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**Franciscan and “Savages”:
Constructing image of “Indian” in História do Brasil of Vicente
do Salvador**

Magisterská diplomová práce

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František Kalenda

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Abstract

Vicente do Salvador’s well-known chronicle *História do Brasil* has often been studied as a source for Portuguese struggle to maintain the possession of Brazil in the 16th and early 17th century. This thesis, however, uses the chronicle to describe and analyze means of construction of the “Indians”, indigenous stereotypes and therefore particular Portuguese identity as understood by a Franciscan author. In its core lies question of the designed and imagined contrasts between the white, Portuguese religious friar and a dark-skinned, pagan and barbarous heathen as formulated in the terms of a concrete 17th century perspective but provided with comparative context. Understood in the terms of historical anthropology research, *História do Brasil* needs to be recognized as a principal Franciscan source that could potentially counter overall dependence on the Jesuit literature to study colonial Brazil.

Keywords

Brazil. Colonialism. Franciscans. Identity. Otherness.

Abstrakt

Dobře známá kronika bratra Vicenteho do Salvador byla mnohokrát využita pro zkoumání portugalského zápasu o udržení Brazílie v 16. a 17. století. V této diplomové práci je však kronika využita pro analýzu procesu konstrukce „Indiána“, indigenních stereotypů a v tomto kontextu také konkrétní portugalské identity v pohledu františkánského autora. Centrem zájmu je uměle vytvořený protiklad mezi bílým mnichem portugalského původu a barbarským pohanem tmavé kůže formulovaný konkrétní perspektivou autora ze 17. století v komparativním kontextu. História do Brasil by měla být uznána jako klíčový zdroj pro historicko-antropologický výzkum s potenciálem vyvažovat příliš velkou míru závislosti na jezuitské literatuře pro studium koloniální Brazílie.

Klíčová slova

Brazílie. Kolonialismus. Františkáni. Identita. Otherness.

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1. Introduction

Franciscan authors of early colonial Brazil¹ are not very frequented objects of anthropological research. It might be partially ascribed to an ongoing fascination with Society of Jesus and certainly to a very few remaining primary sources from this period. *História do Brasil*,²

¹ Throughout the thesis, I define “early colonial Brazil” as period between 1500-1630, i.e. between the “discovery” of Brazil and the date of destruction of Olinda seat of the Franciscan Brazil custody by Dutch troops. Such definition is for the purpose of the Franciscan order in Brazil, as it marks first Franciscan activities in the colony and the date of devastation followed by reform and extremely fruitful period after eviction of the Dutch invaders.

² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Nacional, 1889).

chronicle written by Fr. Vicente do Salvador, is one of these few. It is remarkable how often this relatively short chronicle is quoted in every textbook on Brazilian literature but how scarcely it is used as a potential source in historical anthropology although it contains rare accounts on indigenous-Portuguese relations.

Inspired by Barth but also Annales School that brought the question of identity, constructed “self” and “otherness” to historiography, this thesis is concerned with an issue of a particular “other” in the aforementioned chronicle, i.e. “Indians”. However linguistically, ethnically or historically the term Indian itself might be completely inaccurate and even as lacking any logic as for instance term “African” when used to describe inhabitants of an entire continent, it does not by any chance mean it is meaningless as a subject of research. Using the general term “African” in a contemporary, let’s say journalistic text constructs imagined stereotypical and collective identity for hundreds of millions non-related inhabitants of a concrete geographical area; or even imagined geographical area since geography is the same ideological construct that sometimes includes or excludes one part or another. In the same way, Indian in a historical and early colonial text represents many stereotypes and connotations based on exaggerated religious, racial or lifestyle differences.

Vicente of Salvador is a Portuguese speaking Franciscan friar and perspective of his chronicle needs to be treated as such, representing his personal views on the indigenous population of Brazil but in the context of his experience, his order and adherence to the Portuguese crown. This thesis can be therefore understood both in the terms of his own, original perspective but also in the terms of him as representing his order, his social status and his obvious loyalty to Portugal. Specifically a general Franciscan perspective of the Indians in Brazil has been too often formulated only based on accounts of later friars from the 18th century, from a completely different colonial reality and reality of the order itself; order that was stronger and more engaged. To counter such generally accepted and reflected perspective but no less to provide the reader with completely original and not yet processed perspective of a 17th century Franciscan manuscript, I formulated following research questions that are in the core of my thesis:

1. In what way is “Indian” *dominantly*³ understood and conceptualized in História do Brasil? What is the role of this Indian as imagined homogenous entity?
2. What does it mean to be Indian? And what does it mean to be Portuguese – in contrast with Indian?
3. What are some specifics of this dominant model that can be identified in comparative perspective with comparable primary sources?

Answers, I believe, lie ahead in the text and they are summarized in a more organized way in the conclusion. In ideal case, answers to these questions should provide the reader and future researchers with solid base of stereotypes and concrete case of construction of self/other. But as every single answer generates ten more questions, this thesis can be merely an introduction to potential study of a colonial Franciscan contribution to indigenous Brazilian conceptions.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Objectives

The key questions posed by me as a researcher before commencing my work on this thesis were formulated in the introduction. Here, however, I would like to articulate broader research objectives that are coming in hand with the concrete subject of the construction and perspective of the Indian in a 17th century chronicle. There are three such principal objectives:

First, there is even at this time very small amount of anthropological research related to indigenous questions of the 16th and early 17th century Brazil; it might be argued that such state is logical with relatively few remaining complex primary sources. But I believe the case of História do Brasil that has not yet been used even in the Portuguese speaking community for indigenous-related topics provides a good evidence of a different reality. Anthropologists even today tend to be rather skeptical to the use of historical sources for their research, and colonial Brazil seems to be, geographically and periodically speaking, one of the most distant issues to be worked with. First objective could be therefore summarized as a motivation and even encouragement to historical

³ Note that I am attempting to construct a dominant model of the perception of imagined Indian in História do Brasil. Vicente do Salvador with high probability did not write his chronicle with clear and formulated ideology and even such ideology would be imperfect and subjected to exceptions in concrete cases. In the following chapters, I mention some of such exceptions of the major model present in the text.

anthropologists to open debate, challenge views and attempt to work with relevant primary sources for indigenous-related topics in Brazil.

Second, there is a highly disproportional historical and anthropological interest in study of the Society of Jesus and their activities in Brazil in comparison with other religious orders. Franciscans, for example, are almost entirely represented in current historiography in the writings of their own authors. Other orders are not even that lucky; I am not aware of any contemporary Benedictine friars, for instance, that would be responsible for notable works on activities of their order in the largest Portuguese colony. Ambitious objective of this thesis and conducted research is not only presenting Franciscan historical writing as potentially important primary source for various topics, including indigenous “otherness” described here, but even a possibility of a shift from Jesuit-centered studies to an interest in other religious orders.

Third, the dominance of Franciscan authors in the study of their own order creates danger of significant bias. The issue goes even further, with two main figures of Franciscan research in their own history being standard-bearers of a certain kind of “Franciscan legend”; a legend of the hundreds of years of protection of the Brazilian indigenous population from colonial oppression. For instance, such position is openly stated in the introduction of *A Ordem Franciscana no Brasil*⁴, classical piece written by Fr. Basílio Röwer, and in many works by his colleague Venancio Willeke. In my perspective, the legend formulated mainly by the most famous Brazilian Franciscans, Fr. Antônio de Santa Maria Jaboaão and Fr. Apolinário da Conceição, needs to be confronted with other primary sources of the Franciscan order, including Vicente’s *História* that has been widely ignored in this particular context. I would not dare to evaluate truth of the Franciscan claims that are continuously stated from the first half of the 18th century. But for researches as for the wider public, I believe there is a need for comparison and access to a wider spectrum of material on indigenous issues than only those composed and ideologically formulated by the Franciscans themselves.

2.2. Current state of research

An insufficient state of research is one of the reasons why I chose to examine the topic of Indian image in Vicente do Salvador’s famous chronicle. Only singular components that are

⁴ Basílio Röwer, *A Ordem Franciscana no Brasil* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1947).

forming this work are well or at least partially researched. As for colonial Brazil itself, since 19th century, there is number of famous Brazilian historians that composed brilliant overviews of this period, including early colonial period up to 1630. Most notable of these is certainly Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, sometimes called father of Brazilian historiography that compiled his famous *Historia geral do Brasil* (first published 1854) together with some important primary sources on the 16th century that have never been published before.⁵ Capistrano de Abreu, first publisher and editor of *História do Brasil* needs to be mentioned as well, if only as one of the first Brazilian historians to recognize the importance of interdisciplinary approach including anthropology. In the 20th and 21th century, most of the Brazilian historiography concerning early colonial period deals with economic context, usually related to slavery and sugar plantation economy.⁶ There have been some complex English written histories on colonial Brazil but usually focusing on period after 1630 and having very limited or no emphasis on other missionary orders than the Jesuits. Let us name at least A. R. Disney and his vast two volumes on Portugal and Portuguese colonies called *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*.⁷ Stuart B. Schwartz has, on the other hand, published several specialized works in English language on Brazil and slavery, partially concerning indigenous population and their relations with Society of Jesus.⁸

Jesuits remain, overall, main topic to be studied among the scholars examining Portuguese-indigenous or missionary-indigenous relations in Brazil. It is understandable, due to the satisfying amount of well-preserved primary sources, usually published by state educational and research institutions since the 19th century, as part of editions such as publications of *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro*, *Publicacoes do Arquivo Nacional* or *Documentos Interessantes para a História e Costumes de Sao Paulo*.⁹ Serafim Leite wrote exhausting ten volumes of *História da*

⁵ A. J. R. Russel-Wood, "Brazilian Archives and Recent Historiography," *Latin American Research Review* Vol. 36, n. 1 (2001), 77

⁶ Russel-Wood, "Brazilian Archives and Recent Historiography," 83-84

⁷ A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and Portuguese Empire: Volume One* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and Portuguese Empire: Volume Two* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁸ See e.g. Stuart B. Schwartz, "Indian Labor and New World Plantations: European Demands and Indian Responses in Northeastern Brazil," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 1 (1978): 43-79

⁹ Much of publication of these documents can be related to effort of aforementioned Capistrano de Abreu and his colleagues from Rio de Janeiro National Library. See Russel-Wood, "Brazilian Archives and Recent Historiography," 77-78

*Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*¹⁰ but Brazilian Jesuits have been thoroughly studied even by Czech scholars. Markéta Křížová, for instance, is responsible for valuable research.¹¹

Franciscan order remains, together with other religious orders in Brazil, largely unstudied both for colonial period up to 1630 and in general. Most research in this matter has been done by Franciscans themselves, namely Fr. Venâncio Willeke, author of *Missões Franciscanas no Brasil*.¹² He studied the role of Franciscan order in the Brazilian independence, or early Franciscan activities in Amazonia. But although Willeke's work is with no doubt specific and cannot be substituted, as prominent member of Franciscan order, he remains biased. Besides, most of his works come from period between 1950 and 1970s. Fr. Basílio Röwer is another notable Franciscan historiographer from the same period and author of *A Ordem Franciscana no Brasil*. Since their death, there have been few more Portuguese and Brazilian authors studying Franciscan activities in early colonial Brazil, for instance Portuguese scholar Maria Adelina Amorim¹³ from the Lisbon University.

I am not aware of any anthropological or ethnographic study on the relations between Franciscans and indigenous population of Brazil or concerning Franciscan imagining of indigenous peoples; similar studies have only been concluded on Franciscans in Spanish Americas, mostly Mexico and California.¹⁴ And as for Vicente do Salvador's chronicle, it has been studied as source for Brazilian history or conflicts between Portuguese and French or Dutch but its author is rarely treated as a Franciscan. This dissertation therefore constitutes first study of Vicente's *História do Brasil* as related to indigenous population of Brazil and construction of image of the "other," in this case construction of the "Indian."

¹⁰ Serafim Leite, *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*, Volume 1-2 (Porto: Tipografia Porto Médico, 1938); Serafim Leite, *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*, Volume 3-10 (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1943-1950).

¹¹ E.g. see Markéta Křížová, *La ciudad ideal en el desierto: Proyectos misionales de la Compañía de Jesús y la Iglesia Morava en la América colonial* (Karolinum: Praha 2004).

¹² Venâncio Willeke, *Missões Franciscanas no Brasil* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1974).

¹³ Besides other works, she is author of detailed study of Franciscan activities in the North of Brazil. See Maria Adelina Amorim, *Os Franciscanos no Maranhão e Grão-Pará* (Lisbon: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2005).

¹⁴ There have been number of very detailed anthropological studies here, as Franciscans in Mexico and Spanish Americas played much more prominent role than in Brazil. See e.g. Inga Clendinnen, "Disciplining the Indians: Franciscan Ideology and Missionary Violence in Sixteenth-Century Yucatán," *Past & Present*, No. 94, 1982; or Erick D. Langer, "Franciscan Missions and Chiriguano Workers: Colonization, Acculturation and Indian Labor in Southeastern Bolivia," *The Americas*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 1987.

2.3. Sources and general methodology

This thesis is based on qualitative research and analysis of a concrete historical source, *História do Brasil* written by Franciscan friar and former custodian, Vicente do Salvador. For comparative and contextual reasons, I have been working with more primary sources, both Franciscan and Jesuit; from Franciscan order, it is *Primazia Seráfica na Região da América*¹⁵ by Fr. Apolinário da Conceição and *Novo Orbe serafico brazilico, ou Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brazil*¹⁶ composed by Fr. Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboãtao. From Jesuit order, I work with two contemporaries of our Franciscan Vicente do Salvador; Fernão Cardim's *Tratados da terra e gente do Brasil*¹⁷ and Manuel de Nóbrega's *Dialago sobre a Conversão do Gentio*.¹⁸ Furthermore, I have studied some major secular sources up to 1630: first and very short history of Brazil, *História da Provincia Santa Cruz*¹⁹ by Pero de Magalhães Gândavo and *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil*²⁰ by slavery apologist Gabriel Soares de Sousa. As for the literature, I have incorporated various accounts related to the Franciscan order in Brazil, on indigenous related issues including slavery but also on colonial administration. For the Franciscans, I was mostly dependent on the works of Maria Adelina Amorim²¹ and Venâncio Willeke.²² Stuart B. Schwartz²³ provided me with crucial works on race and slavery and I worked with general colonial histories of Brazil as well. Besides that, I have used some more experienced authors to broaden my understanding of the primary sources I worked with or for additional information, for instance Alfredo Cordiviola²⁴ for

¹⁵ Apolinario da Conceição, *Primazia serafica na regiam da America: novo descobrimento de Santos e Veneraveis Religiosos da Ordem Serafica, que ennobrecem o novo mundo com suas virtudes, e aççoens* (Lisboa Occidental: Na officina de Antonio de Sousa da Sylva, 1733).

¹⁶ In two volumes: Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboãtao, *Orbe serafico novo Brasilico ou Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brazi, Volume I* (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto historico e Geografico Brasileiro, 1858); and Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboãtao, *Orbe serafico novo Brasilico ou Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brazi, Volume II* (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto historico e Geografico Brasileiro, 1858).

¹⁷ Fernão Cardim, *Tratados da terra e gente do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Leite, 1925).

¹⁸ Manuel da Nóbrega, *Dialago sobre a Conversão do Gentio* (São Paulo: MetaLibri, 2006).

¹⁹ Pero de Magalhães Gândavo, *História da Provincia Santa Cruz a que vulgarmente chamamos Brasil* (Lisbon: na officina de Antonio Gonsaulez, 1576).

²⁰ Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil em 1587* (Sao Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1987).

²¹ Amorim, *Os Franciscanos no Maranhão e Grão-Pará*; and Maria Adelina Amorim, "A Formação Dos Franciscanos No Brasil-Colônia À Luz Dos Textos Legais," *Lusitania Sacra* 11 (1999): 361-377

²² Frei Venâncio Willeke, "The Mission of São Miguel de Una in Pernambuco, Brazil," *The Americas*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1956): 69-74

²³ Schwartz, "Indian Labor and New World Plantations"; and James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

²⁴ Alfredo Cordiviola, "Os dilemas da evangelização," *Diálogos Latinoamericanos* 7 (2003): 90-112

Manuel de Nóbrega's *Dialogo sobre a Conversão do Gentio* or Fernando Amed²⁵ for Vicente do Salvador himself.

The thesis contains traditional historiographical methods – semiotic, comparative and content analysis. But the general method is anthropological, not attempting to either “reconstruct” the past or verify the general sources and their validity of a concrete event as would be attempted aim of a traditional historiographical research that have been long stranded in a heated debate over the role of fiction in the study of historical materials, and chronicles in particular.²⁶ An anthropological approach is embodied in the use of wide concept of contrast between “self” and “otherness”, and in the work with colonial stereotypes that might be found and identified in the analyzed chronicle. Wider setting in the indigenous and colonial studies is also anthropological, as elaborated further.

2.3.1. Use of historical sources in anthropological research: Anthropology in the archive

The use of historical materials in anthropological research or “anthropology in the archive” is a relatively new phenomenon. But clear boundaries between anthropological and historical research are long gone, since anthropologists started to use their approach with archival sources as well as with living ethnographies – and vice versa. As early as in the 1920s, Marc Bloch and other original protagonists of the Annales School begun to look into other fields than only classical historiography, including sociology and anthropology. It was Bloch himself who strongly linked field and archival research, and he was soon followed by other French historians from the same group, e.g. Lucie Varga openly inspired by Malinowski.²⁷ At the same period, prominent anthropologists also begun to recognize importance of historical sources for their research and turned to archives; Alfred Métraux that studied Tupinambá Indians in Brazil is actually one of the first scientists to be working with French Franciscans in Brazil, namely Claude D’Abeville or André Thévet.²⁸

But it was 1970s that witnessed the first major turn of anthropologists to history and historians to anthropology in the form of interdisciplinary seminars and in 1980s, Marshall Sahlins

²⁵ Fernando Amed, “Um Capítulo da Historiografia Colonial: Frei Vicente Do Salvador e a Primeira História do Brasil,” *Revista de História* 151 (2004): 53-71

²⁶ For some recent contributions to this debate, see e.g. N. Lee Wood, “Truth or Consequences Fiction vs Fact in Historical Research,” *The Profane Arts* (1995): 107-114

²⁷ Lucette Valensi and Nathan Wachtel, “Historická antropologie,” *Český lid* 85 (1998), 197

²⁸ Valensi and Wachtel, “Historická antropologie,” 200-201

himself called for “anthropological reading of historical sources.”²⁹ Historical materials can be often the only sources we have for particular cultures and for more distant time period and they can be used for reconstruction and identification of supposed and modelled theories and concepts as for the comparative research. But anthropological reading of historical texts can be especially important when related to colonial period as in the case of this thesis; ethnocentric approach was too typical in the classical historiography, overshadowing serious studies of indigenous populations and labelling them with terminology of colonial authors. Caroline Brettell rightly speaks of the necessity of understanding the cultural context and different perspective of sources that are to be evaluated.³⁰

2.3.2. Otherness and image of the “other” as a theoretical concept

Study of “otherness” and construction of image of the “other” is a crucial theoretical component for this thesis. Self-identification and labelling the “other” has been anthropological interest for decades, with Fredrik Barth formulating the means of ethnic and group identity. Pashtuns, he observed, historically built their identity in a constant struggle and contact with their neighbors while their self-identification was mostly dependent on emphasizing differences from these neighbors, e.g Balochs.³¹ As Barth noted, ethnicity itself is not crucial for defining and creating ethnic groups, as he found many Balochs by descent identifying themselves as Pashtuns.³² Religion, on the contrary, is always crucial defining element noted both by Barth³³ and Leach.³⁴ It is the same case for the Portuguese in Brazil, building their own identity on the contrast with non-existent homogenous entity called “Indians” but also French and Dutch, based on their Catholic religion in contrary either with alleged paganism or Protestantism.³⁵

²⁹ Valensi, and Wachtell, “Historická antropologie,” 202

³⁰ Caroline Brettell, “Fieldwork in the Archives: Methods and Sources in Historical Anthropology,” in *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*, ed. H. Russell Bernard (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1998): 517

³¹ Fredrik Barth, *Pathan Identity and its Maintenance: Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 131-132

³² Barth, *Pathan Identity*, 124-125

³³ Pashtuns identify themselves strongly as Muslims. See Barth, *Pathan Identity*, 119

³⁴ Leach notes in the case of Burmese Shans that “a most important criterion of group identity is that all Shans are Buddhists.” See E. R. Leach, *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 30

³⁵ No matter that many indigenous inhabitants of Brazil were soon baptized and that at least the French were often devout Catholics and their activities included aforementioned Franciscan missionaries; such simplification is in fact typical for self-identification.

“Otherness” is deeply linked to construction of one’s “identity” that is related to other anthropological concepts such as worldview, value and culture, all suggesting imagined homogeneity in a concrete group or community.³⁶ Defining the “other” in negative terms and emphasizing the differences between two imagined group is then a crucial element in defining collective identity of “self”/“selves”; this leads to establishment of positive stereotypes of the own group, whether ethnic or other, and negative stereotypes of the others in order to reinforce the positives of their group. As Eriksen formulates it, stereotypes “make it possible to divide the social world into kinds of people, and they provide simple criteria for such a classification.”³⁷ In the colonial context, such divide and “classification” is yet stronger as Portuguese and other European colonialists come to contact with indigenous peoples in position of power and supposed cultural dominance, equipped with the ideology of Christian exceptionalism but also racial differences already present in Hispania since the establishment of racial laws (*Limpeza de sangue*)³⁸ against Jews and Muslims.

Contact and defining the “Indian” therefore created and reshaped both the identity of the indigenous population and of the dominant Portuguese. Studying account Vicente do Salvador, early Franciscan author that both identified himself and Portuguese and “transnational” Franciscan and his perception of “otherness” of the indigenous peoples of Brazil is thus beneficial for broader understanding of the construction of both Portuguese and Indian identity and for identifying and formulating relatively early stereotypes of this “other” in the early colonial period.

3. História do Brasil in context

3.1. Of the chronicle

This chapter intends to present general but complex picture of História do Brasil, its author, process of publication and finally composition of the chronicle itself.

³⁶ Toon van Meijl, “Culture and Identity in Anthropology: Reflections on ‘Unity’ and ‘Uncertainty’ in the Dialogical Self,” *International Journal for Dialogical Science* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2008), 170

³⁷ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 25

³⁸ Adepts to the Franciscan order were subjected to these “blood tests” as well, as stated in *Inquirições de genere, vita e moribus*. They were primarily targeting converted Jews and Muslims but soon they were used against the indigenous population, too. See Amorim, “A Formação dos Franciscanos,” 369

3.1.1. Author

As for the author, Fr. Vicente do Salvador was a Franciscan friar native to Brazil. The amount of information we have about his person is extremely limited to the account of Fr. Jaboatão of the same order and to the information provided by Fr. Vicente himself in his chronicle.

We know our Franciscan was born sometimes in between 1564-1567 in the current state of Bahia,³⁹ as a son of João Rodrigues Palha, Portuguese from Alentejo that settled in Brazil in about 1554.⁴⁰ It is generally thought that Vicente returned to his father's homeland to study theology in Coimbra,⁴¹ from which he returned back to be elected Franciscan custodian of Brazil in 1614 and he kept the office for three years.⁴² As a first historian born in Brazil, he is often called "Brazilian Herodotus," both in Brazilian and Franciscan historiography.⁴³ He is also the earliest proven Franciscan primary source on Brazil, as origins of the chronicle of Fr. Manuel da Ilha are more than mysterious. He died between 1636 and 1639, in the middle of Portuguese war against Dutch invaders.

3.1.1.1. Work

Besides *História do Brasil*, Fr. Vicente is supposedly the author of mysterious *Chronica da Custódia do Brasil* from 1618 that is mentioned by Fr. Jaboatão as lost.⁴⁴ As there are no references to this deed and no mention at all in *História* itself, there are two general theories: first claims Manuel da Ilha's *Narrativa da Custódia de Santo Antonio do Brasil* is in fact this lost chronicle that is being mentioned by Jaboatão⁴⁵ while second theory considers *História do Brasil* and *Chronica da Custódia* a same deed or the latter to be first part of *História*. Second theory is pushed by authority of one of Brazilian greatest historians, Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen.⁴⁶ In any case,

³⁹ Amanda Estela Guerra and Marcia M. Duarte Santos, "O Estado do Brasil no texto de Frei Vicente do Salvador e na cartografia de João Teixeira Albernaz" (paper presented at III Simpósio Luso-Brasileiro de Cartografia Histórica, Ouro Preto MG, November 10-13 2009), https://www.ufmg.br/rededemuseus/crch/guerra_santos_o-estado-do-brasil-no-texto-de-frei-vicente-do-salvador.pdf

⁴⁰ Amed, "Vicente do Salvador e a Primeira História do Brasil."

⁴¹ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 376

⁴² Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 230

⁴³ Frei Sandro Roberto Da Costa, "O protagonismo dos franciscanos na evangelização no Brasil antes dos jesuitas: a experiencia de Laguna," *Revista de Investigación en Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades*, No. 13 (2011), 12

⁴⁴ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 376

⁴⁵ Tania Conceição Iglesias, "Fontes Franciscanas: Historiografia clássica da ordem no Brasil colonial," *Revista HISTEDBR On-line*, n. 41 (2011), 126-127

⁴⁶ Amed, "Vicente do Salvador e a Primeira História do Brasil."

História is the only preserved work written by Fr. Vicente and no sources mention any others to be written by him.

3.1.2. Motivations

What motivations can we identify Vicente had for writing his chronicle? His own introduction states dedication to Manuel Severim de Faria, Portuguese writer and religious in Coimbra. He quotes ancient authors and historians including Homer whom he likens himself to, as the world needs both Alexander the Great and Homer to narrate the stories of the heroes.⁴⁷ Fr. Vicente claims that Manuel Severim de Faria asked him to write such chronicle and now he is presenting it to him.⁴⁸ We, however, have no correspondence between these two and no manuscript of História was ever found or mentioned in the possession of Manuel Severim de Faria.

As for other motivations, there seem to be two that are present all over the chronicle:

3.1.2.1. *To show Brazil as worth the royal and Portuguese interest.*

Fr. Vicente very often appears to be concerned with a poor reputation of Brazil and low interest of the Portuguese crown, nobility and maybe even his order. We have to remind ourselves of general image of Brazil at the time; as land attracting only prisoners or adventurers looking for gold.⁴⁹ Brazil was sometimes seen as earthly purgatory, with the word “Brazil” itself and “Brazilian” having pejorative meaning, implying Portuguese that left their homeland for bad purposes.⁵⁰

Fr. Vicente obviously contests this reputation of the conditions unsuitable for decent living, as he gives detailed description of the great potential of his colony. First, he refuses the claim by Aristotle that the tropical zone is not inhabitable; in fact, our Franciscan states that it is in many ways better place to live than any other, as there is no pestilence and few illnesses besides the smallpox that sometimes kill the local population and black slaves.⁵¹

When describing the riches of Brazil, he emphasizes potential of gold and precious stones as if he would wish to attract more adventurers, and many long chapters of the First book are filled

⁴⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 3

⁴⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 4

⁴⁹ Nelson Vieira, *Brasil e Portugal: A imagem recíproca* (Lisbon: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa), 26-27

⁵⁰ Vieira, *Brasil e Portugal*, 28

⁵¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 10

with eulogy of the land of Brazil and foolishness of the Portuguese concerns. As gold attracted Spanish attention to Peru and Bolivia before, gold is mentioned on many occasions with only few adventurers, usually with no morals, to be searching for it.⁵²

He even goes as far to criticize the Portuguese that are otherwise clear heroes of the chronicle, for poor attention paid to the colony. How is it possible that the Portuguese kings had Guinea in their title but not the land of Brazil if they wished to achieve greatness?⁵³

3.1.2.2. *To describe heroic deeds of the Portuguese in war against French and Dutch*

First and second motivation are linked, as Fr. Vicente calls for more sources from the Portuguese/Spanish treasury to be directed towards Brazil that was bravely defending itself from the beginning. Fourth and Fifth book are the ones most dealing with French invasion to Maranhao and later Dutch invasion to Bahia, with Fr. Vicente obviously unaware of the later events that would destroy the seat of his own order in Olinda in 1630 and establish firm Dutch presence in Brazil for another two decades.

A heroic character of the Portuguese in the chronicle is typical for the genre and is elaborated further below. But it is worth noting that the main characters are in fact the governors of Brazil and the chronicle serves to narrate their deeds; most of the chapters are indeed dedicated to them and their brave defense of Brazil both against internal and external foes.

Motive related to this may be also attempt to dishonor the Dutch and French enemies and show them as opposing to Christianity. Both of the principal enemies are described as “Calvinist heretics”⁵⁴ and their heresy is further reinforced by allying with cannibal Indian tribes that feed on Christian population and slaughter them with no mercy.⁵⁵

3.1.3. Structure

Fr. Vicente’s chronicle is divided into five parts, i.e. five books with missing parts of chapter 24 and 30 and completely missing chapters 25 to 29 from the Fourth book. Dedication to Manuel Severim da Faria is prepping the books themselves.

⁵² E.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 11-12

⁵³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 6-7

⁵⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 80

⁵⁵ See e.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 81-82

As for the genre, it is a traditional renaissance chronicle, beginning as inspired with Herodotus and ancient classics with the description of the land, its riches, nature and people and then moving directly to narrating chronologically the set of events.

Five books constitute of following content:

1. First book includes discovery of Brazil, its geography, climate, natural resources and indigenous population together with their customs.
2. Second book narrates the establishment of the hereditary captaincies in Brazil in the first years of Portuguese colonization.
3. Main topic of the Third book is the government of Tomé de Souza, conflict with the French and administrative and political reforms under the general governors.
4. Fourth book continues describing the war with French and their Indian allies mainly over Maranhao and also contains the “great treason” of the Indians from Sergipe and following vengeance.
5. Fifth book covers events from expulsion of the French from Maranhao to the arrival of the Dutch invaders to Bahia. This book and entire chronicle finishes during the life of governor Diogo Luiz de Oliveira and with his arrival to Brazil.

3.1.4. Publishing process

História do Brasil was written in 1627 but it remained in the form of manuscript for more than two centuries, only circulating in handwritten copies over the Franciscan convents in Brazil and Portugal. We do not know why it was never printed as were many other similar works written by Vicente’s contemporaries, including other friars. We can only assume it was for the general periphery status the Franciscans had in Brazil at the time, both in comparison with Jesuits and their own friars from other parts of Latin America.

It had to be a legendary Brazilian historian Capistrano de Abreu (1853-1927), author of *Capítulos de História Colonial*⁵⁶ that discovered the chronicle in Brazilian national library and published it in 1886 for the first periodically on the pages of Diário Oficial. Chronicle in one piece was once again published by Tipografia Leuzinger & Filhos do Rio de Janeiro in 1889⁵⁷ when

⁵⁶ For English version, see João Capistrano de Abreu, *Chapters of Brazil's colonial history, 1500-1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁵⁷ Amed, “Vicente do Salvador e a Primeira História do Brasil.”

some missing parts of the chronicle were discovered in Portuguese National Archive Torre do Tombo. Capistrano de Abreu then watched over yet another revised and annotated publication in 1918.⁵⁸

3.2. Sources on Franciscan Order in Early colonial Brazil

Knowledge of sources concerning Franciscan order in Brazil and their location is crucial to study activities of this order and its literary production. As there is very few such overviewing works and almost everything written so far is in Portuguese, this chapter intends to provide the reader with general information on study of the Franciscans in early colonial Brazil (1500-1630).

3.2.1. Archives

In the matter of archives, there are three key institutions to look for materials concerning Franciscans in early colonial Brazil. Franciscan sources in any of these institutions are not digitized neither fully, nor from a significant part.

First, there is a central Franciscan archive located in Olinda, ancient seat of the Custody and later Province of Saint Anthony in Brazil. This archive contains some minor materials, including minutes from provincial chapters, documents from ecclesiastic authorities from period from 1525 to 1881, and necrology covering from 1585 to 1890.⁵⁹ Together with Franciscan Institute in Petrópolis, this is the only remarkable archive or library in Franciscan hands that contains documents from the studied period.

Since its establishment in 1838, the Rio de Janeiro National Archive administrates vast amount of Franciscan correspondence addressed to the governors or government officials. National library in Rio de Janeiro is the another important place to find Franciscan sources, keeping as the largest library in Latin America in its possession some less known manuscripts of the Franciscan order, such as *Epítome da Província Franciscana da Imaculada Conceição no Brasil* written by Fr. Apolinário da Conceição in 1730.⁶⁰ And it was Biblioteca Nacional where Capistrano de Abreu discovered almost complete manuscript of *História do Brasil* by Fr. Vicente do Salvador. Similarly, Portuguese Torre do Tombo National Archive contains some parts of Vicente's *História* and most

⁵⁸ Conceição Iglesias, "Fontes Franciscanas," 127

⁵⁹ Lino G. Canedo, "Some Franciscan Sources in the Archives and Libraries of America," *The Americas*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1956), 167-168

⁶⁰ Conceição Iglesias, "Fontes Franciscanas," 128-129

of the materials that were previously in already non-existing general archive of the Franciscan Province of Saint Anthony in Lisbon.

3.2.2. Primary sources – chronicles

I will not attempt to describe all the primary sources related to or written by early Franciscans, as there is no complete account of all correspondence or internal documents related to the order. Core of this subchapter is focused on chronicles, comparable to Vicente's *História*. I divide these chronicles into three different categories: 1) Non-Portuguese chronicles, 2) Lost Portuguese chronicles, and 3) Fully or largely preserved Portuguese chronicles.

3.2.2.1. Non-Portuguese chronicles

Franciscans coming to Brazil were not only of Portuguese origin or writing in the Portuguese language; significant French Franciscan missions were established in Maranhão as part of the struggle between French and Portuguese crowns. At least two of these Franciscans were authors of notable works concerning Brazil, its land and people. Fr. Claude D'Abeville published *Histoire de la mission des pères Capucins en l'isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoisins* in 1614 in French, providing both linguistic and ethnographical account of indigenous population of Maranhão.⁶¹ His fellow friar, Yves d'Evreux, published *Voyage dans le nord du Brésil* a year later. Both of these works were written in French and only translated to Portuguese three centuries later, having therefore limited or more probably no impact at all on the Portuguese Franciscans.⁶² French were soon definitely expelled from Brazil and missionaries left together with them.

3.2.2.2. Lost Portuguese chronicles

Some of the important chronicles have been lost over time, including Fr. Vicente's own *Crônica da Custódia do Brasil* that was supposedly written in 1618 but there is nothing more than references left in the 18th century. Disputes over this chronicle are addressed further.

There are only references and traces left from another two important texts from the end of the 16th century, both written by Fr. Francisco de Rosário: *Tratado dos Ritos, costumes e linguas dos Brasils* and *Cathecismo para o Gentio do Brasil*, supposedly written in the simplified Tupí language. Fr. Jaboaão claims them to be formerly in the possession of central Franciscan archive

⁶¹ Conceição Iglesias, "Fontes Franciscanas," 128

⁶² Conceição Iglesias, "Fontes Franciscanas," 128

in Olinda but lost during the Portuguese-Dutch war.⁶³ Especially for us studying Franciscan construction of Indian image, the loss of these works is very painful, as they constitute only linguistic and ethnographic volumes to be written by Franciscan author before 1650s. Fr. Francisco seems to be one of very few skilled linguists the order had in 16th and first half of 17th century, with vast majority of such works being written by the Jesuits.

3.2.2.3. Fully or largely preserved Portuguese chronicles

We know of four fully or largely preserved Portuguese chronicles dealing with early colonial Brazil, oldest being *Narrativa da Custódia de Santo Antonio do Brasil: 1584-1621*, allegedly written by Fr. Manuel da Ilha. This chronicle finished in 1621 in Latin is highly problematic, as not being referenced by any renowned author including very thorough Jaboatão and as we are certain Fr. Manuel never visited Brazil. There is no Portuguese version or translation of this chronicle before 1922 and the text was obviously not known to the Brazilian Franciscans. As discussed in different part of this text, one of the theories considers *Narrativa da Custódia* to be in fact lost *Crônica da Custódia* by Fr. Vicente.⁶⁴

Second chronicle is, of course, *História do Brasil*. Third crucial chronicle is *Primazia Seráfica na Região da América* published 1732 in Lisbon and written by Fr. Apolinário da Conceição, one of two most famous Franciscan authors of the colonial period. He has written many other works on the Brazilian Franciscans but *Primazia Seráfica* is the most complex, narrating Franciscan primacy in conversion both of Brazil and all the New World and thus concentrating also on our period prior to 1630. The context of putting together conversion of Brazil and colonies of the Spanish crown makes his book invaluable, although Fr. Apolinário is sometimes criticized for being purely a compiler and not a professional historiographer.

Finally, Fr. António de Santa Maria Jaboatão is certainly the most renowned and celebrated Franciscan colonial author. Formerly dreaming of becoming a poet, he entered the order in 1717 and in 1755, he was named official chronicler of the Province of Saint Anthony in Brazil; a position that he held for more than 20 years. His *Novo Orbe serafico brazilico, ou Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brazil* was initially published in Lisbon in 1761 and reprinted in two

⁶³ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico Vol. II*, 355-356

⁶⁴ Conceição Iglesias, "Fontes Franciscanas," 126-127

volumes in Rio de Janeiro, 1858, and since then published again various times separated in two.⁶⁵ There is no doubt of *Novo Orbe serafico* being the most detailed account of all the early Franciscan activities, including establishment and abandonment of the missions, biographies of the first Franciscan missionaries and martyrs or details of custodian/provincial organization with names and exact dates of elected custodians and provincials. In the first volume, he provides the researcher with linguistic and ethnographic account of different Indian tribes as known in the 18th century and his work incorporates overview of all the then-known Franciscan authors with the works they wrote or published. Difficulty with his chronicle is, however, similarly as with chronicle of Fr. Apolinário, 18th century date of their writing, leaving more than hundred years gap since the end of early period in 1630. For this purpose, much extensive História do Brasil provides priceless insight into the 17th century Franciscan order.

3.3. Franciscans and Indians in Early colonial Brazil: A short history

To begin narrating the Franciscan history of Brazil, we have to begin with history of Brazil itself, as Franciscan friars were the first European visitors of Brazil, accompanying Pedro Álvares Cabral in 1500 that “discovered” the land he at the time named *Província Santa Cruz*, “Province of the Holy Cross,” based on the cross erected by Franciscan friars in natural bay named Porto Seguro. Together with this “banner of Faith,”⁶⁶ as called by chronicler of the order Fr. Antônio de Santa Maria Jaboatão, the first friars lead by Fr. Henrique de Coimbra also celebrated the first mass on Brazilian soil.

3.3.1. Legendary and early missionaries

Since then for another 84 years, Franciscan presence in Brazil was only short-living and without firm establishment. Accounts of nameless friars coming to die in Brazil can be viewed as more legendary than true but as they constitute important basis for the overall history and mythology of the order in Brazil, I will briefly mention them. Already in 1503, two Franciscan friars are said to come from Portugal to Porto Seguro again, to found a first ever church in Brazil, dedicated of course to St. Francis himself. They die two years later, killed and eaten by the Indians, becoming thus Franciscan “protomartyrs” of Brazil.⁶⁷ Such solitary missions allegedly appear twice more; in 1515 and 1523, with the latter mission yet again resulting in unhappy cannibalistic

⁶⁵ Conceição Iglesias, “Fontes Franciscanas,” 130

⁶⁶ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 9

⁶⁷ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 12-13

finale.⁶⁸ These missions can only be believed by ancient names left behind them, two *Rio de Frade*, “River of the Friar”. In 1534 arrives first missionary we know by name, Fr. Diogo de Borba with his fellow friars land in Bahia de Todos-os-Santos in contemporary state of Bahia and come to preach among the Indians, now being “more humane and tame” to the missionaries, mostly thanks to the baptized Indian chief Caramuru.⁶⁹ There is only one problem with this successful mission: that we do not know for certain if Diogo de Borba and his friars were indeed Franciscans or in fact first Jesuits, as contested.⁷⁰ So it might be quite possible that the first Franciscans arriving since 1500 were four Spanish friars coming from Castile under the leadership of Fr. Bernardo de Aresta in 1538. Nevertheless, these Spanish Franciscans (or Jesuits) were active among Carijó Indians and they probably have the responsibility of successful conversion of this tribe that was later used by many authors as demonstration of perfect Indian Christians.⁷¹

3.3.2. Establishment of the custody

Work of these solitary friars was never institutionalized and while Society of Jesus established itself officially in Brazil in 1549, claiming therefore their primacy in the colony, Franciscan order had to wait until 1584 when provincial chapter approved creation of custody dependent on Province of Saint Anthony in Lisbon. Permanent Franciscan presence in Brazil was requested by governor of Pernambuco Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho and ordered by king Philip II himself that had to urge repeatedly Superior General Francisco Gonzaga.⁷² Four years later, Fr. Melchior de Santa Catarina, new head of Custody of Saint Anthony of Brazil, arrives with seven friars to Olinda to found first Franciscan convent in property donated by member of the Third Order, D. Maria de Rosa.⁷³ According to their order, these first Franciscans were obliged to live in the city “together with the whites” but also “to doctrine the Indians and instruct them in Saint Faith,”⁷⁴ as was supposed to happen in the missionary villages.

⁶⁸ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 17-18

⁶⁹ His Portuguese name is Diogo Alvares. Read further for more information from Vicente do Salvador on this famous soldier.

⁷⁰ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 24-26

⁷¹ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 27

⁷² Portuguese Franciscans, as we know, were not very enthusiastic about their permanent presence in Brazil, as they refused just year ago donation of estate for their convent in Pernambuco. See Amorim, “Os Franciscanos no Maranhao,” 56

⁷³ Amorim, “Os Franciscanos no Maranhao,” 56-57

⁷⁴ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 56

Four other convents all over Brazil were established in 1585 together with Olinda: in Bahia, Iguacú, Paraíba and Vitória.⁷⁵ Another convents followed much later, with Rio de Janeiro, Recife and Pojuca in 1609 and Santos and Sao Paulo only in 1639, during the destructive Dutch-Portuguese war that annihilated Franciscan seats in the Northeast. After this war, however, the custody prospered more than ever in its history, finally gaining status of independent province in 1659.⁷⁶

3.3.2.1. *Independent Maranhão*

Franciscan presence is specific in the farthest Northeastern state, Maranhão. This province was long time contested with the French crown, even having French Franciscans active here.⁷⁷ First Portuguese Franciscans to arrive were, however, Fr. Cosme de São Damião and Fr. Manuel da Piedade from Custody of Saint Anthony in Brazil and their mission is even mentioned in Fr. Vicente's *História*.⁷⁸ Maranhão was part of the Brazilian custody only for very short time, soon to be elevated to Commissariat dependent on the maternal Province of Saint Anthony in Portugal and in 1622 further elevated to the status of dependent custody, with renowned Fr. Cristóvão de Lisboa elected as the first custodian.⁷⁹

3.3.3. Early Franciscan missionary activities: An overview

Since establishment of the custody in Olinda, Franciscan friars were supposed to carry out missionary activities among the indigenous population of Brazil. In 1589, they gained missionary villages in Almaga, Praia, Assento do Pássaro, Joana, and Mangue. In 1590, they added Tracunhaém, so all the missions were located in Paraíba and Pernambuco.⁸⁰ Some of the missions were founded in direct neighborhood of the Jesuits and their mutual disagreements, even reaching king himself in 1595, are know from their earliest establishment.⁸¹

Thanks to Fr. Jaboatão and many documents, we are informed of the Franciscan activities in these missions, principally aiming to reduce “barbarian” customs, from polygamy to cannibalism.

⁷⁵ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 224-225

⁷⁶ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 245

⁷⁷ E.g. famous French missionary Claude D'Aubeville, author of historiographic account *Histoire de la mission des pères Capucins en l'isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoisins*.

⁷⁸ See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 187-188

⁷⁹ Amorim, “Os Franciscanos no Maranhao,” 81

⁸⁰ Willeke, “The Mission of Sao Miguel de Una,” 69

⁸¹ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 58-60

Fr. Jaboatão speaks of many Indians soon wishing to be baptized from the Franciscan hand but the friars were strict in their rules, ordering two years transitional period when only the young under 20 years old and those *in extremis*⁸² received baptism and others had to wait to prove honesty of their fervor for Christian faith and to truly abandon all the “brutal customs.”⁸³ Franciscan control was absolute, taking over marriages and education of the children and implementing Portuguese lifestyle, for instance forcing the Indians to wear clothes instead of traditional nudity.⁸⁴ Music and theater, both based on ancient indigenous fundamentals, played significant role in the conversion and acculturation, as Fr. Jaboatão similarly to Jesuits affirms that Indians are “naturally affectionate to music.”⁸⁵

These allegedly successful missions, however, persisted only for a limited time. From the very beginning, their existence was marked with struggle on many fronts: with Society of Jesus, Portuguese colonists and also hostile captain Feliciano Coelho, one of the worst villains in Jaboatão’s chronicle that is even said to encourage Indian heresy and their return to barbarian habits including cannibalism.⁸⁶ By 1619, all the missions in Paraíba and Pernambuco were abandoned, leaving Franciscans only in convents and already independent Maranhão.⁸⁷ Such was the situation when Fr. Vicente’s *História do Brasil* was being composed and finished.

Independent Franciscan missionary activities were only renewed long after expulsion of the Dutch soldiers from Bahia and Brazil, reaching the peak on the turn of 17th and 18th century when newly independent Province of Saint Anthony in Brazil founded some 24 missions in Sergipe, Baía, Piauí, Pernambuco, Alagoas and Paraíba.⁸⁸ It is this golden age of Franciscan missions reaching even deep Amazonia that is the mostly studied period, leaving us also the highest amount of written accounts, both Franciscan and others.

4. Construction of image of the “Indians”

As both theoretical framework and context of the birth of Fr. Vicente’s chronicle were established, this part of the thesis is concerned with particular process of construction of “Indian”,

⁸² I.e. on a death bed

⁸³ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 58-59

⁸⁴ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 58-59

⁸⁵ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 61

⁸⁶ For this feud between captain and Franciscans, see Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico vol. II*, 65-68

⁸⁷ Willeke, “The Mission of Sao Miguel de Una,” 72

⁸⁸ Amorim, “Os Franciscanos no Maranhao,” 58

stereotypes of this imaginary entity and various levels of influence on the Portuguese identity itself as formulated by our Franciscan author.

4.1. Imagining the Indian in História do Brasil

Let me first state that “Indians” are not a key issue in Fr. Vicente’s História do Brasil, at least not for the author himself. Their presence is, however, logical, as the indigenous peoples of Brazil were integral part of the early history of Portuguese settlement, colonial administration and Christianization efforts. While specific chapters relating to indigenous population of Brazil are relatively few,⁸⁹ Indians are present in some form almost on every page; not as heroes, anti-heroes or acting factors like Portuguese, French and Dutch but as certain kind of “inventory” of Brazil and at the same time, contradiction to the Portuguese and the Christians in the ways that are described further.

If we intend to examine thoroughly the construction of image of the Indian, we must first explain the way it was understood by Fr. Vicente and his contemporaries. So WHO is Indian?

4.1.1. Who is “Indian”?

As James Lockhart puts it, “Indian” is obviously a European term, and indeed a general and generalizing term used for unidentifiable number of indigenous groups of the Western hemisphere.⁹⁰ Christopher Columbus is generally viewed as an author of this term, confusing the indigenous peoples encountered in Caribbean with the population of India he was looking for. The term, however wrong, was soon generally accepted not only in Spanish but also in other languages including Portuguese in which the word is *índio*. In the Brazilian context, first mention of the índios is probably in Magalhães’ short *História da Província Santa Cruz*, the first ever deed thoroughly focused on Brazil.

Fr. Vicente is also putting the indigenous population of Brazil under this generalizing term Indian, with the different tribes or ethnic groups being labelled as “castes” in terminology took

⁸⁹ Chapters 12 to 17 in the first book; chapter 12: “Of the origins of the gentiles of Brazil and diversity of languages among them,” chapter 13: “Of their villages,” chapter 14: “Of their marriage habits and way of producing children,” chapter 15: “Of treating the ill and burying the dead,” chapter 16: “Of the way the gentiles of Brazil wage war,” and chapter 17: “Of those who they capture in war.”

⁹⁰ Lockhart and Schwartz, *Early Latin America*, 31

from the earlier Eastern Asian experience.⁹¹ In this way, their difference and independence is suppressed and Indians form homogenous groups for Fr. Vicente only with minor differences. For Fr. Vicente, the “only difference between them is that some are more barbarous than the others”⁹² and they can be defined through common characteristics. That is their appearance, with chestnut-colored skin and lack of body hair⁹³ but also their language is supposed to be the identical with only variations of the different dialects.⁹⁴

But Fr. Vicente uses other terms for Indians in *História*, too; the same generalizing with slightly different connotations. The most often is *gentio* (“gentile”), *pago* (“pagan”) and *bárbaro* (“barbarian”). First two terms are preliminarily on religious distinction from Christians but they are used even for the baptized and formally Christian Indians while the third term could be seen as exact opposite of *branco* (“white”), *nosso* (“our”) or, of course, *portugues* (“Portuguese”). All these terms used for Indians should not only be taken in religious context but also in general context of civilization vs. barbarism. Accepting Christianity would seem as logical way of becoming civilized but as the Indians are distinguished from the Portuguese and “whites,” they are only rarely called Christians and their ability or intent to become Christians is very low or impossible. Being pagan and barbarian is almost a predestined state for the Indian and thus the terms are often used as synonyms that might be easily interchangeable, regardless of the context.

The different and less often used terms for Indians include general *inimigos* (“enemies”) and in the case of allied “castes,” Fr. Vicente is occasionally calling the Indians *índios confederados* or “confederated Indians,” with a clear reference to the Ancient Roman terminology. In the text, *confederados* are never used with specific defining consequences. In fact, the supporting black slaves are also occasionally labelled with the same word.⁹⁵ That and another term, *negros da terra* (“local negroes”) forms interesting link between these two ethnics in Vicente’s narrative, as discussed further.

⁹¹ John M. Monteiro, “The Heathen Castes of Sixteenth-Century Portuguese America: Unity, Diversity, and the Invention of the Brazilian Indians,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* Vol. 80, No. 4 (2000), 707

⁹² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 24

⁹³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

⁹⁴ In this part, Fr. Vicente uses José de Anchieta, Jesuit linguist and author of first “Brazilian grammar” to support his argument. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

⁹⁵ See e.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 227

4.1.1.1. Where do they come from?

The origins of the Indians are unclear in Vicente's chronicle and the author does not seem to have much interest in such question. Chapter 12 in the First book named "Of the origins of the gentiles of Brazil and diversity of languages among them," however, repeats a fable borrowed from *Miscelania Austral*⁹⁶ by Spanish poet Diego D'Avalos. According to him, the Indians are originating from a barbarian tribe in Hispania. "There was a barbarian folk," writes Vicente, "that was in a constant war with the Spanish and that ate human flesh."⁹⁷ These barbarians have been allegedly defeated by the united Spanish forces and dispersed all over the Western Hemisphere; from Canary Islands to Cape Verde and Brazil, with two brothers of this tribe named Tupi and Guarani that populated different parts of South America.⁹⁸

Our Franciscan considers such theory questionable because of the lack of references from antiquity. But he is certain of the common origin of the Indians, as he is certain of Indians to be "coming from elsewhere"⁹⁹ as Spanish and Portuguese. Using such fable might be considered as legitimization of the Portuguese and Spanish conquistadors that only continue an ancient war against the human-eating gentiles. And if it is not the case, Fr. Vicente at least suggests that Indians are no more "natives" to the land of Brazil and Americas than the newcomers. At the same time, it is another argument for common identity of the Indians.

4.1.2. Indian customs

To define the Indians as homogenous groups, Fr. Vicente is assigning them set of habits and identifying features, regardless of their "caste." When describing the indigenous customs, our Franciscan only rarely if ever uses name of a concrete "caste" and if so, it is solely for geographic purposes to make the reader feel more oriented and to provide some story-making details.¹⁰⁰ These customs are concentrated on the differences with "ours," that is Portuguese and Spanish, to emphasize a contrast between those who are civilized and those with a barbarian lifestyle.

Thus the first chapter concerning Indian customs is named "Of their villages."¹⁰¹ "There is one caste of the gentiles Tapuias that are called with a particular name Aimorés that never build

⁹⁶ Diego D'Avalos y Figueroa, *Primera Parte de la Miscelania Austral* (Lima: Impreso por Antonio Ricardo, 1602)

⁹⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 24

⁹⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 24

⁹⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 24

¹⁰⁰ E.g. "Indians from Sergipe," "gentiles from Araconda" and similar.

¹⁰¹ *De suas aldeas*. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25-27

any houses for themselves but they lie down wherever they want to.”¹⁰² But generally speaking, “most of the Indian castes live in the villages that they cover with palm leaves and they set up a public place in the middle where they practice their feasts and dances and they gather there at night to a council.”¹⁰³ The houses where they live are huge, designed for 70 or 80 couples¹⁰⁴ where they sleep two in one hammock in the air, with the feet pointed to the head of the other one. Only the numerous wives of the chief have their own hammocks.¹⁰⁵ They also have no covers.¹⁰⁶ Concerning their eating habits, the Indians do not have plates or cutlery and they eat from gourds that “are especially valuable for them because they use them as plates for food, as pots and as flasks to drink water or wine.”¹⁰⁷ They do not eat seated but “in a squatting position but father of the family laying down in the hammock.”¹⁰⁸

4.1.2.1. Family life

Fr. Vicente writes that Indians are keeping their polygamous family life and often return to it even when baptized. Number of wives is strongly related to the social status among the Indians; according to Vicente, every brave man in the village has many wives and “captain”¹⁰⁹ has the highest number.¹¹⁰ As for the birth ritual, História states that “After giving birth, woman will wash herself in the river and her husband will stay lying in the hammock under many covers (...) and then the friends will come to visit him as he was ill. And there is no power that could take away this superstition from them for they say this will prevent many sicknesses from the father and child in the future.”¹¹¹ Depending on his sex, the child will receive a ritual offering. “And if it is a boy, soon they put little bow with arrows to his hammock. And if a girl, then a spindle of cotton.”

The work in the family is clearly divided between man and women; man works to clear out the forest on their land and the women work on the cleansed land where of the former rainforest on growing weed. The women are responsible for the harvest, too; “they grow the weed, harvest

¹⁰² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25-26

¹⁰³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 26

¹⁰⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 26

¹⁰⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 26

¹⁰⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 26

¹⁰⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 26-27

¹⁰⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 27

¹⁰⁹ Fr. Vicente is sometimes using this kind of Portuguese naval terminology to describe Indian chiefs or heads of the village or even whole “caste”. Captains in the Portuguese context could mean both captain of the ship or leader of one of the hereditary captaincies that were first established in the colony or even a single head of some armed group.

¹¹⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

¹¹¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

the fruits of their effort and carry it on their backs home where to they take it in large baskets made from palm leaves that could be easily burden for a mule.”¹¹² Besides chopping and carrying wood, the man in the household is responsible for hunting with bows and teaching the sons from the young age how to hunt.¹¹³ “Also they teach them [their children] how to make hampers and other manual works for which they have great skills.”¹¹⁴ Appreciation for the manual work skills of the Indians is only excerpt in the chronicles where Indians are openly lauded for a concrete talent while generally they are overshadowed by the skills of the Portuguese.

4.1.2.2. Feasts and rituals

Fr. Vicente gives us only very simple account of the alleged Indian customs and rituals. Generally, he speak of custom of both men and women to paint their entire bodies besides their hair with the fruit of *Genipa Americana*. The women remove body hair of their husbands and lips of the Indians are pierced with green stones “with which they look like demons.”¹¹⁵

The ritual of birth have already been described and its natural antithesis is ritual of death. When somebody dies, he is going to be buried “wrapped up in the same hammock he slept in”¹¹⁶ and with unbound hair. All his family mourns until the moment of burial and “his wife then mourns many days more.”¹¹⁷ Burial rite of the village chief is more ceremonial: this important person is all covered with honey and bird feathers with cap made of feathers is placed on his head. The chief takes all his trinkets and adornments to his grave, together with his bow, arrows, sword and *tamaracá*.¹¹⁸ To his voyage to afterlife, he also receives food and drinks and full straw of tobacco. Then the grave is all filled with wood. As for the wife, she curtails her hair and paints all her body to black as a sign of mourning.¹¹⁹

When wife dies, her husband also paints himself all black with fruit of *Genipa Americana* and after the mourning ends, husband, his family and friends all gather to feast together and dance and drink and remember the deeds of the deceased.¹²⁰ Finally, when the son of the village chief

¹¹² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

¹¹³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

¹¹⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

¹¹⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

¹¹⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30

¹¹⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30

¹¹⁸ Indigenous musical instrument.

¹¹⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30

¹²⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30

dies, “they put him in a cooking pot, placed in a sitting position with his knees bound to his belly, and this pot is placed under the floor of his own shack or house where he is mourned for many days.”¹²¹

4.1.3. Indians and Christianity

As Fr. Vicente is a religious chronicler and Franciscan friar, Christianity and Indian relationship towards Christianity should be one of the crucial motives of his *História*. I partially implied in the previous chapters and subchapters that Indians play more of a passive role in this chronicle. The same works for the story of their Christianization that does not seem to be presented as a glorious struggle as in the later Franciscan chronicles but rather a problematic and fruitless effort related to the Indian spiritual capabilities. An ability or, in the context of this chronicle, more likely *inability* of the Indians to become Christians will be described on several different levels that are interconnected: Indian morale, refusal of the Christianity and a purpose of the mission.

4.1.3.1. Indian morale

A lack of morale among the Indians plays important role for understanding the general relations between Indians and Christianity in Fr. Vicente’s chronicle. Problem in understanding the morality and distinction between good and evil lies already in their childhood when the parents do not punish their children for any wrongdoing. “And they do not chastise them for any errors and crimes they commit, however grave they are.”¹²² From this excerpt, it is rather uncertain if this immorality can be changed and is learned or inborn. Stories of apostasy and Indian treachery that fill the chronicle, however, suggest the latter.

This lack of morale, a Christian morale of course, is visible in many aspects of Indian’s life. Polygamy have been mentioned; a sacred status of the marriage is not respected but rather mocked with taking more and more wives without any limits. Indian society is indeed rotten if having more wives means becoming more important. Fr. Vicente can hardly understand such situation that must be troublesome even for the Indians themselves. “It is not easy to determine, and even more among the principals that have so many wives, which one of them is the rightful and legitimate one since

¹²¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30

¹²² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

it is not written in any contract and the men simply leave some and take another ones,” he remarks. “But it is believed such [rightful wife] might be the one taken first.”¹²³

Relationship towards the ill and weak serves as another demonstration of the Indian immorality. “A little charity and compassion these gentiles have,” states the chronicle.¹²⁴ For a Christian, caring about the weakest, i.e. elderly people, poor or ill is supposedly integral part of the right life. Depicting a whole imagined nation as reluctant or even hostile to the weakest is meant to construct indigenous ethics (or lack of ethics) opposed to Christianity.

Last significant demonstration is Indian warlike behavior that is typical for every “pagan” nation, as Christianity emphasizes peace. So the pre-Christian, “barbarian” tribes were panned for being constantly in war even with each other. “And these gentiles are naturally so warlike that their only interest is how to wage war against their enemies.”¹²⁵ Extreme cruelty is present, as the Indians “otherwise (...) see no value in killing if not with cracking the skulls up.”¹²⁶ Cruelty is extended with something even worse, cannibalism. Even the baptized and yet treacherous Indians commonly eat human flesh, and often it is flesh of the missionaries that were tricked and eaten. We might use for this words of Fr. Jaboatão that writes that human flesh was a “fabulous nectar of gods”¹²⁷ for the Indians.¹²⁸

4.1.3.2. *Indian capability of Christianity*

For the later Franciscans, missionary work and conversion of Indians to Christianity was logically the ultimate goal of their existence in Brazil and early Franciscan friars were ascribed with the role of being responsible for Brazil becoming truly “Christian nation.” For Fr. Apolinário and Jaboatão, Brazil was one integral piece of the story of Christianization of all pagan Americas. “It was our own Friars that first planted Catholic faith,”¹²⁹ writes Fr. Apolinário, and he has in mind both Land of the Holy Cross (Brazil) and the whole New World when describing the first Franciscans (naming every one of them) in every part of the land explored by Spanish and

¹²³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 27

¹²⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 29-30

¹²⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30-31

¹²⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 31

¹²⁷ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 13

¹²⁸ At the same time, Fr. Jaboatão unlike Fr. Vicente writes about Indian tribes that have never been eating human flesh. Christianity also absolved the Indians from this habit. See Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 20

¹²⁹ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia serafica*, 5-6

Portuguese.¹³⁰ In the first chapter of his opus magnum, Fr. Apolinário quotes certain Padre Daça from the Franciscan order writing: “It is great praise and glory that they destroyed idolatry of America and introduced to it cult of the only true God.”¹³¹

Fr. Vicente, however, unlike his later brothers does not give the reader spectacular successes of the Franciscan effort, followed by statistics of converted pagans. In fact, our Franciscan appears more than critical. In his extremely brief introduction to Indian languages, he states remarkable pseudo-linguistic anecdote: that the Indians, because of their language, cannot pronounce letters “l,” “r,” and most importantly “f.” The letter “l” states for *Ley* (“law”), “r” for *Rey* (“king”) and “f” for *Fé* (“Faith”).¹³² For this, they “have no faith, nor praise no God. They abide no law nor principle and have no king to give the law to them or for them to obey.”¹³³ This anecdote is not original to Fr. Vicente; in fact, it firstly appears in the first history of Brazil, written by Pero de Magalhães Gândavo and published in 1576. The same anecdote was later repeated by Gabriel Soares de Sousa, famous apologist for Indian slavery whose work was obviously known to Fr. Vicente.¹³⁴ On the contrary, it is never mentioned by any of famous Jesuit missionaries that were usually skillful linguists.

Together with the view on Indian morality, this anecdote of the colonists establishes the framework in which the Indians are perceived in *História do Brasil*: as incapable of being Christians. Lack of morale and distinction between good or evil is further demonstrated by the description of innumerable treacheries. For Fr. Vicente, Indians are treacherous by nature and so if they accept baptism, it is for their own purposes and not for long. One of the examples might be case of unspecified Indians from Sergipe. “These gentiles from Sergipe were saying they want to go to Bahia to be instructed by fathers of the Society of Jesus.”¹³⁵ When they received “130 white soldiers and *mamelucos*”¹³⁶ to escort them, they murdered every single one sleeping or unprepared,

¹³⁰ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia seráfica*, 5-9

¹³¹ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia seráfica*, 8

¹³² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

¹³³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

¹³⁴ Gabriel Soares de Sousa, principal enemy of Jesuit fight against indigenous enslavement, is also an author of the more detailed version of the fable to be found in Vicente’s work. See Monteiro, “The Heathen Castes,” 703-704, and John M. Monteiro, “Tupis, Tapuias e Historiadores: Estudos de História Indígena e do Indigenismo,” (Tese de Docência, IFCH-Unicamp, 2001), 19, <http://venus.ifch.unicamp.br/ihb/estudos/TupiTapuia.pdf>

¹³⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 136

¹³⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 137

including Jesuits among them.¹³⁷ Similar result had the mission requested by governor Botelho: most of missionaries were murdered or eaten.¹³⁸ Vicente describes Indians as “inconstant”¹³⁹ and naturally treacherous. Tobayar Indians, for example, are in short anecdote said to only speak the truth when they are drunk.¹⁴⁰ And “those of Rio de S. Francisco” used to “trade with the Portuguese, pretend their love to them and if they found some of them mindless, they secretly murdered them and ate them.”¹⁴¹ The “great treason” of Indians even has its own chapter (Fourth book, Chapter 17).

Strength seems to be the only thing these treacherous people understand, as Franciscan friar Antnio da Estrela formulates it in his complaint: “I confess it is a truly hard work with these gentiles, with all their fickleness. Because it was a pleasure to see their fervor and devotion they attend the church with (...) but in short time they begun to lose interest in such a way that it was necessary to make them [fulfil their obligations] with force.”¹⁴²

The case of Zorobab

Vicente’s overall skeptical relationship to the Indian capability of Christianity can be demonstrated on the case of chief of the Potiguara Indians called Zorobab. According to our Franciscan, Zorobab was a strong ally of the Portuguese that was used both against the French-friendly Aimor Indians and against *mocambo*, runaway slave community that were often formed by escaped black and Indian slaves.¹⁴³

Zorobab appears to be in good relations with the Jesuits, having triumphant entrance to his village controlled by Society of Jesus on the horseback, together with his Indian hunters. But the chief did not enter the church as he intended, allegedly because he was drunk, and his plan was going to another “just war”¹⁴⁴ without consent of the governor and his council that had to approve such decision.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 137

¹³⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 178-179

¹³⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 168

¹⁴⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 51

¹⁴¹ Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 76

¹⁴² Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 169

¹⁴³ See Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 170-172

¹⁴⁴ *Guerra justa*, war against other Indians in order to enslave them and the only legal way of enslaving indigenous peoples.

¹⁴⁵ See Vicente do Salvador, *Histria do Brasil*, 173

At the same time, Zorobabé was considering to become Christian and promised to leave his many wives. “And he said he will abandon them [his wives] soon and will stay only with one woman after baptism and for this purpose he already ordered to prepare many hens.”¹⁴⁶ But Fr. Vicente believes he was lying and secretly plotting to rebel against the Portuguese, as it was later discovered and Zorobabé was captured and sent to Portugal to die in Évora.¹⁴⁷ In his case, the Jesuits are the ones that always defend Zorobabé’s behavior even against governor Botelho because “they considered him very obedient.”¹⁴⁸

The case of Zorobabé is an important concrete demonstration of Vicente’s mistrust of the Indians, their intentions and their relationship towards Christianity. Zorobabé as their head and hero is actually a liar that pretends to be friend of the Portuguese, claims to become Christian but he secretly plots against the governor and the king. He also desires war, as a demonstration of his truly pagan nature. Actions of the Jesuits that are responsible for “tamed” Indians in their reduction where Zorobabé lives and that defend Zorobabé until he is imprisoned show both the significance of the Jesuit activities with the indigenous peoples in contrast with Franciscan ones and also our Franciscan’s criticism of their work that is often perceived naive and too weak when the force is needed.

4.1.3.3. *Missionary activities: Meaningful or not?*

Since Fr. Vicente considers Indians to be generally incapable of truly being Christians, missions in his point of view can be seen as meaningless and usually unsuccessful. His own order, the Franciscans, are not even depicted as principal protagonists of the effort of bringing the hearts and souls of the Indians on the right way. Unlike in the later Franciscan sources, Franciscan missions to the Indians have interestingly little space. Aforementioned Fr. Antônio da Estrela is the first Franciscan missionary mentioned with name in the chronicle after the establishment of Brazilian custody, and it is only in the chapter 39 of the Fourth book.¹⁴⁹ And it is the same friar that Vicente quotes to be unsatisfied with his missionary activities among the Indians although he and his brothers allegedly baptized some 52 000 Indians.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 174

¹⁴⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 174

¹⁴⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 174

¹⁴⁹ See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 168-170

¹⁵⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 169

Society of Jesus is the order generally responsible for the missions in História and Fr. Vicente, although Franciscan, seems to recognize their leading role in this field. Jesuit mission of father Manuel de Nóbrega and José de Anchieta is the first one to be mentioned in the chronicle¹⁵¹ and also the one most thoroughly described. Despite the rivalry present in all colonial world including Brazil,¹⁵² our Franciscan speaks very highly of *padres da companhia*. José Anchieta and Manuel Nóbrega as the principal catechists of Brazil have more than significant role in the whole chronicle like no other religious order including Friars Minor themselves. This is obvious from numerous situations where Indians wish (or rather pretend) to accept the Christianity and the Jesuits are typically responsible for such actions; as in the case of Indians allied to French that were captured by Portuguese soldiers and governor of Rio de Janeiro Antônio Salema “asked respectfully fathers of the Society of Jesus to teach them (...) ministry of our Faith.”¹⁵³ Even Jesuit missions often turn out to be failures, as in the case of aforementioned “great treason” that included many killed and eaten Jesuits and later very famous P. Luiz Figueira only narrowly managed to survive.¹⁵⁴ Jesuits are also indirectly criticized for their naive belief in Indian cause, as in the case of Zorobabe or in many other passages, including the negotiation with certain Indian chief Surupiba that was pushed by father of Society of Jesus but strongly opposed by Franciscan friar, Bernardino das Neves, that was “well aware of their [Indian] treacheries and deceits.”¹⁵⁵

Finally, the missions themselves are often described as way to use the Indians and their baptism for political reasons, articulated as a mean to reduce Indian hostility or their potential to become allies of their French or Dutch enemies or even to make them allies to be used against them. It was for this “common good” that P. Manuel de Nóbrega decided to “to go and test the souls of the barbarians”¹⁵⁶ that were killing other Indians and even Portuguese during the painful war with the French, and he and his fellow Jesuits were successful. As “Friar José de Anchieta calmed them with a brief and loving performance in their own language” and after three months

¹⁵¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 73

¹⁵² See detailed chapter “Os religiosos franciscanos versus os soldados jesuítas” in: Ildebrando Alves de Lima, and Patrícia Lopes Goldfarb, “Religiosidade e intolerância na Parahyba colonial: O trabalho da catequese franciscana entre os nativos,” *Revista Brasileira de História das Religiões*, Ano II, n. 4 (2009), 274-276

¹⁵³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 99

¹⁵⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 178-179

¹⁵⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 153

¹⁵⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 73

among the Indians and two more months together with Manuel de Nóbrega they “made them [Indians] wishing peace.”¹⁵⁷

It is not surprising that such political reasons were often accentuated by the governors. Diego Botelho is not the only one in *História* who literally requests the religious orders to generate missionary activities even against their will. Besides Botelho whose plea resulted in mission of Antônio da Estrela, it was for instance governor Gaspar de Souza resulting in the mission of two Franciscans, Cosme de S. Damião a Manuel da Piedade, and governor Mem de Sá, great friend of the Society of Jesus. Two Franciscan friars, Cosme and Manuel, proved their talents later in the chronicle not that much with their conversion skills but with achieving to motivate the friendly Indians against the French that lead to a great Portuguese victory.¹⁵⁸

4.1.4. Indian slavery

In about 1630 when Vicente finished his masterpiece, Indian slavery was repeatedly abolished in both Iberian kingdoms, in Portugal namely by decree from 1570 and later this royal decision was reaffirmed in 1595 and 1609 under the dynastic union.¹⁵⁹ While famous Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas argued against the indigenous slavery in Spanish Americas from beginning of 16th century, in Brazil it was the first Jesuits, Fr. Manuel de Nóbrega and his colleagues since their arrival in 1540s. According to Fr. Apolinário, the Franciscans were protectors of Indians against enslavement and “tyrannies of the captains.”¹⁶⁰

Fr. Vicente, however, does not appear to be a fierce opponent of slavery. I mentioned he is obviously influenced with Gabriel Soares de Sousa’s extremely anti-Indian account that was partially written for the purpose to lobby for indigenous slavery decades ago; *História* even contains entire chapter dedicated to his death.¹⁶¹ For Fr. Vicente, slavery is a logical punishment for permanent “aggressiveness” of the Indians and their never ending attacks on the Portuguese

¹⁵⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 73; Let me note that even in this case, Vicente mentions that there were others who continued to help the French and fight the Portuguese. At the same time, there is no mention of successful Christianization of these Indians as they were just made less hostile towards the Portuguese currently in need of less military engagement to concentrate their forces against the French invaders.

¹⁵⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 189

¹⁵⁹ Disney, A. R., *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese empire: from beginnings to 1807*, vol. 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 218

¹⁶⁰ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia seráfica*, 50

¹⁶¹ It is Fourth book, Chapter 24. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 150-152

settlers.¹⁶² In the entire text, there is no criticism of “unjust” enslavement or mistreatment of the Indian slaves, they are seen as integral part of the Brazilian society and attacks on the plantations with an objective to liberate Indian slaves are viewed with disapproval.¹⁶³ When Fr. Vicente deals with enslavement of the Indians, it is in context of the “just war” concept and rightful vengeance for treachery. When the aforementioned Indians from Sergipe committed their “great treason,” Portuguese declared war on them, “war so rightful, with the permission of our Lord the king himself” and they “expected to bring many slaves,” some four thousands according to our Franciscan.¹⁶⁴

Although Vicente informs us that governor Mem de Sá liberated some Indians enslaved “unjustly,” it is in context of this governor’s attempt to offer the Indian neighbors peace and fair treatment in an exchange for evangelization and baptism from the hands of Jesuit fathers. For the reason of Indians’ treachery and need for human flesh, this attempt was of course unsuccessful and governor Mem de Sá “personally pursued them into their own lands and among them killed many and burned more than seventy villages, and destroyed them so they had to beg for peace.”¹⁶⁵ Fr. Vicente then speaks of “unjust” enslavement only once, when these Indians were transferred to the Jesuit reductions by governor Botelho.¹⁶⁶ “Just war” is, on the contrary, mentioned namely six times, often with long supporting stories.

Overall, Vicente do Salvador is not critical of indigenous slavery. He gets the closest to criticism of slavery in the fifth chapter of the first book; here he briefly mentions Portuguese coming to the Brazilian interior in search of freed Indians to “bring them with force and with deceit” and to sell them or use their knowledge of the land when looking for precious stones and metal.¹⁶⁷ But these precious stones and metal are the true heroes of this chapter, written for purpose of showing the riches of Brazilian land and attracting more people to this unpopular colony. Fr. Vicente seems to accept indigenous slavery as understandable and natural and, as he writes in one

¹⁶² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 75

¹⁶³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 75-76

¹⁶⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 141

¹⁶⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 67

¹⁶⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 67

¹⁶⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 11

chapter, actually better for the Indians than their freedom. “For the life they [whites] give to them is so much better for them than freedom.”¹⁶⁸

This attitude might seem strange but can be understood in context of the previous chapter. As the Indians cannot – or can very rarely – be true Christians, it is better for themselves to be rescued from their natural barbarism including horrible cannibal rituals¹⁶⁹ or permanent wars and it is also better for the Portuguese as they can control the Indians, prevent them from potential treacheries and can use them against their enemies, French and Dutch, or at least to prevent them from being used by their enemies against them. Being incapable of becoming true Christians make Indians also incapable of true freedom; this can be demonstrated even in the language used for the Indians that were no longer slaves. Fr. Vicente is using for them *índios forros* or literally “freed Indians,” not *índios livres*, “free Indians” as it would be used for the Portuguese and other Europeans. Not surprisingly, this is also the case of the free blacks and it constitutes yet another link between these two groups in *História do Brasil*.

4.1.4.1. Common characteristics of the blacks and Indians

By 1630, Indians had overall different status in the colony of Brazil than the black slaves; indigenous slavery was abolished repeatedly and part of the Indians were living in the Jesuit reductions as “free men” (at least according to the Jesuits and their contemporary ideology) although the crown could not entirely protect them from slave raiding parties of the colonists that did not yet abandon their effort to force the Indians to hard labor for them. At the same time, there were few people if some that would challenge black slavery. Such distinction is obvious in our Franciscan’s account and there is no mention of effort to Christianize the “negroes” and not at all any questioning their status. So it is more his critical view of the Indian Christianization efforts and logic that occasionally make these two groups appear similar in his chronicle.

First, there is language Vicente is using. Black slaves are generally described as *negros* (“negroes”). Aforementioned *negro da terra* term is used for Indians on several occasions and such terminology implies the same social status¹⁷⁰ although the black slavery was unquestionably legal

¹⁶⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 67

¹⁶⁹ Previous quote is actually a part of the passage from Fr. Vicente’s description of the treatment of hostages and the potential they will be ritually sacrificed.

¹⁷⁰ Slaves and especially the black slaves were on the true bottom of the society, having no personal rights and their humanity itself was questionable. See Joaquim Romero Magalhães, “Africans, Indians, and Slavery in Portugal,” *Portuguese Studies*, Vol. 13 (1997), 147

while Indian slavery was strictly prohibited. For Vicente, however, this is not a problem; he seems strongly influenced not by fellow religious authors from the Jesuit order or other Franciscans but by Gabriel Soares de Souza, strong advocate of the indigenous slavery and author of one of the account most hostile to the Indians. Another linguistic link is use of *índios forros*, “freed slaves.”

Besides linguistics, blacks and Indians are sometimes linked in the chronicle by their common weakness in comparison with Portuguese. They share the same weakness to the illnesses that are not affecting white population; smallpox „sickens the blacks and the same natives of the land [Indians].“¹⁷¹ On the other hand, Indians were generally considered even weaker than the blacks and strength of the “negroes” was usually appreciated. But Vicente does not seem very concerned with physicality of the Indians and even less the blacks. Only while describing the barbarian festivals of Indians in the First book, chapter 14, he makes clear comparison: “During the feasts they [Indian women] paint themselves with the Genipa fruit that they would look like the negroes of Guinea if not for the hair, and with the same color they paint their husband.”¹⁷² There is also lack of erotic desirability that was usually ascribed both to Indians as Blacks in different, non-religious accounts.¹⁷³

Resistance against the Portuguese colonists constitutes last significant link between the two groups in the chronicle. Runaway black slaves can be found at many places in História, such as the runaway Indians, forming communities known as *quilombo*, *mocambo* or *palmares* that were usually later destroyed by the colonists and their Indian auxiliaries.¹⁷⁴ But from the account of the case of Potiguara chief Zorobabé that helped to destroy mocambo near the river Itacupuru is obvious that Indians were also *inside* mocambos, allying themselves with the escaped blacks and forming resistance against the crown and Portuguese colonists.¹⁷⁵

4.1.5. Indian relationship with the Portuguese

Portuguese are the main protagonists of Fr. Vicente’s chronicle and the Indians come into different forms of interaction with them that can be divided into 4 main types: 1) Indians as confederates, 2) Indians as subjects, 3) Indians hostile to the Portuguese, 4) Indigenization. These

¹⁷¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 10

¹⁷² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 28

¹⁷³ Magalhães, “Africans, Indians,” 149

¹⁷⁴ For more detailed information on the use of Indians against black slaves, see Matthew Restall, *Beyond Black and Red: African-native Relations in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque: UNM Press, 2005).

¹⁷⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 170-172

different types of mutual interaction can be also understood as different roles of the Indians in the chronicle, as they serve as supporting characters on both sides of the struggle with French and Dutch enemies on which the chronicle is centered.

4.1.5.1. *Indians as confederates*

In the first form of interaction, Indians serve as confederates and allied forces of the Portuguese colonists. Called *índios/gentios confederados* or *nossos amigos* (“our friends”), these Indians are helping the Portuguese against French and Dutch forces and hostile Indians but they often do so for their own purpose. And for the reason of their hostility to other “caste,” often friendly to the enemies of Portuguese, as in case of unspecified “other gentiles of the Brazilian forest”¹⁷⁶ that were Portuguese confederates and also “mortal enemies” of the “gentiles of the cape of Saint Augustine”.¹⁷⁷ In the same way were Tabajara Indians helping the Portuguese against “Potiguara Indians, their ancient enemies.”¹⁷⁸ Unlike other Indians or Indians generally, confederates can be ascribed with certain positive characteristics related to their helpful services to the Portuguese; Tabajara Indians are said to be good warriors¹⁷⁹ and their chief Pirajibe¹⁸⁰ is praised for his wise decision not to fight the Portuguese but instead to unify against the common enemies. Fr. Vicente, however, does not ascribe any significant personal characteristics to Pirajibe and does not mention the honors he received from the king for his services including even membership in the chivalric Order of Christ he was awarded with by king Philip I.¹⁸¹

4.1.5.2. *Indians as subjects*

Indians as subjects of the Portuguese are under their direct control and are completely absolved of any acting factor or individuality; for Fr. Vicente, they are simply not interesting and their role in História is purely utilitarian. These can be divided into two groups: First are those Indians living in Jesuit reductions or under Jesuit protection, and second are Indian servants or slaves. In the first case, they are often called *nosso gentio* or *nossos índios* and similarly as confederates, their role is a military one, supporting the Portuguese units and sometimes betraying

¹⁷⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 75-76

¹⁷⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 75-76

¹⁷⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 247

¹⁷⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 94

¹⁸⁰ Braço de Peixe in the text, literally “The Fin.” Parajibe or Parajibe has the same significance in Tupi language.

¹⁸¹ For more informations on Pirajibe, see Anonymous, *Índios Famosos em Armas que neste Estado do Brasil concorreram para sua conquista temporal e espiritual* (manuscript: Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP, 1758).

them. As they are subjected to the Jesuit influence, they are usually theoretically Christians (see further) and it might be hard to completely distinguish them from the allied tribes that also had usually Jesuits among them, as it was general demand of the Brazilian governors while securing alliance with Indians, together with absolution of the eating of the human flesh.¹⁸²

As for the Indian slaves or servants, they are on deepest bottom of the social status, usually gained in the “just war” or enslaved and sold by other Indians (that was theoretically prohibited). Therefore, they have the same marginal role as the black slaves, often sharing the same destiny of attempting to escape or being massacred in escaped slave communities. On few occasions, they might improve their social status if it is found by one of the governors that their enslavement was “unjust”; Mem de Sá for instance has done this when he assumed his office.¹⁸³

4.1.5.3. *Indians hostile to the Portuguese*

Indians that are hostile to the Portuguese act this way for two reasons: 1) They are inherently treacherous and their pagan nature make them logical enemies of the Christians, 2) They often ally themselves with enemies of the Portuguese crown, i.e. French and Dutch. These French/Dutch allied “castes” have the same supporting character as Portuguese confederates. Caste most hostile to the Portuguese and also in most of the cases French ally are the Potiguara and Tamoio Indians.

Hostile confederates are the worst pagans of all, according to Fr. Vicente usually purposely attacking those Indians who converted to Christianity and slaughtering them.¹⁸⁴ Our Franciscan shows such deeds to be tolerated by the French and the Dutch, linking them indirectly to the Indian paganism and showing them as hostile to Christianity itself as the “gentiles.” Vicente firmly established this link in Brazilian Franciscan historiography, as Fr. Jaboatão repeats the same with even more direct criticism more than century later in his *Orbe Seráfico*.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, the Dutch were enlisting runaway Indian and even black slaves, ignoring their barbarian and horrific habits.¹⁸⁶ As in other cases, Indians (and black slaves) in this role are supporting characters, serving to vilify Portuguese enemies with relationships to the cannibal pagans. For instance, Tamoio and Potiguara

¹⁸² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 66

¹⁸³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 67

¹⁸⁴ E.g. when Tamoio Indians fortified themselves in Rio de Janeiro and for two years continued attacking newly baptized Indians. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 72

¹⁸⁵ Jaboatão, *Orbe seráfico*, 14

¹⁸⁶ E.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 209

Indians are openly called *ajudados* (“helpers”) of the French and the French share the crimes committed upon Christians.¹⁸⁷

4.1.5.4. Indigenization

The last form of Portuguese-Indian interaction is quite specific and can be called simply “indigenization” of the Portuguese. It applies to the cases, often narrated in *História* as humorous stories, when Portuguese captured by the Indians managed to survive through the knowledge of Indian language¹⁸⁸ and by adopting indigenous customs.

For instance, this is the case of certain Diogo Alvares, known as Caramuru among the Indians, that was left alive “because he was fluent the language [of the Indians] and I do not know if even this would be enough for those scavengers if he would not marry daughter of an Indian chief.”¹⁸⁹ Such stories, occurring occasionally throughout the chronicle, could imply potential of Indian dominance and Portuguese subjugation to the indigenous culture. But in fact, they serve more to yet again demonstrate the contrary; Portuguese in these stories are those who manage to adapt and pretend their allegiance to the Indians but in fact, they are cunning enough to keep their identity, survive and later escape or even use the friendship or trust of the Indians for their own cause. So the captain Francisco de Braga “knew the language and was so notorious among the Indians that they never did anything he would not command them.”¹⁹⁰ And Diogo Alvares himself after surviving the massacre of his fellow soldiers later again joined the Portuguese and many times helped them as a loyal servant of the crown and a Christian.¹⁹¹

4.2. Portuguese and Indians in contrast

Imagination and construction of the “other,” in the case of Vicente’s chronicle the Indians, is always linked to the construction of major group, i.e. Portuguese. This part is dedicated to depict the major contrasts between Indians and Portuguese and to show how Vicente’s construction of Indian image serves to emphasize Portuguese qualities.

¹⁸⁷ See e.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 82

¹⁸⁸ As it was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Fr. Vicente does not recognize any significant differences between various languages of indigenous Brazilians. He only speak of those who “knew how to speak the language” or about “Brazilian language.” See e.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 186

¹⁸⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 45

¹⁹⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 54

¹⁹¹ E.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 59

I have identified such contrast to be most visibly present on three levels that are interconnected and mutually dependable:

First, it is contrast between Portuguese as Christians and Indians as Pagans. Second, it is contrast between Portuguese as Civilized and Indians as Barbarians. And finally third, the contrast between Portuguese as strong and Indians as weak or submissive.

4.2.1. Christian Portuguese v. Pagan Indians

For Fr. Vicente and most of his contemporaries, Christianity (i. e. Catholicism, as we are in the middle of a religious conflict in Europe) and Christian identity serves as principal mechanism of distinction. Christianity is strongly linked to the Portuguese nation in our Franciscan's chronicle, as they are presented to be the guardians of Faith. The same could be said about Spanish but their presence throughout the chronicle is only supportive.¹⁹²

Strong link between Christianity and Portuguese can be found on multiple levels:

1. In language used by Fr. Vicente.
2. On the level of the Portuguese administration.
3. In Portuguese faithfulness.

On the contrary, Indian non-Christianity or paganism can be seen as direct opposite to the Portuguese on all these levels, preferring Chaos instead of Order and Instability instead of Loyalty. Instability might be the most important, as it summarizes all the negative (pagan) characteristics.

4.2.1.1. Language

For Fr. Vicente, there are three crucial positive words of his heroes can serve as synonyms and are often mutually interchangeable: *portugues* ("Portuguese"), *branco* ("white") and *cristão* ("Christian"). Such connection between nationality, race and religion is not surprising in the context of 16th century. Portuguese as heroes of the chronicle are, together with Spanish, the only

¹⁹² The Spanish enter the scene in the chronicle only after dynastic union between Spain and Portugal; after that, the Spanish appear as soldiers sent by king to help the Portuguese against French or Dutch enemies, as in the case of Spanish captain Francisco de Morales that arrived with "fifty soldiers that were also Spaniards." See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 129-130

Catholics. As for race and nationality, we are in the period of blood tests for most of the administration positions and even positions in Franciscan order itself.¹⁹³

The Indians, on the contrary, are most often called “gentiles” in generis, regardless of their religion, or “pagans.” If they are Christians, it is explicitly stated: *índios cristãos* (“Christian Indians”) that are rare and are usually to be found in the Jesuit-controlled villages. While for Portuguese, their general name is synonym to Christian and other words linked to them are also implying their faith,¹⁹⁴ with Indians the case is exactly the opposite, generally implying that they are pagans or *infieis* (“infidels”).

4.2.1.2. Portuguese administration

Christianity, resp. Catholicism is presented as growing through the whole administration of united Portuguese and Spanish crown, obviously with no strong implications of the Spanish position. On the highest level of the administration is king himself (*el-rei* in Portuguese) that represents both state and the Church in his authority. Among independent Portuguese kings, most faithful role is ascribed to d. Sebastian (1554-1578), Portuguese ruler that dies in the famous Battle of Alcácer Quibir with the Moroccans. His legend as a saint and hero begun to spread right after his death and it is partially present in História as well where he is described as “the most zealous”¹⁹⁵ warrior against the infidels. For later kings of the united crown, Fr. Vicente uses their Spanish title of *el-rei católico*, “Catholic king,” showing the critical connection between royal authority and loyalty to the Church.

But it is the general governor of Brazil that has an ultimate link to the Church in the colony, acting as hand of Christianity, its protector and guarantor of the missionary activities. Vast majority of the Christian missions described in the book are ordered directly by the governor, including Franciscan missions, although Fr. Vicente shows Jesuit order as usually being the one capable of carrying out huge missions and having full support of the administration. For instance, governor Diogo Botelho was especially active, ordering Franciscan mission in Paraíba carried out by Fr.

¹⁹³ *Inquirições de genere, vita e moribus* states necessity to provide “clean” ancestry to secure exclusion of the “infected” races including blacks and Indians up to fourth generation. Distinction between “old” and “new” Christians (of Jewish or Muslim ancestry) was very clear and being Christian with the wrong race closed the way to vast majority of public offices. See Amorim, *A Formação dos Franciscanos no Brasil*, 369

¹⁹⁴ E.g. *fiel* or *fiéis*, “faithful.”

¹⁹⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 89

Antônio da Estrela¹⁹⁶ and another Jesuit one in Espírito Santo that was massacred by the Indians.¹⁹⁷ Generally speaking, Fr. Vicente only describes and confirms for us the well established relationships and cooperation between the Church and state in Portuguese colonial territories, with the royal administration and especially governors having power over both religious orders and activities of the Catholic church in Brazil, merging together both spheres into Portuguese nation as represented by Portuguese administration.¹⁹⁸

While the Portuguese administration and its heads, both king and even more the governor, were acting as the greatest of Christians, Indians chiefs serve as examples of the worst pagans. As Fr. Vicente states, the more important the chief is, the more wives he has.¹⁹⁹ Infidelity in more than just this meaning is thus a key characteristics for an Indian leader, as further elaborated in the next part. Indians have not only “no Faith” because of their language but also “no law” and “no king,”²⁰⁰ so there is no firm administration recognized by our Franciscan and unorganized Indians are only left to their own immorality as they have nobody to lead them except their chiefs (or “captains”) chosen due to their family ties and prowess in fight.²⁰¹

4.2.1.3. Faithfulness

Stability, faithfulness or loyalty might be the words to describe the most accurately Portuguese behavior in the chronicle, both on general and personal level. It is loyalty to the king, to governor and royal administration, loyalty to the law, Church and also to honor. Direct link of these loyalties to Christianity can be found already in the language used. We should remember that Catholics are labelled as *fiel* (“faithful”) while *infiel*, word to describe the pagans, means both “infidel” and “unfaithful,” i.e. lacking the fidelity or loyalty. *Inconstancia* or liability to change their loyalty is one of the characteristics related to the Indians most often found in Vicente’s chronicle.

Let me remind the reader of some contrasts between Indians and Portuguese relating to unfaithfulness: 1. Portuguese are monogamous and Indians are polygamous, i.e. they are not

¹⁹⁶ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 168

¹⁹⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 178-179

¹⁹⁸ For alliance between Portuguese crown and Church, see e.g. De Lima, and Lopes Goldfarb, “Religiosidade e Intolerância,” 268-270

¹⁹⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

²⁰⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

²⁰¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

faithful to their own wives and to sacrament of marriage. 2. Portuguese are wishing peace and Indians are always in war (including cruelty and cannibalism), i.e. they are unfaithful to the idea of peace. But the worst demonstration of this lack of loyalty is in their behavior towards Portuguese that wish to be in peace with them; Indians betray them innumerable times in the chronicle, when pretending to be their friends or allies. Indian treachery or deceit (*engano*) is the major characteristics to define them and, at the same time, to define the Portuguese as faithful Christians.

Fr. Vicente's tolerant view on Indian slavery can be understood in this context, as freedom can be only reserved for those who are Christians. The Indians are already slaves of their unfaithful nature and being slaves of the Portuguese actually bring them closer to Christianity and Christian morale, however with the use of force.

4.2.2. Civilized Portuguese v. Barbarian Indians

On the first level, civilization of the Portuguese and barbarism of the Indians is related to the Christianity and Christian behavior; cannibalism, permanent war or polygamy are all practices in deep contrast with Vicente's faith. But it is quite clear in Vicente's *História* that at the same time, they are in a way hereditary to the Indians as a whole, the same as whole set of other "barbarian" behavior, as is demonstrated by quoted anecdote of linguistic predisposition for lack of faith or by parents not leading their children to any moral life, as Indians know no morale. Civilizing the Indians is a target of the missionaries, together with Christianization, and civilization and Christianity are closely linked as it is impossible to clearly distinguish the line. D'Aubeville, French Franciscan, for instance openly stated that accepting Christianity means being absolved of the barbarian nature.²⁰²

Since the openly moral questions, i.e. cannibalism, permanent war and polygamy have already been widely described earlier, I will be focusing more in this passage on other demonstrations of this contrast between civilized Portuguese and barbarian Indians that are more practical. For the notion of Portuguese civilization dominance is obvious from many passages, mainly those describing the Indian habits and what they *lack*; of course in comparison with the Portuguese.

²⁰² For further discussion on relationship between civilization and Christianity, see Thiago Henrique Mota Silva, "Os nativos pelos olhos cristãos: 'encontros' entre Indígenas e Religiosos, do século XVI ao XVIII," *Anais do 35. Seminário Nacional de História da Historiografia* (2009), 1-10

As for the language used by Vicente first, barbarian nature of the Indians is often implied; *bárbaro gentio* (“barbarian gentile”) or simply *bárbaros* (“barbarians”) are the most obvious, usually used in the in relation with negative behavior as hostility towards the Portuguese²⁰³ but also generally to describe the Indians. As I mentioned earlier, Fr. Vicente writes that the only difference between various castes of Indians is that one is more barbarous than the others.²⁰⁴ Other word with similar meaning is *selvagem* (“wild” or “savage”), both as description of Indians that do not live in organized Jesuit villages and as related to cruel or criminal deeds.²⁰⁵ Only when the Indians are under firm Jesuit or Franciscan control, they can be labelled as “domesticated,” indicating more or less successful conversion of the “gentiles” not only in their Faith but in their costumes and lifestyle.²⁰⁶

For the concrete habits and description of what the Indians lack in comparison with the Portuguese, there are some significant points showing Portuguese civilization dominance. First, one “caste,” aforementioned Aimoré Indians does not even live in organized villages and instead sleeps under the tree leaves.²⁰⁷ However, most of the Indians are said to be living in long houses with 70 to 80 pairs in one. These Indians do not sleep in beds but in hammocks and birth and death is also linked with the hammock, as described in previous chapter. They have no covers and share their hammock with their wives. Indians also use no tables but they sit on the ground and have no cutlery.²⁰⁸

Fr. Vicente emphasize they lack other symbols of civilization, too: for instance weights or numbers. “Nor they have numbers, as they cannot count more than up to five, and if they need more, they count with their fingers and toes.”²⁰⁹ In other words, they have no knowledge of mathematics and other related sciences that are viewed as fundamental. And Indian medicine is

²⁰³ For such case see e.g. Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 63

²⁰⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 24

²⁰⁵ E.g. as in the passage on Aimoré Indian and their cruelty. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 42

²⁰⁶ Fr. Vicente mentions such state on five different occasions, although he does not go further into detail. But as de Lima and Lopes Goldfarb affirm, “domestication” of the primitives and their cultural conversion was one of the missionary practices of the Franciscans, attempting to not only teach the Indians how to read or count (i.e. crucial things they lack) but also to speak Portuguese. At the same time, Franciscans in the controlled villages firmly punished Indian costumes and “barbarian” behavior, such as traditional rites or ceremonies. See De Lima, and Lopes Goldfarb, “Religiosidade e Intolerancia,” 280-284

²⁰⁷ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

²⁰⁸ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 25

²⁰⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 29

basically magical and described as “barbarian,” interestingly reminiscent of Arab description of the Western medicine:

“There are no real medics among them besides their magicians that live in distant houses, one per each, with very small door, as nobody dares to enter or disturb them with their own thing.”²¹⁰ Any such disturbance or offence means being subjected to curse and die by staying in his hammock, not willing to eat anything. “And thus they [magicians] should be called more witch doctors than the medics, as they cure no diseased if not by deceit, sucking the parts [of the diseased] where they feel pain, taking from mouth thorn or old nail that they have already hidden in there and showing them [the diseased] as source of their illness and leaving them as sick as they were before.”²¹¹ Fr. Vicente writes there are some medics that are better and attempt to cure with herbs. But if the suffering seems to be taking too long, diseased patient is abandoned and left to die.²¹²

Fr. Vicente is a harsh critic of Indian lack of interest in those who are ill, weak or old. It is both demonstration of Indian immorality and barbarism. Let us compare this horrible account of pagan witchery with the Portuguese. When describing incoming Portuguese *armada*, our Franciscan gives us also details about the care that was prepared for those ill or injured, equipped with 22 apothecaries, two skilled medics, surgeons on the board of “almost every ship” and beds for 200 ill.²¹³

Indian lifestyle from their living conditions to medicine, combined with obviously barbarian behavior contradicting the Christianity as polygamy, warmongering, cruelty and cannibalism, form important contrast in the chronicle with the Portuguese that bring together with Christianity modern or civilized standards of living, as best reflected with the presence of “honorable” and “noble” men coming from the homeland.

4.2.3. Strong Portuguese v. Weak Indians

When describing different types of mutual interactions between Portuguese and Indians in the previous chapter, I showed the deep gap between the two groups in role they assumed in História; Portuguese as the heroes and main actors of the chronicle and Indians as supporting

²¹⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 29

²¹¹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 29

²¹² Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 29-30

²¹³ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 232

character with limited or no action factor on either side of the major conflict between Portuguese on one side and French and Dutch on the other.

Such contrast between Portuguese strength and Indian submission or lack of active characteristics can be found in the language used by our Franciscan. To describe Portuguese soldiers or their deeds, he often uses adjectives as *valoroso* and *valente* (both “valiant”), *fortemente* (“vigorously”) and *coragem* (either “courage” or “bravely”).²¹⁴ We barely find such words associated with Indians and if so, it is directly linked to the brave Portuguese. In one scene when fighting the French and Tamoio Indians, Portuguese Indian confederates are “encouraged with example of the Portuguese.”²¹⁵ Indians on the wrong side, allying themselves with French and Dutch, are then typically using malice, deceit and treason. In other words, Portuguese are modelled according to the ideal of chivalry still lively at the time and as the brave soldiers of the Alexander that is mentioned so many times in the introduction of the chronicle,²¹⁶ contrasting thus the weak and treacherous Indians. Such behavior is strongly refused by the Portuguese, as reflected in the alleged words of d. Fadrique “with reference to Alexander the Great that there is no honor in gaining victory with deceit.”²¹⁷ The word “deceit” (*engano* in Portuguese) is almost solely associated with the Indians, implying they have no honor and are so weak that they cannot face Portuguese in open fight.²¹⁸ On the contrary, another word *honrado* (“honourable”) or *nobre* (“noble”) is always found associated with Portuguese.

If there is a valiant Indian mentioned in the chronicle, and there are very few, he is usually absolved of all his Indian attributes, including his Indian name, symbolically becoming a Portuguese. Let us take a case of Martin Afonso de Souza, titled at one place to be a “valorous Indian.”²¹⁹ A native Indian born with the name Araribóia and founder of city of Niterói is set in the chronicle to fight aside the Portuguese lords and he is said to “prove great prowess in the defense

²¹⁴ Often used as adjective in *com muito coragem* (“with strong courage”) and similarly.

²¹⁵ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 83

²¹⁶ See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 3-4

²¹⁷ See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 250

²¹⁸ Often quoted use of bows and arrows as the main weapons of the Indians can be understood as evidence of Indian weakness, as valiant Portuguese use either swords (weapon of the knight) or gunpowder. Historically, use of bows in Latin Europe was associated with weakness and deceit of the Greeks and as mentioned earlier, Indians are said to both get born and die with bow and arrows. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 27 and Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 30.

²¹⁹ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 83

of Christian name and of the Portuguese.”²²⁰ But he is not treated as an Indian; his original name is mentioned only twice (compare 8 times mentioning his Portuguese name) and his Indian origins the same. Martin Afonso seems to constitute one of the rare cases when baptism (and Jesuit effort) successfully absolved Indian from his Indian nature, making him thus more or less Portuguese, although he would certainly not pass any blood test. “Domesticated” Indian, as mentioned above, would be probably the most appropriate term to describe his position, with additional advantage of being militarily successful in the Portuguese services. On the other hand, case of him and few other “domesticated” Indians do not seem to convince Fr. Vicente to think differently about Indian capability of Christianity, as the “fallen example” of Zorobaba, another *índios de padres*,²²¹ assumes much larger presence in the chronicle and as there is no passage dealing with successful conversion of Martin Afonso or his relationship to Christianity.²²²

Finally, a bodily weakness of the Indians and Indian liability to grave illnesses (especially smallpox) reinforce the idea of white Portuguese dominance, as they are the only group not severely affected.²²³ Even the “caste” of Aitacazes that were successfully resisting the Portuguese for decades in the current states of Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo was so weak to this illness that it “forced them to go to look for us [Portuguese] and become our friends.”²²⁴ This “pestilence of Brazil” made Portuguese dominance and strength even more obvious in the eyes of our Franciscan, as they were mostly protected from cruel disease principally affecting the gentiles.

4.3. Specifics of Indian image in História: A comparative perspective

Following the description and analysis of depiction of the Indians in our Franciscan’s chronicle and emphasizing significant contrast lines with the Portuguese, this chapter is focusing on important specifics of construction of the Indian image in this chronicle in comparative perspective with two Jesuit and two Franciscan accounts from colonial Brazil. Comparative perspective of other Franciscan authors is a logical choice as Fr. Vicente was a member of the

²²⁰ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 83

²²¹ Literally “Indian of the fathers,” meaning fathers of the Society of Jesus. One of the terms used by Fr. Vicente to describe Indians living under Jesuit patronage.

²²² Generally speaking, such cases should not be overstated as a sophisticated thought of Fr. Vicente on the Indian capability of becoming civilized and almost Portuguese. Individuals such as that to raise to the knight status during the wars can be found even among the black that have almost non-human role in the chronicle, even inferior to the Indians. See Leslie B. Rout Jr., “Race and Slavery in Brazil,” *The Wilson Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1 (1976): 87

²²³ Black slaves on the other are said to be affected similarly. See Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 10.

²²⁴ Vicente do Salvador, *História do Brasil*, 39

Franciscan order himself. But since he is the first Franciscan to give us a complex account on Brazilian Indians and most important Franciscan chroniclers come from 18th century,²²⁵ I have decided to incorporate comparison of *História* also with the Jesuits accounts, as the most mainstream, fruitful and influential religious players in Brazil during the period covered.

Choosing particular literature for this imaginary Jesuit and Franciscan discourse is obviously problematic, as there is always both question of author's choice of the sources and question of originality v. genre. This might be a little less of a problem in Franciscan case since we have two main colonial accounts from Brazil that have been already cited in this work: Fr. Jabotão's two volumes of *Orbe Seráfico* from 1761 and Fr. Apolinário da Conceição's *Primazia Seráfica* from 1733. Up until Fr. Apolinário's *Primazia Seráfica*, there is no preserved complex account dealing with Franciscan contacts with the indigenous population.

To counter the time gap between *História do Brasil* and other Franciscan sources used that is more than hundred years, I use accounts of two principal Jesuit authors of the late 16th/early 17th century; *Dialago sobre a Conversão do Gentio* of Manuel de Nóbrega and *Tratados da terra e gente do Brasil* written by Fernão Cardim. There is no doubt there could be used many more Jesuit authors from Brazil, so why Nóbrega and Cardim? Let us begin with Nóbrega; he was the first Provincial of Society of Jesus on Brazilian soil and his short *Dialago* was long used for education of the future Jesuit priests.²²⁶ *Dialago* constitutes one of very few accounts from Brazil that are solely dealing with the issue of Indian conversion. As for Fernão Cardim, his account contains probably the most thorough description of Indian languages, customs and Jesuit missions in the whole early colonial period and he himself was an eyewitness. His perspective is therefore highly educated and with personal experience, as contrasting our Franciscan author of *História*.

While trying to identify the specifics of the Indian image in *História do Brasil*, I have chosen to mention only those that seem to be opposing both of the selected discourses and that step out of the general construction of Indian image among religious writers in Brazil as I came to understand it both from cited primary sources and literature. These are in my point of view:

1. Indian incapability of Christianity

²²⁵ As emphasized in the previous chapters, this is obviously due to the rise of Franciscan presence in late 17th and entire 18th century in Brazil.

²²⁶ Cordiviola, "Os dilemas da evangelização," 91-92

2. Criticism of the missionary activities among Indians
3. Lack of criticism of the Indian slavery and colonist behavior towards Indians

4.3.1. Indian incapability of Christianity

Knowing other Franciscan and Jesuit texts, Fr. Vicente's critical view on Indian capability of becoming Christians might be quite striking. Vicente criticizes on numerous occasions Indians as generally inconstant, lacking morale from their childhood and furthermore being treacherous and only pretending to be Christians. As in other points, he seems much closer to the depiction of Indians by the colonists than his fellow religious brothers, repeating the linguistic anecdote in Gabriel Soares de Souza and many other arguments of him. Similarly as Soares de Souza, Fr. Vicente criticizes even those under the Jesuit influence to be often betraying their new faith or slaughtering the trustworthy Jesuits.²²⁷

In this context, we should note how poor distinction Vicente makes among different Indian "castes," not having any subchapter of his first book dedicated to the tribes and individual characteristics. This is highly unusual if we compare it both with the Jesuits and later Franciscans. Cardim, for instance, in his *Tratados* gives extremely elaborated description of every known caste, providing us information on the language they speak, precise localization and what is even more important, their relationship to Portuguese crown and Christianity.²²⁸ Jesuits were generally very well informed in the case of concrete tribes and languages, being the principal experts on indigenous linguistics in Brazil.²²⁹

This cannot be said about the Franciscans, always lacking enough skillful linguists or experts on Indians. But both Fr. Jaboatão and Fr. Apolinário include similar highly distinguishing description of different Indian castes, with Jaboatão providing the reader with clear information on what caste is Christian and friendly to the Portuguese and what not. Carijó Indians, for example, have never been eating human flesh and never killed "the white people" in their history²³⁰ and

²²⁷ Monteiro, "Tupis, Tapuias e Historiadores," 21

²²⁸ E.g. Indians "from the coast" and mostly from São Vicente captaincy are "old friends of the Portuguese" that helped them in their conquest of Brazil. See Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 195

²²⁹ Let's only mention elite linguists such as Francisco Pinto, Luís Figueira or already cited Fernão Cardim. Jesuits also established "intellectual center of the colony" in Bahia where they founded their colégio. See Pablo Antonio Iglesias Magalhães, "A Palavra e o Império: A Arte da Língua Brasileira e a Conquista do Maranhão," *Revista de História*, n. 165 (2011), 372

²³⁰ Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 30

Goyaná Indians are said to lack almost entirely the barbarian attributes of the “gentiles.”²³¹ So other Franciscan chroniclers can distinguish between “good” Indians that have successfully become Indians similarly as the Jesuits and “bad” Indian tribes, usually allied to the enemies, as Potiguara Indians.

Although these texts are from later period, we know from Jaboatão that Brazilian Franciscan friar Francisco do Rosário published his work on the Indian rites and customs called *Tratado dos ritos, costumes e linguas dos brasis* in 1594²³² that would be probably available to Vicente do Salvador. And Fr. Vicente mentions Cardim, Anchieta and other Jesuit linguists in *História*. We could therefore assume he decided to ignore such detailed information as he does not agree with such distinction between “good” and “bad” Indians and he generally does not believe in their potential of becoming true Christians.

Such skepticism reflects more position of the colonists than of the religious orders, as colonists use the same arguments for Indian slavery. And this skepticism is even further reflected in Vicente’s unexcited or even critical description of the missionary activities.

4.3.2. Criticism of the missionary activities among Indians

Such description is in a sharp contrast both with his Franciscan successors and with the Jesuit authors. From the beginning of the Franciscan presence in Brazil, both Fr. Jaboatão and Apolinário provide the reader with spectacular successes of conversion, speaking of thousands Indians immediately converted even after the first mass celebrated in 1500 during short Portuguese arrival. Fr. Apolinário provides the most detailed account for the first Franciscans before establishment of the custody, speaking of destruction of idols and pagan temples, founding many churches and “baptizing innumerable [gentiles].”²³³ For him, Brazil was only part of great history of conversion of the whole New World, with Franciscans being the pioneers of such magnificent deed. “It was our friars that were the first to plant the Catholic faith,” he writes.²³⁴ Conversion is described as heroic and successful deed full of Franciscan martyrs and thousands of the converts. Indian apostasy from Christianity, so emphasized in Vicente’s *História*, are then explained with

²³¹ Unlike other Indians, they never wage wars on their own but only in self-defense. They are never lying or treacherous and on the contrary, they always helped the Portuguese. See Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 28

²³² According to Jaboatão, Fr. Francisco is also author of Indian catechism in indigenous language (probably in simplified Tupi). See Jaboatão, *Orbe serafico*, 355-356

²³³ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia serafica*, 7-8

²³⁴ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia serafica*, 5-6

wrongdoings of the Portuguese colonists.²³⁵ Connotation of dead missionaries killed by the Indians are very different in História and both other Franciscan texts, as for Vicente it was Indian treachery that lead to their death and it is implied Christians should not trust Indians when they pretend to be interested in the true faith.

Jesuits, as principal protagonists of the Christianization of Brazil, seem to assume similar position as later Franciscans. Fernão Cardim, Vicente's contemporary, gives the reader almost utopic description of the Jesuit missions in Brazil, with Indians being loyal and true Christians due to the effort of Society of Jesus. When entering the first mission with the visitation, he describes the religious fervor of Indians under *padres da companhia*, together singing *Te Deum laudamus*.²³⁶ Many were surprised, he writes, of that "gentiles" are capable of performing such beautiful Christian feast.²³⁷ Cardim also accents the positive expectations of mission currently ongoing among the "wild" Indians, expecting conversion of some "five thousands souls."²³⁸ If the missions are unsuccessful, Cardim ascribes it to the rogue colonists in a similar manner as aforementioned Franciscan authors.²³⁹

Thoughts most similar to Vicente's on the lack of meaning of the missionary activities for the reason of Indian nature and their incapability of Christianity can be found in Manuel de Nóbrega's *O Diálogo para a conversão do gentio* from 1556/1557. This Platonic dialog between Gonçalo Alvares and Mateus Nogueira, two actual Jesuit friars, have been used for decades in the colleges for the education of future fathers. Alvares is expressing many views on Indians that would be shared by Fr. Vicente, describing Indians as "inconstant" and using all the moral arguments that can be found in História. He even claims Indians not to be humans.²⁴⁰

But as it is common with the Platonic dialogue, Alvares is only serving as opponent to be refuted with more optimistic Nogueira that reaffirms indeed human nature of Indians, arguing that they are no less making mistakes than other humans, such as the most rational Jews adoring metal calf or Romans and Greeks having false gods without anyone questioning their humanity.²⁴¹

²³⁵ See e.g. Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia serafica*, 58

²³⁶ Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 292

²³⁷ Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 292

²³⁸ Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 344

²³⁹ E.g. he writes all the Carijó Indians would be already good Christians if not for the Portuguese colonists occasionally trying to hunt them or murder them. See Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 198

²⁴⁰ Nóbrega, *Dialogo sobre a Conversão*, 5

²⁴¹ Nóbrega, *Dialogo sobre a Conversão*, 10

Nogueira takes stance that Indians are indeed supposed to be successfully converted and it is only in the hands of God.²⁴² And Nóbrega himself, as we know from his letter to governor Tomé de Souza, had exactly the same view on the obstacles of missions as Cardim or Fr. Apolinário: activities of the colonists that “hated” Indians.²⁴³ Arguments used by Alvares in Nóbrega’s dialogue and arguments used by Fr. Vicente in his *História* are in fact arguments of the colonists that wished to de-humanize indigenous population of Brazil to support its use as slaves.

4.3.3. Lack of criticism of the Indian slavery and colonist behavior towards Indians

Vicente’s tolerant attitude to indigenous slavery can be viewed as highly surprising and unusual among the religious authors, as both Franciscans and Jesuits have been always presenting themselves to be protecting the Indians against colonist ill-treatment. But it does not come as surprising after previously describing Vicente’s overall views on the Indians. If we assume Vicente’s views are close to those of the colonists, we can also further understand his lack of criticism of activities of Portuguese colonists related to the Indians. For demonstration of how specific this position on Indian slavery is, however, we have to establish general views of the case among Franciscans themselves and the Jesuits.

Let us begin with brief historical and religious excursion to the question of Indian slavery. Theories since the first interaction with Indians questioned humanity of the indigenous peoples, comparably to the black Africans; if Indians were not descendants of Adam and they were indeed savages without soul, they could be treated as such.²⁴⁴ Spanish colonists acted this way for several years, until pope Julius II firmly declared Indians to be humans that ought to be treated the same way as white Europeans.²⁴⁵ This was declared repeatedly, for instance with papal bull from 1537. Similarly, the Portuguese crown (and later united crown of Spain and Portugal) prohibited capture and enslavement of Indians: In 1570, 1595 and 1609, with the latter declaring all Indians, converted and pagan, to be free citizens of the empire that could never be sold or forced to work.²⁴⁶ Loophole of “just war” as described earlier still existed but was harshly criticized by religious orders,

²⁴² Nóbrega, *Dialogo sobre a Conversão*, 6

²⁴³ Cordiviola, “Os dilemas da evangelização,” 109

²⁴⁴ Thiago Henrique Mota Silva and Angelo Adriano Faria de Assis, “A humanidade de ameríndios e africanos em relatos de missionários (1584-1696),” *Revista de C. Humanas*, Viçosa, v. 12, n. 1 (2012), 207-208

²⁴⁵ Mota Silva, and Faria de Assis, “A humanidade de ameríndios,” 208

²⁴⁶ Muriel Nazzari, “Transition toward Slavery: Changing Legal Practice regarding Indians in Seventeenth-Century São Paulo,” *The Americas*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (1992), 138

preferring Indians to be concentrated in religious-controlled settlements. Since early 17th century, free status of Indians as human being was generally accepted although not always respected by the colonists; but even the infamous Indian slave catchers from Sao Paulo claimed in the legal documents their Indian slaves are in fact free.²⁴⁷

As for Society of Jesus, hostile attitude towards indigenous slavery is well known and studied and often caused significant tensions between Jesuits and colonists. So the Jesuit authors are very critical of the colonist behavior to the Indians and their struggles for enslavement, often being cited as reason for unsuccessful missionary activities. Manuel de Nóbrega played crucial role in abolishment of “voluntary sale”²⁴⁸ of Indians in late 16th century and he condemned benevolent practices of secular clergy that was ready to give absolution of sins to those colonists enslaving Indians.²⁴⁹ It was Jesuit friar António de Vieira that compared indigenous slavery to enslavement of Jews in Egypt, as was popular metaphor within both Jesuits and Franciscans.²⁵⁰ Condemnation of Indian slavery can be found in Cardim on many places, including description and criticism of inhumane conditions in *engenhos*, sugar plantations, responsible for death of many slaves.²⁵¹ Reading Cardim can demonstrate Jesuit attitude to Indians as their real fathers and sole protectors against the colonist wrongdoings.²⁵²

Franciscan authors, however writing in a period when Indigenous slavery almost disappeared, provide comparable account with Fr. Apolinário especially constructing the Franciscan order as defenders of the indigenous cause not only in Brazil but in all New World. Apolinário thoroughly depicts the crimes committed by the first Spanish and Portuguese colonists, calling conquistadors “destructors of Americas” that “used tyranny to enrich themselves.”²⁵³ Within Brazil, only in captaincies of S. Vicente and Grao Pará were not committed great crimes during the conquest and first colonization.²⁵⁴ While conquistadors and colonists were enemies of

²⁴⁷ Nazzari, “Transition toward Slavery,” 139

²⁴⁸ This concept was together with “just war” another loophole in the legislation concerning Indian slavery, allowing Indians to sell themselves that was often misused by the colonists claiming to be legal owners of the slaves on this ground. See José Eisenberg, “António Vieira and the Justification of Indian Slavery,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2003), 89

²⁴⁹ Cordiviola, “Os dilemas da evangelização,” 109

²⁵⁰ Eisenberg, “António Vieira,” 91

²⁵¹ Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 322

²⁵² See e.g. Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 356

²⁵³ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia serafica*, 50

²⁵⁴ Apolinário da Conceição, *Primazia serafica*, 51

Indians and the crown itself with their deeds, Franciscan order is said to be sent by God himself to fight hard against all the crimes and always protecting Indians. Fr. Apolinário even dedicates all sixth chapter of his book to the condemnation of Indian slavery and to the deeds of concrete Franciscans, such as bishop Francisco Ximenez, that attempted to stop them.

From documents of the 1619 abolished missions we indeed know of Franciscan struggles with the colonists and their regular complaints to the secular authorities, as the colonists attempted to disrupt catechizing efforts and capture Indians in Franciscan missions.²⁵⁵ Some demands to stop Indian enslavement and regulate their labor conditions are preserved in the correspondence²⁵⁶ but we can only note that it *História* implies Fr. Vicente was not part of such effort. He even openly stated the slavery being better for Indians than their “natural” (i.e. barbarian) way of life and any criticism of the “unjust” enslavement is minimal or none, only relating to activities of the new governors while justifying or simply describing large slave catching expeditions during the conflicts.

Such complex position on Indian freedom, ranging from Indian incapability of Christianity to tolerance of Indian slavery, as force is the mean to limit their treachery and help the attempt to civilize the “barbarians”, makes *História do Brasil* very specific in the middle of other texts of religious authors both in the context of Franciscan writings and comparable Jesuit writings from the same period.

4.3.4. Possible explanations?

Looking for possible explanations for such skepticism towards Indian capability of Christianity and missionary efforts would be a topic for entirely new thesis. But there are two points that should be mentioned: first is already implied similarity of views between Fr. Vicente and colonists, represented by his probable knowledge and references to Gabriel Soares de Souza. Second possible explanation is very low level of Franciscan missionary activities at the time of finishing *História*, combined with recent failure of Franciscan missions in the Brazilian Northeast. Franciscan-controlled Indian villages were established both near Sao Luís in Maranhão and Belém

²⁵⁵ Willeke, “The Mission of Sao Miguel de Una,” 71

²⁵⁶ Vanessa Anelise F. Da Rocha, “Cotidiano Missionário: franciscanos e indígenas em convívio nas missões,” *Anais do XV Encontro Regional de História da ANPUH-Rio* (2012), http://www.encontro2012.rj.anpuh.org/resources/anais/15/1338471544_ARQUIVO_Cotidianomissionario-artigoANPUH.pdf

in Pará, being one of the first in both contemporary states but all of these missions were gradually abandoned by 1619, just few years before Fr. Vicente finished his chronicle.²⁵⁷ Missions were handed to the secular clergy and some of them went under direct control of the Jesuits within several years, including famous mission in Sao Miguel de Una.²⁵⁸

Such failure and obvious Jesuit takeover, however not direct,²⁵⁹ could have influenced Fr. Vicente to adopt stance closer to the colonists. But since Portuguese colonists themselves were crucial in destruction of Franciscan missions in the Northeast, it does not explain almost complete lack of criticism of the colonist treatment of Indians and religious orders themselves in Vicente's *História*.

5. Concluding remarks

In the introduction, I formulated three research questions – or rather three sets of problems – that I attempted to address in this paper, together with adding some wider context and useful information for future researchers. At this final point of the thesis, let me try to reformulate and simplify the answers that were already provided.

5.1. Conceptualization and role of the “Indian”

História do Brasil is no different from comparable colonial accounts, dealing with all the indigenous population as single, homogenous entity that can be described with anti-historical (and anti-geographical) term “Indian”. This imagined Indian nation is divided into “castes”, not independent nations or even tribes; instead, Vicente believes all the Indians share common identity, he distinguishes between them almost solely based on geographical location or their friendly/unfriendly relationship with the Portuguese and all the chapters concerning Indians are generalizing in this manner. *Language* is an important tool he is using to bind imagined Indians together, as he does not recognize major differences between indigenous languages. Instead, he

²⁵⁷ Ildebrando Alves De Lima and Danielle Ventura Bandeira De Lima, “A Ordem de São Francisco no Brasil Colônia: Um Apanhado Histórico” (paper presented at II Encontro Internacional de História Colonial, September 16-19, 2009), http://www.cerescaico.ufrn.br/mneme/anais/st_trab_pdf/pdf_st3/idelbrando_lima_st3.pdf

²⁵⁸ Willeke, “The Mission of Sao Miguel de Una,” 72

²⁵⁹ In this case, Franciscans were forced out by secular activities, not by Jesuits themselves. But Society of Jesus was the preferred order by both regional and general governors.

speaks of a shared “Brazilian language” that is in fact a construction of Jesuit linguists.²⁶⁰ But among the Jesuit authors, such simplification is never fully accepted, as we might see from Cardim and his account when describing vast amount of concrete and absolutely different, unrelated languages same as differences between particular Indian groups.²⁶¹ Vicente’s Indian is much more simplified and unified concept. At the same time, role of these Indians is basically marginal in the chronicle, assuming more importance only when directly put into comparison with the Portuguese. Indians bear the negative characteristics that can be ascribed through them to the main enemies of the Portuguese, i.e. French and Dutch. When serving as Portuguese confederates, their characteristics are either suppressed or their negative behavior serves to put emphasis on the qualities of the Portuguese.

5.2. Indian v. Portuguese imagined identity

To be Indian in Vicente’s chronicle, it means not to be Christian – synonym to Indian is heathen, pagan or gentile – while being Portuguese is synonym for being Christian. And vice versa. This distinction is a core and Fr. Vicente spends significant amount of time to underline Indian incapability of Christianity and their natural inclination towards paganism. Lack of morale as demonstrated by polygamy, poor treatment of the elderly and ill people or cannibalism and warlike behavior is one of the principal arguments for this state, being presented as more or less natural. Other key element of imagined Indian collective identity is barbarian and uncivilized behavior that can be demonstrated in material terms as well, as Indians lack many symbols of the civilized world, even such simple things as covers or weights. Finally, Indian treachery and alleged weakness show opposite values of the Portuguese, that is their sense of honor, loyalty and manly strength. While it is not openly stated in the chronicle, in this sense the Indians become feminine while Portuguese can be identified with masculinity.

5.3. Indian image in a comparative perspective

This “dominant model” for the Indians, as I call it in the introduction, bears in my opinion some remarkable specifics in comparison with similar accounts both from the Franciscan and Jesuit order; I have decided to use the perspectives and models of four concrete authors, that is two

²⁶⁰ Let us just mention José de Anchieta and his *Arte de gramática da língua mais usada na costa do Brasil*. But Anchieta and other Jesuits do not consider at all this simplified version of Tupi language they created to be the language of all the Indians as Fr. Vicente seems to do.

²⁶¹ See e.g. Cardim, *Tratados de Terra e Gente*, 206 when speaking of difficulties of conversion because of the vast amount of languages.

Franciscans (Fr. Apolinário da Conceição and Fr. Jaboatão) and two Jesuits (Manuel de Nóbrega, Fernão Cardim). Overall, Vicente do Salvador is more critical to the Indians in his chronicle than the later members of his own order, and more critical than the significant representatives of the Society of Jesus. And the level of information he either possesses or leaves to the reader of *História* is much smaller, less detailed and much more generalizing than the authors used for comparison. The Indian he constructs is more homogenous and far more negative, lacking even the positive characteristics ascribed by *all the other authors*, for instance high sensibility to music and the musical talents. Fr. Vicente's Indian differs in his inability to become true Christian and that leads to the criticism of missionary activities and tolerance of slavery. This Indian is closer to the general black although Vicente does not openly question Indian humanity; instead, his humanity is questioned indirectly through natural inclination to paganism and slave status, as he even uses the term *negro da terra* so frequented by the colonists that wished to equate blacks and Indians.

5.4. Final words

At the very beginning of this thesis, I noted the objective of establishing and analyzing the dominant conceptualization of an imagined Indian in *História do Brasil*. The image of Fr. Vicente's concept of the Indian would not be fully completed without the exceptions that are present in his chronicle; let me just mention again the case of „valorous Indian” Caramuru that adopted Portuguese name Diogo Alvares. No imagined and constructed identity can be pure even with the most detailed ideology – and Fr. Vicente's colonial ideology was not half as thorough and firmly conceptualized as, for instance, his later counterparts from the 19th century. And my attempted reconstruction of one particular “other” in his chronicle and therefore the “self” itself is not without flaws and complications that could not be avoided; we know very little of Vicente de Salvador personally, his other chronicle is probably lost and we have no correspondence or notes that could correct wrong assumptions. But *História do Brasil* is a source too important to be ignored, even if for such remarkable lack of Franciscan materials from this period. Or even if for the different perspective to the persistent and very dominant narrative of a thoroughly positive Franciscan imagination of the indigenous population of Brazil.

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