Introduction

What I would like to do here today is to give you an overview of the first half of my new book manuscript concerned with the formation of a territorial distinction between Spain and Portugal in both Europe and the Americas. Responding to the call for this conference, I will contrast two distinct narratives: the traditional one that centers on state and state action, and a second, that centers on individual and individual action. In line with my work to-date, in the background is the question what is the state, how it acts, what it is made of; and, on the contrary, what are individuals, how they act and why.

The standard story of what the Spanish-Portuguese territorial conflict in the Americas was about

From late fifteenth to the early nineteenth century, Spain and Portugal struggled to define the extension of their American domains. Having first secured papal bulls that gave them a monopoly in certain areas and having signed a bilateral treaty (the Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494) confirming, albeit with changes, this monopoly, for the next 500 years the authorities of the two powers could not agree what this monopoly meant and how it was to be implemented. They debated the meaning of terms, the relationship between rights stemming from bulls and rights stemming from treaties (after the Treaty of Tordesillas, several other important treaties were signed). They debated scientific questions such as where the meridian mentioned in the bulls and the Treaty of Tordesillas passed, they could not agree on whether certain territories that had already been discovered were to the east or west of this meridian and, most of all, they could not agree on the size and shape of earth. Also debated was the meaning of the doctrine of occupation, one that, according to Roman law, now interpreted also as the Law of Nations, even Natural law, gave rights to land: which type of occupation generated rights and what type of rights. Last but not least, even if the parties could agree --which was rarely the case-- as to how these questions should be resolved, they failed to arrive at a consensus regarding the factual question who was present where, doing what, and since when.

Because over time European penetration into the American interior grew exponentially, by the eighteenth century Spaniards and Portuguse found themselves confronted in a vast area that included parts of present-day Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, that is, practically the entire south American interior. Disagreement was often accompanied by warfare, sometimes even fairly large-scale war. It involved constant attempts to find a negotiated, diplomatic solution that would satisfy both parties. Failure however persisted: the conflict not only continued during the entire colonial period, it survived colonialism and continues to haunt Latin American states even today.

If this is the standard story, let me now turn to what I think we can make of it. The quest to understand (and affirm) territorial divisions was motivated mostly by local actors. Rather than debated by the courts, most of the discussion regarding who was allowed to be where, doing what, happened on the territory itself, as individual Spaniards wished to bar individual
Portuguese from doing certain things, and as their rivals hoped to achieve the same. Because most of the discussion happened on the border and involved neighbours, it confronted people who knew (or believed they knew) one another. These people were often opinionated: they felt very strongly about their rights and rejected vehemently what their rivals were saying.

Despite its richness, this story is largely untold. Most historians who studied the conflict between Spain and Portugal in the Americas cared about its political and territorial implications. They were interested in establishing who of the two parties was right, usually in order to make claims to territory in the present. They inquired on the bilateral relations between the Spanish and the Portuguese monarchs, and the geo-political and economic interests, which lead them to pursue one policy or the other. Largely following what historians of borders did elsewhere, these historians concentrated their attention of what monarchs did. In their minds, the border was tied to the appearance, and territorialization, of the early modern state. According to their story, the gradual extension of royal power and the will to imagine sovereignty as including not only people but also territory, led to the negotiation, imposition and clarification of territorial divisions. In the process, borders, which were either did not exist or demarcated large areas, became linear. Also in the process, local divisions became “national.” Separating “internal borders”(of occupation) from “external” borders (against neighbouring political entities). Historians, in short, reduced what I hope to convince you was a very complex (and often untidy history) into a foretold story about the coming of the Leviathan.

Rather than observing what kings wanted or planned, and whether they were successful or not, what I did in my project was to ask why those living in the American interior got involved in this conflict and how their involvement modified the right to land. Because I was uninterested in distributing guilt or in endorsing a certain interpretation, I used both Spanish and Portuguese sources (and when I can, indigenous ones). And, because the conflict purportedly involved people belonging to different groups, I argued that at stake were not only territorial questions. Early modern notions of territoriality, I demonstrated, were tightly connected to membership; That is, according to contemporaries the right to land was never disassociated from the question who was a member of which community. The conflict between Spain and Portugal involved therefore not only territorial issues but also the definition of who Spaniards, Portuguese and Indians were (which is where this present project intersects to my previous work).

I would like to begin my exposition by asking when and how did those living in the Americas argued their right to the land and how these explanations affected what they did; how issues of membership in the community determined the extension of land, and what was the role of the religious orders, mainly the Jesuits, in the evolution of the dispute. I will end with a brief conclusion regarding the larger implications of this talk.

II Looking at Imperial conflicts from the bottom up

When local records are examined, it becomes clear that despite the constant debate regarding criteria and the highly complex nature of the controversy between Spain and Portugal, people living in the Americas were convinced that what truly made the land “theirs” was their presence on it. Bulls and treaties, they argued, may have given rights, but these rights meant nothing if the parties did not proceed to acquire them by way of performance. Whether this conclusion was linked to the theory of actual occupation, or whether it expressed a more general understanding that unless you exercised your rights you had none, is hard to establish. What is clear, however, is that contemporaries were convinced that (1) rights to the territory could be established only by action and that (2) the most important issue was not what you did, but what
you prevented others from doing. As if rights were truly performative, in order to aquire them, they said, it took the respect of those watching. 

Because of these convictions, questions of actual occupation were omnipresent in local documentation. Although this documentation often mentioned rights by treaties, it was obsessed, on the contrary, with verifying who was present, where, doing what. Contemporaries seemed to understand actual occupation as a very wide doctrine, allowing the acquisition of rights by virtue of practically any type of behavior. Some suggested that discovery and penetration constituted occupation. Others sustained that occupation required cultivating the land permanently. Yet another group indicated that in order to acquire rights it was sufficient to perform seasonal activities such as letting your cattle pasture on the land, collecting wood or fruits, capturing animals, fishing and so forth. Most tended to agree that performing jurisdiccional acts such as distributing land, granting offices, collecting taxes or persecuting criminals were behaviors that both demonstrated and established occupation. Navigation along the rivers and commerce with their inhabitants could also establish rights. The same happened with land routes: roads discovered or carved out in the jungle were both markers of and reasons for occupation. Because traveling through the territory, as well as commercial activities performed in it, could be generators of territorial rights, contraband, for example, could have implications much wider and more important than its economic significance. It could, in fact, lay ground to territorial claims.

Because according to local understanding even the smallest, unauthorized, or illegal act could have a territorial significance, locals felt as if they had to be extremely vigilant. They had to make sure that no penetration occurred and that, when it did, response in the form of protest would immediately follow. Both Spaniards and Portuguese living in the American interior were acutely aware of these requirements. They constantly attested that if they remained silent, silence would be interpreted as consent. Yet, the practical difficulties in knowing who was where doing what were insurmountable. The question whether the rivals penetrated certain areas haunted contemporaries. Rumors circulated and information was sought after from both locals and native-Americans. On occasions, expeditions were sent in order to verify such rumors. Yet the information such forces gathered was extremely scarce. They easily mistook one river for the other, or searched for the settlement where it did not exist. Verifying the intentions of rivals was just as difficult. The general assumption was that all presence was meant to establish territorial rights. Those wishing to argue otherwise carried the burden of proof: they had to demonstrate that they roamed the territory with another intention in mind. Such demonstrations, however, often met with resistance, as both Spaniards and Portuguese accused one another of lying. They argued that those pretending to be merchants were in reality spies or explorers. They disbelieved the claim of individuals that they had immigrated to the rival territory for personal reasons such as a family feud, criminal prosecution or simply mistake. Those catching turtles or collecting Cacao in the mountains were thus accused of wanting to expand the territories of their community despite their protest that all they wanted to do was to survive.

The accumulated effect of all these factors was that although large scale war between Spaniards and Portuguese in the American interior was a rare thing, struggle occurred daily. Triggered by who sent their horses to pasture where, who built a hut, and who collected fruits, preoccupation with what was happening on the territory was constant. Paranoia was such that in 1770, when a Portuguese military commander autoproclaimed himself governor of Río Grande de San Pedro instead of Viamonte as he had called himself before, his Spanish correspondent answered with determination. As far as he was concerned at stake was not a simple honorary title: what the Portuguese was doing was trying to take possession of the land.
Despite these convictions, contemporaries knew that in reality the American interior was extremely porous. Not only was it large and uncontrollable, it was constantly roamed by Spanish and Portuguese civilians, soldiers, deserters, criminals, outlaws and runaway slaves. This constant flux, typical of many such situations, was further complicated by the presence of Indians, both allied and enemies. This presence, or rather omnipresence, was often silenced in the debates taking place in Europe, yet it greatly modified the dynamics of the confrontations.

There were several reasons why the presence of the Indians was so important. The clearest among them was that this presence exasperated the conflict. Spaniards and Portuguese not only faced one another in the American interior, they were also involved in repeating conflicts, open warfare, with the native population. Natives, so did contemporaries believe, carried out their own guerilla warfare against Europeans and the Indians who had allied with them. Both Portuguese and Spaniards wished to win the support, or at least the non belligerence, of local Indians. They tried to convince them to ally with them (rather than with their rivals), offering them gifts and the prospects of a better treatment. Although many such arrangements were oral, on occasions, they were reproduced in written treaties that defined the obligations and rights of both parties. These treaties required Europeans to imagine what the indigenous world was like: how was it organized, what were its units and who headed them. Arranging this world according to their own criteria, Spaniards thus concluded that the Indians of Rio de la Plata, for example, were divided in tented camps (tolderías), each lead by a chief (cacique). Yet the wish to find neat political divisions where those did not exist or were different than assumed, led to confusion. Often, military commanders could not agree on who the correct party to a treaty should be. On many such occasions it became clear that the treaty instituted rather than simply recognized the authority that was about to sign it. Those signing for the indigenous part were thereafter constituted – at least as Europeans were concerned—as indigenous leaders. At the end of this process it was not always clear whether Spaniards and Portuguese used the Indians to consolidate their territorial expansion or whether Indians utilized Europeans in order to gain prominence in their relationship with other natives or perhaps both. What was obvious, at any rate, was that, overtime, alliance making was responsible for the ethogenesis of new groups.

Despite efforts, peace with Indians was rarely permanent. Contemporaries blamed natives; they portrayed them as free agents whose activities were wholly dependent on their wishes. Natives, they argued, initiated contact with Europeans, they chose whether to ally with the Spanish or the Portuguese, and whether to change sides. Because they were barbarians, they did not feel bound by these pacts. Presenting natives as aggressors rather than victims, and as people who were encroaching on European land and fighting against a legitimate European presence, contemporaries silenced the fact that European presence pushed many native communities off their land and forced them into what was to become a permanent migration. They also failed to mention that on most instances peace treaties were not voluntarily signed. Presented as an alternative to war, natives were told that either they agreed to enter into them or they would be annihilated.

Although archival documentation mentions Indians mainly in connection to their alliance with or belligerence against Europeans, the role of natives in fixing the extension of Spain and Portugal in the Americas was much larger: natives could become generators of, or —if you wish—
foils against which, territorial claims could be made. In order to use natives for that end, Europeans needed to (1) classify them as vassals and (2) claim that either their activities constituted actual occupation by vassals or that their personal subjection to the king implied by extension also the subjection of their lands to his jurisdiction.

Issues of vasallage were closely related to territorial ones because actual occupation required that actions generating rights would be performed either by individuals commissioned by the king or by his vassals. This requirement implied that those promoting territorial claims had to prove the identity of occupayers. Although our modern bias may lead us to believe that during the early modern period identities were clear, such was not always the case. In my last book regarding citizens and immigrants I described some of the difficulties involved in knowing who Spaniards were. In order not to repeat myself, I would like to address here not the question who Spaniards and Portuguese were, but how Indians became vassals of one power or the other.

According to contemporary narratives, Indians who converted to Christianity also became by extension vassals of the monarchy that had converted them. Espousing religious and civic conversion, these visions transformed missionary activity into an activity likely to produce also territorial effects. Wherever missionaries were present and Indians were converted, new members were added to the state and, by extension, so were new territories.

The Jesuit order, first and foremost in importance among the orders working in the American interior, formally espoused these doctrines. Its members repeatedly argued that they had augmented royal territories by conquering numerous Indigenous nations, founding villages, and making natives both political and Christian beings. Referring to these Indians as “Spaniards” or “Portuguese” Jesuits insisted that they be treated as such, their life, work, fidelity and love to the king and obedience to his orders having made them worthy of this treatment.

While instrumental in making Indians Spanish or Portuguese, Jesuits were also important in the conversion of indigenous land into a European possession. This contribution was recognized by contemporaries that called the Jesuits “explorers” and “conquistadors” and that constantly expressed the hope (or the fear – depending on who was speaking) that missionary work would lead also to the acquisition of territory. Because missionaries were also conquistadors, attack on them – as those performed by slave traders from San Paolo--, could be portrayed as a patriotic activity. Under this guise, Paolistas and bandeirantes were not simple slave traders. They were also people concerned with the territorial extension of their kingdom that were willing to fight to stop Spanish (in the form of Jesuit) penetration.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, the expousal between conversion, vassallage and territory gave rise to new theories that sustained that the rights of Spain and Portugal to certain territories only persisted as long as the Indians were pagans. Europeans could conquer native territory in order to subject its peoples to both god and state. Yet, after the indigenous converted, they could no longer do so, among other things, because the territory was already both Christianized and Europeanized.

The accumulated effect of these visions ensured a debate as to whether certain Indians had already converted, and under which banner. It also lead to a fierceful competition as to who would convert the natives first. Presenting yet again the Indians as free agents who could chose who to ally with, missionaries working for Spain and Portugal therefore had to convince them not only to convert, but also to convert under them, not their rivals. Rejecting the idea that certain orders or monarchs could have a monopoly over the conversion effort in 1751 a Portuguese military commender asked: “By which divine or positive law, by which right or papal bull are the Indians living in these parts the property of Spain?” If the Portuguese were heretics,
such a claim would make sense, but given that they are not, and that they also pretend to convert the Indians as they are now doing, why should they not be allowed to do so?”

V

Because missionary activities were vital to the acquisition of territorial rights, the question who would establish missions where was highly conflictual. Not only did the different religious orders disagree about who best converted the natives, the monarchies supporting their activities constantly quarreled over who had the right to send missionaries where. Theoretically, Spain could only send missionaries to Spanish territories, the same being true with the Portuguese. Yet, contemporaries were aware of the fact that missions not only consecrated what had already been achieved, they were also extremely helpful in extending the jurisdiction and territory of the community. I already eluded to one way by which they did: converting the Indians and thus making their land and activities, the land and the activities of vassals. However, contemporary documentation demonstrates that missions were also helpful in other important ways: not only did missionaries convert Indians and their lands into Spanish or Portuguese, they often were the only Europeans present in the territory. As delegates of the king working on the border, their activities could constitute actual occupation.\textsuperscript{40}

If missionaries and their activities were a reason and a justification to claim land, their presence in the interior was also instrumental in other ways. Because they lived in the contested area and had close contacts with the native population, missionaries were in a perfect position to supply information on the whereabouts of enemies.\textsuperscript{41} Expert witnesses who knew the territory well and cared about who would control it –Jesuits sent by Spain needed the territory to be Spanish in order for their presence to be legitimate and vice versa-- Jesuits not only reported to their superiors and to local authorities, they also gave advice. They wrote letters, missives, pamphlets and treaties in defense of their respective monarchies and instructed local and metropolitan individuals and authorities as to how they could best pursue their interests. It was not rare to find missionaries discussing with military commanders or with friars working for the other party, which were the rights of whom. Resisting demands that they evacuate their missions because they were founded in the territory of the other power, Jesuits protested that they knew nothing about territorial rights but immediately proceeded to discuss these rights in great detail. From as early as the 1630, Jesuits were also military commanders: having received permission from the Spanish crown, they mobilized their mission Indians, trained them in the use of European arms and even guided their actions. On the Spanish side, at least, native troops constituted the only military force present on the border.\textsuperscript{42}

Yet the perils involved in entrusting friars with the creation, occupation, definition, and defense of communal rights became clear in the mid-eighteenth century, when the Treaty of Madrid required that Spanish natives and Jesuits evacuate seven missions whose territory was to be handed over to Portugal. On that occasion, many Indians, perhaps backed by Jesuits perhaps not (the debate still continues) refused to abandon their settlements, which they defended against a mixed army of Spaniards and Portuguese.\textsuperscript{43} In the decades following these events, Indian resistance, echoes of which reached Europe, became a symbol for why it may not be wise to allow missionaries to represent the interests of community and king vis a vis the native population.\textsuperscript{44} Did Jesuits truly convert the Indians into Spaniards, or did they create a republic of their own in which obedience was only due to them in person? Could they be trusted to defend the interests (also) of Spain? While pamphlets circulated accusing the Jesuits of having unleashed a war
against both Spain and Portugal, Jesuits and their apologetics responded by stressing the faithfulness of both friars and Indians.\textsuperscript{45}

Forming part of a larger European debate involving the Jesuits (a debate that began long before the order was expelled and disbanded), Indian resistance and the role Jesuits may have played in promoting it also generated speculations as what would happen next. In the 1750s and 1760s there were constant rumors that Indian armies, led by Jesuits, may attempt to invade Portuguese territories.\textsuperscript{46} Rumors continued even after the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and Spanish America (1767). They now sustained that some Jesuits may have remained in the territory and may be living among natives, even acting as native chiefs (\textit{caciques}).\textsuperscript{47} Fears of friars controlling Indians and encouraging insubordination continued into the 1800s.

VII

Portuguese, Spaniards and Indians, as well as friars (most of which were German and Italian anyway) thus co-habited a region, which they claimed as their own, but which neither the law nor the practice adjudicated clearly to any of them. They feared territorial excursions by the other European power—most of the documentation currently available in the archives engages with such questions—but they were also very concerned with what Indians may do. In order to know if the land was theirs they needed to establish occupation and make sure that their rivals would not. But occupation was not easily established. The issue was not only what was happening on the ground; at stake was also the question who was performing these activities and with what intention. To know if the land belonged to Spain or Portugal, therefore, one needed to know who was Spanish and who Portuguese; whether Indians belonged to one formation or the other, and whether people who travelled through the territory meant to escape angry relatives, or to conquer the land.

VIII

The story of how Portuguese and Spaniards—and to a lesser degree Indians—lived in the American interior and how they believed they acquired rights to the land has a few larger implications that I have not yet alluded to. To conclude my talk, I would like to address some of them very very briefly. If my intention in this paper was to take the territorial dispute away from diplomatic, military or even political history and bring it back to the ground, it is because, as the organizers of this meeting, I believe that neither states nor networks had the form we once believed they did. I am not quite sure that “seeing” like states (to use Scott’s term) is possible in modernity, but certainly in the early modern period what states were like, and how they acted, was a highly complicated affair. As I have attempted to demonstrate when I investigated the criminal justice in quito (many years ago), or the categories of belonging and citizenship (a few years later) or now with territory, I believe it is our anachronistic reading that attributes the early modern state a being and an activity it never had. Rather than asking how Spain and Portugal expanded, the appropriate question, I believe is how individuals imagined their relationship to both land AND community. This imagining I would argue, had important consequences not only for what they said, but also for what they did and what they accomplished. Kings and states may have intervened in the process, legitimating or supporting certain practices, but territorial divisions were above all experienced: they came alive and were relevant as individuals and groups realized where they could pasture, collect wood or navigate and where the presence of those they classified as their rivals was permissible or detrimental to their interests.
Notes:


2 A complete list would include: 1715 (the Treaty of Utrecht), 1750 (the treaty of Madrid (signed 1750, cancelled 1761)), 1763 (the Treaty of Paris), and 1777 (the Treaty of San Idelfonso).

3 The scientific issues involved in determining the meridian were briefly described in W.G.L. Randles. “Portuguese and Spanish Attempts to Measure Longitude in the Sixteenth Century.” The Mariner's Mirror 81 (4) (1995): 402-8. These questions arose as soon as the Treaty of Tordesillas had been signed and before actual discovery, possession or occupation took place: Jorge Juan and Antonio Ulloa. Disertación histórica y geográfica sobre el meridiano de demarcación. Madrid: Instituto Histórico de la Marina, 1972 [1749], pp.24-6. The scientific questions that were debated, and the need to chose among different maps using different technologies are described on pp.54-65 and 69-90. Belief in the ability of science to resolve the issue was expressed on pp.65-6. The difficulties in establishing a definite answer, and the constant disagreement among the scientists of both sides were also evident in AHN, Estado 3410-2 “historia de la demarcaciones en la America entre los dominios de españa y Portugal compuesta por don vicente aguilar” and jurado official Segundo e la secretaria de estado y por don francisco reyna brigadier e ingeniero de los reales ejercitos para acompanar el mapa general construido por este ultimo de
todos los países por donde pasa la línea divisoria con arreglo al tratado preliminary d elimites de 1777. Madrid 1797."

8 IX-4-3-6: Letter of Luis Antonio de Souza, governor general of the capitanity of Sao Paolo to Carlos Morphy, governor of Paraguay, Sao Paolo, 17.7.1771.
9 AGN/M, IX.4.3.5: letter of the Count of Bobadella to Pedro Cevallos, Rio de Janeiro 29.2.1762. Similarly, see AGN/M, Archivos particulares, Caja 333, Colección de documentos de Mario Falcao Espalter, Carpeta 3-
“Documentos relativos a las luchas entre España y Portugal por la posesión de la banda oriental y proceso de población de dicho territorio, 1685-1757,” Letter of Domingo Ortiz de Rosasa to Antonio Pedro de Vasconcelos sin fecha, dealing with Portuguese illegal presence on Isla dos Hermanas in 1743.
10 Estado 4371: Letter of the Marqués de Valdelirios to the Marqués de Grimaldi, Madrid, 11.3.1776, p.33.
11 BNE, Mss. 3042, Fol., 42r-101v:Juan Carlos Bazán, “Examen jurídico y discurso historial sobre los fundamentos de las sentencias pronunciadas en discordia en los confines de los reinos de Castilla y Portugal por los jueces comisarios de una y otra corona en demostración de los derechos claros, sólidos y legítimos de posesion y propiedad que pertenecen a su magestad católica en el Río de la Plata,” undated, Fol. 91r and
AMRE/MRE/R/G.1.2.1, G-46, Doc. No. 19: Madrid, 25.7.1779 – carta del rey al gobernador del paraguay andres de robles f. 161-162v. The Spanish reaction was to look for that drawing and destroy it.
12 IX-4-3-6: “Copia de la carta que escribe al gobernador y capitán general de la capitanía de San Paolo (Luis Antonio de Souza) el gobernador de la provincia de Paraguay (Carlos Morphy), Asunción, 18.9.1770” and IX-4-3-6: Letter of Luis Antonio de Souza, governor general of the capitanity of Sao Paolo to Carlos Morphy, governor of Paraguay, Sao Paolo, 17.7.1771.
13 Issues of navigation were discussed, for example, in AGN/BA, IX.15.7.15: Juan Joseph de Vertiz al señor don Miguel de Tejada, no. 7, fols.282v-285v, en 283r and AGN/BA, IX.4.3.5: The count of Acunha to Pedro Cevallos, Rio de Janeiro 27.2.1764 and Pedro Medrano to the Count of de Acunha, Buenos Aires, 15.6.1764.
14 IX-4-3-6: “Copia de la carta que escribe al gobernador y capitán general de la capitanía de San Paolo (Luis Antonio de Souza) el gobernador de la provincia de Paraguay (Carlos Morphy), Asunción, 18.9.1770.”
15 Example of such attempts to verify information regarding Portuguese establishments are included in AGN/BA, IX.4.3.5. Copy of a letter of Antonio Catami to Pedro Cevallos, San Lorenzo del Río Yacui, 2.11.1764 (Copy dated Buenos Aires 20.4.1774), AGN/BA, IX.4.3.5: copy of letter of Carlos Morphy a Francisco Bucarelli y Ursua, Asunción 19.1.1768, in “Real orden para que los gobernadores del Tucumán y Paraguay estén a las de este gobierno,” Fol. 5r-6r. IX.4.3.8 also incluyes many such rumors, and attempts to verify them as does IX.4.4.1: Letter of Joachin Alos to viceroy Nicolás de Arrendondo, dated asuncion, 13.6.1790 and sent together with an “Expediente sobre los medios de verificar el reconocimiento en el río paraguay y banda del Igatimi para averiguar la existencia de establecimientos portugueses en aquellos parajes, 1790. Also see AHN, Estado 4611, Letter of viceroy Nicolás Arrendondo to Conde de Campo Alange, Buenos Aires, 21.1.1791.
16 The importante of intention was mentioned in IX.4.4.1: Lazaro de Ribera de Cayetano Pinto de Miranda Montenegro, governor of Matogrosso in Villabella, 30.6.1797. On the question of intentions the viceroy of Nueva Granada attested in his correspondence that “it is not the same ir looking for tortous eggs and settling in order to make territorial claims” (no es lo mismo andar buscando huevos de tortuga que poblarase para la adquisicion de derecho): Estado 4554, No.1: Letter of Manuel Antonio Flores to Josef de Gálvez, Santa Fe, 28.2.1779.
17 AGN/BA, Bn 297, expediente 4704: “Reflexiones hechas a los artículos de la carta escrita por el gobernador de Chiquitos al exmo señor virrey.” Sin fecha. The original version reads: “siempre este tránsito es de mala presunción siendo por dominios ajenos y esto sin urgente necesidad.”
18 BRAH/M, 9-1663: Colección Mata Linares, Tomo 8, Fol., 42-57: “Papel del señor regegnte de Buenos Aires sobre asunto de la linea divisoria de los reinos de España y Portugal,” fol.44r. The importante of intention (ámimo de adquirir derecho o posesión) was also mentioned in BNE, Mss. 3042, Fol., 42r-101v:Juan Carlos Bazán, “Examen jurídico y discurso historial sobre los fundamentos de las sentencias pronunciadas en discordia en los confines de los reinos de Castilla y Portugal por los jueces comisarios de una y otra corona en demostración de los derechos claros, sólidos y legítimos de posesion y propiedad que pertenecen a su magestad católica en el Río de la Plata,” undated, Fol. 94v.
19 AGN/BA, IX.4.3.5: Declaration of Antonio Franzia, Gatimi, 30.12.1767 in “Real orden para que los gobernadores del Tucumán y Paraguay estén a las de este gobierno,” Fol. 13r.
20 interrogatory elaborated by Juan Francisco Gómez de Villajufre y de Arce, governor of San Joaquin de Omagua (Mainas) on 26.5.1775, ANQ, Fe 30, vol. 83, no. 3226, “Autos formados a consecuencia de una real cédula para que se informe a su magestad sobre la conducente a la provincia de Mainas,” fols. 80r-275v. On the Portuguese side,
the allegations against Fernando Roxas, a Spaniard, who allegedly only penetrated Portuguese territory to look for provisions: Ángela Dominguez. *When the Amerindians were Vassals. Power Equations in Northern Brazil (1750-1800).* New Delhi: TransBooks, 2007, pp.197.

21 IX-4-3-6: “copia de la minuta que remitió el coronel Joseph Marcelino de Figuereido gobernador de Viamonte al teniente coronel Jopseh de Molina, comandante del Río Grande de San Pedro para formalizar el convenio de mutua restitución de fugitivos que se le había propuesto por orden del exmo señor capitán general de las provincias del Río de la Plata con la adición de las razones porque el citado comandante no omitió algunos capítulos y puntos en el estilo de ella,” Río Grande de San Pedro, 26.7.1770 and IX.4.3.7: Letter of Joseph de Molina to Juan Joseph de Vertiz, San Pedro, 24.2.1774. Another copy of this letter can be found in AGN/BA, BN 193, No. 2054.

22 It is possible that desertion was facilitated by the rival party: Spain may have encouraged Portuguese soldiers to defect by giving them food, gifts, cloths and hospitality: AGN, IX-9-16-2-8, No.17: “Relación de las razones dadas a los deserteros de los dominios de Portugal,” December 1774, no.23 of January 1775, and nos.41 and 42.

23 The espousal of struggle against the portuguese and fear of attacks by *Indios infieles* is expressed in AGN/BA, IX.4.3.5: copy of letter of Carlos Murphy a Francisco Bucarelli y Ursua, Asunción 19.1.1768, in “Real orden para que los gobernadores del Tucumán y Paraguay estén a las de este gobierno,” Fol. 5r. Also see AGN/BA, BN 185, expediente 1436: Copy of a letter to Joseph de Vertiz to Jose de Gálvez, Madrid, 5.9.1784 and AGN/M, Catálogo del ex Archivo y Museo Histórico Nacional, Papeles del doctor León Pereda de Saravia, Miscelanea, Caja 206, Carpeta 26: “Apuntes historicos sobre la demarcacion de limites de la banda oriental s/f” AHN, Estado 4506-1, includes many similar complains voiced by the inhabitants of Montevideo as late as 1803. For what was happening on the other side of the border, in Quito, see ANQ, Indígenas 42 exp. No. 25 de 2.11.1729, expediente sobre la representación de Pablo noa indio alcalde ordinario del pueblo de nr. Senora d eloreto anejo a la ciudad de avila gobernadcion quijos y mission mainas and ANQ, Fondo especial 150 v.343 no. 8216 fols. 44-47v Quito 15.7.1797 a miguel hernandez vello de luiz monuz de guzman. (presidente?) 47r-v.


indios infieles de las fronteras de la cordillera de los Sauces provincia de Cochabamba y tartar de paces con el cacique Cumbia.” Attempts to understand Indian “political divisions” are also evident in Estado 4548: letter of Joaquín Alos to viceroy Nicolás Arrendondo, Asunción, 19.1.1793.


30 See, for example, the negotiations between the “casique infiel Cumbay” and Jorge Michel, who was implementing the orders of the president and captain general of La Plata, Ramón García Pizarro, in 1806: AGN/BA IX–24-04-06, fol.6R.


32 These perceptions continued in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. See, for example, Juan Carlos Bazán, “Examen jurídico y discurso historial sobre los fundamentos de las sentencias pronunciadas en discordia en los confines de los reinos de Castilla y Portugal por los jueces comisarios de una y otra corona en demostración de los derechos claros, sólidos y legítimos de posesion y propiedad que pertenecen a su magestad católica en el Río de la Plata,” undated, BNE, Mss. 3042, Fol.. 42r-101v, Fol.. 96r.

33 Jesuits belonging to the provinces of Spain arrived to the Amazon region in the early 17th century and remained present until their expulsion decreed in 1767 and effectuated in 1768. Their activity was particularly important in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when their missions expanded rapidly, both in terms of number of occupants, as the territory that they covered. On the Portuguese side Jesuits did not enjoy the same monopoly. Although extremely important in the early period by the end of the seventeenth century and especially in the eighteenth century their activities were rivaled by those of the Franciscans and Carmelites. See, for example, Sandra Negro. “Maynas, una mission entre la illusion y el desencanto.” In Sandra Negro and Manuel M. Marzal eds. *El reino en la frontera. Las misiones jesuitas en la América colonial*. Lima and Quito: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú-Abya Yala, 2000, pp.185-203, Mathias C. Kiemen. *The Indian Policy of Portugal in the Amazon Region, 1614-1693*. New York: Octagon Books, 1973, Jans-Jürgen Prien. “O papel dos jesuitas portugueses no Brasil entre 1549 e 1640.” In *A união ibérica e o mundo atlântico. Segundas jornadas de história ibero-americana*. Lisbon: Edições Colibrí, 1997, pp.217-240 and Maria Adelina Amorin. *Os franciscanos no Maranhão e Grão Pará. Missão e cultura na primeira metade de seicentos*. Lisbon: CLEPUL and CEHR, 2005. On the role of other missionaries in expanding European territories, as well as knowledge of them see, for example, Mariano Cuesta Domingo.

“Descubrimientos geográficos durante el siglo XVIII: acción franciscana en la amplicación de las fronteras.” *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 52 (205-208) (1992): 293-342. The Jesuits, although quantitatively and qualitatively the most important order in the Amazon basin, at least on the Spanish side, was not the only religious order to engage in these dynamics. The Maranon river, it was affirmed in 1780, was discovered in 1647 by Franciscans belonging to the province of Quito. AMRE/MRE/R/G.1.2.3, G-37 (copies of documents from AGI), No. 12 ; “Extracto de una relacion por fray Francisco Alvarez de Villanueva de las doctrinas y pueblos de misiones…en todas las Indias…, Madrid 29.2.1780, Fols..233-235v. (copiado. Indias estante 155 cajon 4, leg. 16), fol.234r. In 1642 Franciscan and Jesuit friars informed the council of the Indies of the discovery of the river Marañon and requested permission to return there in order to convert the natives: AMRE/MRE/R/G.1.6.3.4 (copies from AGI) no. 2 Fol.4-5.– 30.10.1642 – memorial de fray domingo de brieva, religioso lego de la orden de san francisco al rey. Agi-76-5-47. also see BRAH/M, Jesuitas vol. CLXXXVII BRAH/M, Jesuitas vol. CLXXXVII no. 24 antiguo, no.30 moderno “Memorial presentado en el real consejo de las Indias acerca del descubrimiento del rio de las Amazonas que se hizo en el año de 1636 por el padre Cristóbal de Acuna de la compañia de Jesús y este memorial le vio después de la rebelión de Portugal.” Another copy of this document can be found in AGI, quito, 158. In 1692, similar petitions were presented by Jesuits, wishing to convert the Jívaros (AMRE/MRE/R/G.1.6.3.5 (copies from AGI) No.19 fol. 30-35– quito 7.6.1692 – informe del fiscal de la audiencia Antonio de ron sobre una petición del padre jesuita francisco de vivas que trata de la conquista de los jivaros Agi, 76-6-10). For these petitioners conversion equaled conquest. Indeed, it
obeyed royal orders to conquer without violence through a spiritual, rather than military, means. A claim was made that the orders acquired right to such a conquest. After all, they had discovered the territory and suffered martyrdom.

ARSI/Rome (Archivi Romani Societatis Jesu/Rome), Manuscrita antique societatis pars I. assistentiae et provinciae, Provincial nr. Et quito n. 18, “Petición de respuesta a la que presentó el padre Diego de Urena procurador de corte en esta audiencia de San Francisco de Quito en el pleito que tenemos con los padres dominicos entre otras cosas que dice en su respuesta el padre fray Domingo de la Barrera,” fols. 14r-v 19.5.1684

The insistence that Indians converted by the Jesuits would also recognize their subjecton to the secular authorities, was continuous. Indeed, even if the Jesuits were apt for the political and economic government of Indian settlements, justice was still a matter for royal officials: ANQ, encomiendas 4, exp. 17 of 9.2.1750, Vista fiscal sobre el estado de las misiones en Mainas, lujan y vedia, quito 2.3.1750 fol. 2v. Accusations that such was not the case were frequent. See for example, ASV/Rome (Arquivio Segreto Vaticano/Rome), Fondo Gesuiti, vol. 2: “Relazione abbreviata della republica che i Gesuiti della provincia di Portgallo e di Spagna hanno stabilita ne domini che le due sopradette corone possiedono nell’America e della guerra da loro mantenuta contra gl’essertici spangoli e portoghesi, formata permezzo de registri della segregarie de’due comisari principali stabilite nellistessa America ed altri averati documente quivi aggiunti,” undated, anonymous manuscript.


“Copia de una carta del gobernador de Arayal o Matte Grosso [Antonio de Silva Guzman] al padre superior de Moxos Nicolas Altogetti en respuesta de una suya, en que se le quejaba de algunos portugueses que entran a maloquerar o hacer esclavos a los indios, escrita en Arayal de Matogrosa a 25.9.1751” ANC/S, Gesuitas, Vol. 202, pieza 1, fols. 1r- v. The governor accused the Spanish Jesuits of pretending that “todo el gentilismo sea solo suyo.” The original version reads: “Por qué ley divina o positiva o por qué título pertenencen a los misioneros castellanos los indios, que habitan estos desertos? Tienen a caso algun decreto de la sentisma trinidad, o alguna bula pontificia, para que ellos solos puedan conquistar? Si los portugueses fueran hereyes, justa seria la disputa; pero siendo catolicos romanos, si pretenden hacerlo lo mismo, que hoy hacen v. ras de catequizarlos y reducirlos a la fe, por qué razón han de ser prohibidos?” citation on Fols.1r-v. The governor than goes on to say “lo que v ra pondera de que los tratan mal y se amanceban, solo toca a dios castigarlos y a su rey, y ministros y ninguno da poder a los misioneros españoles, para zelar y enmendar esto; demas de que no hay muchos anos, que por esas indias se vio lo mismo y peor, que ha dado ocasión de tantos volúmenes de historias, bastando su Solózano y no menos a sus prelados, y asi como alla tuvo enmienda, también aca lo tendra,” “ si como Espana no ha muchos anos que abrio los ojos para ese
celo de ponerles misioneros, por lo mucho que ganaba por ese modo de senorear tierras y alargar sus dominios; así Portugal ahora entra mano en eso, poniéndolo en ejecución; y no debe ser extrano pues tiene el ejempo de un buen vecino” and “digame v ra en qué v ras fundan, para que así como v ras las iban poseyendo, no pudiesen los portugueses hacer lo mismo?” : all citations on fol.1v.

40 Already in 1917 Herbert Bolton recognized the importance of missionaries as (1) explorers and diplomatic agents (2) defenders of the frontier (3) people who had advocated further expansion of the frontier (4) and who were responsible for integrating the Indians into the Spanish commonwealth: Herbert E. Bolton. “The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish-American Colonies.” The American Historical Review 23 (1) (1917): 42-61.

41 IX-4-3-6: Letter of Francisco Bruno de Zavala to Jose Custodio de Sá y Jaria, San Marcos 18.11.1768 and AMRE/MRE/R/G.1.2.1, G-46, No. 24 – al virrey del peru rey aranjuez 16.4.1725 fols. 185r-v. The role of both Indians and “their Jesuits” as informers regarding the geography of the continent is mentioned, for example, in AHN, Estado 3706: unsigned letter sent to the Marqués de Valdelirios, dated San Nicolás 1.12.1757 and AHN, Estado 3706: “Copia de la que acabo de recibir de padre Miguel de Soto,” signed Juan de Echavarria, San Miguel, 22.4.1758. Jesuits continued to act as informants even after their expulsion: AMRE/MRE/R/G.1.2.2, G-47, No. 18, fols. 62r-83r: “relacion de viaje que de la capital de Santa Fe de Bogota…hizo a las montanas de los Andauquines y misiones de los rios Caqueta y Putumayo…don Sebastián Jose Lopez Ruiz.” Signed Santa Fe, 30.9.1783, fols.70v-71r. Also see the information supplied by Diego Altamirano, procurator of the Jesuit province in Río de la Plata, Tucumán and Paraguay in Madrid, s/d, reproduced in Campanía del Brasil. Antecedentes coloniales. Buenos Aires, Archivo General de la Nación, 1931, vol.I, pp.361-366.


44 Contemorary literature on these questions is enourmous. See, for example, the anonymous Relation abbrege e concernant la republique que les religieux, nommes jesuïtes, des provinces de Portugal et d’ Espagne, ont etable dans les pays et domaines d’ autre mer des ces deux monarchies et de la guerra qui ils ont excitee et soutenue contre les armées espagnoles et portugaises. Amsterdam: Aux Depans de la Compagnie, 1758, Le gouvernement du Paraguay sous les Jesuites. Ouvrage ou l’on expose les moyens que les Jesuites ont employes pour maintenir leur roaute dans le Paraguay, Madrid, 1771, and I jesuïti accusati e convinti di spilorceria con due altre dissese intiolute: l’ una apologia per il Rev. Padrì della compagnia di Gesu… e l’ altra lettera sopra il leggera publiche scritture e stampe malediche e infamatorie del prossimo. Venezia: per Gino Bottagrissi, 1760.

45 BRAH/M, 9-1663: Colección Mata Linares, Tomo 8, Fol.. 1-35: Joseph Cardiel, “Declaración de la verdad contra un livel inflamatorio impreso en portugués contra los padres jesuitas misioneros del Paraguay y Maraño, Pueblo
Espalter, Carpeta 6: documentos diversos sobre la historia del Río de la Plata, 1747-1805, Informe con noticias sobre las posiciones que los portugueses están tomando en la banda oriental del Uruguay, Antonio Pardo Rivadeneira, Madrid 2.5.1805.”

46 IX.3.8.2: letter of Joseph de Andonaegue to Luis García de Vivar, Buenos Aires, 10.1.1750.
47 IX.1.5.6: Letter of Francisco Faijo y Noguera to viceroy Juan Joseph de Vertiz, Pergamino, 8.5.1772.