

Friday Sep. 14, 4:00-6:00 pm – “Thomas More and Spain”

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Of Utopia and utopias. Traces of Thomas More's *Utopia* in the enlightened project of the New Settlements of Sierra Morena and Andalusia (Spain, 1767-1772)

The influence of Thomas More on the Spanish utopists extends well into the eighteenth century in Spain. At that time, converging with other more politically biased trends, the utopist drive made itself felt in the thought of the Spanish enlightened elite. We know, for instance, that the Count of Campomanes owned a manuscript of *Sinapia* in his library, which may have been read by the Superintendent Pablo de Olavide, the highest authority in the management of the New Settlements in Andalusia. There is evidence that Olavide himself had read, like most of his enlightened Spanish contemporaries, Thomas More's *Utopia*. This paper endeavours to gauge the influence both direct and mediated that *Utopia* and other works of the utopist thought exerted in the preconceived ideas of enlightened figures of the New Settlement, concerning human nature. It also examines how some derivatives of those ideas found their ways in the practical implementation of the New Settlements.

