrington's *Oceana* (1656), which leave no chance to spontaneity, since "manners that are rooted in men bow the tenderness of a commonwealth coming up by twigs unto their bent." Inside the often neglected Hispanic utopian tradition, we may also produce the anonymous *Sinapia* (second half of the seventeenth century), scrupulously numbering thirty-three normative sections for a social experimentation situated in the austral antipodes of the Iberian peninsula; and we may finally recall a self-appointed disciple of Thomas More in colonial Mexico, Vasco de Quiroga, one of the four main judges (*oidor*) of the *Segunda Audiencia* (1530-1535), who did not hesitate to prescribe a rather repressive thematization for indigenous peoples in his *Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Village-Hospitals* (1535).

This paper intends a critical interrogation of some of these alternative or reformist proposals under an expanding regime, which we may shorthand as the Spanish proto-capitalist colonization of the Americas. I want to focus on the political proposals put forth by the still relative young institution of the Society of Jesus (foundation in 1539), in the historical context of colonial (Latin) America. Specifically, I want to imagine the social tensions in the historical geography of two

vast regions, today's Paraguay, and the region of Maranhão in the northern litoral of Brazil. Inside the massive crises and transformations brought about by Iberian colonization, the Jesuit-sponsored reformism will gather momentum in the still largely uncharted northern region of Maranhão and its backlands, with an indigenous substratum of over 200 Tupi-Guarani indigenous populations, and also in the widespread Guarani communities in the southwest region of the Amazon, penetrated by tentative imperial demarcations between the Spanish and the Portuguese. In these two vast locations, we must add the constant instability factor of the mostly irregular or illegal slave market vis-a-vis the institutionalized the Crown-sponsored *asiento* institution.

We may ask, how was Jesuit reformism predicated?, what did it do in relation to ethnic labor, the main source of wealth in these two regions?, how did it relate to the incipient, yet slow predations of money economy inside a larger barter economy? To answer these questions, we now turn to two complementary repressive textualizations by two Jesuits, the Spanish Antonio Ruiz de Montoya and the Portuguese-Brazilian Antonio Vieira.

Case Study One: Antonio Ruiz de Montoya (Lima 1585-1652) provides in his classic narrative *The Spiritual Conquest* (1639), a testimonial recollection of the preceding forty-odd years of Jesuit intervention in what today is mostly called Paraguay. It was however during Montoya's visit to Spain twenty years before his death that *Spiritual Conquest* was written, together with important philological work such as his *Tesoro de la Lengua Guarani* (1640) and *Catecismo de la lengua Guarani* (1640). Read politically, *The Spiritual Conquest* vindicates the Society of Jesus, and its itinerant settlements (missions), as the indispensable frontier institutions for the protection of the interests of the Spanish Crown in the Americas. Ruiz de Montoya constructs an apparently value-free or impartial social position for the Society of Jesus, as though they were ever above the political fray of political interest. Because of this supposed impartiality, the Society of Jesus constitute the "ideal" social agents for the overseas management of state interests. *The Spiritual Conquest* will be insinuating the dangers of not granting complete political control (monopoly) of the Paraguayan-Guarani region to the Jesuits. In Montoya's words, the overseas interests of the absolutist state and the Jesuits are beautifully complementary. It is this concrete, yet implicit commonality of political interests, the Crown and the Jesuits against settler and slave-holder (or *encomendero* and *bandeirante*), which gives the greatest political force to the dialectical explicitness of Spaniards and Indians. Quite far from the ornate monumentality of early Franciscan messianism, such as Motolinía's *Memoriales* (1555), or

Mendieta's *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana* (1596), *The Spiritual Conquest*, has a distinctively hurried and sloppy quality. Our Jesuit does not appear to hesitate to adopt an anxiously pragmatic and deadline-driven ethos, to better respond politically to the early dilemmas of Spanish colonization of Paraguay.²

Against the early dissemination of Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians in the Viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru, a more targetted and calculated approach in the colonial periphery by the young Society of Jesus will be needed.³ In contrast to the more extensive expansionism Franciscans, and their magnificent discursive practices,⁴ Mörner speaks of the Jesuit "failures" in Florida and the Atlantic coast farther north in the late 1560s.⁵ Historical opportunities for Jesuit growth were no doubt envisaged in the regions far away from these two main colonial centers in the Spanish Empire, and far away from the sugar-producing captancies situated between Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro in the Portuguese Empire.⁶ Despite the standard perception that there was little or no economic attraction, great expectations for a second Potosí in the Plata region had already vanished by 1639, the Rio de la Plata area was nonetheless chosen for Jesuit expansionism in the Americas. So was the still poorly charted northern littoral of Brazil. Wealth was elsewhere: the possession and preservation of ethnic labor.

Montoya's political position is unambiguous from the start: self-appointed mediation for the Society of Jesus in the thick middle of social contradictions under colonial expansionism. There is a clear repudiation of the uncontrolled rapacity of the *encomienda* system and of the official institution of forced labor ("servicio personal"), which was currently decimating the indigenous communities (40).⁷

This anti-*encomienda* position is however favorable, according to Ruiz de Montoya, to both sides of the fundamental political dialectics of Indians and Spaniards (134).

The political friendliness of this anti-*encomienda* position is however far from self-evident in relation to the larger historical context. It is not at all easy for the contemporary reader to discern concrete socio-economic differences regarding the structuring of labor implemented by the *encomienda* system and the frontier Jesuit enclaves, or *misiones*. In both instances, we are dealing with the colonial institutionalization of land and people allocation under an European, white and Christian supervision. We may perhaps accentuate the latter enclaves as the peripheral modulation of the former *encomienda*, situated in the still poorly charted territory, penetrated by the deeply irregular exchange economy of a money economy looming in the horizon of "permanent war,"⁸

numerous migrations, rebellious indigenous communities and the irregularities proper to the illegal slave market trade (we must remember the perfect legality of slavery, according to the political orthodoxy of the day, in a just war). Detailed accounts of structured ethnic labor inside the Jesuit missions do not, for the most part, exist. And when they do, they mostly come from Jesuit sources.⁹

We must always remind ourselves that the *encomienda* institution of forced labor, also in crisis and growth in the borderzone of former Guaraní territory as of 1639, constituted the fundamental pillar of the colonial society and the hegemonic Latin American landscape. In relation to this colonial norm, the Jesuit differentiation appears to be far from being clear-cut or drastic. We should not forget the historical irony that finds the principal *encomendero*, the largest beneficiary of ethnic labor arranged in *mita* (or rotational mine-serving duties), and also of *yanacónaje* (or ethnic-based assemblage of forced labor) in the pinnacle of absolutist power, the Crown.¹⁰ This legalized condition of the *encomienda* institution of forced labor for the periphery, with its historical hesitations, appears to be the historical limit for the para-state institution of the Society of Jesus, which benefitted from a historical proximity to the monopoly-granting powers of the Spanish Crown. Although numbers vary, the human wealth in the Paraguay region was quite considerable.¹¹ Around this threatened human wealth (or ethnic labor) in these forgotten, yet expanding regions, we must situate one of the fundamental colonial fights for power and desire.

The colonial structuring of human toil for life (or labor) largely occurred in a barter economy. By 1639, colonial Paraguay represents a peripheral (S. Van Bath) area of minimum complexity (Elman R. Service), and correspondingly a marginalized area of colonial consolidation.¹² Largely uncharted territories, Paraguay represented the challenging scenario between the incipient colonial culture of sedentary land-owning ("sementeras" implemented by Crown, Jesuits and *encomenderos*), and the itinerant autochthonous desolations and wastelands ("soledades"), runaway slaves and mass migrations constantly threatened by destructive *bandeirante* explorations.

The investigation of the colonial mechanisms of force (or state impositions) must take into account the juxtaposition of tribute and labor. Ruiz de Montoya speaks of the frequent use of the "so-called Paraguayan herb" (40), as standard currency in colonial Paraguay. In theory, every male Indian over 13 years of age, as vassal to the Crown, had to comply with state regulations and pay tribute to the theoretical sole owner of lands and peoples. This led to abuses: "curious persons have made the experiment of weighing an Indian against his load on a

scale: even with many additional pounds on the Indian's side he did not outweigh his heavy load. How many have been left dead beside their loads, the Spaniard less concerned over the poor Indian's death than at having no one to carry the load!" (41). State imposition being non-negotiable, the Spanish-Indian interaction will become unbearably hierarchical around this divide: "Indians" must take the brunt of Spanish expansionism and settlement in the shadow of "money," the historical winner of all social transactions. If forced labor is, together with herb produce, the most typical payment of tribute (or state imposition), the early or foundational condition of colonial settlement in Paraguay meets with a severe underregulation against the constant instability factor of *bandeirante* activity. This historically accented principle of uncertainty informing the early or foundational condition of coloniality in the Paraguay periphery will become a crucial factor to be taken into account by the Spanish Crown and the Jesuits. This historical alliance will be trying to keep this unpredictability under control, but with only partial success.

If we define coloniality as the social condition predicated upon the implicit or explicit use of force, it appears clear that the foundational, unstable stages of coloniality, should the law initially be the horizon for our historical interpretation, breed instability and underregulation which will in all likelihood hit the subalternized indigenous sectors the hardest. If it may appear, but only at first sight that the novelty of standardized wage labor is a way out of coloniality, it will take centuries for the standard formalization of this form of social exchange, today everpresent. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we must contemplate money substitutions: cloth or linen, but not always.¹³ It will also be much later that the final dismantling of *yanaconaje*, and eventually of the *encomienda* system,¹⁴ followed the general tendency of increasing suppleness of the "work unit." "Free" and "freedom," will thus semanticize as non-*yanaconaje* and non-*mita* for temporary hire (i.e. "free wage labor"), among the presumably equal parties involved. During Ruiz de Montoya's lifetime, "free" indigenous populations were incorporated to Spanish expansionism legally as tributary populations to the centralized political structure of the Crown. In this formal sense, the "Indians" theoretically were of the same free status as Spaniards and *mestizos*, yet the brunt of the tribute and accumulated debt to the state was mostly theirs. The so-called free wage labor was more often than not debt peonage for indigenous populations. And there was historically no way out of this living situation predicated upon force. Although it is plausible that miscegenation or *mestizaje* might have helped to ease some of the state burden.¹⁵ It is as

though the majority of living subjects in the Paraguayan region had no option but to get out of the subalternized category of "Indian," without falling into the legalized precipice of social death (or slavery).

It is conceivable that the tax-exempt segregation of the Jesuit mission life might have helped in this transition from pre-Hispanic "freedom," and through the coloniality of subalternized indigenous forced labor, towards the concrete utopia of the formalization of full-member citizenship and the contractualism of proto-capitalist wage labor inside a pan-Hispanic and transatlantic world.

Yet, it is also clear that it is not so easy for us today to come to terms with the historical trauma of this much later institutional attribution of "freedom" in relation to the individual worker-unit (or "pieza" and "peón jornalero"). It is cutting through the juridical logic of repressive colonial subjectivities, that we must historically imagine a slow, yet irreversible global monetarization process of most social exchanges.¹⁶ As early as 1654 in the distant Maranhão region, Vieira is already talking of these money-fractured "human units" ("peças que se levarem ao sertão para os ditos resgates....," proposal XV). This individuality does not mean, however, that institutional abuse stopped and that "freedom," whatever good this empty category may hold historically, increased.¹⁷ This "ideal" situation of hired and justly paid wage labor, should the abstraction of justice ever be completely contained inside the economic horizon of payment, was not happening for the most part in most of peripheral Paraguay and Maranhão, mostly situated in the shadow of money as the early accounts of Montoya and Vieira tell us. The essential Jesuit call is for the regulation of the all-pervasive irregularity of ethnic labor, which is cutting through social energies to the extreme degree of indigenous decimation. Jesuit reformation of state structures, these mostly complicit with criminality to be sure if only by negligence, had no choice but to make an intervention into the colonial legalization of ethnic labor.¹⁸

If the state-sponsored *encomienda* institution interpellated all male individuals over 13 years of age to comply with the satisfaction of tribute every year, the social meaning of this historical interpellation resulted in labor arrangements such as *mita* and *yanacónaje* to satisfy this non-negotiable state imposition. Due to the scarcity of money, Ruiz de Montoya speaks of the individual tribute of five "hollow weights" ("peso hueco" or quite literally, the shadow of money), and its alternative of one month's service. In a clear "us v. them" logic, Ruiz de Montoya locates in the same tight knot the "proper" political desire of the Monarch, state officials such as the judge don Francisco de Alfaro, and the close collaboration of the Society of Jesus. Against this histori-

cal *entente cordiale*, our jesuit posits the other side of the *encomenderos* and *bandeirantes*, and both political sectors well upon the structural subordination of the indigenous and majoritarian sectors of the American population. Against all odds, it is the latter group, the “they” of the white settlers, who have it their way by the time *Spiritual Conquest* was written (41-42). The global commonwealth thus turned upside down, Montoya’s reformist proposals horn with the apparent impossibility to enforce colonial legislation (there are the two monumental legislative efforts, the *Laws of Burgos* (1512-1513) and the *New Laws* (1542-1543)). Underegulated *encomienda* system —not *encomienda* per se and this inflection is crucial— is the fundamental cause of the internal destructuring of the Crown interests in the American commonwealth.

The Jesuits according to Ruiz de Montoya, are committed to a new enforcement of the colonial legislation and the close supervision of declining indigenous populations for the management and usufruct of the colonial periphery. Never quite raising the voice against the largest corruption of the colonial state, which was historically not perceived as such, *The Spiritual Conquest* is however quite eloquent about targeted state corruption and colonial anomie. For the Jesuits, the Spanish colonization was as inevitable as desirable. Domination (or *imperium*) of the Americas constituted a magnificent historical opportunity, also a monumental task, not to be neglected¹⁹.

The colonial juxtaposition of tribute and forced labor will constitute the main target for Jesuit-implemented reformism. We need more concrete information about this historical fight. Ruiz de Montoya described, for example, how often the Indians ended up with their properties seized by officials and paying double tribute, ten *pesos* and the most likely alternative of two months of personal service. Abuse regarding the structuring of the payment tended to increase and the itinerant quality of the personal service (or *mita*) worsened the situation. Forced labor became debt labor. Ruiz de Montoya’s descriptions are quite eloquent as to how sometimes the Indians had to travel for twenty days and sixty leagues and “forced by fear or harsh compulsion,” stayed in personal service for “three months or more” instead of the stipulated one month (42). Ruiz de Montoya’s writing will be quite eloquent when describing how the most “honest” *encomenderos* —honest, a very thin word— will make the Indians work for six months of the year without any pay, while the less “honest” for ten or twelve months. Besides the double tribute to settlers and the Crown, some Indians found themselves cheated out of the regular wage labor, which already co-existed with forced labor. Instead of the law-standard of a *real* and a half per day, or forty-five per month, these indigenous workers got

paid less while the tribute increased to a new debt. The irregularities in the stipulation of the colonial debt, shot through by the theoretical egalitarianism of "freedom" as vassalage, a generalized barter economy and a looming wage labor, entrapped indigenous populations into a permanent state of debt, almost like a slippery fish biting its own tail.²⁰

In *Spiritual Conquest*, "freedom" for the majority of the population, an empty category always to be filled historically, theoretically subsumes under the Jesuit proposal for a previously arranged payment among non-hierarchical parties (42). This "freedom" was truly a dream for the many who were still unacquainted with the 'theology' of money in the first place. *Spiritual Conquest* is fundamentally intended as a mediation among dynamic cultural complexes in order to promote the exemplary singularity of European-centered Christian civilization and with no contradiction the interests of the Crown (surely, the taboo names left underexplored by Montoya). In the vicinity of the castle of power and privilege, Ruiz de Montoya is mostly attacking pervasive malfeasance, and his words do not ever go against the official grain. Wanting to change malfeasance into scrupulous sense of duty, Montoya's narrative capitalizes on the main source of state wealth and profit, quite literally the "sweat and blood of the defenseless Indians," to thus construct a Jesuit monopoly in the region. In this *bandeirante*-dominated landscape where 60,000 missionized people had been made prisoners (128), Ruiz de Montoya petitioned the temporary tax-and-labor exemption to all missionized Indians, who must then turn into borderline patrolmen (128). According to Ruiz de Montoya's design, these "Indians" would be fenced off from forced labor on condition of prompt attendance to military service in a frontier location.²¹ Peripheral Indians were thus taken "outside" the contractualized social exchange, and segregated inside the construct of a pure ethnicity, which granted them a legal state of theoretical equality, almost undistinguishable from a helplessness which needed supervision (*miserables*). The Jesuit-implemented frontier institution, the missions, thus came to the fore as check-points within the vast Amazon political landscape in order to properly channel the otherwise free-floating social energy, still by 1639 mostly capitalized upon by apparently more penetrating *encomendero* rapacity, and *bandeirante* irregularities.

And yet, it is important to suggest a variation to the outside and inside of missionized life in the Paraguay periphery. There is in all likelihood no clear demarcation between the surrounding criminal exteriority and the presumably orderly mission enclaves. We may imagine instead a poorly charted, still fluctuating borderline economy interpenetrated by institutionalized demands for migrant labor, *mita* and

yanaconaje, illicit slave market and militia duties. In the transient human geography of migrating populations, we may imagine missions as mobile homes. Rather than detached enclaves, these missioned enclaves may only then become more like nodal points of social exchange in the foundational period of marginalized regions such as Paraguay and the Maranhão region. Established in compliance with the dictates of Crown and the Pope's blessings, the prerogatives and monopolies had already been granted as early Nov. 26, 1609, but remained largely inoperative by 1639, Jesuit missions did not take place despite, let alone against the largest official colonial structuring of the new world. It would then be erroneous to characterize Jesuit missions as anti-colonial or even as post-colonial alternatives to the larger social polity reconfigured under colonization. They were rather para-colonial enclaves largely instrumental to the designs of state absolutism (in a perhaps valid musical analogy, we may think of the voice of the *counter-tenor* as not "against" the main melodic voice of the tenor but as a necessary modulation inside the main theme of early Iberian colonization of the Americas).

There is no hesitation to say that Jesuit enclaves, in their relative legal exceptionality (labor exemption), and their relative economic self-sufficiency inside a larger economy of subsistence, also came with their own internal conditions of imposition. It is perfectly possible to envisage Jesuit enclaves as colonial institutions, "colonial" in the double sense of taking place during colonial times and also in the sense of reinforcing coercive situations of social control, other than the largely underegulated state structures in crisis and expansion and the largely underegulated and blatantly savage state of the least "honest" *encomenderos*. And yet this Jesuit desire for the rule of the law, and we must remember that there is only *one* imperial law, appears colonial through and through in that such initiatives, articulated in the imperial languages, came from minority sectors near political privilege. Jesuit diction thus did not, could not fail to produce conditions of impositions, internal to all those missionized populations who were escaping from *mita* impositions and *bandeirante* explorations.²² For Ruiz de Montoya, for whom *imperium* over the Americas was the right to do, Jesuit intervention consisted in the attenuation of those irregular features of imperial domination which were causing destruction and pain. We may see missions as these buffer zones in the precarious borderlines of imperial growth modelled after secluded seminary life and only incipiently non-competitive or proto-capitalist culture of the land. Montoya's postcard pictures of Jesuit missions and the seemingly bloodless dismantling of autochthonous Amazon cultures largely consti-

tutes the routinized semantic foundation which passes for utopianism in most of the literature on missions even among secular authors (Caraman, Cunninghame, Medina Ruiz, Reiter to name but few). Against the rapacity of *encomenderos* and *bandeirantes*, Montoya's constructs thus a charming *vita beata*:

They all raise food, and each man has his own plot. When past eleven years of age, boys have a plot of their own. Upon these they very cooperatively assist each other. They neither buy nor sell, for they freely and unselfishly help each other in their needs, and show great generosity to people passing through. Accordingly, there is no theft; they live in peace and without quarrels. Throughout the year they hear Mass at daybreak and go to work from church. This holy preparation is very successful. While the sacrament of confession is received from the start, Communion is put off for a number of years, more for some and fewer for others. For while their capacity for learning matters of faith and mechanical arts is well known, the resistance among the older people is considerable. (131)

The goodness of this "garden of Christianity," as Reiter puts it, is unmistakably scrupulous to the Catholic dictum: regulations of bodies and minds in the prohibition of drunkenness (132), the control of reproduction in the prohibition of concubinage (132), the imported European frame of monogamic and indissoluble heterosexual couple arrangement, and the enforcement of chastity, "any lapses against it that may be discovered are met with effective correction and exemplary punishment" (132).²³ Needless to say, the explicit goal of constructing "an excellent civilized commonwealth" (132), coincides with Ruiz de Montoya's ideological position, and by extension of the Society of Jesus.

No taking Ruiz de Montoya at his word, an intent look may soon discover internal hierarchical asymmetries, uneven exercise of duties, severe restrictions, rigorous supervision of abjected peoples, condescension and paternalism. The "inside" (or the presumable social goodness of the isolated commonwealth) and the larger hostile and colonial "outside" are radically part of the same universe that gives conditions of possibility to both shifting sides (like the rotating sides of the same coin tossed high in the air). The large political meaning is of course the historical usufruct and enjoyment of monopolized wealth (ethnic labor). It is only paying attention to the more likely variables and gradations, intensities and conditions of imposition, that the Early Modern colonization of the Americas appears to be the fundamental background, and simultaneously condition of possibility, for mission structures to emerge to social experimentation.²⁴ It is this historical anomaly, commonly called Jesuit Utopia, situated in the margins of Iberian ex-

pansionism, that I here wish to historically semanticize more concretely in relation to ethnic labor. It is largely the standard champagne celebration of most scholarly accounts that I also wish to water down.

Case Study Two: Antonio Vieira (Lisbon 1608-Salvador, Brazil 1697), Jesuit missionary of African descent,²⁵ orator, diplomat, and master of classical Portuguese prose played an active role in both Portuguese and Brazilian history. His sermons, letters, and state papers provide a valuable index to the climate of opinion of the Seventeenth-century world.²⁶ He entered the Jesuit Order in 1623, ordained in 1635 and soon became the most popular and influential preacher in the Portuguese colony. Like Montoya, he was a renowned linguist. He knew Tupí-Guaraní, a number of local Amazon dialects and the Kimbundu language of the black slaves. He did extensive mission work until 1641 in the states of Pará and Maranhão in Brazil. He was sent on a mission to Portugal to congratulate King John IV on his accession. Taking advantage of this trip, he undertook an intense diplomatic work in Europe between 1646-1650. During these years, he secured monopoly for the Jesuits that would protect the Brazilian Indians from enslavement. He returns triumphantly to Brazil in 1655 doing further mission work until 1661. Problems with the Inquisition led to his imprisonment during 1665-1667. On his release, he went to Rome in 1668 to labor for relief of the persecuted Portuguese Jews. He became Provincial of his Order in 1688. He dies in 1697 at the age of 89. Often presented as the Portuguese equivalent to the Spanish Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas (Alden, Hemming), encyclopedic literature considers him a fighter for the freedom of the Indians, an advanced advocate for racial tolerance,²⁷ even "a liberal."²⁸

On the Portuguese side of empire building, Vieira's proposals provide a consistent historical parallel to his fellow Jesuit Ruiz de Montoya. Both writers, qua members of an international elite institution, had privileged access to negotiations with the Crown. This historical vicinity endows Vieira's epistolary literature with a strong proto-repressive or proto-legal character. The historical alliance turned Vieira's literature into normativity, or legality, well until Jesuit expulsion from Brazil in 1759.²⁹ Vieira's writing, just as his Jesuit fellow traveller Ruiz de Montoya, is fundamentally aiming at the most effective colonial implementation of state structures. The relatively marginalized northern littoral of Maranhão and Pará lent a potential for Jesuit growth well under the hermetic confines of a Christian civilization and the Portuguese Crown. In the pages which follow, I have selected fragments from two letters to the Portuguese King, João IV dated April 4, 1654 and April 6, 1654 to highlight concrete key aspects of the Jesuit-

implemented political remedies to the largely chaotic state of being for the immense majority of the indigenous population.

Vieira's epistles want to become normative or prescriptive textuality. The epistolary exchange between Vieira and his King João IV provides us, for all its proto-legalism, with some salient features regarding the diplomatic handling of colonial tensions. Readers are given a dramatic account of the Maranhão region. Vieira's letters represent a direct and strong plea to see immediate results. The Jesuit intellectual is proposing a thorough enclosure of indigenous population around the institutionalization of *aldeias*, the Portuguese equivalent of Spanish reductions (or *reducciones*), and the sole supervision of the Society of Jesus. Conceptualized mainly as frontier posts, these enclaves signal the boundaries beyond which barbarism, the hostile other of Christianity, grows thick and wild still quite distant from the reach of the European-centered imagination.

Already in the manner of an experienced law-giver, Vieira is creating a typology for the social category of Indian: 1) "missionized" Indian, legal vassals to the Crown (Indians "forros" or partially exempted from tribute, 436),³⁰ presumably "free," yet their laboral duties and movement subjected to a rigid control, 2) "wild Indians" not yet missionized or Indians beyond the boundaries of Christian civilization ("os índios do sertão"), and, 3) legally enslaved Indians ("índios em cordas", or "índios de corda") in a presumably transitional state between the preceding two.³¹ The interplay of these Indian categories with the white settlers or first-generation Portuguese population will be supervised by one appointed ecclesiastical order. Referees in the complexities of the colonial game, the complex "reduction," or the incorporation of the majority of the population into theoretical citizenship and jurisdiction (310), apparently needs, according to Vieira, ecclesiastical mediation for its success. Promoted to the status of political advisors inside the mercurial borderline of Maranhão region and the backlands (or *sertão*), ecclesiastical people were supposedly the ideal candidates for the prevention and correction of a standardized abuse due to the systemic lack of law enforcement.

To João IV, the most powerful reader inside the Portuguese Empire to be sure, Vieira is presenting proposals for the betterment of the colonial state. This is a description of the appalling living conditions begging for a strong reform:

Os índios, que moram em suas aldeias com títulos de livres, são muito mais cativos que os que moram nas casas particulares dos portugueses, só com uma diferença, que cada três anos têm um novo senhor, que é o governador ou

capitão mor que vem a estas partes, o qual se serve dêles como de seus e os trate como alheios; em que vêm a estar de muito pior condição que os escravos, pois ordinariamente se ocupam em lavouras de tabaco, que é o mais cruel trabalho de quantos há no Brasil. (311)

"Indian" freedom, granted by imperial structures above the bottom line of slavery, is constructed according to a strict distribution and surveillance of Indians to the Portuguese. Vieira pronounces the *mestizo* population ("mamelucos" or hybrids of Indian and white), the main manufacturers of abuse. Making "their" villages "ours," the Jesuit-mediated state coverage provides safety and protection for "them" and "us" ("us," always inside the personable epistolary format, João IV and Vieira). The already Christianized Indians, automatically protected by the Crown and the Jesuits, will be redistributed to all white settlers every three years to attend to all necessary labor requirements for the colonial establishment. Yet, a structural abuse did not stop here since, given the current lack of law enforcement, even these protected Indians were also routinely abused by governors or military men in the cruelties of tobacco work. Vieira's colonial background is one of barbarian wilderness, irregularities in complying with legislation, illegal slave-raiding explorations and the opposition of the Portuguese *encomenderos*. Against this, Vieira's proposals to João IV are fundamentally for the segregation of these "Indianized" populations and the manufacturing into fully regulated state property. In this worldview, "vassalage" is "freedom" which is non-negotiable. "Indians" are not called to a plebiscite. Yet, this "freedom" is no free lunch. The nominal good comes with vested interests and concrete conditions of colonial imposition.

In his letter 4 April 1654, Vieira proposes several concrete remedies: prohibition to all state officials (governors, captains and intermediaries) to make use of Indians in the tobacco plantation, except, and this clause is crucial, to fulfill service to the Crown ("senão quando fôsse para as fortificações ou outras cousas do serviço de V.M.," 312). The Indians are declared "free," and the passive construction is important to Vieira's world view, by taking them out from the wilderness (*sertão*) and sealing them off inside civilization, well under exceptional tax-as-labor exemptions including the compensation of military duties in borderline conflicts (normal state of being in the Amazonas by 1654).³² In so doing, he leaves the reason of state dangerously plastic and empty (the anything, any single thing, of "outras cousas"). Read politically, Vieira's writing is mostly in mapping out the still largely uncharted landscape of the innumerable wealth potential in the

Maranhão backlands ("os índios do sertão ... inumeráveis," 312).³³ The expansionist interests of the absolutist state and the Jesuit interests for their missions thus appear to intersect gracefully in the targeted fluctuating demarcations of Portuguese civilization and barbarism not yet made into a Portuguese possession.

To João IV, Vieira's dishes out a political plan for reform: Christianized "Indians," under Jesuit supervision and thus faithful to the Crown, will be distributed according to measured and reasonable labor impositions, theoretically wage labor, responding to the needs of the Portuguese settlers, situated inside a colonial geography of pacified villages. From an "Indian" viewpoint, if only for a fleeting moment, we must see these proposals as structural conditions of imposition from a Portuguese outside (forced labor, reconfiguration in centralized *aldeia* structures, incipient fracturations of a still primitive money economy, Jesuit supervision over local leaders, intolerant Christian symbology, etc...). According to the orthodox institutional postulate that negates social maturity to the Indians, to which Vieira's letters certainly subscribe, this regulatory goal can only be achieved via ecclesiastical mediation. Vieira's proposals for social reform basically amount to the strict surveillance and control of the Indians in the transition, which will prove slow if not insurmountable, from the wilderness to the villages, from the so-called barbarism of an itinerant slash-and-burn culture with little, if any surplus, to the civilizational arrogance of Christianity jargon of authenticity and colonial settlement around the southern centers of sugar plantation. Similarly to Ruiz de Montoya, Vieira encourages a diligent knowledge of indigenous languages (in today's words, foreign languages), to better suit state interest:

e houver quantidade de religiosos que aprendam as línguas, e se exercitem neste ministério com verdadeiro zêlo; não há dúvida que, concorrendo a graça divina com esta disposição dos instrumentos humanos, os índios se reduzirão fãcilmente à nossa amizade, abraçarão a fé, viverão como cristaos, e com as novas do bom tratamento dos primeiros trarão êstes apos de si injúria a deus, à fé, à Igreja e a V. M., não fôssem os bárbaros das brenhas, nem outros homens inimigos ou estranhos, senão aqueles memos de quen V. M. confia os sue Estados, e a quem V. M. encomenda primeiro que tudo a conversão das almas, e lhes encarrega os meios dela so pena de caso maior! (313).

This first letter ends with a petition (the "cousa indigna" is a polite euphemism): the abolition of the standardized colonial abuse in the Jesuit enforcement of fiercely regulated regulations, which are always

in semantic agreement with largely inoperative state regulations. The imperial machine is still, no doubt for Vieira, the inexcusable and inevitable form of commonwealth, which was currently failing, but it should not, to deliver the "goods" of undisputed European civilization in the radical singular form, money economy, alphabetic writing, the Portuguese, city-structured communities, sedentary agriculture and Christianity, to a dispersed indigenous heterogeneity which could not, in Vieira's view, produce any goods by themselves. These "outsiders" were not to be left alone. For Vieira, the Portuguese Empire was the sole House of Being, a world increasingly centered around slave-holding sugar-plantations and increasingly, if hierarchically hybrid (Big House and slave quarters, *Casa-Grande* and *Senzala*). The malfunction of this imperial household was to be corrected via Jesuit mediation in the marginalized northern litoral of Brazil.³⁴ This correction had to come with the granting of exemptions and prerogatives.

The April 6 1654 letter contains an orderly and detailed list of nineteen proposals to thus improve the colonial state of affairs. Vieira's appeal to justice is fundamentally structured around the negative: the prohibition of unregulated traffic of peoples and goods which is considered to be the prime reason for the decimation of the Indians "porque as injustiças que se fazem a esa pobre e miserabilíssima gente não cabem en nenhum papel" (432). Political agents (or governors) and military agents (or captains) are denied jurisdiction over the indigenous populations, except for a case of open conflict or war, almost a permanent state of being, as we have already emphasized, in the 1654 whimsical Maranhão borderline situation.

Vieira's proposals speak of a strict hierarchical distribution of the population: Christianized Indians, today we might translated into "legalized aliens," will be distributed among the Portuguese, "Christian" subsumes the generic national label, according to the internal hierarchy, or "quality" and need of the latter (proposal I). This hierarchical structuring of the territory ("capitania") should be done as follows: one major ("um procurador geral") and several military positions (or captains) will be appointed to the new territories and enjoy a relative independence from the general jurisdiction of governors; in a mediatory position between majors and captains (proposal III), two ecclesiastical persons will be designated to supervise the incorporation of still illegal Indians and the regulation of Indian labor arrangement.³⁵ Annually, according to a rotational mechanism, missionized Indians will be distributed to a different settler ("morador"), paying particular attention to the settlers' need ("the neediest among them come first," proposal II). Annually, there will be tabulation of Indians (proposal

IV). Christianized (or "visaed") indians will be distributed in small urban enclaves (*aldeias*), and these will be kept in small numbers for a more efficient control and supervision. Vieira unifies the prompt service to state interests and the preservation of the life of the indigenous populations. Vieira is proposing a measured mechanism to capitalize on Indian labor: Indian wealth (or Indian labor) will be distributed among white settlers according to the verifiable need of the latter, the assumption being that Indian needs are also presumably better served this way (proposal V).

Vieira's proposals speak of restrictions regarding the traffic of peoples and goods. Theoretically, Maranhão wealth (Indian labor) was thoroughly to be kept under control. Indians could not travel two days outside their assigned villages, nor could they work for more than four months outside their villages (the total maximum of a four-month time unit was divided into two manageable time units, proposal VI). Colonial reformism introduced a consistent structuring of wage labor thus: payment to Indian labor should be centralized in the village strongbox and two keys will be assigned, one to the Major of the village and the other to the two supervisors.³⁶ A written contract stipulating the satisfaction of the working hours and the appropriate payment should bear public witness (proposal VII).³⁷ Although with the internal social hierarchies and contradictions above illustrated, this inflexible Jesuit-implemented regulation of Indian populations strove to take into consideration satisfaction of communal need as pertains to the subaltern sectors: traffic of peoples and goods had to convene every fifteen days, or twice a month, in a pre-established money-free market place.

Zeroing in on a synchronized satisfaction of communal need, the lowest common and human denominator, eating, was thus taken into consideration.³⁸ Prevention of abuse in the social exchange of goods was to be implemented by the patrolling of the appointed authorities (proposal VIII). Expeditions into the wilderness ("entradas ao sertão"), had to be exclusively assigned to clergymen or to reliable military men (proposal IX). Because supervision of 'miserable' Indians should had to have a desirable consistency, it should ideally be assigned in monopoly to a religious order. Vieira's predilection, we may guess for whom, was cunningly kept in suspense for a while (proposal X). Enslaved Indians ("índios do corda"), or those Indians made captive, "justly" captived in Vieira's words, were to be the only ones allowed in the expeditions into the wilderness provided they were always supervised by clergymen who had to be well-versed in indigenous languages and good theologians ("bons linguas e bons teólogos," proposal XII). Indians from the wilderness ("índios do sertão"), once prop-

erly baptized and converted into missionizable Indians (or “indios forros”), were to be distributed *pro rata* among settlers (“moradores do Estado, comencando sempre pelos mais pobres, para que tenham quem os ajude”). This was considered the most idoneous measure for the maintainance and aggrandizement of a colonial state (“conservação e aumento do Estado”). Vieira’s political vision placed the responsibility for the supervision of the colonial state in the whistle-blowing patrol of the “black robes,” and the responsibility for the production of the colonial state on the shoulders of the “white settlers,” to use Alden’s language. Both social groups, oftentimes in fierce opposition, came to sit, in our proposed Atlas-like analogy, on the broad indigenous shoulders of the majority of population in Maranhão and Pará.

This Early Modern naturalization process was theoretically to be done without use of force against the Indians (proposal XI). Those in charge of the distribution of indigenous populations were the maximum secular authority (Procurador geral) or the maximum authority of the appointed religious Order (proposal XIII). A selected unit of white soldiers, called “Advancement of the Faith” (“Propagação da fé”), had always to accompany the exploratory journeys into the wilderness (“jornadas ao sertão”), for the defense of the ecclesiastical persons and appointed Indians (proposal XIV). All transactions (financial, prisoner exchange, etc.), during those explorations were centralized in one military commander (proposal XV). All these exchanges were to be done, and here Vieira’s writing thins out to touching a historical impossibility, respecting Indian willingness in a social exchange and their own naturalization process well beyond their means as radically non-equals (“mas isto nao fazendo força ou violencia alguma aos mesmos índios, senao per vontade”). Exceptions to the stipulated respect for the Indians’ exercise of free will were only to be made due to exceptional circumstances, and were to be channelled through proper military personnel (proposal XVI). Exceptional circumstances in marginalized borderline regions are most likely situations as usual. It is the serious consideration of this exceptional normality in a frontier situation which will most likely make “Indian” free will vanish into thin air.

To attend to the increasing availability of labor (*gente de servico*), an inflexible economic restructuring of a few number of Indian villages was deemed advisable (proposal XVII). Village majors elected religious officials (proposal XVIII). Appointed clergymen, because of the assigned referee role in this colonial pool of social energies, were not to have any Indians directly assigned to them for personal labor (neither “free” Indians nor enslaved Indians).³⁹ Clergymen were not

to have any vested interests in their assigned villages (proposal XIX). Thus numbered the Indians, in the sense of "doutrinados" and "sujeitos," their decimation was to be theoretically arrested in the mutual responsibility of the state and the Jesuits. Vieira concludes the letter by intimating that the ideal monopoly of this mediation and regulation should be given to only one religious order well versed in letters, of the greatest impartiality and tested zealotry in the salvation of souls. Of course, this Jesuit narrative will propose the Society of Jesus (439-40). If it is true that the Indian-settler ("indios-moradores") dialectics is the fundamental internal structuring device by Vieira, it is also true that such dialectical structure crisscrosses with the most fundamental political dialectics of white settlers and black robes (Portuguese settlers and Jesuits), sitting at the King's negotiating table on this Iberian side of the Atlantic.⁴⁰

As Ruiz de Montoya's implicit suggestions for Paraguay, Vieira's 1654 epistle, not quite a legal dictum yet, is fundamentally aiming at the assignment of "proper" locations and duties to all social agents in the marginalized and still largely uncharted Maranhão backlands ("proper" according to the hegemonic colonial dictum of the state). With this Jesuit proposal, surely pleasing to Crown interests, Vieira, an intimate of João IV, included a monopoly clause touching on Indian labor in the truly immense promises of the Amazonas region, particularly so after the *Tratado de Límites* (1750). A firm alliance between Portuguese monarchy and the Society of Jesus was established, and both got what they wanted until Jesuit expulsion from Portuguese America in 1759.

To conclude, if Modernity is the historical milieu which displayed a fascination for regulation (or legislation), Early Modern political reformism (or utopianism), largely contained by hegemonic absolutist state structures, proposed a convinced intensification of such regulatory idealism. The historical expansionism of Modernity, or Iberian colonization, emerges from the fractures of this historical regulatory impulse. And colonial reformism, in the shadow of classic utopianism, adds a perhaps surprising and unpleasant twist to European-based utopianism in the formal, when not semantic or political coincidence which fundamentally seeks to consolidate European expansionism in the Americas. Colonial reformism will deliver a strict regimentation of an "indigenized" social polity, sealed-off inside relatively autonomous pockets of royal prerogative.

This essay has been focusing on the Jesuit proposals for the distant colonial regions, the Paraná-Paraguay and the northern littoral of Maranhão in Brazil. My political reading wanted to reinforce the formal coincidence in the political, or semantic alliance of interests be-

tween the Crown and the Society of Jesus against the seemingly victorious white settlers (Spanish and Portuguese).

We have analyzed some salient features of the social regulation of Indian labor under asymmetrical and structurally violent situations of colonization. This analysis has been done via two exemplary Jesuit testimonies, Ruiz de Montoya and Vieira's. Against most scholarship on Jesuit missions, my critical position leans closer to a more secular and critical stance. In this reticent spirit, the invocation of the nominal good (say, "freedom"), has been put together with structural conditions of imposition (ethnic or "Indian" labor). And, always with a wary eye on this conceptual pair, my analysis has been proposing the colonial chaos of underregulation, or an early colonization semanticized around the unenforceable condition of state underregulation, and the Jesuit reformist proposals for self-appointed mediation and a stricter regimentation of a growing and heterogeneous social polity. Our conclusion is that, it is not at all easy to unpack much of a desire for the historical meaning of that Jesuit-manufactured "freedom" for the majority of the indigenous population in our two targetted regions.⁴¹

We have been looking at some of the historical contradictions implicit in the Jesuit reformist construction of a globalized commonwealth. Inside the largely barter economy of the Amazon region, the incipient predations of money economy and colonial state impositions regarding tax tribute and forced labor, Jesuits proposed themselves for the supervision and control of indigenous populations in the expanding margins of imperial demarcation. To subsidize this supervision, they requested suspension of customary, if underregulated tribute and forced labor for missioned Indians. My historical diagnosis has been that Jesuit reformist structuring of mission enclaves largely operated in the manner of a cog in the imperial wheel. In the colonial margins of imperial expansionism, Jesuit missions were one crucial frontier institution, with privileges concerning tax and labor impositions to the most fragile indigenous social sectors associated with them.

Building bridges, this paper has been remarking on the truly striking similiarity of denunciation of social conflict and enunciation of possible remedies in our two Jesuit case studies. Jesuit reformism, of Portuguese or Spanish origin, crystallizes around the incorporation of foreign peoples, named "Indians," into regulated state property in the chaotic middle of massive slave-raider predations and solid *encomendero* interests. Unlike Alden's conviction, differences among savage *encomenderos* and measured Jesuits are clear, structural differences among measured and reasonable *encomenderos* and Jesuits appear to be less clear.

In agreement with classic utopianism, these Jesuit proposals fundamentally strive for greater supervision and control of peoples and goods, traffic and duties in a particularly sorry picture of the expanding margins of a colonial world. These proposals try to do so by following a model that we might want to call the United Nations politics of neutrality and legality-bound intervention in the midst of permanent state of war (Sempat Assadourian). Indian labor in a pacified region was to become the cornerstone which, if properly kept under control, would help the overseas construction of the absolutist state (“*todos são interessados nos índios*” as Vieira says).

Following the historical dictum of political decorum, Jesuit proposals were made in the prestigious vehicle of communication, narrative and epistolary exchange in the imperial languages, Portuguese and Spanish. These proposals made the primordial claim of attending to state interest and Crown desire (the untouchable taboo of the “*serviço real, serviço de V. M.*” as in Vieira). Due to this scrupulous observance, Ruiz de Montoya’s and Vieira’s proposals for social change (the often called “Jesuit utopia”),⁴² were welcome inside decision-making power circles, and monopoly was granted, although there were no doubt tensions, backlash and hesitations, until the official expulsion of the Jesuits (1759 and 1767 from Portuguese and Spanish America respectively). It would certainly enrich this preliminary research to be able to demonstrate Jesuit collaboration among Spanish and Portuguese members beyond imperial demarcations and interests. After all, there is only one international Society of Jesus heavily centralized and unambiguously hierarchical, still largely influential in Latin America and elsewhere until today. To reinforce the likelihood of this hypothesis, the proposed figure of speech of the shifting imperial borderline theoretically vanished during the six decades (1580-1640), in which the Crowns of Portugal and Castile were united.⁴³

We thus contemplate one colossal imperial construction theoretically unified under the absolutist pinnacle of the Monarchy. Ruiz de Montoya and Vieira amply demonstrate the generalized malfunction, the paradoxical crisis and growth, of this impressive House of transatlantic Being, with respect to the most often non-textualized interests of the indigenous majority of the American population. This indigenous majority, when not kept in the slave quarters, the *senzala*, was most likely to be found in the huts of forced labor, or tightly regimented inside Jesuit enclaves (not to mention the runaway escapades and the threat of the *bandeirante* explorations). Colonization thus posits the impossible challenge to the Early Modern vision of what “human” may mean and the institutional compromise by the absolutist state, and also

by the Jesuits, was a middle-of-the-road compromise in the legalized infantilization of American populations.

The dual aspect of the word mission, enclave and exploration or foray, has been crucial because it highlights the fundamental itinerant constitution of peripheral populations and the precarious nature of population settlement in the initial years of empire establishment in the marginalized Paraguay and Maranhão regions. Surely, the vastness of the topic necessitates of further in-depth and comparative research. And yet, the strong suggestion remains that a state of severe underegulation is most likely not for the benefit of the weakest social sectors. We may add to this previous comment, that a certain *indigenista* program is certainly at work in these early Jesuit proposals while at the same time tinge such "white" claim with the "blood and sweat" of the "Indians." This consideration has taken this work to conclude that the operative regulation in a colonized world does not quite appear to be an entirely desirable solution, let alone the final solution to colonization. And this is perhaps the historical horizon that the Early Modern period could not transcend. This critique is also including most utopian literature, mostly Europe-centered, addressing the Jesuit utopianism historically situated in the colonization of (Latin) America. Celebrations do not come easy in relation to the larger imaginary landscape of colonial Latin America.

Finally, and this is the desire behind these pages, the interrogation of structural practices of vertical imposition will hopefully give us the necessary understanding for the abolition of such practices of vertical imposition, still well and alive today.⁴⁴ If utopianism is the "social good" which is not yet here, not yet there in the past, I am not saying, there is no need to say, that the Indians, as the subalternized majority, are or did "the good," by contradistinction to the Jesuit well-meaning regulation which tried to deliver "the good" inside the larger desolation of Early Modern colonization. More importantly, I would like to suggest, is to highlight that it was the majority of the population in colonial Paraguay and Maranhão which suffered the colonial commotion and massive restructuring of modes of living in the name of the "social good," be this Christianity as the ultimate horizon and social meaning for Montoya and Vieira, civilization, state Crown interest or anything else.

The making and the chaneling of wealth for the benefit of the majority of the population (commonwealth), is the mental horizon that my writing has been trying to circumscribe in relation to the historical slipperiness of utopianism, still very much in the making with us today. In relation to colonial reformism, Jesuit reformism may be said to

be a historical approximation, surely insufficient, to the mercurial slipperiness of utopianism, which could be if only tentatively semanticized as follows: 1) the primordial and radical consideration of social egalitarianism as exposed by the question, "what would a non-hierarchical structuring of say, labor (or ethnic, or sex, or language, etc.) look like?;" 2) the abolition of degrading social labelling, the abolition of practices of social degradation; 3) the abolition of toil for life (labor) and the satisfaction of communal need or equal distribution of "goods" to everyone according to need; and, 4) the constant negotiation of in-between states of inflexible regulation and absolute deregulation, the inoperativeness of an ideal legal dictum and the legal loopholes, always with an eye on the production and distribution of "social goods" to all coincidental social agents (whatever these "goods" might be according to the avatars of historical crisis and transformations). And yet, one may wonder out loud whether the "social good" must ever be fittingly situated within the horizon of the law. Early Modern utopianism emphatically answered "yes" to this, and colonial reformism categorically underlined this "positive" answer. In the darker (Latin) American underside of Modernity, we might perhaps today have some growing doubts about this. Should regulation be the ultimate horizon, one might also hesitate a little bit more if the production and usufruct of "the social good" have of necessity to be subsumed under, and exhausted by, the large shadow of money and payment. The outside of history, the "excess" which we may shorthand as "justice," whatever this empty sign may mean, does not appear to be encapsulated so easily.

It appears clear that there is no definite round figure to egalitarianism-as-justice. Yet some of the rigor of the numeral, think of the six working hours for everyone, might just as well be a very good start in the implementation of more egalitarian measures around the toil for communal life. This historical fascination for the measuring rod may be said to be the horizon for the slippery ideal of egalitarianism in classic Early Modern utopianism. Against this precedent, colonial reformism comes into being, it is important to highlight, not without colonial tensions and contradictions. Jesuit reformism intended the construction of orderly pockets of social polity in the imperial margins colonial domination. Such political practice with partial successes and severe limitations is no doubt interpellating our practices today.

In the historical shadow of this utopian egalitarianism, my reading has been proposing the juxtaposition of this utopian desire and the praxis (labor or mode of life) of the majority of the population in Paragay and Maranhão. In relation to Ruiz de Montoya and Vieira, we have seen how the fundamental social structuring of labor changed.

O’Gorman’s Spanish is surely more eloquent, “se está siempre dando de sí en el transcurrir de la historia,” just as *yanaconaje*, *mita* and *encomienda* labor massively destructured and restructured indigenous structures for social reproduction. It is only slowly, yet inevitably that we may see the coexistence with abusive wage labor per work-unit (“peças de serviço” already in Vieira), today the hegemonic form for social exchange. The slow and fragmentary introduction of money economy brought no relief to subsequent indigenous generations (as Maeder’s work exemplifies), and the figure of the *pongo* may insidiously sneak into any celebratory accounts. It is precisely against this historical figure that some of the fearful symmetry, the patterns of predictability and sameness, the radiant eating of anonymous peoples in public dining halls, or the inflexible clockwork regulation of social duties, which we may find in classic or Early Modern utopias, as well as in the underside modulation of colonial reformism, may be brought, with all its tensions, to memory and desire.

If any single *thing* which we may be tempted to call “social” is inevitably in the middle of crisis and transformations, what would utopian praxis have meant in colonial Paraguay and Maranhão, amid early implementation of imperial structures of domination and Jesuit reformism, if not the effective negatives of no-tribute, no-forced labor, no-*encomienda*, no-*mita*, no-*yanaconaje*, even perhaps no-mission labor? Would consistent wage labor among theoretical equals have exhausted the historical meaning of colonial reformism? And does utopianism effectively “do it” if it remains within the horizon of accurate money payment? Most likely not. It appears to me, but I might be wrong, that it is mainly in the critical analysis of state (i.e. structural and systemic) conditions of force and imposition, and also the neighboring or residual conditions of possibility, that a more acute perception of qualitatively new needs in old and new historical times may thus be said to come into being together with more appropriate responses tending towards the shameless satisfaction of communal need (politics of fulfilment and transfiguration in Seyla Benhabib’s words). It is in relation to this Jesuit political “paradise” in colonial Latin America, with all its successes and failures, that we dare ask in the end, what would all of this have to mean for us here and now? And do our privatized selves have anything better to offer?

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NOTES

¹ Earlier versions of this article have been presented at the 49 *International Congress of Americanists* (Quito, July 7-11, 1997), and also in the 22nd Annual Meeting of *The Society for Utopian Studies* (Memphis, Oct. 16-19, 1997). I wish to acknowledge the numerous responses and comments I received in both of these events. I particularly wish to thank Profs. Walter D. Mignolo, Enrique Dussel, James Kripper-Martínez and Lúcia H. Costigan for their critical suggestions to earlier versions of this work.

I must also include the observations from *Mester* reviewers and editors to the first draft. I finally want to include the names of Marc Couture, Kristin Pesola and Debbera Carson in the editing of this final version. All errors remain my own.

² See J.H. Phelan for a panoramic account in *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970). The large contrast still remains valid to me, between the more accusatory and confrontational millenarianism of early Franciscanism in New Spain, and the more compromising attitude of the young Jesuit monasticism expanding in the more distant colonial regions such as Paraguay. It is important to note that there is almost one-hundred years and important geographical and populational differences between *novohispano* Franciscanism and Paraguayan Jesuitism. Some qualifications will be however needed later in relation to Vieira.

³ See Peter Gerhard for a complete mapping of the overlapping ecclesiastical divisions and relative hegemony of Franciscans in colonial Mexico (the Introduction to his *A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). See also J.I. Israel's *Race, Class and Politics in Colonial Mexico. 1610-1670* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) for an overall review. For a brief account of Franciscan enterprises and living ethos in the Sixteenth-Century Yucatan peninsula, see chapter 4, "Missionaries" in Inga Clendinnen's *Ambivalent Conquest. Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987): pp. 45-56. See also "Spanish Interaction in Sixteenth-Century Florida and Hispaniola" by Katleen A. Deagan included in *Cultures in Contact: The Impact of European Contacts on Native American Cultural Institutions a.d. 1000-1800*. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985)): pp. 281-318.

⁴ We have the figure of Fray Diego Valadés, born in the colonial

Mexico, who in Rome will be defending the Franciscan sermonistic invention of figures and images, see the beautiful bi-lingual edition of the *Retórica Cristiana* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989, particularly pages 235-239). The condensation of signification that the allegorical figure entails for more efficient learning processes is also extensively exemplified in this monumental text. The contrast with the selected texts by Montoya and Vieira's epistles cannot be more striking.

⁵ See Magnus Mörner in his *The Expulsion of the Jesuits from Latin America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965): pp. 11 & 28-29.

⁶ See David Alden, *ibidem*, p. 72-73.

⁷ All quotes refer to the recent English edition, *The Spiritual Conquest Accomplished by the Religious of the Society of Jesus in the Provinces of Paraguay, Paraná, Uruguay and Tape* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1993).

⁸ Carlos Sempat Assadourian has spoken of the "permanent state of war" in the foundational period of colonization in the specific context of the Viceroyalty of Peru. I find this definition perfectly applicable to our two targetted regions of Paraguay and Maranhão, see "La Gran Vejación y Destrucción de la Tierra: Las Guerras de Sucesión y de Conquista en el Derrumbe de la Población Indígena del Perú," in *Transiciones hacia el Sistema Colonial Andino* (Lima: IEP, 1994): pp. 19-62.

⁹ Although the bibliography on Jesuit missions is quite extensive, convincing socioeconomic accounts are not so easy to come by. My fundamental source has been Pablo Hernández's *Organización Social de las Doctrinas Guaraníes de la Compañía de Jesús* (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, Editor, 2 vols., 1913). See also Jaime Cortesão (1969) for letters and yearly briefings by Ruiz de Montoya and Pedro Romero to Diego de Boroa, Father Provincial, for some extra information regarding the situation in the missions and the constant *bandeirante* threat and damage. The recent work by Rafael Carbonell de Masy, S.J. promises to be a fundamental source of reference for the future, *Estrategias de Desarrollo Rural en los Pueblos Guaraníes (1609-1767)* (Barcelona, Antoni Bosch Editores, 1992). I haven't had a chance yet to consult this work, which I am sure, will respond to some of these silences.

¹⁰ In fact, the *encomienda* appears as the very condition of possibility for the implementation of the colonial system in a fundamentally agrarian society radically in the making. See Góngora's *Studies in the Colonial History of Spanish America* (Cambridge, 1975), for a detailed study of the rewards of expedition and conquest

(particularly chapter one). See also Burkholder & Johnson's numbers of *encomenderos*, about 500 for New Spain and Peru, in *Colonial Latin America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994): p. 109.

¹¹ Burkholder & Johnson's, *ibidem*, state that "by 1707, 30 villages and 100,000 Indians" (p. 87).

¹² See Elman R. Service's "Indian-European Relations in Colonial Latin America," *American Anthropologist* (1955/57, num.3, part 1): pp. 411-425; and Bernard Slicher Van Bath's "Economic Diversification in Spanish America around 1600: Centres, Intermediate Zones and Peripheries," in *Jahrbuch fur Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* (1979/16): pp. 53-95.

¹³ In payment to the Indians, Susnik speaks of the standard practice of cloth-payment and the official prohibition of payment in form of wine, honey, *chicha* or coca. She describes the regulated length of the cloth-payment (*pago en lienzo*) and the standard abuses which occurred (*El Indio Colonial en el Paraguay* (vol.1), pp. 43-44, 150-152).

¹⁴ Jesuit expulsion from Portuguese America in 1759 and from Spanish America by Carlos III in 1767. Official abolition of the *encomienda* system by 1770. Suppression of the Jesuit Order by the Pope in 1773. Independence of Paraguay in 1811. Destructuring of Guarani villages, or "táva" communities by official decree of Carlos A. López in 1843: the status of "natural national" is officially attributed to the ethnic notion of Guarani (Susnik, (1)167).

¹⁵ See Susnik's *El Indio Colonial del Paraguay* (vol. 1), p. 31, 47, 51 and 203-204).

¹⁶ See Susnik, *ibidem* (vol. 1), p. 34.

¹⁷ See Susnik, *ibidem* (vol. 2), p. 83.

¹⁸ See Susnik, *ibidem* (vol.1), p. 138.

¹⁹ The comparison with Vasco de Quiroga (1470-1565) in colonial Mexico is revealing of the efforts to reconcile the tensions implicit in the juxtaposition of utopian rules and regulations that attempt a reform of a society and the Christian-inspired legalisms that deemed right the right to conquest, the *Reglas y Ordenanzas para el Gobierno de los Pueblos-Hospitales* (1565), directly inspired by Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) and the controversial treatise *De Debellandis Indis* (1552), which could be translated as "About the war that must be waged against the Indians." Quiroga's *Real Colegio de San Nicolás de Pátzcuaro* passed to engross Jesuit patrimony. There is a marked contrast between the centralized urbanity of New Spain, more prosperous and quieter, and the unpredictable Paraguayan periphery, "Noticias para la Historia del Antiguo Colegio de San

Nicolás de Michoacán" in *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* (Num. 1, Tomo X, México 1939): pp. 24-106.

²⁰ It is against this early chaotic colonial background that the prophetic suggestion made by classic utopianism for the six working hours for everyone must grip the historical imagination. We may also recall Marx's later description of the horrors of the working day, in *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: Norton & Company, 1978): pp. 361-376.

²¹ For a theorization of the frontier paradigm, see the comprehensive volume edited by David J. Weber, *Where Cultures Meet: Frontiers in Latin American History* (Wilmington, Delaware: A Scholarly Resources Inc. Imprints, 1994).

²² It is in this sense that it is important to denaturalize and gain a profound sense of estrangement as regards the internal implementation of mission structures. Say, Hernández's chapter headings: "Concept of Indian," "Family," "The Cabildo Structure," "the constitution of the Vassal," "the Militia," "the Economic regime" (Agriculture, Industry, Commerce, etc... Everything sounds reasonable until we suddenly remember that these structures happened in the Amazonas! The importation of European molds is welcome by Hernández as "the good" without ever quite putting them side by side with say, the reception by the peoples who were there. It is also important to emphasize that Hernández in the two truly impressive volumes of *Organización Social de las Doctrinas Guaraníes* does not provide his readers with convincing descriptions of mission labor.

²³ About punishments, Hernández speaks of the "rollo" (or flogging post) in the form of the cross in the middle of the village square for public punishment. Some villages also had jail (*Organización Social*, (1)122-124).

²⁴ It is to the credit of *The New Latin American Mission History* (1995), a recent revisionist volume edited by Langer and Jackson, the juxtaposition of "true belief" to "fanaticism" and the consideration of economic motives that may come, if only at times too close to (structural) "hypocrisy" mostly among those in powerful positions in colonial situations. The notion of "true belief" and "faith" (nominal goodness to some) and greed (bad thing as publicly acknowledged by most), is put together with Jesuit interests, if only to compensate the profusion of hagiographic accounts about and from Jesuits about Jesuit interventions in colonial times. My analysis is trying to move away from a history of the mentalities (the fundamental consideration of systems of belief, moral(ized) accounts, etc.). By focusing on the category of "ethnic labor" or the "praxis of the majority of the

population," I am trying to get at the socioeconomic conditions of possibility for colonial tensions among several social sectors.

²⁵ "The grandson of a negroid woman," in Gilberto Freyre's *The Mansions and The Shanties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986): 244 & 425.

²⁶ Following upon an earlier appreciation of the weak presence of millenarianism in the Jesuit ethos, mostly in relation to Ruiz de Montoya, it is the right time for some qualifications in relation to Vieira's millenarianism. It's been recently pointed out to me that it is possible to see messianism in Vieira, specifically in *Clavis Perpetrarum* and *Apologia das Coisas Profetizadas* (Lucia Helena Costigan, personal communication). Hemming notes the messianic belief in Vieira's "Sermon of the Missions" or "Sermon of Amazonia," which brought him to conflicts with the Dominican-run Inquisition (*Red Gold* (1978), p. 242). D'Azevedo cites several unmistakable instances of messianism in Vieira's sermons (*Historia de Antonio Vieira*, vol. 2, 24-5, 318, 323 and 329).

²⁷ There is the biographical account by J. Luzio Azevedo, *Historia de Antonio Vieira* (Lisboa: Livraria Classica Editora de A. M. Teixeira, 1920). See Gilberto Freyre for a comprehensive reading, a bit aged yet characteristic of a period certainly picturesque, of Portuguese colonization in the famous *The Masters and the Slaves*, particularly chapters one and three; and John Hemmings's *Red Gold or The Conquest of the Brazilian Indians* (Papermac, 1978), particularly chapters five and fifteen, for more general information of the Jesuit activities and Antonio Vieira. See also Gregory Rabassa for a descriptive and biographical account of Vieira, "Vieira in the Maranhão: Out of Pragmatism, Prophecy," in *Colonial Latin American Review* (Vol. 1, Nos. 1-2, 1992, pp. 175-184).

²⁸ This latter appellation of "liberal" is to be found in *The Dictionary of Global Culture*, edited by Kwane Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates Jr., (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997): p. 674.

²⁹ See Dauril Alden for a thorough account of the Maranhão region and Vieira's early leadership in "Indian Versus Black Slavery in the State of Maranhão During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Iberian Colonies, New World Societies: Essays in Memory of Charles Gibson*, edited by Garner and Taylor (private printing, second corrected version, 1986): pp. 71-102, and also the essay "Black Robes Versus White Settlers: The Struggle for "Freedom of the Indians" in Colonial Brasil," included in *Attitudes of Colonial Powers Toward the American Indian* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1969): pp. 19-45. This date of 1759 is taken from Dauril Alden,

"Black Robes versus White Settlers..." p. 38.

³⁰ All references to *Cartas do Padre António Vieira* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1925), unless otherwise indicated.

³¹ Based on labor, Susnik also speaks of the strictly nominal division of the subalternized populations, or "Indians," according to the following categories of reticent or hostile Indian to incorporation into empire structures (or "plebeyo-mitayo"), ethnic labor grouping more or less docile and acculturated ("siervos-originarios-yanaconas"), and a certain original blood privilege delegated to bureaucratic tasks (or "caciques principales"), (vol. 1), p. 65, *ibidem*). Very close to slavery (war prisoners with no nominal rights), *yanaconato* or perpetual service ("servidumbre") was in all historical likelihood blood-related service officially granted to either tamed war prisoners or Indians initially hostile or reticent to accommodation to state structural impositions of tribute and labor. The verb "yanaconizar" is very telling of a certain state action (Susnik (vol. 1), pp. 20-23). Susnik's analysis is quite convincing of some of the historical complexities regarding the juxtaposition of labor, ethnicity or race and gender in situations of profound hybridity or *mestizaje*. We may have, for example, the deregulated union of a *yanacona* woman and a *mitayo* man. See also J.I. Israel's work in the Mexican context, for some panoramic comments about "the steady erosion of the 'Indian' republic" and "the paradox of the *mestizo*" (particularly chapters 1-3).

³² Dauril Alden has spoken of the state as the contradictory "husband in between his wife and his favorite mistress" ("Indian versus Black Slavery..." p. 72); he has also convincingly spoken of how the fight between "black robes" (Jesuits) and white settlers rested on the common ground of the low estimate of the cultural worth of the Amerindians. Necessity to historicize the notion of "freedom" is finally highlighted ("Black Robes versus White Settlers," pp. 39-40).

³³ Hemming speaks of 42 villages and 200,000 Indians in *Red Gold*, p. 324.

³⁴ See Freyre for the regional differentiation of the two cultures, *The Masters and the Slaves*, pp. 44-48.

³⁵ Bearing in mind the notion of "cloth-payment" to the Indians, the internal hierarchy in the missions and the official attribution of status (or "cargos") broke open the egalitarian Morean principle of equal dress for everybody that the Jesuits tried, but fail, to implement. The *caciques* will occasionally dress with pieces of 3 ó 4 different colors whereas the "common people" (*los comunes*) re-

ceived unadorned cloth or nothing ("lienzo simple or nothing," Susnik's *El Indio Colonial del Paraguay* (vol.1), p. 28).

³⁶ In this distinctly Early Modern utopianism, Vasco de Quiroga also mentions in his Rules and Regulations one strongbox with three keyholes located in a safe place: the centralized and communal ownership of the "good" ("la moneda del común" is the historical phrasing) to which the three authorities ("Rector, Principal, Regidor") may have simultaneous access. Yearly and public account of those monetary holdings will occur ("cuenta y razón clara y fiel"). The strict control and communal and centralized regulation of money also appears in Thomas More—the ideal of money circulation outside the enclosed Utopian community—and James Harrington—the *summum bonum* of normative regulations and money tabulation.

³⁷ Some of Vieira's 1654 remedies are very similar indeed in spirit and formulation to the *Ordenanzas de Hernandarias* as described by Susnik (vol. 1), p. 68 and the 55 articles by the secretary Lastarria during Viceroy Avilés in the late date of 1800 (vol. 2), pp. 63-64). And this formal coincidence may trigger two comments: a) it reinforces the impression that there is really no formal contradiction between state interests and Jesuit interests, b) it introduces the alternative of the velocity with which reformism must adjust to larger imperial dictum, and c) the necessity for colonial reformism, in the shadow of colonization, to intervene into the dictum of the colonial state.

³⁸ Who can ever forget the splendid vistas into the timely, efficient and clean dining halls in More's island? Enough food to satisfy anybody's hunger, earthenware dishes, glass cups, finely made but inexpensive, most special attention to the elders, intellectual reading by an appointed Utopian, "no evening meal without music, no dessert course is ever scanted, they burn incense and scatter perfume, omitting nothing which will cheer up the diners." The most basic human need—eating—is thus provided for in the same vein that proclaims that the coarser of the woollen thread (for everyone) is precisely the finest: "they do not value fineness of texture." Not an isolated activity, utopian eating is then a radically centralized and communal activity (rather than beggars' banquet truly love feast and agape). In relation to this splendid state-implemented structuring of communal need satisfied, who can ever dream even today of the coevalness of all hunger gone at least for a couple of hours?

³⁹ Lucio D'Azevedo's biography of Vieira, with important primary material, contradicts this regulation numerous times, the

Jesuits had slaves; see for example Vieira's letter to the Provincial of Maranhão (1680, vol. 2), pp. 67-372. Morner has given us round numbers of the slaves for the Jesuit headquarters of Cordoba, 50-70 black slaves for 40-60 Jesuits, and a total number in the Cordoba vicinity of 150 slaves, in *The Political and Economic Activities of the Jesuits in the La Plata Region* (Stockholm: Ibero-Amerikanska Biblioteket och Institutet, 1953): p. 63, 76-77 and 79.

⁴⁰ To give a concrete money form to this negotiation, see Dauril Alden's "God's Share or the King's? Jesuit Opposition to the Payment of Tithes in Colonial Brazil," in *Colonial Latin American Review* (Vol. 1, Nos. 1-2, 1992, pp. 185-200.

⁴¹ Dauril Alden thinks otherwise, see the conclusion to his "Black Robes versus White Settlers..." p. 40.

⁴² See Marzal' comprehensive volume, *La Utopía Posible. Indios y Jesuitas en la América Colonial (1549-1767)* (Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2 vols. 1992).

⁴³ J.I. Israel, *ibidem*, p. 67.

⁴⁴ See "the interest in naming the subaltern in the interest of class disappearing" in chapter 18, "The New Historicism: Political Commitment and the Postmodern Critic" a conversation with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989): pp. 277-292; and also the fundamental theorizing of the *principium exclusionis* and the *principium oppressionis* articulated around the *tertium quid* (or the Marxian *pauper ante festum*) in Enrique Dussel's *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor and the Philosophy of Liberation* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1996).

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