

Pursuing Empire: Brazilians, the Dutch and the Portuguese in Brazil and the South Atlantic, c.1620–1660

# European Expansion and Indigenous Response

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Pursuing Empire: Brazilians,  
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c.1620–1660

*Edited by*

Cátia Antunes



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## General Series Editor's Preface

Over the past half millennium, from circa 1450 until the last third or so of the twentieth century, much of the world's history has been influenced in great part by one general dynamic and complex historical process known as European expansion. Defined as the opening up, unfolding, or increasing the extent, number, volume, or scope of the space, size, or participants belonging to a certain people or group, location, or geographical region, Europe's expansion initially emerged and emanated physically, intellectually, and politically from southern Europe—specifically from the Iberian peninsula—during the fifteenth century, expanding rapidly from that locus to include, first, all of Europe's maritime and, later, most of its continental states and peoples. Most commonly associated with events described as the discovery of America and of a passage to the East Indies (Asia) by rounding the Cape of Good Hope (Africa) during the early modern and modern periods, European expansion and encounters with the rest of the world multiplied and morphed into several ancillary historical processes, including colonization, imperialism, capitalism, and globalization, encompassing themes, among others, relating to contacts and, to quote the EURO series' original mission statement, 'connections and exchanges; peoples, ideas and products, especially through the medium of trading companies; the exchange of religions and traditions; the transfer of technologies; and the development of new forms of political, social and economic policy, as well as identity formation.' Because of its intrinsic importance, extensive research has been performed and much has been written about the entire period of European expansion.

With the first volume published in 2009, Brill launched the European Expansion and Indigenous Response book series at the initiative of well-known scholar and respected historian, Glenn J. Ames, who, prior to his untimely passing, was the founding editor and guided the first seven volumes of the series to publication. Being one of the early members of the series' editorial board, I was then appointed as Series Editor. The series' founding objectives are to focus on publications 'that understand and deal with the process of European expansion, interchange and connectivity in a global context in the early modern and modern period' and to 'provide a forum for a variety of types of scholarly work with a wider disciplinary approach that moves beyond the traditional isolated and nation bound historiographical emphases of this field, encouraging whenever possible non-European perspectives...that seek to understand this indigenous transformative process and period in autonomous as well as inter-related cultural, economic, social, and ideological terms.'

The history of European expansion is a challenging field in which interest is likely to grow, in spite of, or perhaps because of, its polemical nature. Controversy has centered on tropes conceived and written in the past by Europeans, primarily concerning their early reflections and claims regarding the transcendental historical nature of this process and its emergence and importance in the creation of an early modern global economy and society. One of the most persistent objections is that the field has been 'Eurocentric.' This complaint arises because of the difficulty in introducing and balancing different historical perspectives, when one of the actors in the process is to some degree neither European nor Europeanized—a conundrum alluded to in the African proverb: 'Until the lion tells his tale, the hunt will always glorify the hunter.' Another, and perhaps even more important and growing historiographical issue, is that with the re-emergence of historical millennial societies (China and India, for example) and the emergence of other non-Western European societies successfully competing politically, economically, and intellectually on the global scene vis-à-vis Europe, the seminal nature of European expansion is being subjected to greater scrutiny, debate, and comparison with other historical alternatives.

Despite, or perhaps because of, these new directions and stimulating sources of existing and emerging lines of dispute regarding the history of European expansion, I and the editorial board of the series will continue with the original objectives and mission statement of the series and vigorously '... seek out studies that employ diverse forms of analysis from all scholarly disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, art history, history (including the history of science), linguistics, literature, music, philosophy, and religious studies.' In addition, we shall seek to stimulate, locate, incorporate, and publish the most important and exciting scholarship in the field.

Towards that purpose, I am pleased to introduce volume 41 of Brill's EURO series entitled: *Pursuing Empire: Brazilians, the Dutch, and the Portuguese in Brazil and the South Atlantic, ca. 1620–1660*. A project that was guided and edited by Cátia Antunes, this volume consists of essays prepared by 10 contributors who generally support Antunes' proposition and advocacy, albeit with nuanced and different perspectives, for a critical re-examination of Dutch-Portuguese rivalry and a historiographical shift in explanations concerning violent imperial contestations and counter reactions on communities and individuals in the South Atlantic, ca. 1620–1650.

By concentrating on period that has generally been represented more globally as one of 'crisis' and a constrained regional space, the South Atlantic, they have examined historically how violent imperial contestations intersect and intertwine with the daily lives of those inhabitants and societal institutions

that faced, coexisted, suffered, and rejected these expansionary onslaughts by one side or the other and how that interaction culminated in actual practice in polity and political economic formation. These are cutting-edge essays, and they raise new questions and propositions for the continued examination of this topic. *Pursuing Empire*, consequently, is an exciting and stimulating piece of work that should be warmly engaged, debated, and received by the EURO series' readership.

*George Bryan Souza*  
University of Texas, San Antonio

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