

Chapter 1

The Apprenticeship of Colonization¹

In August 1499, King Manuel wrote to the Holy See from Lisbon to announce Vasco da Gama's return from the first maritime voyage to India. The king bestowed on himself a new royal title: "King of Portugal and the Algarve, afore and beyond the Sea in Africa, Lord of Guinea, of the Conquest of Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and (. . .) India."² Supported by pontifical bulls and caravels, the king was able to attribute to himself the lordship of the trades in distant territories. Matters would become more complicated when the metropolis tried to enforce its policy overseas.

Anchored in four continents and dealing with distant communities, the Iberian powers tried different ways to establish control over indigenous peoples and to exploit the conquered territories. These undertakings did not always converge with the Iberian trading and institutional structure. Before the Age of Discovery came to an end, the Iberian Crowns resumed the overseas expansion in order to colonize their own colonists.

"Among remote people they built the new kingdom they so much exalted," Camões wrote in the opening lines of *The Lusiads*. But how did the overseas "new kingdom" relate to the European "old kingdom?" How did Lusitanians master the "remote people" and make them work for the king?

Even in the places where power relations favored the European invaders, it was not enough to realize their twin goals of domination and exploitation. Although slavery and other forms of coerced labor allowed the domination of conquered populations, they did not always lead to successful colonial exploitation. Colonial surplus might be consumed by settlers or traded outside areas under the control of metropolitan powers. The control of indigenous communities did not guarantee that coerced labor could be transformed into merchandise that could be integrated into metropolitan commodity flows, or guarantee the emergence of dependent tributary economies in overseas territories.

A second factor developed on the political plane. Even though the economic surplus of the possessions was incorporated into the Iberian networks, mercantile expansion did not necessarily lead to the reinforcement of monarchic authority. New power relations emerged inside metropolitan states and conquered territories as mercantile zones expanded and merchants increased their influence. Overseas dominion did not always flow into colonial exploitation, nor did it immediately determine the colonists' and merchants' submission to metropolitan authority.

Three distinct problems trod the stage of the discoveries: the consolidation of royal authority over the colonists; the inclusion of production from conquered areas in Atlantic trade; and the confrontations among authorities, colonists, and clergy over the control of natives. In Peru, Angola, Goa, Mozambique, Brazil, and other places, colonization went astray from the very start.

The Colonists' and the Missionaries' Paths

In Peru and most of Spanish America, conflicts pitting colonists against clergy and Crown derived from the fight to control the natives. In light of Hispanic political and doctrinal influence in Portuguese America, the Peruvian case merits consideration. Between 1542 and 1543, Charles V proclaimed the "New Laws" (*Leyes nuevas*) acknowledging a certain sovereignty over the Amerindians. These laws abolished concessions of Indians (*encomiendas*) granted to the conquerors, and gradually converted all natives to dependence on the Crown, to whom they would pay tribute. The contradiction immanent in the Spanish imperial project burst out straightaway.

As one of the inspirers of the *Leyes nuevas*, the Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas, expressed it, Charles V, in order to assert himself as "emperor over many kings," had to recognize the sovereignty of the Amerindians, a condition for establishing a bond of vassalage, the quintessence of imperial being. Las Casas, confirming this new legislation, stated in 1545 that the Superior Court of Guatemala should consider the Amerindians as the "free vassals" of His Majesty.³ Consequently, Spanish colonists and officials were urged to endorse the authority of the native "natural lords."⁴

However, this innovative indirect government policy—put into practice three centuries later in Africa and India by Victorian England—invalidated former concessions that had allowed the colonists to construct the first stages of the

overseas edifice with the Amerindian labor granted by the Crown. Insurrections then broke out in Peru.

The attorney of the High Court in Lima, searching for reasons for the mutiny led by Hernández Girón in 1553, summarized the rebels' point of view: "They started saying that they realized your Majesty's wish was to have the whole of Peru to himself, and that being so, Peru could not forbear becoming sovereign and governing itself freely, as Venice did."⁵ Yet troops loyal to the Crown, mobilized and led by the clergy, triumphed over reluctant colonists. A compromise was reached by the two sides. The conquistadores kept the vanquished Indians, but resigned themselves to the taxation imposed on the *encomiendas*. The Crown prevented the emergence of hereditary fiefs and succeeded in establishing its authority over the conquered lands and peoples, as well as over future possessions.⁶

But the essential development occurred in rather different circumstances. By the mid-1540s, the Potosí silver mine was both reorienting trade networks and opening Peru up to commercial access from the metropolis.⁷ Subsequently, in the context of the Iberian Crown's Union (1580–1640), Peruvian silver exports to the four corners of the world would become one of the basic aspects of the "universal kingdom" ruled by Spain's Catholic Crown.⁸

The situation in Angola bore some resemblance to the preceding case, except that there the Crown also fought against colonists and the Jesuits. In 1571, the colony was given to Paulo Dias Novais, grandson of Bartolomeu Dias, in the form of a hereditary possession, according to the method already tried in the African island of São Tomé and in Brazil. Novais was troubled by high expenses and was abandoned by the Crown after the military and political disaster of the Battle of Ksar El Kebir (1578). Therefore, he granted to the conquerors—some of his captains and to the missionary Jesuits—concessions of natives and lands, in a system similar to the Hispanic-American *encomiendas*.⁹

These new feudatories, called *amos*, controlled Angolan native chiefs (*sobas*) and collected taxes from the Mbumdu population. Most of the time these taxes were paid in the form of slaves, whom the *amos*—Jesuits and captains—soon began to export to America.¹⁰ Luanda's Jesuits relied greatly on their fellow missionaries of Brazil, especially on Colégio da Bahia. Thus, in 1586, when José de Anchieta was the provincial father of Portuguese America, Father Balthazar Barreira, Luanda's Jesuit Superior, made a request to Rome for the transfer of the Congo and Angola missions, subordinate to the province of Portugal, to the Jesuit

province of Brazil, created in 1553. Rome did not accede to this demand. Still, the proposal illustrates the Jesuits' precocious perception of the South Atlantic as a unified colonial space.¹¹

The Crown, finding that Angola had no silver mines and that the slave trade had turned out to be an important activity in the area, resumed control over the colony. Hereditary possession was abolished, and a governor general—an immediate trustee of royal authority—received orders to halt the institution of the *amos*.¹² Indignant, captains and Jesuits revolted against Governor Francisco de Almeida (1592–93), who was following the new royal instructions. In discussion with the Jesuit Superior in Angola, the governor declared he was “much astonished” to see a challenge to the royal order halting the concession of *sobas*.¹³ The *amos* faction temporarily gained the upper hand. Francisco de Almeida, excommunicated by the missionaries and jailed by the rebel colonists, was expelled from Angola a mere ten months after his arrival.¹⁴ His brother Jerônimo, a pawn of the Jesuits, assumed the governance of Angola and restored the authority of the *amos*.¹⁵

King Felipe II, when informed of the revolt, decided to ban the Society of Jesus (hereafter S.J.) from Angola and to entrust the colony's missions to another religious order. An ally of the Jesuits who was one of the most powerful men in the Iberian Peninsula, the Cardinal-Archduke Albert of Austria, viceroy and grand inquisitor for Portugal, dissuaded him. Notwithstanding, Felipe II ordered the expulsion and the immediate return to Lisbon of the Jesuit Superior in Angola, Balthazar Barreira, whose singular endeavors in Africa will be considered below.¹⁶

A few years later, a Jesuit chronicler justified the missionaries' attitudes in Angola: “There will be no better way of attracting and keeping them [the Mbundu] than by making them the [Jesuit] priest's *sobas*; for in doing so, they do not diminish one jot of His Majesty's jurisdiction and authority.” The king, however, was of another opinion.¹⁷ In 1607, the institution of *amos* was abolished, and vassal native chiefs were placed under the control of the Crown. Though quarrels still went on between governors and captains who intended to restore the *amos*' privileges, the action of the Crown and of metropolitan merchants dragged Angola into the Atlantic trading system.¹⁸

From 1595 to 1640, Madrid's *Asiento* granted to the Portuguese the monopoly of supplying Spanish America with African slaves.¹⁹ The Portuguese merchants who owned the *Asiento* were sometimes also Contractors (*Contratadores*) for collecting royal taxes from Cape Verde and from Angola, enjoying privileged access to operations in the slave-trade ports. For now, it is worth recalling that the growth

in maritime exchanges—induced by the slave traders—both rendered the African possessions viable and clipped the colonists' wings.

Unlike events in Africa and America, Portuguese activities had a more muted impact in Asia but caused immediate repercussions in Europe. Impelled by the monarchical and missionary apparatus on overseas expeditions of trade and conquest, the Iberian states threatened the Venetian mercantile oligarchies. João de Barros, in the first *Década* (c. 1545) of his *Ásia*, vividly describes the turnaround produced in the West by the opening of the Cape route. Knowing that King Manuel was negotiating the spice trade with the Kannur (Cananore) and Kochi (Cochin) ambassadors, Venice's diplomats in Lisbon maneuvered to sabotage the business. Presenting themselves as merchants without ambitions for dominance in the Indian Ocean, they argued that the Portuguese Crown ventures had a military and ideological bias. "The Venetians filled the ears of the ambassadors," claiming that Venice was peaceful and that the Portuguese would wage war against the "Moors" in the Indic shores, spoiling the time-honored Venetian spice trade from India to the Mediterranean.²⁰ In truth, the Portuguese tried to appropriate areas that were the reserve of Omani Arab merchants and of the Muslim Indians from Gujarat, a major textile producer.²¹ Around 1550, they opened to European markets the Goa-Malacca-Macao-Nagasaki trading route, interrupted since the end of the Cheng-Ho expeditions in the 1430.²² For decades, the Crown sought to divert these exchanges into waters controlled by Lisbon through the Cape route.²³ This policy led to conflicts between the metropolis and the Portuguese in India, who sometimes sailed "against the wind, against the monsoon, against the tide and against reason," as the celebrated author of *Peregrinação* (1614) wrote.²⁴

In Goa, the colonists called *casados* (married men)—as opposed to the Portuguese soldiers and itinerant traders called *solteiros* (bachelors)—were wholesalers who carried out most of the important commercial business at seaports along trade routes to China and Japan.²⁵ The *casados*, represented by Goa's House Senate and directly subordinated to the State Council in Lisbon, imposed the rule that no New Christians (Iberian Jews and their descendents forced to embrace Christianity) or Indians converted to Catholicism were to be allowed to associate with Portuguese officials trading at Asian seaports.²⁶

The *casados* then secured from Portugal's Crown limitations on the activity of Lisbon's agents who had business with India. To counter alleged collusion between Goa's New Christians and the ancient Jewish community of Cochin, a center for the diversion of pepper, Jesuits and Portuguese authorities succeed in establishing

the Goa Inquisition Tribunal (1560), the single such instance in a Portuguese overseas settlement.²⁷ To be labeled New Christian in India was “very dangerous” as Diogo do Couto warned around 1600, “since bought testimony would not be lacking, if one should wish to accuse another of such a defect.”²⁸

Also up against the *fidalgos* (the Portuguese military aristocracy holding royal authority in India), the *casados* tried to control the whole brokerage of European trade in Asia. Apparently, the Crown drew no advantage from this situation, for in 1587, it gave the indigo trade monopoly—the main economic activity in Goa—to a group of Lisbon merchants.²⁹ Revolts then broke out among the *casados*. Indeed, Goa was shaken by the colonists’ mutinies every time the Crown tried to increase tributes or sought to capture the Persian Gulf and Asian exchanges, which were lucrative for the Portuguese and Indian merchants but disadvantageous to metropolitan traders and the Royal Treasury.³⁰ Michael Pearson, who has studied such revolts, concludes that the *casados* placed their interests above their loyalty to the Crown.³¹

A broad range of interests linked Portuguese merchants and crown officials to local communities in India and the Persian Gulf.³² They exchanged items that were easy to smuggle and circulate outside the control of local rulers and European authorities—coral from the Mediterranean and diamonds from the Golkonda Sultanate in southern India—in an extensive network involving the Fuggers from Augsburg, Hindus from Goa, and Sephardi from Leghorn and Lisbon.³³ In this transfrontier, intercultural environment, profitable transactions outside the Crown’s control undermined Lisbon’s administration of the Estado da Índia, which embraced Portuguese territories east of the Cape of Good Hope.³⁴

It was in Goa that Diogo do Couto wrote, in 1593, his masterpiece *O Soldado Prático*, a key book of Lusitanian historical skepticism, pointing out the frauds practiced by colonial officials. According to Diogo do Couto “Nowhere else is the King [of Portugal] less obeyed than in India.”³⁵ But as Magalhães Godinho explains: “Whatever were the military and naval means assembled, and however righteous the official’s honesty, the Portuguese could not afford replacing all Moors and Gentiles in interregional circuits of trade.” Between the beginning and the middle of the sixteenth century, a crack opened in the Eastern enclaves: “From that time the Luso-oriental economic complex was opposed to the interests of Lisbon and of the Cape route.”³⁶ As shown by Artur Teodoro de Matos, regional exchanges with the Indian ports, East Africa, the Persian Gulf and the Far East sustained Goa and other marketplaces of the Estado da Índia. Yet, those exchanges were not integrated with the Cape route and the Lisbon networks.³⁷ This picture illustrates

one of the colonial impasses mentioned earlier. The colonial surplus was achieved and transformed into mercantile production, but evaded the metropolitan networks.

In Mozambique, the fragility of Lusitanian colonial intervention in the Indian Ocean was even more transparent. In its first stage, the Monomotapa (*Mwenemutapa*) pre-European empire was permeated by Portuguese conquerors who took over the powers of native feudatories (*amambo*) in the domains (*prazos*) of the Zambezi valley. In recognition of the local ruler's authority, the first Portuguese *prazo* holders, the *arrendatários*, were confirmed in their posts by the Monomotapa emperor himself.³⁸ The *prazo* holders paid the Portuguese Crown a tax in powdered gold and received from their vassals, natives from the Tonga people, a rent in ivory or maize, or a labor rent (*mussoco*). Where there was no Portuguese sovereignty, the colonists paid a tribute in textiles (*fatiota*) only to the native authority.³⁹

Every year the Monomotapa would send emissaries to the tributary chieftaincies to seal the bond of vassalage. In case of refusal, the refractories suffered military retaliation from the Monomatapa's army, which in 1576 numbered 30,000 soldiers.⁴⁰

Despite the attacks on natives—legitimated by the “Just War” declared in 1569 against the Monomotapa and the “other kings and kaffir [*cafre*] lords,” Portuguese sovereignty only skirted Mozambique, in contrast with the conquest triggered in Angola.⁴¹ Friar João dos Santos, in his *Ethiopia Oriental* (1609), commented that the Portuguese captain of the Massapa Fair, in a gold-bearing area, was empowered by the Monomotapa and by the Portuguese crown as a representative of both powers.⁴² While he acted as a judge for the viceroy of Portuguese India, he also on the Monomotapa's behalf collected duties for the Zambezia ruler from the settlers and Moors trading in the area.⁴³

Gradually absorbed by native society and institutions, the colonists tended to Africanize, or to “kaffirize,” as Alexandre Lobato, Portuguese historian of Mozambique, has pointed out.⁴⁴ A seventeenth-century narrative sketched the difficulties of populating Mozambique by colonials: “These lands are divided between several [colonist] lordships, and each [lord] took control of whatever he wished, and of the income from it.”⁴⁵ Leaving untouched native conditions of production, the Portuguese were unable to change the regional trade. External exchanges remained directed toward the North and the East, with Omani Arabs controlling the slave trade to the Persian Gulf, the main market in the area.⁴⁶

In 1752 Mozambique was separated from the Estado da India, on which it was dependent, and became an autonomous colony, directly administered by Lisbon. The slave trade then took a new step in the Indian Ocean. In fact, the first

Portuguese tariff schedule to collect taxes on slaves was set in 1756, two-and-a-half centuries after similar tariffs had come into operation in Portuguese Guinea, and two hundred years after those set in Luanda and Benguela.⁴⁷ In this period, Omani Arab, Indian, Swahili, Dutch, and French regional demand fostered the growth of the slave trade in the southwest Indian Ocean.⁴⁸

Except for some sporadic deliveries, Brazil regularly received East African slaves only from the first decade of the nineteenth century on: 94.7 percent of Africans deported from Mozambique to Brazilian ports, mostly to Rio de Janeiro, disembarked in the period 1801–1850.⁴⁹ The emerging intercolonial division of labor had already designated the other side of Africa, mainly Angola, as the preferred market for the Luso-Brazilians slave ships.⁵⁰ In addition to exports of ivory to Europe and Asia, and of gold to Goa, Gujarat, and Kannara, Mozambique gained strategic importance as a port of call on the India route. Portuguese fleets remained for several months at the Mozambican harbors waiting for the maritime monsoons to cease.⁵¹ Failing to achieve economic control over the area, Lisbon modified the alliance and inheritance rules to be observed by the *prazo* holders, redefining metropolitan policy in this part of the overseas territory.

After 1625, the domains of Zambezia were no longer hereditary possessions. Changed into “*prazos* of the Crown,” they were issued—under an emphyteusis contract—to petitioners for a period of three generations, after which the Crown resumed ownership. The concession could either be renewed for the same family or granted to other petitioners. Concentration of *prazos* in the hands of one grantee alone was, however, very common, as the Crown preferred to let the law lapse rather than leaving *prazos* uninhabited—“Not to break off the continuity of its control over the natives,” as Fritz Hoppe explains.⁵²

In his *Tratado dos Rios de Cuama*, written in 1696, the missionary Antonio da Conceição describes the dual significance of the bond between the leaseholders and the Crown: “Those who have Crown lands receive considerable benefit from them, but no one can maintain the State [the Crown’s dominion]. . . . Even so, one should not think that the State is superfluous, but rather that it is essential in order to make us respected in this Kaffir Land [*Cafraria*].” In other words, the leaseholders did not pay much tax to the Royal Treasury, but their relation with the Crown, set by the *prazo* concession, helped to prop up Lisbon’s sovereignty in the Zambezi valley (*Rios de Cuama*).⁵³

The emphyteusis contract, linking the Crown with the *prazo* holder, marked the originality of Portuguese policy in the region. Contrary to Lusitanian legisla-

tion in its entirety—which excluded women from inheriting concessions as well as property bestowed by the Crown—this contract determined that *prazos* were inherited in the female lineage, when the heiress married a colonist born in Portugal, that is, a *reinol*, or a *reinol's* son.⁵⁴ The *prazo* holder was therefore subjected to metropolitan sovereignty by a double temporary contract: the contract of three generations (the emphyteusis) established by the Crown with his wife's father, and the contract of one generation, which he took over by marrying the holder of the *prazo*.⁵⁵ By constraining each heiress to marry a *reinol*, the Crown hoped to restrain the colony's self-sufficiency and the overwhelming ascension of mulattos who took possession of the *prazos*.⁵⁶

Relying on the Makua's matrilineal kinship as much as on colonial support, this system brought about unusual marriages.⁵⁷ Many of these ladies became widows and soon remarried pretenders eager to become proprietors. Such was the case of Dona Catarina de Leitão, the great holder of the Quelimane *prazo*, who contracted marriage for the fourth time around 1770, when she was over 80 years of age.⁵⁸ Or else Dona Francisca Josefa de Moura Meneses (died in 1825), nicknamed *Chiponda*, or “the Lady who steps on all,” which managed several advantageous marriages to her and her nieces.⁵⁹

Despite this singular juridical arrangement, the powers of the *prazo* holders rested more on compromise with natives than on the legal status acknowledged by Lisbon. Among fifty-five *prazos* found in 1750 in the province of Tete, five had a title of concession and twenty-five had no title at all. The other twenty-five *prazos* were either merely confirmed by local authorities or had doubtful property warrants, while the further twenty-five lacked deeds or justification.⁶⁰ In 1763, when the Marquis de Pombal tried to centralize the Mozambique administration, a revolt broke out among the *prazo* holders, driving the Crown to temporize with the rebels.⁶¹ Lisbon thus shared power with the *arrendatários*, who in turn depended on pacts celebrated with African chieftains.

Following a practice previously adopted by Arab merchants, Portuguese governors bestowed a gift on the Monomotapa and the king of Kiteve—as a symbolical bond of vassalage—at the moment they took their posts in Mozambique. When this tribute—called *curva* and generally consisting of a certain amount of cloth—was not paid, trouble developed in the colony and subverted the relations with the natives.⁶² Friar João dos Santos records that the payment of the *curva* to the Monomotapa was more coercive than that to the king of Kiteve, who relied more on the alliance with the Portuguese.⁶³

At the turn of the eighteenth century, the monetary value of the *curva* seemed insignificant. The São Paulo-born cartographer Lacerda e Almeida, governor of Rio de Sena in Zambezia, called the Monomotapa emperor a “drunkard,” and the longevity of the Portuguese presence would lead one to suppose that this obligation to pay tribute was lost. However, when the Portuguese governor of one of Zambezia’s provinces decided not to pay the *curva*, in 1806 a revolt broke out that ended only in 1826, when the Portuguese finally offered the tribute to the Monomotapa.⁶⁴ Portuguese America, involved in the Atlantic market and repopulated by African deportees, did not come close to incidents of this kind. No South American native community ever held sufficient power to sustain an enduring sovereignty and to collect regular tributes in the Luso-Brazilian settlements.

The fragility of the links of the Mozambique domains with the metropolitan networks caused continuous rebellions among the *arrendatários*.⁶⁵ The *prazos* were disconnected from the pre-Portuguese social system in the first quarter of the nineteenth century when the Brazilian slave traders effected the “Atlanticization” of Mozambique, attaching the territory’s maritime exchanges into the Rio de Janeiro network—and later still, when foreign concessionary companies transformed the region.⁶⁶

The facts show more plainly the impasses considered at the outset of this chapter. The overseas surplus did not reach the metropolis when it fell into circuits unrelated to the Lisbon networks (as in Goa), or was stranded within the supposedly conquered territory (as in Mozambique), where the product of labor extorted from the native communities was directly consumed by colonists or drained away by regional trade. Three centuries after the Century of Discoveries, Mozambique was still entangled in the misunderstanding pursued in Peru in the mid-sixteenth century. Hernandez Girón’s companions intended to found republics, “like Venice.” Were it not for the epidemics that devastated the Inca empire and for the silver mines that turned local society upside down, the Peruvian rebels would have created “republics” of the Zambezia type, where they would live more in the “*cafrealized*” manner of the Mozambican *prazo* holders than in the luxurious style of Venetian aristocrats. It is again noteworthy that the presence of European colonists in a territory did not necessarily occasion colonial exploitation of that territory.

In Brazil, measures were taken in 1534 to consolidate the occupation and valorization of the colony in response to both the French invasion of the territory and the decline of Portuguese trade in Asia. The colony was divided into fifteen hereditary captaincies awarded to twelve grantees. The Crown offered several privileges

to attract candidates. Nevertheless, six of the first twelve donataries either never went to Brazil or came back at once to Portugal. Two were killed by Tupinambás Indians, two others gave up their rights, and only two thrived: Duarte Coelho in Pernambuco and, up to 1546, Pero do Campo Tourinho in Porto Seguro. The captaincy (*capitania*) of São Vicente prospered for a certain time, though its donee had never visited it. In 1549 a general-government was established, impelling a movement of centralization designed to reduce donees' privileges.⁶⁷

Circumstances peculiar to Pernambuco allowed Duarte Coelho and his descendants to resist Bahia's governor general's attempts to assume their prerogatives until the mid-seventeenth century.⁶⁸ In all other places, however, a central government authority was set up. The difficulties involved in this change will be noted below. It is worth remembering that the economy based on Indian labor and exploitation of brazilwood started to change into an economy based on sugar plantations and African slave labor. The colony's linkage with the Atlantic trade was deliberately emphasized by royal legislation restricting employment of Amerindian slave labor and stimulating the use of African slaves, as well as by measures restraining internal trade among Brazilian captaincies.

This geographic and economic context shapes an aterritorial space, more South Atlantic than South American, which reveals the flagrant anachronism of transposing contemporary national boundaries onto colonial maps, in order to draw conclusions about Portugal's enclaves of Terra de Santa Cruz (later Brazil)—a land that was not a unified entity. Because of the prevailing winds, the currents, and the trade predominating in the South Atlantic until the end of the seventeenth century and even after this date, the Brazilian East-West coast (the Amazon region proper, plus Maranhão, Pará, Piauí, Ceará, and part of present Rio Grande do Norte), embraced by the Estado do Maranhão, remained dissociated from Brazil's African slaving core, while Angola became attached to it.

Far from being an arbitrary act of Iberian bureaucracy, the establishment of the Estado do Maranhão, created in 1624 with a government distinct from the Estado do Brasil, whose capital was Bahia, perfectly dovetails with maritime trade and winds.⁶⁹ "Maranhão . . . it is closer to Portugal than any other port of that State (of Brazil), with easier navigation and route . . . because this Land is so, Her Majesty has established it as a government separate from Brazil," stated Captain Sylveira, a representative of Maranhão council, in his 1624 history of Amazonia.⁷⁰

Maritime guides of the British Admiralty and of others nations signaled such a partition of the South American coast up to the end of the Transatlantic Sailing

Age.⁷¹ As we will see below, the Papacy followed those same geographic determinants in the management of its dioceses. Created in 1676, the archbishopric of Bahia gained jurisdiction over the Brazilian dioceses of Rio de Janeiro and Olinda, plus the African bishoprics of Congo and Angola and São Tomé. In contrast, because of the difficult navigation to Bahia, the new bishopric of Maranhão (1677) was made suffragan of the Lisbon's archbishopric.⁷²

Portuguese America and the genesis of modern Brazil assumed their full dimensions in the South Atlantic. Consequently, the continuity of colonial history cannot be bracketed within the continuity of the colony's territory.⁷³ In fact, conditioning by the Ethiopic Ocean, complementary but distinct from the North Atlantic linkages, only disappeared from the country's horizon after 1850, following the end of the transatlantic slave trade and the split of the colonial spatial matrix. Such conditions mark the originality of Brazilian historical development.

This summary illustrates the antagonisms that arose on the colonial horizon when the Crown no longer confined itself to mere exercise of domination (*dominium*) but also asserted its right over lands to be conquered and its guardianship of conquered peoples (*imperium*). The conflict between Iberian powers and their subjects had different effects on overseas territory. In Peru, the rise of the mining economy put an end to the colonists' move toward autonomy and stimulated integration of Spanish American markets into European trade. In Angola, maritime exchanges—triggered by the slave trade—gave Portugal additional means of control over the colonial enclaves. In Mozambique, where Portuguese trade took its place in a pre-European mercantile network, colonists became kaffirized and fulfilled roles in the traditional trade network of native society. Finally, in Goa, where exchanges with Arab and Indian merchants as well as with the Far East provided profitable choices, trade with the Portuguese gave way to more attractive opportunities outside metropolitan control.

The Metropolis's Options

The nineteenth-century historian Francisco Varnhagen noted an apparent incoherence in Portuguese overseas policy. Regarding the prerogatives granted to the donataries in sixteenth-century Brazil, he stated that these were “much wider than expected at a time when European kings tried to concentrate authority, enforcing imperial royal authority over ancient lords or over certain privileged corporations.”⁷⁴ It is

well known that private investment in the first stage of Lusitanian colonization was not exclusively Portuguese. Except for some royal monopolies, Catholic foreigners, settled or not in Portugal, could get privileges similar to those of national Catholics for trade with Portuguese colonies. Moreover, if they employed a Portuguese crew, those foreigners were also allowed to use their own ships in this commerce. Such traders were obliged to pay certain taxes, but were exempt from specific duties that nationals had to meet. Legally or illegally, half and perhaps two-thirds of the sugar produced in Brazil had been transported by the Dutch into Amsterdam until the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁷⁵

Even after the anti-Spanish Flanders insurrection, Lisbon kept cordial relations with the United Provinces, to whom King Sebastião provided pecuniary and political support, despite protests from his uncle Felipe II.⁷⁶ The so-called “colonial exclusive,” that is, the metropolitan trade monopoly over colonies, was imposed only after 1580. Through association with the Spanish monarchy, the Portuguese Crown became so involved in European conflicts that it ended by ruining its overseas domains.⁷⁷ Therefore Lisbon started to restrain the activities of traders from other countries. Foreigners were forbidden to go to overseas territories after 1591 in order to avoid heresies—but also because it was “against all reason and good sense” that foreign merchants should be allowed to damage “the trade of the kingdom.” In 1605 all foreign transactions in Portuguese domains were prohibited.⁷⁸ Non-Portuguese aliens settled in Brazil had to go back to the kingdom within a year.⁷⁹

Hence, a sharp shift occurred in Portuguese colonial policy on the eve of the Century of Discoveries. Initially, the Crown granted powers both to its subjects possessing capital and to Catholic foreigners trading with its overseas markets. Some decades later, the monarchy stepped back and initiated a movement of “metropolitan restoration” abroad, restricting the autonomy of the main actors of overseas possessions. On the one hand, a national monopoly (the *exclusivo*) was established over colonial trade. On the other hand, new laws subjected settlers to governors general entrusted with ample powers and charged with reinforcing the “purpose of colonization.”⁸⁰ The Crown had to learn how to make all colonial rivers flow toward the metropolitan sea. The colonists had to understand that the apprenticeship of colonization was mainly the apprenticeship of the market, which was, first and foremost, the metropolitan market. Only then could colonial domination and colonial exploitation coincide and correlate with each other.

Imperial power, having taken the role of the only bestower of lands and the only controller of natives to be conquered, appeared also as the organizer of productive

labor, the conveyor of social privileges, and the gendarme of religious orthodoxy. The latter acquired its full strength in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, considering the influence of the Counter-Reformation and, above all, the weight of the most powerful ideological apparatus of the Iberian Peninsula: the Inquisition.

Like the Spanish monarchy, the Portuguese Crown exercised direct control over secular clergy thanks to the *jus patronatus* (the Padroado), a set of privileges that popes granted to Iberian kings between 1452 and 1514. According to these texts, the Iberian religious hierarchy could undertake its functions only after royal approval. The Crown supported the secular clergy financially, and could forbid the proclamation of pontifical edicts and briefs.⁸¹

Framed by the Padroado, the secular clergy and episcopate became chains of metropolitan power, especially in Brazil and Africa. In the context of migrations and cultural transfers, where accusations of heresy spread easily, exclusion from the ecclesiastic community brought harsh consequences. At the same time, religious repression transposed its doctrinaire framework overseas in order to intervene as a disciplining instrument for metropolitan policy.

Truly the founding text of Portuguese colonial law, the *Romanus Pontifex* bull of 1455 excommunicated those who breached the overseas monopoly bestowed by Pope Nicholas V on King Afonso V and Infant Dom Henrique.⁸² This repressive resource was occasionally activated on request. In 1613, at the behest of Cape Verde's governor, the diocese bishop excommunicated on a large scale "all those who have stolen from His Majesty's property or who have evaded His taxes."⁸³

Instruments to intimidate freelancers who interfered with the metropolitan trade circuit sprang from the post-Tridentine movement, which maintained the sacraments' compulsory nature. European middlemen settled in the Jagas's *kilombo* at Kasanje,⁸⁴ away from the Luanda's authorities' control, received "tight orders" to shelter in the Angolan capital, because they "lived amongst barbarians" and were thus unavailable to receive the holy sacraments.⁸⁵ It is clear that the religious orthodoxy played an active role in the colonization of the colonists.

The perspective of Jesuits, Franciscans, Carmelites, and Benedictines, the regular clergy present in Portuguese America, was quite another matter. In their strategy for the evangelization of local Amerindians, the Jesuits conflicted with the colonists, with the bishops, and with the Crown. However, it is also necessary to highlight the role of the missions as occupation units in overseas territories. As Charles Boxer recalls, in the absence of substantial military contingents overseas before the second half of the eighteenth century, it was mainly the Catholic priesthood that kept the

colonists and the natives alike loyal to the Iberian Crowns.⁸⁶ In this context, the role of missionaries is key, especially with regard to the Society of Jesus, which exerted in Portugal a greater influence than in any other European country.

Even if we confine ourselves only to the history of the South Atlantic, there are several examples of this process. Accordingly, the Jesuits of the Guanabara Bay mission helped organize the Rio de Janeiro expedition that expelled the Dutch from Angola in 1648. Following that, the Jesuits opposed the proselytism of Spanish and Roman Capuchins, whose mission in the Congo hindered Portuguese policy in West Central Africa. Still on the periphery of Portuguese America, Jesuits of the Estado do Maranhão neutralized French influence on the Amapá tribes, enlisting Amerindians for the recapture of the Macapá and Parú forts (1697), occupied by French troops from Cayenne during the War of the League of Augsburg (1689–1697).⁸⁷ Inside Portuguese America, the Jesuits helped suppress the São Paulo rebellion in the 1650s and favored the restoration of royal authority in Maranhão after the Beckman mutiny (1683–1684).⁸⁸ The activity by Jesuits in favor of the Braganza dynasty gained stronger inflection in the 1640–1668 period, when the overseas dioceses lay vacant by virtue of the contention between Rome and Lisbon.⁸⁹

The role played by the Inquisition was more complex and diversified. Missionaries and Goa's colonial authorities pestered Hindus who crouched to urinate, a practice considered deviant.⁹⁰ Franciscans and Jesuits quarreled in the Amazon missions, arguing over whether the river turtle (*tracajá*) was a fish or a beast, so as to determine if the Tapuya Amerindians who ate it during Lent incurred in mortal sin or not.⁹¹

However, greater damage would be inflicted by inquisitorial agents in the kingdom and overseas. In the metropolis, the Holy Office often appeared as a weapon of the aristocracy against the mercantile bourgeoisie.⁹² Also, when metropolitan merchants or the Crown faced foreign competition, denunciations of Judaism abounded. In Upper Guinea, gold was the main object of the European trade until the middle of the seventeenth century, when the slave trade prevailed.⁹³ Flemish, French, and English vessels carrying trade goods such as fabrics and iron bars—valuable merchandise in the area—easily gained access to the coastal ports of Senegambia.⁹⁴ Adding to European competition, the existence of two New Christian communities south of the Cape Verde peninsula, on the Senegal coast, appeared as a critical threat to the alleged royal Portuguese monopoly.⁹⁵ In response, denunciations against New Christians in the Rios de Guiné—the Senegambia coast—were constant from the beginning of the sixteenth century. The captain of

Santiago (Cape Verde) informed the court in 1544 that “Guinea [was] lost” to Portugal, since the land was already “crowded” with New Christians engaged in smuggling.⁹⁶ In 1611 the bishop of Cape Verde received orders to find out if there were people living “Jewishly” in Upper Guinea, so as to have them incarcerated and sent to the Inquisitorial Tribunal in Lisbon.⁹⁷ Later, the rising price of slaves, driven by European slave-traders’ demand, led a committee formed by the bishop and the governor of Cape Verde to propose the nomination of a Commissioner of the Inquisition for Cacheu to extract (*tirar*) “Judaism” from Upper Guinea.⁹⁸ After the coronation of King João IV, the outbreak of the Portuguese-Spanish war, and the conquest of Elmina (1637), São Tomé, and Angola (1641) by the Dutch, the Overseas Council was also concerned with foreign assaults on Upper Guinea ports, “because without Angola, there is no other another remedy, but these ports, to populate Brazil with Blacks.”⁹⁹ In this context, Cacheu’s New Christians were also suspected of being pro-Castilian.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, as we shall see below, the Spanish Inquisition accused Portuguese New Christians in Peru of “Judaism” and betrayal in favor of the Crown of Braganza.

The practice of the Portuguese Inquisition presents several distinguishing features. First, the Portuguese Inquisition almost always appeared as an instrument of the aristocracy that was deployed against a mercantile bourgeoisie that was intertwined with Judaism.¹⁰¹ Next, the repressive activity of the inquisitors against Judaism assumed a more constant pace in Portugal than in Angola and Brazil, where blasphemies and superstitions were the main origin of the denunciations at the turn of the sixteenth century.¹⁰² Further, condemned New Christians were more likely to be executed than condemned Old Christians. Deaths were also more frequent among jailed New Christians. Finally, physicians and merchants, often New Christians, were more likely to be subjected to capital punishment than those of other occupations who had been condemned by the Inquisition.¹⁰³

Notwithstanding the absence of inquisitorial tribunals in Portuguese America, the reduced presence of Inquisition’s lay officials (*familiars*) and the low number of settlers convicted in Lisbon’s autos-da-fé, from the early seventeenth century on, the Holy Office established a control network grounded in local clergy and royal officials in Brazil.¹⁰⁴ Subsequently, merchants and sugar mill owners were denounced and taken in chains to the Inquisition of Lisbon.¹⁰⁵

Unlike in Brazil and Portuguese Africa, in Spanish America permanent Inquisition tribunals were set up in Lima (1570), in Mexico (1571) and in Cartagena

(1610). The latter court was created in response to the influential Portuguese New Christian merchants in that key *Asiento* port.¹⁰⁶ Often held by Portuguese New Christians, the *Asiento de Negros* was, as Jonathan Israel has noted, “the most important loophole” in Seville’s transatlantic monopoly convoy system during the Iberian Union.¹⁰⁷ Spanish merchants in Peru manipulated the inquisitors to ruin the Portuguese merchant community in the years of the 1630s.¹⁰⁸ In the post-1640 period, there was a new development when the Portuguese Inquisition operated alongside Madrid, thrashing the economic agents that supported Portuguese independence.¹⁰⁹

The “unfaithful,” whether real or alleged, lived in constant insecurity as the Crown vacillated between repressive fury, direct extortion, and the desire to take advantage of the New Christians’ economic activities. The laws of the period registered such hesitation. The royal decree of 1587 prohibited New Christians from leaving the kingdom. In 1601, the Crown backtracked as the Jewish community paid a donation of a 100,000 *cruzados* to the Royal Treasury. Three years later a general pardon was conceded in exchange for a fresh donation, ten times larger than the previous one. Another decree, in 1610, reinstated the 1587 interdict. New franchises were cancelled by new bans.¹¹⁰ In the ensuing back and forth, repression became more insidious. Although only around two dozen individuals from Brazil seem to have been punished by the Inquisition and the number of people brought before it on charges was not more than 500, the fear instilled by the Inquisition effected a much greater number of people.¹¹¹

Because of coastal winds and the Benguela current, Angola remained more protected from competition by foreign vessels than Upper Guinea, affording some shelter to the trade and government of Luanda and Benguela.¹¹² New Christians were allowed residence if they restricted themselves to the role of merchants.¹¹³ Yet disputes among colonists often led to denunciations against “Hebrew” merchants in Congo and Angola.¹¹⁴ Indeed, missionaries’ correspondence record several examples of the indirect action of the inquisitorial hand.¹¹⁵ In 1631, an old Angolan hand, Jesuit Pero Tavares, undertook an evangelizing journey into the backlands of Golungo, in the modern province of Cuanza Norte. Along the way, Father Pero Tavares found an indigenous idol enthroned in a village and tried to destroy it. Seeking to recover the image, considered by the local community as their “physician” and “medicine,” the *soba* sought help from a colonist, his ally. Tavares, entangled in a quarrel with the colonist amid dangerous agitation in the hamlet, acted quickly:

I feared there would be some disturbance and, thus, brought the matter to an end in a few words. I clearly told the man—for I knew that he belonged to “the nation” [was a New Christian] but was of good character: “that he should no longer discuss such an affair with me, as I would have to tell the governor and the bishop of everything, since these matters were the jurisdiction of the Holy Office.” These were my last words because with them the poor Hebrew was almost struck dumb. Then, regaining his composure, he said to me: “Father of my soul, the one who spoke is no longer here. Your Reverence may thus then burn the idol.” With that, we parted with much friendship and the natives were gone, some crying and others bursting with rage against me.¹¹⁶

This apparently banal incident shows the force of intimidation exerted by priests in Brazil and Angola, even though the fires of the Inquisition did not burn in those territories. Yet this incident is not that banal. Following his Order’s instructions, Father Pero Tavares sent his reports to the colleges of the Society of Jesus in Lisbon. Collected alongside similar texts under the title *Sumária relação* (1635), it was read in Jesuit seminars throughout Europe. Such narratives served the purposes of case-based doctrinal reasoning and of evangelization, as well as a “lesson on how to proceed in such bushland.”¹¹⁷ In this regard, the much advertised antipathy of the Jesuits to the Holy Office did not stop them from making use of the inquisitorial threat.¹¹⁸ A historical trait of Portuguese authoritarianism stands out here. Without thoroughly banishing Muslim and Jewish populations from its territory as Spain had done, Portugal persecuted and plundered its Jewish and allegedly Jewish mercantile bourgeoisie.¹¹⁹ In a report addressed to King João IV in 1643, Father Antonio Vieira underlined the paradox of the kingdom’s policy: “Truly, it is very difficult to understand Portugal’s reason of state because being a kingdom entirely dependent on commerce this kingdom expelled its merchants [Jewish or allegedly so] to alien kingdoms.”¹²⁰ Thus, the contingency of the civil rights of a socioeconomic community invested with a key role in modernization was established. This revenge of the aristocracy on the merchant bourgeoisie marked the evolution of Portuguese and Luso-Brazilian societies. Through the oblique power of the Inquisition or the political zeal of the clergy, the Iberian Church played a double role. It helped to consolidate *dominium* by securing in place the colonial population of the overseas regions, and it strengthened *imperium* to the degree that it promoted the vassalage of overseas peoples to Lisbon.

Referring to “international relations” at a time when the nations did not yet exist (but instead to the notion of the aterritorial or transfrontier space employed here), the literature on Iberian overseas expansion also transposes to the past concepts of the Berlin Conference (1884–85) correlating empire and continuity of the imperial territory. In contrast, Robert Ricard calls attention to the military and geopolitical role of the “restricted occupation” zones around the Portuguese, Spanish, and English North African strongholds before the Second European Colonial Expansion.¹²¹ Other authors underline the role of the trading posts, trading diasporas, and transcommunitarian merchant networks in African and Asian areas where European sovereignty was feeble, symbolic, or nonexistent from the sixteenth century until the end of the nineteenth century.¹²²

Macao, whose capitalistic statute was respected, protected—and above all contained—for four centuries by the Ming, the Qing, the Warlords, Mao Zedong, the Gang of Four, and Deng Ziaoping, constitutes a paradigmatic instance of a great trading post.¹²³ Consequently, it is important to recall the contrasting evolution of European presence overseas. Most of the historiography on the Latin American countries skips over the crucial transition that converted coastal factories and enclaves into a colonial, protonational territory. Why was Iberian America much more extensively occupied since the seventeenth century than Africa and Asia? How did the small seaport of Rio de Janeiro, founded by the Portuguese in 1565, turn out to be the head of the largest unified European colony in the Americas and then capital of a nation-state, whereas the factory of Macao, established in 1557, remained a trading post until 1999, when it was retaken by China?¹²⁴

At the beginning, the colonies’ links with the Iberian metropolises depended more on knots tied by royal officials and clergy than on links provided by world market exchanges. Only after the mining production in Spanish America and the connection of slave trade with Brazil would the dynamics of the Atlantic system come to involve Iberian possessions in Africa and America.

Spanish metropolitan authority exercised relatively weak control over the colonial process of production, but strongly regulated the commercialization of colonial goods. Spanish colonial goods—precious metals—were stocked and carried by a fleet system channeled through three American seaports and Seville, the only communication points allowed between Spain and America. Given the fact that the slave trade did not fit in with such restrictions, Madrid was compelled to establish *Asientos*, subcontracting to the Genoese and Portuguese the slave trade to Spanish America.

In Portuguese America, the colonial process was rather different. Rigid centralization and long waits in buying, storing, and carrying goods, which characterized Spanish trade, were inadequate arrangements for the perishable nature and price fluctuations of Brazilian agricultural products, as well as the growing activity of Portugal's secondary ports.¹²⁵ In fact, the introduction of Africans and the prohibition of Indian enslavement allowed Portugal to take control both upstream and downstream from Brazilian colonial production. Colonists depended on the metropolis, too: they had to export their merchandise, but also had to import their factors of production, that is, the African slaves. This situation fundamentally framed Portuguese colonization and the South Atlantic.

Intermetropolitan wars in the second half of the seventeenth century led Lisbon to organize trade fleets between Brazil and Portugal—a system that would be kept during the first half of the eighteenth century—to carry Brazilian gold to Lisbon. But that system was less severe than the one in Spanish America. Brazil's organized fleets, discredited by colonists and merchants, were abolished in 1765.¹²⁶

The slave trade, which formed the basis of colonial production, was a decisive instrument in the achievement of the Portuguese colonial system in the Atlantic. Gradually this trade transcended the economic field and became integrated into the metropolitan political apparatus. The two issues presented in the preceding pages thus assume their full meaning. The exercise of imperial power in overseas territories and the set of exchanges between metropolis and colonies converged in the sphere of slave traffic.

Nevertheless, by allowing the colonization of the colonists, that is, their inclusion in the metropolitan network, the slave trade's dynamics transformed the colonial system in contradictory ways. By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this colonial pattern was breached as Luso-Brazilians—or, to use a better term, the *Brasílicos*, that was adopted at the time to designate Portuguese America colonists—established themselves in the South American slaving areas and in Luanda.¹²⁷ In a counterpoint to the direct exchanges of Portuguese America with Lisbon, they created direct trade links between Brazil and Africa.

Hence, two major transformations occurred in the Atlantic during the second half of the seventeenth century. In the North Atlantic, new organizational centers of the slave trade arose in Liverpool, London, Bristol, and Nantes, alongside those already existing in Lisbon and Seville.¹²⁸ In the South Atlantic, a bilateral trade emerged between Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pernambuco, and to a lesser extent, Buenos Aires, and the Angolan and the Gulf of Guinea ports.