

Chapter 2

“Between the Cross and the Crown”: Missionaries and Indigenous Sexuality

In the early seventeenth century, the French Capuchin priest Yves d’Evreux delivered a dramatic account of his trip to Northern Brazil (1613-1614) (*Voyage au nord du Brésil fait en 1613 et 1614*).

There is, in Juniparan, in the Island, a hermaphrodite, in the exterior more man than a woman, since he has the face and the voice of woman, with fine, flexible and long hair, however [he] was married and had children (...). (d’Evreux, 1874, p. 90)

A few chapters later, d’Evreux refers to this same native as “a poor Indian, rough, more a horse than a man,” and that he had fled into the bush, having heard that the French “were looking for him and to his equals to kill them and to purify the land of their cruelties” through the “sanctity of the Gospel, of the simplicity, of the purity and of the clarity of the Roman Apostolic Catholic Religion.” Finally he was caught, tied up, and brought to the Fort of São Luís,¹ where they chained his feet and kept him under surveillance until the leaders of other villages arrived to watch. After being sentenced, he asked to be baptized, at which one of the leaders had him say the following:

You will die for your crimes, we approve your death and I myself want to light the fuse for the Frenchmen to know and to see that we hate your evil deeds [...]: when Tupan² sends someone to take your body, if you want to have in the Heaven the long hair and the body of a woman instead of that of a man, ask Tupan to give you the woman’s body and to be resurrected woman, and you will be in Heaven on the side of women and not of men. (d’Evreux, 1874, p. 232)

In the end, they took the convict.

. . . next to the cannon on the wall of the Fort of S. Luiz, near the sea, where he was tied from the waist to the mouth of the cannon and the native chief lit the fuse, in the presence of all the leaders, of the savages and the Frenchmen, and immediately the bullet divided the body into two parts, one falling near the wall, and other one in the sea, where it was never found. (d’Evreux, 1874, p. 233)

¹ Currently the city of São Luís, in the state of Maranhão.

² “Tupan” is the word in the Guaraní language that roughly translates here as “god.”

Despite the brutality of the description, the episode would have caused joy for d’Evreux, since the natives would repent for their sins and allow themselves to be baptized, so it was a “beautiful occasion to admire and to love God’s judgments.”

This narrative well serves the purpose of this chapter, in which we seek to reflect on the ideas about colonizing practices of Indigenous sexuality deployed in the first centuries of Brazil’s colonization period – from its theological, historical, and legal perspectives. In this sense, in addition to presenting the Lusitanian religious motivations, we will expose – albeit in summary form – the overview of the concept of “sodomy” in Portugal and the laws existing to regulate it. In addition, we seek to reflect on how far this vision of sexuality and sodomy would be summed with the notion of lust in order to describe and to understand Indigenous sexualities in that historical context. Finally, we will present – making use of letters and other Jesuit documents – how the disciplining control of these sexualities was justified and conducted by the Society of Jesus, a religious order that was primarily responsible for the regulation of Indigenous issues up to the mid-eighteenth century.

2.1 Colonization and Missionary Vision: Historical Background

To those accustomed to an analysis of the colonial history of the Americas, it is noticeable that the discovery of the Portuguese lands on the continent caused no great theological debates such as those that took place in Valladolid, or left monumental works such as those written by the Spaniards José de Acosta and Bartolomé de Las Casas. Authors such as Raminelli, for example, highlight the Portuguese silence on the Amerindians. According to him,

During the sixteenth century, seven works on Brazil were published in Portugal. The Jesuits provided the publication of three of them. In the books, they reported Amerindian customs and the misadventures of the catechesis: *Copia de unas cartas embiadas del Brasil ... tresladas de Portugueses em Castilhanos recebidas el ano de MDLI*; José de Anchieta; *Excellentissimo, singularis Fidei AC Pietatis Viro Mendo de Saa. Coimbra: na Casa de João Alvares, 1563*; José de Anchieta; *Arte da gramática da lingoa mais usada na costa do Brasil ... Coimbra: António de Mariz, 1595*. (...) there are still the writings of Pedro Magalhães de Gandavo, *Historia da província Sãcta Cruz a qui vulgarmente chamamos Brasil, 1576*; and the narrative about the shipwreck of Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho – *Naufragio, que passou Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho, capitão e Governador de Pernambuco*, published in 1584 and 1592 or 1601. (Raminelli, 1996, p. 146)

As Raminelli demonstrates, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries very few printed texts were published in Portugal about Brazil, besides the manuscripts of Soares de Sousa, Friar Vicente do Salvador, Fernão Cardim, and Simão de Vasconcelos. A considerable number of the Jesuit writings would only be organized and published centuries later, as we will see below. Raminelli attributes this to the Portuguese enchantment with the grand Eastern civilizations, which would allow them to critique, for example, the political situation in Portugal and the role of its crown in

contrast with, or from, the Chinese reality. We still account other chroniclers, which include the German Hans Staden; the French Léry, d'Evreux, d'Abbeville, and Thevet; and the Dutch Marcgrave, Piso, and Laet. However, when reading their writings, it becomes clear that their assumptions were very different than those that inspired the Catholic and Jesuit Portuguese colonization in Brazil. Such intellectual abandonment of Brazil by the Portuguese creates, for the purposes of this survey, a specificity when compared to the rest of the continent. Just a very few sources relate to any Indigenous perspective of the colonization process. The historical account is almost always depicted through the eyes of the colonizer and permeated by their economic, political, and religious interests.

But this biased perspective of the first centuries of the colonization of Brazil has an analytical advantage: by studying them, it becomes evident that they display the mechanisms used to discipline Indigenous sexuality, ontology, cosmology, and corporeality – understood here as interconnected spheres. What these sources allow us to comprehend is a form of colonization largely based on the lack of planning by the Crown and, on the other hand, an excess of control methods by the Jesuits.

Portugal, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, was a nation independent from Castilla.³ After the battle of Aljubarrota (August 14, 1385), the Castilians were defeated and D. João I was crowned as King of Portugal. In 1411, the Spanish Crown signed the peace treaty of Ayllon-Segovia, and four years later, in 1415, Portugal conquered Ceuta in North Africa, an event in Portuguese history that marked the beginning of the south of the Strait of Gibraltar conquest – first under King D. João I (who reigned from 1385 until 1433) and later under D. Duarte I (king from 1433 until 1438).

One of his brothers was Prince Henry (1394-1460), Duke of Viséu, known in the Lusitanian lands as the “Inventor of the Islands” and the founder of the “School of Sagres.”⁴ A more relevant fact is that he had been the Grand Master of the Order of Christ since 1420; this role was from then on exercised by Royal House members appointed by the Pope. Since that time, the Portuguese ships (including those of Pedro Alvares Cabral’s fleet) that sailed uncharted waters or sought conquests did so under the name and the Cross of the Order of Christ, which is the first flag symbol to wave in Brazil.

The Order of Christ had inherited the possessions of the Templar Knights and the order was one of the benefactors of the Portuguese trips. However, the influence of the order went far beyond its financial realm. The genesis of important instruments for the Portuguese crown were documents issued by the Popes, f. ex: the *Dum Diversas* and *Romanus Pontifex* papal bulls (edited by Pope Nicholas V in 1452 and 1455, respectively); *Inter Caetera* (edited by Pope Callixtus III in 1456); *Aeterni Regis* (edited by Pope Sixtus IV in 1481); and *Inter Coetera* (edited by Pope Alexander VI in 1493).

³For the following summary of the history of Portugal, we used Saraiva (1997).

⁴The “School of Sagres,” or “Court of Sagres,” was a group of Portuguese personalities and techniques related to ocean formed Please explain in Sagres.

The first document gave supremacy to Portugal due to the conquest of the “Moors,” and the second gave the Portuguese Crown the right to claim the lands of the Cape of Bojador and Num (the northern coast of the Western Sahara, which today is Morocco) and trade with the conquered and the yet-to-be-conquered native people. This document guaranteed and extended the papal bull *Inter Caetera*, granting the Order of Christ ecclesiastical authority over those domains. The bull *Aeterni Regis*, in turn, ratified the validity of the Treaty of Alcáçovas (1479) that divided the territories of the Atlantic between the crowns of Portugal and Castile from a parallel line that runs from the Canary Islands: to the north, the lands would belong to Castile, and those to the south would be in the Portuguese domain.

It is important to note that this document can only be understood in light of the War of the Castilian Succession (1475-1479) and the Portuguese Crown’s interests in this conflict. Concerning the Crown’s succession, there would be two possible heirs to succeed Enrique IV in Castile: D. Joana, “the Beltraneja,” supported by King Afonso V of Portugal; and Isabella, stepsister of the late King, who was promised to Ferdinand of Aragon (whose marriage would result in the union of Castile and Aragon). The treaty of Alcáçovas marks, beyond the peninsular peace, the division of territories yet to be discovered, the consolidation of the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella’s power, and the increase of the Catholic Church’s presence in the region. Similarly, the *Inter Coetera* bull would also divide the world between the Spanish and Portuguese; this time the line of demarcation was to be located 100 leagues west of Cape Verde. Such an agreement did not please King John II of Portugal, and it resulted in the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, which drew the line counting 370 leagues from Cape Verde. In this way, Portugal could guarantee the safeguarding of the trade route to the Indies, its main interest at the time.

What is important to bear in mind is the relationship that links the papal bulls, the overseas expansion, the consolidation of power of the Portuguese Crown throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the Order of Christ. These are all parts of an embedded network of relationships that leads us to two other elements: the Portuguese *Padroado* (“Patronage”), and the Jesuit presence in Brazil (Brásio, 1961).

According to the Patronage, the territories discovered by the Order of Christ belonged to the Portuguese Crown, keeping the Order’s spiritual jurisdiction. Therefore, by virtue of papal bulls, the king would be patron of the Church and propagator of the Catholic faith – which meant sending missionaries to the lands already conquered or lands still to be discovered.

The Patronage and the Portuguese “missionary spirit” at the time are key to understanding the practices used by the Crown and by the Jesuits; they were not, as it turned out, two separate spheres of power in Colonial Brazil, something that is clearly evidenced in the Jesuits’ letters. There were several letters exchanged between Father Manoel da Nóbrega and the Portuguese Crown, in which Da Nóbrega’s influence in the first Crown’s efforts when dealing with the natives became clear. As Almeida points out:

In general, the missionaries were the informers that the Portuguese Crown had in its “conquered territories”. They were the eyewitnesses of the situations of dispute, war and enslavement involving Indigenous and Portuguese residents. The administration of these conflicts and their Government at a distance would be made possible by legislation that was formulated based on opinions issued by those few observers of colonial life that could read and write. Although these missionaries were committed to maintain the system of slave labor and they needed it in their own colonial endeavors, they were mostly frankly convinced as well that they had a civilizing mission to fulfill (Almeida, 1997, p. 38)

The Crown and the local governors supported the members of the Society of Jesus in Brazil by giving them salaries, clothing, slaves, or food. In this sense, the Jesuits were the order of the greatest influence in colonial Brazil – which may also explain the relative flexibility of the Holy See towards the natives. In addition, the Patronage brought the notion of “just war” as a means of evangelization and of servitude – ideas that would play an important role in the relationship with the Indigenous peoples in colonial Brazil.

With that exposed, we can better grasp the context in which several issues addressed here are inserted. More than just pointing out how the Jesuits and the chroniclers described the Indigenous sexualities in the colony, it is important to understand how this was part of a set of representations of savagery and lust, as well as how crucial it is intertwined with the need to discipline the natives’ bodies. It is important to keep in mind that the notions of corporeality that circulated 500 years ago originated from quite different assumptions than those we might conceive today. Similarly, the idea of “sodomy” is not equivalent to the current distinction between straight and gay, but concerned mainly a distinction between what was considered by them as natural acts and those against nature. (Clark, 2008, p. 74)

2.2 Sodomy in Colonial Brazil: Vice vs. Nature

If “sodomy” in the colonial period was not equivalent to the current division between homo- and heterosexuals, then what was it? What were the models that shaped the understanding of the colonizers about sexuality? What was the Iberian view on the subject? How did it shape the role of institutions like the Inquisition in Brazil? What assumptions or ideas formed concepts that would be close to the ones we now call “sexual dimorphism” or “corporeality”? And what was the relationship between sodomy and nature? All these questions are extremely complex, and deserve proper, lengthy responses. They will offer an understanding of the colonizers’ perspectives that in turn would offer a better explanation of Indigenous sexualities.

Accordingly, we will try to address some of these questions. First, we will explain the category of “sodomy” as they used it, particularly because it allows us to understand more about the ideas of differences between the sexes and about nature at the time. This is of particular importance, since it appears as a constant concern in the Jesuit letters dated from the sixteenth century in Brazil.

Mark Jordan points out that the term “sodomy” was created by the Italian theologian of the Order of the Benedictines, St. Peter Damian (1007-1072), in a clear analogy with the word “blasphemy.” (Jordan, 1997) The term, obviously, refers to the city of Sodom and its destruction, as recounted in Genesis 19. According to Scripture, Lot was a nephew of Abraham. After a disagreement, he separated from his uncle and headed for the Sodom area. The region was plundered, and Lot and his family taken captive to Sodom, having been released by Abraham and his servants. After a while, Lot returned to Sodom, until he received a visit by two angels sent by God to warn him and his family that the city would soon be destroyed. In the end, Lot managed to escape from the city with his daughters before its destruction.

But before they lay down [the daughters of Lot laid down with him, as explained below], the men of the city [] of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter. And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, where [are] the men which came in this night? Bring them out unto us, so that we may know them (Gen, 19:4-5).

We would like to emphasize two points in the story. The first is about its sequence. Lot’s daughters, thinking that life on earth had been extinguished, decided to get their father drunk, and “to lay down” with him in order to have offspring. The other important point concerns Verse 5, quoted above, which is the most unambiguous reference in this passage about homosexuality in Sodom, made more obvious in some translations: the Greek translation (Septuagint) uses the expression “συγγενώμεθα,” meaning something we can roughly translate to “conversing” as “sexual intercourse” – although it is a different word from the one Lot uses to offer his daughters to the men who surrounded his house: “εγνώσασαι” (“to know”). The Latin translation (the Vulgate) also uses the word “to know” (*cognoscamus*), instead of “abuse” which is used in some other versions, making it clear that the strictly sexual sense of the passage leaves room for numerous interpretations. So the question that arises is: “Why was “sodomy” associated with homosexual practices over the centuries?”

Jordan (1997, p. 31) discusses the relationship between Sodom and intercourse between same-sex couples. He claims that in the Old Testament, the city appears linked to destruction and isolation (Dt 29:23⁵; Is 13:19⁶; Jr. 49:18⁷; Jr. 50:40⁸; Sf

⁵“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” (Unless otherwise indicated, the transcribed portions of the Bible in this book are from the King James Version.)

⁶“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ Excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”

⁷“As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor [cities] thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.”

⁸“As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor [cities] thereof, saith the LORD; [so] shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.”

2:9⁹); divine judgment (Lam 4:6¹⁰; Am 4:11¹¹); general or impudent sin (Is 3:9¹²; Jr. 23:14¹³); producing bitter fruit (Dt 32:32¹⁴); and arrogance (Eze 16:49–50¹⁵). In the New Testament, the city is mentioned in Ju 1:7¹⁶. However, there are several other biblical passages in which there are unequivocal indications of copulation between persons of the same sex, yet without any mention of Sodom.

An example is found in Leviticus 18:22 (“Thou shalt not lie to mankind, as to womankind: it [is] an abomination.”), which in contemporary English would mean the reproof of a man laying with another man as he was a woman. The same-sex practice being subject to death (“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood [shall be] upon them,” Lev 20:13). In the New Testament, the best-known reference is in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans: “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise, also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that reward of their error which was met” (Rom 1:26,27). So far we have clear references to sexual intercourse between persons of the same sex, and no clear mention of Sodom.

Some commentators on the Bible (as well as Mark Jordan himself) draw a parallel between the events in Genesis 19 and Judges 19. In Judges, a story with a very tragic outcome is told, one that would result in a national war involving more than 400,000 men (Judges 20:2). A Levite took a concubine for his wife and he ended up leaving her, after committing adultery. Later on, even being able to divorce, the husband goes to his father-in-law’s house, looking for his wife. While on the way

⁹“Therefore [as] I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, [even] the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.”

¹⁰“For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.”

¹¹“I have overthrown [some] of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.”

¹²“The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide [it] not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.”

¹³“I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants there of as Gomorrah.”

¹⁴“For their vine [is] of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes [are] grapes of gall, their clusters [are] bitter.”

¹⁵“Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore, I took them away as I saw [good].”

¹⁶“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

back home, they were sheltered by an old man who saw them sleeping out in the open. The biblical account follows:

So, [the old man] brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink. [Now] as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, [and] beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, **bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.** And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, [nay], I pray you, do not [so] wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly. Behold, [here is] my daughter a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing. But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go. Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her lord [was], till it was light. And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down [at] the door of the house, and her hands [were] upon the threshold (Judges 19:21–27).

This story is, in many ways, very similar to that of Sodom, in particular the action of men reported in Genesis 19:5 and Judges 19:22 (highlighted above) asking the host to let out his guest, that “may know him.” This time in the Greek translation the word is “*γινώμεν*,” meaning “to know” but also “to have sex,” while the Latin translation of the Vulgate would be more emphatic than the *cognoscamus* used in the Genesis passage; the Latin translation explicitly *uses* “*abutamur*,” (to abuse).” Thus, one can infer that the message of this passage is, at least from a sexual point of view, much more emphatic than that of Sodom; here not only is there a clear attempt to – literally – abuse the Levite husband but, in fact, the rape takes place and the wife victim winds up dead. The consequences of this action by the Belialites of the tribe of Benjamin were also, as mentioned, quite considerable in terms of mobilization and war of all the tribes of Israel (after the death of his wife, her husband divided the body into 12 pieces and sent a piece to each of the tribes of Israel).

Then why does the idea of “sodomy,” specifically, become so strong? As Jordan (1997, p. 30) points out, there is no mention of the “sin of Benjamites” in the Bible. We would like to observe that there is neither reference to the “sin of Lot,” referring to incestuous sex between father and daughter. Jordan argues that “sodomy” has become onslaught of the ideas of sin and retribution, responsibility and guilt. We agree with the author, but it is important to explain further the development of his arguments.

We assume that the message in the biblical passage about Sodom (and the idea of sodomy) does not seem to be primarily about sexual practices nor about copulation between people of the same sex, but about the idea of obedience under penalty of severe punishment from God. That weight given to obedience and to punishment will be very enlightening in order to understand the developments in the formation of the Iberian Peninsula national states. Sodomy reinforced the idea of national unity and interdependence, and – as we will see below – could be punishable by death as it was understood as a betrayal and crime of *lèse-majesté* in Portugal and Spain.

As indicated by Soyer,

The people of early modern Spain and Portugal widely shared the notion that homosexual anal intercourse represented a dangerous threat to the very existence of both secular state and the church. Most early modern Spaniards and Portuguese would have been familiar, either through the sermons of their priests or via works of sacred art, with the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah after their inhabitants had provoked God's wrath through their sexual behavior as it was reported in Chapter 19 of the Book of Genesis. The majority of the inhabitants of early modern Spain and Portugal were aware that God could well bring the same fate upon their own kingdoms if their society was not energetically expunged of the *pecado nefando*. As will be obvious from what follows, military and natural disasters such as famines, droughts, earthquakes and floods were often rationalized as the result of excessive tolerance and insufficient efforts to prevent or punish immoral sexual conduct and homosexuals were frequently turned into scapegoats. (Soyer, 2012, pp. 27-28)

One cannot rule out the possibility (to be developed below) that the characterization of Brazilian natives as sodomizers and lustful served as further justification for the intervention and control of these societies through their sexualities, corroborating the missionary and civilizationary vision that the Portuguese had of themselves during the exploration era and throughout the colonization process, as pointed out here.

Anna Clark also gives indications in this direction:

In the second half of the thirteenth century, many secular authorities also adopted strict injunctions against sodomy in their customary laws, mandating punishments of burning, castration, or burying offenders alive. Legally, sodomy might include bestiality, oral and anal sex, or even mutual masturbation, but in practice the latter was not punished as harshly. To some extent, sex between men, like other crimes such as rape, was seen as compelled by "diabolical desires", which might infect anyone. But unlike rape, authorities believed that God would call vengeance on sodomy, because it violated the order of nature. (Clark, 2008, p.74)

The same can be said as based on the writings of Giovanni Scarabello: "The offense that seems to be added to the obsession of religious conviction, the terror of indiscriminate divine vengeance, concern about uncontrollable private and public disorder consequences, perhaps even unconscious fear of his subversive charm of extreme recklessness, is sodomy."¹⁷ As Mark Jordan indicates, Sodom becomes a place no longer associated with a particular kind of sin to become a reminder that God has the power to judge and what the consequences of disobeying Him are. "We remember the story of Sodom," says Jordan, "because we need to learn from its experience." (Jordan, 1997, p. 32)

We stated earlier that the idea of "sodomy" is consistent with the momentum of the Iberian Peninsula's emerging States, during the Late Middle Ages, as the legislation of the period shows. By then, there were three Portuguese main instruments that provided the legal base for the condemnation of sodomites' practices: the *Afonsinas* (1446), *Manuelinas* (1521), and *Filipinas* (1603) ordinations ("ordenações," in

¹⁷ Scarabello, Giovanni. "Desvianza sessuale ed interventi di giustizia a Venezia nella prima metà del xvi secolo," in *Tiziano e Venezia: Convegno Internazionale di Studi Venezia 1976*. Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1980. Pp. 75-84. Quoted in Scaramella (2010, p. 1447).

Portuguese). The Portuguese Inquisition began in 1536 (long after the Spanish, which began in 1480), and only in 1553 did King John III authorize the hunt for sodomists, while the papal recognition of the Portuguese inquisitorial jurisdiction over the practice of sodomy only occurred in 1562. (Soyer, 2012, p. 32)

Such instruments served as a means to normalize sexuality – not as an end in itself, but also as a way to consolidate a sovereign national state overseas as well. Such a ruling state would be present both in the “public” and “private” spheres, to deploy the terms proposed by Scarabello. That said, we will briefly present some general observations on the “ordinations” and on the punishments prescribed in such documents in order to shed more light on the importance of terms like “sodomy” in the colonial punishment and ruling system.

The *Ordenações Afonsinas*, edited by King Afonso V of Portugal, ordered that the sodomites were to be burned, justifying the punishment with the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins. Trexler (1995) notes that the *Ordenações Manuelinas*, edited by d. Manuel I, also included the confiscation of the convicteds’ goods, added to the fire punishment, as previously established by King Afonso V’s rule.

The *Ordenações Filipinas*, given the low number of convictions, established that the testimony of only one person who had engaged in sexual intercourse with the accused was enough to begin an inquisitorial process and also to decree that the accused would lose access to eventual positions of privilege and authority (Soyer, 2012, p. 31). It is important to consider that, in fact, such a set of laws was not new in the Iberian Peninsula. The *Siete Partidas*, promulgated by Afonso X already in the thirteenth century, predicted the castration and death by stoning to those considered “active” in same-sex activities over age 14, while the “passives” would only be punished if they consented to the act. The Spanish laws known as *Fuera real* (also in the thirteenth century) established public castration followed by death by hanging three days later, “and their bodies were not descended.” (Trexler, 1995, p. 45)

In Spain, the Catholic royals Ferdinand and Isabella also published laws to punish the practice of sodomy (Ordenanza de Medina del Campo) in August 1497:

The Catholic monarchs dropped the castration that had preceded execution at least since the *Siete Partidas*, and changed the death penalty for sodomy (and bestiality) from stoning or hanging to burning on the spot of the crime. Proof was sufficient if it matched that necessary to convict someone of *lèse-majesté* or heresy; thus, on the eve of the settlements in the Americas, the old association of treason and sodomy was again evoked. (Trexler, 1995, p. 46)

The notion of divine punishment that justifies sodomy as a crime of treason and *lèse-majesté* is made very clear in the wording of the law:

Amongst the many other sins and crimes that offend God Our Lord, and bring dishonor to the land, crimes committed against nature are especially conspicuous. The laws must have punishments against this abominable crime, a destroyer of the natural order punished by Divine justice, whose name it is not decent to utter. [This abominable sin] causes the loss of nobility and courage as well as the weakening of faith. It is abhorrent to the worship of God who, in his anger, sends pestilence and other earthly plagues [to punish it].” (Soyer, 2012, p. 30)¹⁸

¹⁸“Quote originally taken from *Reyes Catolicos Pragmática sobre el pecado nefando*, A.G.S., leg1, num.4, Título XXX. *De la sodomía y bestialidad*. About the Spanish Inquisition and its effects in the New World, reading Garza Carvajal (2003) is recommended.

An important concept in this passage is worth examining further: the one that considered it to be a crime committed “against nature” (the same idea was already mentioned by St. Paul in Romans 1:26, as we have already seen), a conception linked to degradation and towards a “bestial” nature. This perspective is essential to understanding what the Jesuits and the chroniclers thought about the natives; it is intertwined with what the Europeans at that time understood linking polygamy, lust, debauchery, and sodomy with Indigenous cannibalism. These were all practices understood under a broad concept – a “reversal of natural laws.” The idea of “nature” itself is important to grasp – not only to comprehend the European representations about the American Indians, but the very idea of hierarchical divisions between men and women. The native sexualities were largely a result of the crossroads between the Thomistic and Aristotelian order of medieval Europe: they perceive the Indigenous as lustful and cannibals that doubly reversed European ontology around a “divine” order (seen as “natural” and, therefore, universal).

It must be said that the Jesuits (and not the Portuguese Inquisition) initially played the role of adjusting the Indigenous world to Christian cosmogony and morality. Unlike Spanish America, which had three courts of the Inquisition – in Peru, Mexico and Cartagena, from 1570, 1571, and 1610, respectively – Brazil did not have any court, despite the fact that the Bishop of Bahia was formally responsible for occupying the inquisitorial function since 1580 (Vainfas, 1986, p. 43). However, there were some inquisitorial visits (four in total) – in Bahia, between 1591 and 1593; in Pernambuco, between 1594 and 1595; again in Bahia in 1618; and in Pará in 1763. On these occasions, there were a few allegations of sodomy involving Indigenous peoples.

One reason for these concerns were the very dynamics of the inquisitorial process, as pointed out by Mott (2007, p. 66); besides the confession made by the perpetrator, it was necessary to have the testimonies of two other people for a conviction. In the case of the Indigenous, it was a Jesuit priest who heard the confession, and the order was not necessarily sympathetic to the Inquisition.

However, we do not want to give the mistaken idea that the natives' sexuality in colonial Brazil was out of the control of the colonizers. Along these lines, Vainfas' synthesis is very enlightening:

... the racial stigmas came from Portugal, they were present since before, independent from slavery colonialism. We perceive them, for example, in the statutes given to some of “purity of blood,” which disqualified for State positions and honors the descendants of so-called “infected races” – blacks, mulattos and natives, it is true, but also the Moors and especially the Jews. [...] Hierarchical society shaped by Thomism, the model of society that was transplanted to Brazil, is a model that valued the old Christian gentlemen and demoted the new Christians with various stigmas that had nothing to do with the colonial slavery. (Vainfas, 1997, pp. 238-239)

Differences in sexuality, as well as in racial perspective, were suitable for the Thomistic natural order based on an Aristotelian perspective of hierarchy. Jordan writes, commenting on the Thomist perspective on sin against nature,¹⁹ that according

¹⁹In his *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas presents sodomy in his discussion of the lust addiction

to Aquinas’s view, this would be a practice against nature for opposing the union of men and women, natural to humans and animals, with sodomy comparable to other acts against the divine nature of man, like eating mud or dirt. (Jordan, 1997, pp. 146-147)

Under the Church’s watchful eye, sex existed for the strict purpose of procreation, taking place only in a monogamous marriage and between individuals of different sexes. The relationship between nature, sex, sodomy, and hierarchy is something we find frequently in the texts written in the period. We present a summary of such a connection.

Soyer (2012, p. 5) shows how the difference between the sexes was perceived as a result of “natural” factors: the distinction was expected not only to exist on a physical level (that transcended the genitalia, and included for men, for example, having a beard and a deep voice), but also including behavior and dress codes. The female body, according to an Aristotelian and biblical view, was seen as a weaker, inverted, and imperfect version of the male body, and the very idea of masculinity was associated with the notion of rationality and self-control.²⁰ This argument was supported at the time (until the eighteenth century, at least²¹) by a reasoning that we would today call physiological:

Medical descriptions of the body held that there were four humors – blood, phlegm, black bile (or melancholy), and yellow bile (sometimes called red bile or choler). Each humor had its qualities – dry, wet, hot, and cold, respectively. And they correlated with body organs – heart, spleen, liver, and brain – that governed the different four personalities. All of these parts were made of and corresponded to the basic elements of all existence: earth, water, fire and air. The humors were related to the elements and each fluid was supposed to have two primary qualities that reflected its elemental properties. Blood was hot and wet; yellow bile was hot and dry; black bile was cold and dry; phlegm was cold and wet.” (Crawford, 2007, pp. 101-102)

This understanding of the body and the various humors presented the disease and the bodies as a *continuum*, where hot and dry properties would be related to the male pole and the cold and wet to the female pole. That is how it would explain the fact that men become bald. Because of their hot bodies, and because they do have more yellow bile, their hair would get burned. Their genitals were designed “outside” their bodies, and because of their hot bodies, the organ was “expelled,” as was written by Galen of Pergamon in the second century. Crawford and Soyer (2012, p. 23) call attention to how a lack of balance between the humors could cause hermaphroditism or even a change in the sex of the fetus: depending on temperature changes,

(understood as excessive venereal pleasures, and misuse of the sexual apparatus). The types of lust are fornication, adultery, incest, rape, and sins against nature. Among the types of lust, sin against nature would be considered the gravest, and of these, bestiality is the most serious (followed by sodomy), with masturbation considered to be less severe.

²⁰See Laqueur (1990).

²¹Throughout the seventeenth century, there were important discoveries in the field of human sexual physiology, such as the discovery of follicles of the ovaries with ovules by Regnier de Graaf, and of spermatozoids in semen, by Anton van Leeuwenhoek.

a female fetus could become a child with male genitalia and female characteristics although, more rarely, a man could turn into a woman after childbirth.

To this Hippocratic vision, an Aristotelian touch would be added by the scholars and then they would consider nature as something stratified and hierarchical:

Aristotle believed that all things had a natural goal, or *telos*, that could be discerned through observation. When he looked at animal populations, Aristotle observed that males were dominant, and females were subordinate. Males were larger, and Aristotle thought more active and important to each species. Aristotle further argued that the goal of sex was reproduction. Because all things were as they should be and males were superior, Aristotle maintained that males provided the important features in reproduction. (Crawford, 2007, p. 102)

Aristotle's concepts supported as natural the dominance of the male, related to being rational and self-controlled, in contrast to the female, associated with lust. It is important to note that this Aristotelian perspective also gave support to European ideas about natural slavery, according to Pagden (1982, pp. 42-43). In the new world, the women continued to be treated as inferior when compared to the male natives. An example of this is seen in a decree written by Felipe II establishing that, in court, the testimony of two male natives or three women would be equivalent to one Spanish man (Pagden, 1982, p. 44). Moreover, humoral theory was clearly associated with the Aristotelian view regarding Indigenous peoples. Jean Bodin, for example, writes in his *Les Six Livres de la République* [1576] that the organs of the human body and its fluids respond to climate effects: the hot weather is more prone to impulse, cruelty, and stupidity, "as the drunkards," which would explain, for him, the "savagery of the Brazilian" (quoted in Pagden, 1982, p. 138). In his turn, the Jesuit theologian Martín del Río (1551-1608) ensures that

The female is the suspect for being full of voracious and vehement passions. Their imagination leads to madness, to voluptuousness, to the luxury and avarice. On the other hand, they lack prudence and parsimony, making them fragile to face the wiles of the devil. Since Eve, the flesh temptations and the sexual perversions come from women. Not rarely, the late Middle Age scholars assume that women's lack of self-control could explain their sexual perversions and their cannibalistic desire, drawing a parallel between the acts of eating and drinking with the act of copulating (Raminelli, 1996, p. 102).

As it becomes evident, the implications of these ideas of lust, cannibalism, and lack of self-control are fundamental for the understanding and interpretation of seventeenth-century ideas about Indigenous peoples and sodomy in Brazil. The descriptions of colonizers associating anthropophagic practices with Indigenous lust show how they were perceived by the Europeans as inferior people with an intrinsically perverted nature. The Indians living in Brazil were described as if the natural order of things between the Brazilian Indians was reversed to Europeans. The indigenous people were accused of polygamy and nudity and the Europeans condemned them for what was considered to be incestuous practices, lust, and excessive drinking (of *cauim*, a near-beer beverage made from fermented manioc, frequently referred to as "wine" by chroniclers).

According to the colonial texts, the Indigenous sodomites became the epitome of inversion of the "ideal" European Catholic with their presumed pre-modern nature representing the maximum lack of self-control. No theological debates took place in

Portugal to discuss the topic. Meanwhile, the Spanish debates were often restricted to small academic circles or to the Dominicans, historic rivals of the Jesuits, that seem not to have had any impact on the Portuguese policies carried out in Brazil, such as was the case even during the times of the Iberian Union (1580-1640). However, in the day-to-day relations with the natives, it seems that the Jesuits and the governors were always developing and trying to improve ways to establish control over the Indigenous “abominable practices”. Jordan writes, commenting on the Thomist perspective on sin against nature,²² that in Aquinas’s view, this would be a practice against nature for opposing the union of men and women, natural to humans and animals, with sodomy comparable to other acts against the divine nature of man, such as eating mud or dirt (Jordan, 1997, pp. 146-147).

To summarize Brazil’s colonization process, the European concepts of sodomy, lust, nudity, polygamy, and cannibalism were linked to each other as a huge complex of practices considered to be “against nature.” The role of the Jesuit missionaries and the Crown (the Portuguese Patronage) was to regulate and control Indigenous lives in order to spare Portugal from the same destructive punishment that had befallen Sodom. We recognized that the message of the biblical story of Sodom and of sodomy was mainly about the importance of obedience. Therefore, we would have: (a) a notion of sin necessarily tied up with fear of a divine punishment for disobedience; (b) a masculine nature associated with self-control and a female, in contrast, associated with lust; (c) a missionary perspective of control present not only in the mindsets of the Jesuits, but also in the Portuguese Crown officials; (d) a context of formation of national Iberian states where the idea of a systematic regulation of the lives of its subjects is justified as a way to avoid divine punishment of its citizens (reinforcing the same idea of the need for a nation-state and thus justifying its control over the subjects – this idea will be further developed at the end of this chapter); and (e) a complex of Indigenous practices described as lustful and abominable – “against nature” – upon which, as exposed here, the Church and the Crown considered necessary to intervene.

The Brazilian natives were described as the antithesis of what a European man should be: monogamous; seeking marital sex to beget children; and moderate in dress, drinking, eating, and talking. As Serafim Leite writes on the *spiritual exercises*²³ of Loyola, “The sin is supposed: and therefore, the reaction against pleasure. Mortification is the great lesson of Jesus.” (Leite, 1938, p. 15). Of course, the Indigenous perspective was quite different. After all, contrary to what the Portuguese and the Jesuits thought, it was not simply a matter of “imprinting on them easily any mark that we want to give them,” (Pero Vaz de Caminha, 1500 In Castro, 1996) nor were they “white paper” or *tabula rasa*. (Manuel da Nóbrega, 1549 In Leite, 1955).

²²In *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas presents sodomy in his discussion of the lust addiction (understood as excessive venereal pleasures, and misuse of the sexual organs). The types of lust are fornication, adultery, incest, rape, and sins against nature. Among the types of lust, sin against nature would be considered the gravest and of these, bestiality is the most serious (followed by sodomy), with masturbation less severe.

²³Synthesis of his practical and theological views.

2.3 Sexuality and Savagery: Cannibalism and Lust as Seen by Chroniclers

Sexual references are common in the descriptions of the lands of the New World. There were numerous brutal episodes of sexual violence committed against Indigenous people across the continent. As Trexler observes, rape was conceived as a lawful form of taking ownership in capturing slaves (1995, p. 14), and it was understood as something trivial through the eyes of the colonizer:

[...] having captured a very beautiful Carib [...] woman and being naked as usual - I had inspired desire to satisfy my pleasure. I wanted to run my wishes but she refused and so she scratched me with her nails in a way I would have preferred never to have begun. But seeing this (to tell everything to the end) I took a rope and gave her such a good beating she gave some unheard screams, they could not believe their ears. Finally, we reached an agreement and I can tell you that she seemed to have been raised in a school of sluts [Michele da Cuneo, Letter to Annari, October 28, 1495] (Bartra, 1992, p. 150).

This letter from Cuneo (an Italian navigator and close friend of Columbus's, whom he accompanied on his second voyage to America) brings, in addition to this brutal account, the second reference to homosexual practices among Indigenous peoples ever known in the Americas. The first reference to homosexuality is the letter written in 1494 by Diego Alvarez Chanca, a doctor who joined Columbus's fleet. (Trexler, 1995, p. 65) The most brutal description was by Pietro Martire d' Anguiera, published in his book *De orbe novo* (1516) and it describes how in 1513 the Spanish nobleman Vasco Núñez de Balboa killed the brother of the chief of Quaraca and 40 of his companions by throwing their bodies to the dogs to be eaten after the assassination because they were dressed as women in Panamá.

Such violent scenes are common in colonial narratives and they allow us to see how the imposition process of Iberian sexualities in the Americas was brutal. We will not give a detailed report on them,²⁴ but we consider it important to keep in mind that just focusing on these narratives can result in the risk of victimizing Indigenous populations and, therefore, obscuring their reactions to these processes.

²⁴For a more detailed look at sexual colonization of the Americas (in addition to the references cited at the end of this book), the thesis by James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Race, Religion, and Sexuality in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (1999) is recommended. Also recommended are Ruth Tricoli's "Colonization and Women's Production: The Timacua of Florida" in Cheryl Claassen (ed.) *James H. Sweet, Recreating Africa: Race, Religion, and Sexuality in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (1999), as well as Ruth Tricoli's, "Colonization and Women's Production: The Timacua of Florida" in Cheryl Claassen (ed.) *Exploring Gender through Archeology* (1992); Pete Sigal (ed.) *Infamous Desire: Male Homosexuality in Colonial Latin America* (2003); Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (1999); Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (1987); Federico Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies Will Burn: Prosecuting Sodomites in Early Modern Spain and Mexico* (2003); Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (1995); and Michael Horswell, *Decolonizing the Sodomite: Queer Tropes of Sexuality in Colonial Andean Culture* (2005).

In general, the hypothesis being developed here is that the descriptions of the chroniclers and Jesuits entangle ideas such as "incest," "savagery," "corruption," "inversion," "cannibalism," "polygamy," "drunkenness," "lust," "sodomy," "nudity," "bacchanalia," and "lasciviousness," and they all participated in the same semantic field. Furthermore, these descriptions (despite the polysemy of these terms) cannot be understood outside the colonial project. As we have seen, they intrinsically carried out the missionary perspective of the Portuguese Crown. In its turn, this perspective was based on a very strict concept of human nature based on Christian doctrine, where many Indigenous practices would fall under the label of being "against nature" – i.e.. *contra naturam*.

It implies a certain paradox, because at the same time the Indigenous were considered to be close to nature, as they were not "civilized," but their practices were judged to be "against nature." We would like to stress that according to this line of thought, natives' bodies reflected their corrupt nature, justifying the Jesuits' control over them. Drunkenness, lust (including sodomy), nudity, anthropophagic rituals, polygamy, etc., are the characteristics against which the Society of Jesus acted more forcefully, as we will see later. The notion of control over the body, as a way to curb "sensual impulses," is something that is present in most of Jesuitical correspondence and writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Brazil, as well as in the *spiritual exercises* of Loyola. In this way, reading carefully about the period's authors who portrayed the Indigenous peoples in Brazil, allows us to better figure out the mosaic of the time, telling us more about their authors and about the European perspective than about the Indigenous peoples among whom they lived.

Marriage customs, polygamy associated with warrior prestige, levirate,²⁵ the avunculate²⁶ – that is the privilege of marriage of the maternal uncle with his sister's daughters – the prenuptial freedom contrasting with jealousy by the married woman and the rigor with adultery, sexual hospitality practiced with allies but also with the captives, sexual initiation of boys by older women, the carefree weddings and successive separations, all this was unusual. [...] As for sodomy, it was part of the great European taboos and, in America, it always seems to be linked to cannibalism, as if there were symbolic equivalence between eating and living with the same. This correspondence between homophagy and homosexuality is discernible among others in Michele de Cuneo *Cortés e Oviedo*: significantly, the two accusations are rejected all together by Las Casas. In Brazil, as among the Portuguese, its existence is certain but its moral status among the natives is uncertain. Jean de Léry (1578) and Thévet (1575) mention it to inform that it's rejected by the Indians. Curiously the Jesuits do not seem to talk about it. (Cunha, 1990, p. 107)

The interpretation is important for several reasons. First, it supports our argument in the sense that the regulation of the native's sexuality was part of the missionary project; second, this regulation must be understood within the project of nation-state building that took shape in the Iberian Peninsula within the context of the Inquisition.

²⁵Type of marriage in which the brother of a deceased man is obliged to marry his brother's widow, and the widow is obliged to marry her deceased husband's brother.

²⁶A special relationship existing in some societies between a maternal uncle and his sister's offsprings.

Cunha commented that a Jesuit reference to the “nefarious sin” among the Indigenous in Brazil was not found. But we did encounter one, written by Pero Correia in a letter from São Vicente in 1551 and addressed to “the brothers who were in Africa”:

... these Gentiles in many aspects look like the Moors, [...] and the sin against nature very common there it is also to be found here. There are many women here that in the use of their weapons and all other things follow crafts of the men and have other women with whom they are married. There is no greater offense to them than to call them women. In such a way that those who dare to say it are in danger of being arrowed by them. (Unknown, 1931, p. 97)

These observations resemble those recorded by Gandavo in 1576:

Among them there are some women who decide to be chaste, which know no man of any quality, nor will accept men even if threatened to be killed. They abandon the women’s tasks to follow the crafts of men as if they were not female. They have cut their hair in the same way that the males and go to war with their bows and arrows, and they always hunt persevering in the company of men, and each one has a woman to serve her with whom they claim to be married, and so they communicate and talk to each other as husband and wife. (Gandavo, 1858, pp. 47-48)

The cases commented on by Gandavo are registered as a “sin against nature,” reaffirming the point that we made previously about the relationship not only between homophagy and homosexuality but between homophagy and native lust (nudity, polygamy, marriage between relatives, sodomy, etc.). It is also remarkable because both records comment on women that take social positions of warriors, with another woman as a marital partner.

This is made abundantly clear by most chroniclers, missionaries, and historians. Gabriel Soares de Sousa, for example, devotes a separate chapter to the topic (“The One About the Lust of These Barbarians”):

... the Tupinambás are so lush that there is no sin of lust they do not commit. [...] They are devoted to the nefarious sin, it is not affront among them; and who uses other males thinks he is brave, and they tell this bestiality as prowess; and in their villages in the backlands there are some who have public tent to all who want to use them as public women. (Sousa, 2000, pp. 235-236)

As already stated, homophagy and Indigenous lust (including sodomy) are part of the same semantic field. In this way, the forms of interference on Indigenous corporalities as well as the “blemish” of amoral, lustful sodomites and polygamists imposed on them were articulated with the relations of power and subordination imposed upon them. The discourse on controlling the Indigenous sexualities relates to the process of establishing the colonial hierarchy, subordination, and domination.

In every sense, Jesuit crusades to the West Indies were justified by the descriptions of the “Indigenous bacchanals,” matching them with the missionaries’ mission that Portugal attributed to the colonizing and western civilizing project.

Another example is the clear parallel between the descriptions of Indigenous dwellings with those of hell, according to Brother Ant3nio Bl3zquez,²⁷ and the description of the sensations of hell according to Ignatius of Loyola as a place of “great fires” and souls “as incandescent bodies”, where one listens to “tears, cries, screaming, blasphemy” and where it smells like “smoke, sulphur, bilge and putrid things.”²⁸ “Their houses are dark,” writes Bl3zquez, “among which are some pitchers such as half vats, which appear to be the boilers of hell”. (Unknown, 1931, p. 173)

Of course, such perspectives are embedded in a broader field of representations about the body and the mortification of the senses as basic principles to be followed by the Jesuits, according to the teachings of Ignatius of Loyola: body mortification, suppression of the senses, repression of desires, and self-control. Such ideas will be properly exposed and analyzed below, as well as some ways in which such “mortifications” were forced on the natives by the Jesuits.

2.4 We Show Them the Disciplines that Tamed the Flesh²⁹

As we have seen, so far “sexuality and corruption appear together not only in the spiritual plane, but also in the physical.” (Gambini, 2000, p. 98) In fact, this way of thinking takes as a premise that the control over the body reflected a Christian stance, and that self-control was an expected male feature. What escaped this logic was seen as a potential corruption of nature. In these terms, fear has operated as an effective Jesuit tool for conversion: the submission of the body and its practices among natives (naked, libidinous, inebriated, lustful, sodomite, polygamist, incestuous, etc.) would mean the salvation of their souls – justifying the colonial project of the Church and the Crown themselves, as we have seen.

In this way, the history of the management of the bodies and sexualities of the Indigenous peoples until the mid-eighteenth century is intimately linked to the history of the Society of Jesus. Indeed, it is an accepted fact that other religious orders were present in the country during that period, but none with the scope, organization, and influence of the Ignatians.

The Indigenous proto-politics in the first half of the history of Brazil (1549-1759) had played a major role; and it was the Society of Jesus. They were the ones who proposed the settlement policy and slave raids (“descimentos”) (1557–1757); they also had the responsibility for the villages and the authority to allocate work for the Indigenous. If the control of labor was the major problem with regard to Indigenous issues in Brazil until the nineteenth century, it can be said that it was incumbent upon them – by the management of Indian policy in colonial Brazil until the Jesuits’

²⁷ *Summa de algumas cousas que iam em a n3o que se perdeu do Bispo pera o nosso padre Ignacio*, written on June 10, 1557.

²⁸ *Spiritual exercises* by Ignatius of Loyola, “*Fifth exercise: Meditation from hell*”.

²⁹ Excerpt of letter from Jos3 de Anchieta to Diego Lainez in January, 1565.

expulsion from the country in 1759. There were distinct policies regarding the Indigenous who were considered to be friends or enemies, and such a difference between these two categories of Indians can be understood as a mirror of the dichotomy between Christians and non-Christian natives; it was ultimately up to the Jesuits to impose their control over their lives and fate, and the organization of Indigenous labor in villages and their catechesis was up to them to orchestrate. Thus, the Jesuit conversion method was based on the “harsh and brutal” (Florencio, 2007, p. 16) control of Indigenous physical bodies.

We understand that this control was something common to educational models adopted in Western Europe at the time, but the various Jesuit modalities among the Brazilian Indians were precisely the set of theological assumptions on which this control was based. The Ignatian actions raised a number of questions as presented in the *Gentile Conversion Plan* (“Plano de Conversão do Gentio”) (1556-1557) and synthesized in the *Civilizing Plan* (“Plano Civilizador”) (1558), both written by Manuel da Nóbrega and referring directly to the question of power and conversion through fear.

To simplify Nóbrega's argument, he proposes the creation of settlements to where the Indians would be brought and where they would be catechized and protected from the raids and expeditions of the settlers. Therefore, settlements were the Jesuit option; the other ones could be killed or enslaved by the “just war.” In this way, they would not be coerced into conversion, but rather would consent through fear – something that was allowed according to Thomistic theology. To justify such practices, Nóbrega draws an analogy with iron: once subjected to fire, the metal becomes soft and free of impurities. According to him, the Indians would be “cold iron” – which is why it was necessary to “put them in the forge” in order to convert them to Christianity.

About the *Civilizing Plan*, Florencio (2007, p. 108) notes that the catechization methods proposed by Nóbrega acted directly in relation to “the ways of the body: polygamy, cannibalism, nudity,” with the installation on the patio of the settlements of a pillory in which they carried out such punishment of the Indians as beatings, hangings, and beheadings.

The subjection by fear was not only achieved via physical and psychological punishment, but also by acts seen as ordinary and simple, such as obliging the Indians to dress, to attend daily mass, to “discipline” themselves (by self-flagellation), etc. Of course, this set of practices cannot be understood just from the theology or the Thomist view of nature. Nóbrega's beliefs about servitude, Indigenous subjection, and nature can be understood less as a strictly theological one and more as a set of concerns inserted into the colonial domination debate.

The Jesuits fit into the colonial project and their conversion procedures based on fear and subjection – resulting in brutal control of Amerindian bodies – were suited to the objectives of the Crown. The Jesuit “way of proceeding” (in Latin, *noster modus procedendi*) served as a glove in the Portuguese colonial project under the aegis of patronage: the greatest feature of the Society of Jesus was obedience,³⁰ and

³⁰ Examples of such obedience as their main motivation include the famous “Letter on Obedience”

“hyperbolic discipline” was the “hallmark of the order.” (Lacouture, 1994, p. 119) It should be no surprise then, that their method of evangelization was based on the subversion of the Indians by force, fear, and punishment.

The Jesuits' violent practices are linked to what we have written so far, and it is also clear in several respects. As we pointed out earlier, the Brazilian colonization process, sodomy, lust, cannibalism, etc., formed a huge complex of *contra naturam* (“against nature”) practices, and the role of the Jesuits at the behest of the Crown during the Patronage was to regulate Indigenous life in order to prevent possible divine punishment on Portugal. The control over the Indigenous populations through fear was justified and fully legitimated, since fear was seen by Aquino as divine: “... it is an evil, for example, do not submit to God or to move away from Him. In this sense, faith is the cause of fear.” (*Theological summa*, volume VII, 2–2, q. 7, a. 1, *apud* Eisenberg, 2005, p. 57) For Aquinas, indicates Eisenberg, “God is the cause of all fear,” so for the Jesuits, they were not imposing fear and subjecting the Indians, but it was God acting through them.

Meanwhile, the Portuguese Crown maintained full control over the daily lives of the small settler population spread out along the coastal area, justified the just wars and Indigenous servitude, prevented French and Spanish raids as well as any adventurers who wanted to enter the territory, occupied the interior of Brazil, and served its divine designs – ensuring, of course, the financial return in the process. To the Jesuits, the power and influence was held not only in the colonies, but also with the Crown and the pope, their livelihoods, Indian slaves, and freedom to found their settlements. Over the years, the power of the Jesuits expanded too much, and was the cause of their expulsion from Brazil in the mid-eighteenth century, as we will see in the next chapter.

2.5 Concluding Considerations

Despite not having specific records that take into account the perspectives of the Indigenous peoples themselves about such practices, the reports of chroniclers and missionaries allow us to reach some conclusions. First, the new territory under Portugal's control potentially represented a demon's acting space. Second, the patronage and the Portuguese “undeniable missionary purpose” to the “service of God” theologically justified the domination of the Brazilian native populations.

The references of this justification were presented in this chapter. The control over the Indigenous peoples' bodies and sexualities were an essential part of the missionary project, since it would be a reflection of the bodies' corrupt nature; as we saw, it was an intervention not *in* the body, but in the soul *through* the body. So the native (and more radically, the sodomite native – lustful and naked) was seen as the antithesis of

written by Loyola, in the passage urging obedience to the king, in the *Spiritual Exercises* (entitled “The Parable of Introduction to the Following of Christ”), and the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*.

the Thomist natural order, which mainly valued self-control and discipline. The idea of sodomy epitomized the contradiction between natural acts and acts against nature (*contra naturam*), at the same time reinforcing ideas of sin and retribution, guilt and responsibility, and unity and interdependence, meeting the interests of the nascent Iberian nations at the time.

These images (sodomites, lust, and lasciviousness) fit and confirmed the framework that justified colonial power relations. Thus, the notions of sexuality presented here have become hegemonic under the conditions of historical possibilities.

In this light, it makes no sense to think about the Indigenous sexualities' control as a strict process of native heterosexualization that took place out of the control of their labor force and the imposition of moral and family models within the Iberian Christian ideals at that time. These ideals no longer left space for the coexistence of different ways of living in the world, seeking to classify the practices according to racial, spatial, and historical hierarchies. In this way, as we would like to stress, by departing from the Aristotelian and Thomistic assumptions embedded in the first steps taken by the Crown and the Cross in the colonization of America, that the desired pattern was the European Catholic idea of manhood that practiced monogamous sex with his wife for reproductive purposes only. What escaped this superior pattern was classified as inferior, so that the Iberian imagery has become important as a form for social ranking and as an inequality marker emerging as a counterpoint to the "black people" (an expression that also designated the natives in the sixteenth century), the women, and, in the specific case of America, the savages, cannibals, naked, atheists, sodomites, and idolaters – all of them – "people without Faith, Law, or King". More than just saying that the Iberian sexuality model was imposed throughout the colonization process, we have sought to problematize its assumptions and show how this process worked.

The questions that remain unanswered are: What is the scope of this "colonization of sexualities?" Did the sexual disciplining of Indigenous peoples in Brazil end with the departure of the country's Jesuits? Was it restricted to their actions, or did this phenomenon become more complex and overlap to other Indigenous policies? As other and new players were included in this context, and the political, administrative, and bureaucratic framework concerning Indigenous issues in the country was consolidated, which responses were produced?

That is what we will explore in detail in the next chapter.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-53224-0>

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Untold Stories of the Colonization of Indigenous
Sexualities

Fernandes, E.R.; Arisi, B.M.

2017, XI, 70 p. 1 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-53224-0