

Utopian Harmony Inspired by the Holy Spirit

Geraldo Witeze Junior
(Federal Institute of Goiás, Brazil)

The colonization of America resulted in a catastrophe for the native populations, made famous by the Friar Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566). But other aspects deserve to be unveiled. Vasco de Quiroga (1478?-1565), first bishop of Michoacán, elaborated an alternative proposal: to organize the Indians in villages following the model of Thomas More's *Utopia*. He thought More's book as inspired by the Holy Spirit to solve the problems of the New World. *Utopia* wasn't only the imagination of a better world, but an achievable project. In the 1530s Quiroga founded two utopian communities that remained until the second half of the 19th century. He called them *pueblos-hospitales* and made them part of his evangelizing work. Unlike the colonial pattern, conversion to Christianity and joining the community was a voluntary act. In them there was radical equality, moderate labor, and both slavery and the death penalty were abolished. Life was minimally worthy. Many natives joined them. The Spanish settlers, on the other hand, disapproved them. Quiroga faced many obstacles and got several enemies for defending them. He only partially won. The communities resisted, but the colonial catastrophe continued. It is important to approach the *pueblos-hospitals* of Mexico and Michoacán for some reasons: they show that history is not determined and there are always alternatives; even in tragic moments, there are people who regard human dignity as non-negotiable value; More's *Utopia* flourished very early in America as a political-social project, allied to Christianity; Finally, in times of intolerance and violence, it is always convenient to remember those who fought for a more harmonious world.

Keywords: Colonization, Mexico, Indigenous people

From the Disharmony of Power to Empowerment with Harmony: the Guarani Utopia

Giancarla Brunetto
(Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil &
Portuguese Catholic University, Braga, Portugal)

This paper will reflect on the Guarani Indians in their way of life shared in harmony, until the moment the European colonizers have found their settlement. The study will analyze the film *The Mission* (Directed by Roland Joffé, UK, 1986, 126min). This historical drama shows the beautiful landscapes and territories of the South American continent occupied by the Indians and Jesuit priests who in the eighteenth century founded the Missions, considered models of self-managed societies. One emblematic scene of the film shows a priest playing a flute for the Indians, who play musical instruments and sing several songs typical of their culture. Music as a form of universal harmony and peaceful coexistence between members of the same culture, and between members of different cultures. However, the arrival of the Spanish and Portuguese colonizers causes an abrupt rupture and disharmony motivated by political decisions and mercantilist economic interests that determined the end of the Missions. This indigenous massacre occurred during the Guarani War between the Guarani Indians and the Spanish and Portuguese troops in southern Brazil after the signing of the Treaty of Madrid. The Guarani Indians of the region of the Seven Peoples of the Missions refuse to leave their lands in the territory of Rio Grande do Sul and to be transferred to the other side of the Uruguay river, according to the agreement of limits established between Spain and Portugal. The Crowns of Portugal and Spain proceed by let the Indians at the mercy of the bandeirantes hunters. The Indians were hunted and forced to serve as slaves in the plantations of European settlers. The political and economic power that through the use of violence caused the torture, murder and enslavement of Indians.

Keywords: Harmony, Empowerment, Guarani Utopia

"Liberation" and the Utopias of 1968: Some Reflections

Gregory Claeys
(Royal Holloway, University of London)

1968 represented the remarkable coincidence of many movements and events. Most observers now reckon these exhibited two main countervailing but overlapping trends, the countercultural and the political. It has become fashionable to contrast the two faces of 1968, by way of lamenting the failures of both. Yet humanity never moves forward without setbacks, and it is worth considering today what was gained in this moment, particularly in light of the present and the needs of an even more precarious century. In this talk I want to ask three questions, focusing on the creation and aims of the counterculture: what exactly happened in 1968?; how should we understand it today?; and what relevance does it have to our future?

Keywords: 1968, Countercultural, Political