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SOLA FIDE: PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS IN PORTUGUESE AMERICA

¹Isabela Cristina Torres e Silva Souza and ²José Alves Dias

¹Master in Memory: Language and Society by the Post Graduate Program of Memory: Language and Society from the Southwestern State University of Bahia – UESB and teacher from the Federal Institute of Maranhão (IFMA), *Campus Grajaú*
²Phd in Social History by Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Full Professor of the Department of History and the Post Graduate Program of Memory: Language and Society, Southwestern State University of Bahia – UESB

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ABSTRACT

Evangelization was an important element for the strengthening of the States that sought to establish themselves in Portuguese America, whether Catholic or Protestant. The Indigenous people, who had already been presented to Christianity through the Catholic missions, since the arrival of the Portuguese people, were now facing a new religious configuration: Protestantism. This was the result of France and the Netherlands invasions - Protestant states – even after the colony had already constituted. Thus, this article aims to understand the rise and decline of the Protestant expansion based on the strategic role of religion in imposing the Colonizing State. In general, the Catholic or Protestant missions were associated with the metropolises and were all settled in indigenous territories, through religious cooptation and the understanding of language, as a form of communication, in order to establish a parity with the moral precepts and metropolitan consuetude's and physical violence in order to exterminate even the most resilient indigenous people.

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INTRODUCTION

Catholicism was introduced in Portuguese America's native population immediately after the arrival of the Pedro Álvares Cabral's fleet. The first Christian missions were installed by the Jesuits since 1549 and aimed the occupation, settlement and organization of the territory. This religious order, born in the context of the Catholic Reformation, was proposed to carry out the decision of the Council of Trent: to expand the Christian faith through the diffusion of the gospel to the peoples of the New World. These missionaries had, as task, Christianizing the native and carrying forward what Europe understood as civilization. For this, the missions were created, also called Indian settlements, where several natives were taken and taught to work and obey new rules. The village natives, through the catechisms, took knowledge of Christian doctrine and were compulsorily inserted in the process of colonization established by the monarchy in Portugal. However, Christianity was not only widespread by Catholics in view of the fact that in the first decades of the sixteenth century the presence of Protestant missionaries in the Portuguese colony

grew, but it declined in the face of the ulterior attacks of the Lusitanians against their competing neighbors. Despite the importance of the expedition of Nicolas Durand de Villegaignon, knight of the Order of Malta and former combatant of the Crusades, in 1555, this French diplomat, now converted to Calvinism, managed to establish himself only two years later, with the reinforcement of a new expedition permeated by Calvinist and Lutheran settlers persecuted by the Catholic Church in his country of origin. The Indigenous people, in turn, in spite of both Catholic and Protestant attacks to expropriate the territory of the natives and to extend the colonized territories of Portuguese, French and Dutch, fought vehemently to the missions that still intended to impose new habits to the inhabitants of the lands occupied. It is therefore the insertion of the three conflicting elements into the discussion of the Protestant presence among the Indians in the Lusitanian possessions based on the classic bibliographical reference.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article intends to address the Protestant establishment in Antarctica and Equinoctial France between 1555 and 1644, the period between the arrival of the first French expeditions in the Guanabara Bay and the resignation of the German John

*Corresponding author: Isabela Cristina Torres e Silva Souza
Master in Memory: Language and Society by the Post Graduate Program of Memory: Language and Society from the Southwestern State University of Bahia – UESB and teacher from the Federal Institute of Maranhão (IFMA), Campus Grajaú

Maurice de Nassau-Siegen, a Dutch Protestant who endeavored to conquer the Captaincy of Pernambuco and the annexation of the Captaincy of Ceará, Sergipe and Maranhão. The research developed in this article has as a methodological basis the bibliographical hermeneutic analysis about the insertion of Protestant Christianity in indigenous culture and religious practices in Portuguese America from the colonial period. In the bibliographic analysis, the data collection was carried out in secondary databases. Secondary worked basis are materials that contain information relevant to the research topic and that already received analytical treatment within what is reserved: Protestant Christianity in Portuguese America among the indigenous. These bases were delimited in books and articles of periodicals (physical or virtual ones) referring to this theme; for that, important theoreticians were applied: Schalkwijk (1997), and his studies on evangelization in Brazil colony, Ribas (2007, 2018), on Calvinist evangelization of natives in Brazil-Dutch and Léry (1961), regarding to the religion of indigenous societies. After data collection, its analysis occurred according to the historical-hermeneutical point of view, analyzing how the cited categories are related to the historical path described in the raised bibliography about the Brazilian Amerindians' evangelization process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reformed Christianity: Protestants in the Colony: In the colonial context, Christianity and its God had been announced and preached by the Portuguese prior to Dutch domination and presented as true faith "by the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church. A system of correlations had already been created: God was Father Tupã ... Concepts, words, dogmas had already been established. A constructed pedagogy. A catechetical project already built" (RIBAS, 2007, p.23). The historiography of this topic indicates that, although some Protestants lived among the native people in randomly distributed regions, since from the beginning of the colonization, Protestantism was present in the villages. Del Priore and Venancio (2010) point to the problematic presence of French Vice Admiral Nicolas Durand de Villegaignon (1555 to 1559) who took care of the creation of a colony in the South, France Antarctica. This movement occurred when, searching for refuge, Count Gaspar II of Coligny, newly converted to Protestantism, along with Huguenots – French Calvinists – asked Geneva for a place to shelter protestant fugitives from religious convictions of the Holy Inquisition. In France, the persecution had already been established and, this way, the idea was to constitute sort of a "City of Freedom", in the part that belonged to the Portuguese for the Protestants. In this context, therefore, the interest on the Eastern territory of the American continent was due to the need to protect Protestants and the desire to spread Reformed Christianity among the "newly achieved" peoples. Considering the enormous impediments to the spread of reforms in Europe, the missionaries came to disseminate the new theses in this part of the world. However, the Catholic division of America between Spaniards and Portuguese was another element of conflict and greed for other peoples.¹

The first significant incursions of Protestants in Brazil were intensified after the former fierce combatant of the Crusades

Villegaignon's arrival. Along with the French diplomat converted to Calvinism came many Catholic and Protestant missionaries. According to Léry (1961), at Villegaignon's request, a further 280 Calvinists from Geneva docked at the Captaincy of St. Vincent in 1557. In this fleet of Protestants came the pastors Pierre Richier and Guillaume Chartier, who celebrated the first religious service in March of the same year. Once installed in the former Martim Afonso de Sousa's Captaincy, the tensions and religious conflicts between Vice Admiral Villegaignon and the European Calvinists began to emerge. In that moment of the colonizing occupation's stabilization, as Del Priore and Venancio (2010, p. 26) affirm, the "mistrust and insecurity, however, would soon disturb the government of Antarctica. Villegaignon was suspicious of his own men and the Taoami Indians, his allies". So, he did not differ much from the way the Portuguese nobility and the Jesuit Catholics expropriated the natives in the rest of the dominion. It was found in the writings from the Calvinist Jean de Léry (1961), who arrived in the colony in 1558, an important ethnographic and historical source which provides a view of the early Calvinists in Brazil. The author accuses, on the canvas, the leader of the French expedition for discontinuity of evangelization, and credits this to his religious inconstancy - sometimes Catholic, other times Calvinist - and his flop to maintain the military fortresses that protected the coast. In 1560 and 1567, a struggle waged between the Portuguese Crown and the General Governor, Mem de Sá, against the French, put an end in the Antarctic France colonizing project. Nevertheless, as from 1612, under the command of Daniel de La Touche, the French reestablished themselves, this time on São Luís island. Sometime later, however, military, political and religious tensions unsettled the unity among the Calvinists and enabled the Portuguese resumption of France Equinoctial, located in São Luís, Maranhão. According to Léry's record, the natives had already become acquainted with the presence of Europeans, which explains the greeting of the *Margaiá* natives waving "knives, mirrors, combs and other trinkets." Although allied with the Portuguese, the natives received them already understanding the barter, and other commodities used in trade with the Indians. "(LÉRY, 1961, p. 61).

Protestants, according to Léry's accounts, were not scandalized by Indians slavery or mistreatment. The Calvinist naturally mentions the cruel practices of European culture's injunction to the Indies, by imposing the use of clothes and their exploitation as a labor force, and covering them against their will. Even so, according to him, the women stripped and walked naked at night: "And if they were not forced to whip, they preferred to suffer with the heat of the sun and to skin the body in the continuous conduction of earth and stones to put on the skin as much simple object "(LÉRY, 1961, p.100). As said, the violence of colonization used to relativize Indigenous history and followed Christian metrics to define the proper way of life for the Aborigines living in the region. Puritanism, more than a characteristic of Christianity itself, is a foundation of the Reformed religions; that is, the life of the Indigenous was reason for scandal to the Dutch not only the culture and its liberties of nudity and sexuality, distinct to the European community, but also a universe with *caraibas* and shamans considered false prophets and demonized. The Franciscan friar André Thévet (1944), who came in the fleet of Villegaignon with the Protestants, deepens the Christian impressions on the shamans - important representatives of the Amerindian traditions:

¹Even considering the existing disputes, the Cardinal of Lorena, exponent of Catholicism, manifested his support to the doctor in Theology and Law, knight of the Order of Malta, Villegaignon (FLUCK, 1991).

The American savages (returning to the subject) revere highly their profits, whom they call pajés, or caraibas, that is, the same as demigods. It is the Indigenous, indeed, idolaters, no less than the ancient Gentiles [...]. These pajés, or caribbean, are people of bad life, who applies to serve the devil with the purpose of taking advantage of his companions. [...] The pajés make believe that they entertain with the spirits on the interest of the community. Or that it will be necessary to act in this or that way. Or, still, what will happen this or that. (THÉVET, 1944, pp. 213-215). The prestige of the shamans was considered a threat to the incursion of religious missions into the indigenous world; they were indigenous spiritual authorities respected for their knowledge of nature and physical and spiritual healings. On the spiritual leaders of the natives, Léry accuses *caraiabas* (shamans) of being false nomadic prophets who "believe not only that they communicate with the spirits and thus give strength to whom he pleases, to overcome and to supplant the enemies in the war, but still persuade to have the virtue of causing them to grow and thicken the roots and fruits of Brazil "(LÉRY, 1961, p. 171). Moreover, there were no significant differences between Catholic and Protestants concerning these Amerindian practices, which were considered to be contrary to the Christian faith, such as the dances and invocations of spirits, associated with the invocation of the devil; therefore, it was strongly condemned by the colonizers and missionaries from these two religious perspectives of Christianity. According to Ronaldo Vainfas (1995, p. 26), based on their interpretation of the world, the colonizer saw idolatry and devil "everywhere: in human sacrifices, in anthropophagic practices, in the cult of statues, in the deification of rocks or natural phenomena, singing, dancing, music ... Missionaries and ecclesiastics, in general, would almost always see the diabolical idolatry with which they were accustomed to live in their cultural universe."

Inasmuch as European didn't consider possible religious expressions outside Christian molds, the Tupinambas were seen as beings without faith, because they did not know or worship the Christian God or any deity, which encouraged the Reformed to reproduce the idea of a people "without faith, without a law and without a king"². "For Steigleder (2010), the fact that indigenous peoples have a differentiated social and political organization, without class hierarchies or socioeconomic stratification— a model common to primitive societies – was enough to reduce Aboriginal people to the condition of barbaric, both from the point of view of the early Protestants and Catholics. For Léry, for example, without hierarchy and order, it was impossible to serve God. The self-centered view of Euro centrism itself led Europeans on the path of denying the unknown - the other one. It is important to note that Thévet and Léry were together in the Antarctic France colony led by Villegaignon and shared this same vision. Despite some contradictions in the narrative of both, we find great similarity in important points on the religious customs of the natives described. Therefore, the natives were not worthy of direct connection with faith unless they were civilized to be Christianized and abandon pagan customs in order to receive divine forgiveness.

Protestants also used as a missionary strategy the associations between indigenous and Christian religious beliefs. Similarly, natural phenomena were explained as the "manifestation" of

God's power. Léry (1961) relates his experience to the natives: When we talked with the savages and told them that we believed in one sovereign God, creator of the world, who made heaven and earth with everything contained in them and disposed of them as he pleased, they looked at each other in amazement and pronounced his designating word of admiration: Teh. And when the thunder rumbled and we used the opportunity to tell them that it was God who made heaven and earth tremble to show his greatness and his power, they soon replied that if we had to be intimidated, it was worthless. This is the deplorable state in which these miserable people live. (LÉRY, 1961, p.164)

The Indigenous, in the remarks of the chroniclers, show that there is a great lord who "thunders up and rains there; but in no way do they know how to pray or venerate, nor do they have a proper place for it", which was not common in the eyes of European Christians. This lack of religious ideas reduced the natives, according to the French and Portuguese, to an inferior stage of evolution to the men of Europe, being one of the indicators of non-civilization to European standards. And "if anyone tells them about God, how I did it, they listen in wonder and attention, asking if the God who speaks is not perhaps the prophet who taught them to plant these thick roots, called by them from hetich (cassava)". (THÉVET, 1944, p. 176). In view of this, for the lack of "civility" and knowledge of the true religion, evil that this "miserable people" has suffered, the solution should be the mission of Protestants: Christianization. This religious philosophy inaugurated a Tupã as it is understood today with the natives. André Thevet and Jean de Léry, even denying indigenous religiosity, used inappropriate analogies (STEIGLEDER, 2010) to bring the Christian creator closer to the natural spirit that referred to thunder, Tupã. Nevertheless, the emphasis of comparison was always the negative connotation of Amerindian customs. The presence of evil was the reference in the cosmogonic vision of the natives of Brazil. Steigleder (2010) states that.

Thevet and Léry transformed "Anhã" into the demon of Judeo-Christian mythology, as did so many other missionaries. They took advantage of the Indigenous' fear of this spirit on many occasions to try to convert them to Christianity, convincing them that once they were baptized and truly believed in God and Jesus Christ, they would be immune to persecution de Anhã (STEIGLEDER, 2010, p.88).

This faith that sought analogies was diligently taught, but the natives seemed to forget quickly. This reinforced the supposed inconstancy of the savage soul emphasized by Catholics and Protestants, but that they were, in fact, the cultural resistance of the native against the religious imposition of the Europeans. Léry (1961) mentions this relation of the native with the beliefs of the Portuguese:

They were greatly astonished when we told them that we were not tormented by the evil spirit, and that we owed it to the God of whom we spoke to them so much, for being much stronger than Ainhã, he forbade us to do us harm. And it came to pass that when they were in fear, they promised to believe in God. But past danger they mocked the Saint, as they say in the proverb, and remembered no more of their promises (LÉRY, 1961, p.165).

Before long, the natives resumed their ceremonies in honor of their dead ancestors and the consultations with the shamans, revealing a consistency in their beliefs only interrupted by the

² Pero Magalhães Gandavo's statement, widespread at this time, which made reference to the non-domain of the Indigenous regarding the faith imposed by the church, and the law and the king by denoting the presence of the State.

"civilizing" imposition of the troubled occupants. Notwithstanding the prejudices shown, the Calvinists sought, in a way, to convert the Amerindian and offer them the "word of salvation" in order to appease probable conflicts and properly exploit the existing natural wealth. It should be noted, however, that for Aparecida Vilaça (2013), these religious incursions of the Protestants of the early sixteenth century, despite being part of the history of Protestantism in Brazil, do not constitute the beginning of mass evangelization of indigenous peoples. For Matos (2011), The Calvinists had a missionary concern for the Indigenous, but they could do little for them. Léry expressed contradictory attitudes that were probably typical of his companions: although interested in the spiritual situation of the Indigenous, their reluctance to accept the Christian faith led him to conclude that they might be among the non-elect. France Antarctica entered history as the first attempt to establish a Protestant church and missionary work in Latin America (MATOS, 2011, p.6).

As Alderi Matos (2011) wrote, despite the efforts of the Calvinists, there was indigenous reluctance to accept the Christian faith reformed by Protestants, since Catholic catechization took place in a more organized and solid way, as a result of years of domination and hegemony in Europe, which confronted the new religion in all territories. European states in general, driven by mercantilism, sought economic alternatives to support the aristocracy and expand the profitable trade of privileged subjects; the Dutch, observing the other powers to undertake occupations in lands of others, were launched in colonization projects. In general, the success of the colonial contracts was due to the conversion of customs and religion of the native peoples.

Moreover, European navigators returning to their homelands were "studying" narratives and descriptions of the New World, observing the written oral accounts of the first travelers, already evaluating the strategies to be employed. Protestant settlers succeeded, at least temporarily, in the expropriating crusades in which they participated.

Three times in the colony, there were Protestant ramifications of Europe: The Reformed Church of the French (1557-1558), in Rio de Janeiro; the Dutch (1624-1625) in Bahia, and, about 30 years later, in the Northern Captaincy, the Germans, Dutch, French, English and Iberian. However, although it was present in the Northern Captaincies since 1624, it was only in 1630 that the phase of preparation and implantation of colonial Protestantism began, and that this was the most solid evangelical presence during the period of greatest expansion of the Reformed religion that lasted until the expulsion of Nassau, in 1644 (SCHALKWIJK, 1997).

Protestants in Dutch Brazil

The creation of the East India Company was a decisive factor in the successful development of Dutch colonization in that period. It was characterized as a private society or organization, formed by investments from countries that wanted to profit from the invasion of territories already dominated by Spain and Portugal. From the geopolitical point of view, they had as objective to take to the New World the Netherlandswar and to weaken the Spanish power. The link with Protestantism is explained by the fact that they were organized by groups of Flemish and Brabant Calvinists fleeing religious persecution. Clearly economic interests were

associated with the political objectives of the Dutch provinces such as the Netherlands, Zeeland and West Frisia.

According to Albuquerque (2010), the West-Indische Compagnie (hereinafter WIC), its Dutch name,

[...] was not created for an exclusively commercial purpose. It was an instrument of Dutch foreign policy to conquer Portuguese and Spanish colonies in the Americas and West Africa. Beyond the European continent, in the seventeenth century, Portuguese and Spanish continued to try to ensure control of navigation and commerce in the Atlantic. The Iberians had discovered the New World in the fifteenth century. With the Treaty of Tordesillas, from 1494, Portugal and Spain, with papal approval, had divided the world among themselves (ALBUQUERQUE, 2010, p.25).

After the creation of the Company, the Netherlands launched the navigation with the initial objective of capturing enemy ships or attacking the Brazilian coast to take what was possible. The Dutch Calvinists arrived in Maranhão in 1621 and later in Pernambuco in 1637, after having been expelled from Bahia by the Portuguese, with the collaboration of the Spaniards, in 1625.

The objective was to dominate the capital of the America Portuguese colony, but, with failure, they decided to change plans and invade Pernambuco, aiming at sugar production that gave profits to the metropolis, since this captaincy had the facility of being populated only on the coast.

Still in 1625, after the conflict in Bahia, Admiral Hendricks and his troops took refuge in Paraíba as they prepared to return to Europe. There they were in contact with the Potiguaras, who sought to establish covenant relations with them. Noting that the Europeans would return to the Dutch metropolis, a group of people, two of them Antônio Paraupaba and Pedro Poti, decided to continue with the fleet. These natives ended up being educated in the Dutch language and in the precepts of the Reformed Religion, in the United Provinces, even being in the University of Leiden. Five years later they returned to the colony, again with Calvinists, a fact that coincides with the second Dutch invasion.

Ribas (2007) explains that the interest of the Dutch was not limited to the

[...] conquest material of this territory, but also in the spiritual conquest of souls. Thus, in addition to the geographical information sought by the Dutch, the group [of Potiguares] provided them with information concerning the religious life of the Indians or Brazilians, as they were designated by the Dutch. These informants were told that the Indigenous were Christians and knew how to pray, and other such information, which was certainly very useful in the formation of the reformed missionary project (RIBAS, 2007, p.101).

The first native church in the Americas, which existed from mid-1625 to 1962, was named Potiguara Reformed Church and had as exponents exactly Paraupaba and Poti. Several functions of administrative order were assumed by Pedro Poti: ruler of the natives of Paraíba and captain of the Dutch army; was the first Protestant martyr of Brazil. Also, in the spiritual

sphere, Antônio Paraupaba and Pedro Poti were active in organizing a spiritual body that would initiate a program of catechesis and formation of reformed indigenous teachers, whose meetings were held in the villages, where baptisms, weddings, conversions and religious suppers were accomplished. Despite the belief in the predestination of souls, in which the elect for the kingdoms of heaven are chosen even at birth, the Calvinist Dutch endeavored to literate the natives to have direct access to the sacred books of the Bible, since the foundations of Protestantism postulated that the reading of religious texts was "an indispensable tool to inculcate faith" and this required the creation of catechetical material to teach the Brazilians. The natives of Portuguese America were the first non-Europeans to have a Protestant catechism developed exclusively for them. This material was elaborated in the year 1640 in the following languages: Dutch, Brazilian - general language, *nheengatu* - and Portuguese. However, the "elaboration of this material, and especially of the Brazilian Catechism, was a source of conflicts between the local Church in the colony and the Mother Church in the metropolis, expressing latent and manifest tensions" (RIBAS, 2007, p.10). The authorship of this catechism is attributed to a young pastor from Paraíba, David à Doreslaer. Leonard Schalkwijk (1997) explains that

At that time, each state had its official church. When this state founded a new colony and expanded its territory, the church followed it, leading ministers to accompany the explorers and to proclaim the gospel to the indigenous peoples. Along with the Dutch invasion in Brazil came the Reformed Christian Church (official church of the Dutch State), served by about fifty pastors and one hundred evangelists (SCHALKWIJK, 1997, p.2)."

Thus, the religion of the Dutch state was strengthened by the rule of the Netherlands. Therefore, a new chapter in the history of the Protestants was written when Maurice of Nassau ruled the so-called Dutch Brazil. Although he encouraged the arts and granted freedom of worship to Catholics and Jews, the government of Nassau contributed to the promotion of Protestantism with the Brazilians: the Dutch organized their church according to the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. It is worth mentioning that this restricted religious freedom was more for economic interests than toleration of other creeds: it was up to the new settlers to obtain the confidence of the Portuguese who inhabited Pernambuco, so that they continued to work and move the economy. Thus, Calvinist doctrine with its capitalist ideology has stood out, taking into account the belief that God's chosen ones deserve the best in all strands, from moral to financial aspects. It should also be pointed out that Catholicism was more regulated than Judaism, because by giving power to the clergy, in an era of indissolubility between State and Church, where politics and religion added an efficient force, was very dangerous and, "Catholic ceremonies could only occur in the churches and, consequently, processions and other public activities were prohibited." (SILVA, 2012, p. 41). Nassau's interests were not missionaries. For him, the natives would be a labor force that would help to maintain the conquest against the Spaniards and the desire to raise profits for the Netherlands - a position that did not necessarily extend to the missionaries. Protestant structures also contributed to the establishment of the new order of conquered territory. In this sense, the struggles between the Portuguese and the Dutch for the land strip in Pernambuco involved more than an alliance for the rule of the

state; the choice of a profession of faith was implicit in the enterprise. Following the success of the WIC in establishing itself in northeastern Brazil, the foundations of Protestantism were superseded by the Catholic faith confession, especially by the seemingly simplest form of faith practice. Initially, the Protestant churches acted as missionaries with the natives, but this did not mean that there was a project of catechizing indigenous people in specific Portuguese America as in the case of Catholics. Gabriela Silva (2012) tells us that it was still under the government of the Marquis of Nassau that "The churches stood out for their charitable action and their missionary action with the Indians there were plans to prepare a catechism, translation of the Bible and ordination of indigenous pastors"(SILVA, p. 30) - which was effectively achieved. According to Silva (2012), it is necessary to be attentive to the fact that this is a (re) catechization promoted by the reformed people, so there are cultural singularities that are proper to this missionization, as the care they had in knowing the notions of divinity and religion that the Amerindians possessed, since it was necessary "to extirpate the papist heresy" (SILVA, 2012, p. 40). However, the pedagogical path of Protestants was, according to Ribas, built on the basis of Catholic Christianization: internships for indigenous children were created, in order to distance them from traditional religions and for the education of children and formed villages (by the French and Dutch) to facilitate Protestant Christian education, avoiding extensive displacements (RIBAS, 2007).

Marlon Fluck (1991) states that only about 400 members of the Reformed Church made up the settlers. The churches were constituted as military buildings, and later they were given the mold of a colonial church when the arrival of "Company officials and merchants, or when the soldiers were discharged and became settlers. In the next step, the mission among the natives was organized as a "coordinated effort of the local churches" (FLUCK, 1991, p.159). The Portuguese were also the target of the evangelization of the Reformed people, along with Indians and Negroes. Thus, Protestants believed that there was some moral decay in the colony, resulting from the failure of Catholic orders, which did not know how to present God to the peoples of the New World. These difficulties were closely linked to earlier catechization, which confused the natives with a new "true faith" - not as ritualized as that of Catholics. God was the same, but the reach of the reward of paradise was given in different ways. Thus, according to Matos (2011, p.5), "22 churches and congregations, two presbyteries and one synod were organized. The churches were served by more than 50 pastors ("preachers"), as well as auxiliary preachers ("proponents") and other officers. There were also many "comforters of the sick" and teachers of parochial schools. Although religious indoctrination was considered successful, the obstacle to the teaching of indigenous adults, already experienced by Catholics, contributed to the focus on the young, since "the work done with the indigenous adults did not bear fruit lasting; they considered them disinterested and unreligious, "and that religious conversion" by means of catechesis ran up against the conception of the world, rooted in the soul of the adult Indigenous, because it was impossible for him to adhere to religious precepts without renouncing the principal cultural elements of his society. " (SILVA, 2006, p.19). The resignation of Nassau in 1644, however, opened space for the revolt of Portuguese and Brazilians against the Dutch who, ten years later, were banished from the colony³.

³Nassau resigned for political questions - Portugal and the Netherlands joined

With this expulsion, the maintenance of the Reformed Religion as a public practice became unsustainable. Even so, the Potiguara Church resisted, not without many escapes on the part of the converts, who took refuge in Ceará, persecuted because of the religion. These two attempts can be considered the first movements that generated a Protestant missionary wave (TERENA, 2017). Vieira's⁴ statements about Poti and Parauapaba in this period lead Ribas to believe that the Reformed people succeeded in their religious mission by reaching out to the Indigenous of Ibiapaba and instilling in them the foundations of Protestantism, the doctrine of justification in opposition to the Catholic Church: "doctrine of justification - sola fide - exempts any form of exercise of religious piety and / or human intercession or of saints in obtaining the forgiveness of sins and in the consequent acquisition of eternal salvation" (RIBAS, 2018, p.56). Later, through the efforts of Ignatian missions and of Father Antônio Vieira himself, Catholicism was introduced again in these regions and obtained results, especially with the withdrawal of the Pernambuco Indigenous to Maranhão.

Why, then, was it necessary to withdraw the Potiguara Indigenous from the Sierra? Did they not also need to be reformed, that is, brought back to the breasts of the holy Mother Church? Certainly. But together, Pernambuco and Tabajaras, were strong and in great numbers. It was necessary, therefore, to divide them to destabilize them and thus to weaken them. It was also necessary to restrain the process of reformed catechesis of Tabajaras Indigenous by Potiguara Indigenous (RIBAS, 2018, p.59).

In addition to removing the Indigenous from Ibiapaba, the Indians were sent to Maranhão to submit them to the government that forbade Calvinist religious demonstrations, forcing deserters to "hang on." After the departure of the Calvinists, Protestant fervor was gradually suppressed by the indoctrination of Catholic missions. Even the Protestant merchants and navigators, from the various European and North American segments that regularly contributed to Brazil, were not great missionary instruments, especially among the natives. Consequently, during this period of about a century and a half, Catholicism was the official religion, and Protestants, original or newly converted, secretly worshiped to avoid religious persecution. About this, Matos (2011) affirms that Brazil closed the doors for the entrance of Protestants until the end of the colonial period, but the necessity of opening of ports and communication with the foreign commerce brought in the entrance of Anglicans; the "Reformed Christian Church came to Brazil under the Dutch flag, and was expelled with it." (SILVA, 2012, p.5). Nevertheless, the coming of the Royal Family to Brazil in 1808 provoked a new religious scene, the result of the opening of the ports to "friendly nations" (read it: England). The need for immigration to settle the territory presupposed not imposing religious, albeit partial, restrictions on allies. Mendonça (2007) says that the Treaty of Alliance and Friendship and Commerce and Navigation was signed in 1810, assuring the British their freedom of worship in houses

or chapels - as long as they do not resemble a temple. In this way, the Protestants were able to settle again in the territory.

Conclusion

The analysis of Protestant Christianity in Portuguese America goes far beyond the boundaries delimited in this article, however, on it are present the main elements that conformed the process of missionary and the economic interests that propelled the coming of French and Dutch, among others, that in parallel Portuguese catechesis and occupation promoted a reorganization of the social, political and religious life of the natives in the New World. The complexity of the relations established after the occupation of the territory has been demonstrated, however, since indigenous disputes, alliances and insubordination have re-signified the strategies of Catholic and Protestant colonizers, making the Christianization of that portion of America a much more difficult than the first navigators supposed. It cannot be said that the native peoples, with their own culture, were always an impediment to foreign settlement and the extraction of valuable goods, for the enrichment of the colonizing nations often counted on the collaboration of natives who, for internal disputes or personal interests, whether they expropriated natural resources or expanded the capacity to exploit labor with the imprisonment of other natives. On the other hand, the territorial and religious disputes between the usurpers from beyond the sea were quite severe and punctuated by many successes and setbacks to which the primacy of Roman Catholicism in Portuguese America can surely be attributed.

Jesuit catechesis was an important reason for this process to occur homogeneously and simply. One can rightly affirm that, with regard to religiosity, the Catholic Amerindians and the Portuguese population have rarely been distorted by the Portuguese Crown and its official religion. The later assaults of Lutherans and Calvinists on Portuguese and indigenous settlers converted to Catholicism ran up against the resistance of the traditions and celebrations acquired with the priests of the Society of Jesus. The expansion of Protestantism was built on the very foundations of the Catholic model: the strategy of catechism translation, Amerindian literacy and, in the specific case, the ordination of indigenous pastors [which did not come to fruition because of the Dutchmen]. It is possible to see throughout the exhibition that until the decline of the Netherlands, representative of the West Indies Company, there were periods of good results for the Protestant missionaries, until finally they failed in their attempt to establish themselves in Portuguese America. In summary, the movement of Catholics and Protestants in the New World assisted the colonizing project driven by the economic interest of exploitation and appropriation of the wealth of indigenous peoples. Therefore, it is concluded that the organic relationship between economic and religious exploitation on the part of the European colonizers, where religiosity consorted with flags of great economic powers in the search of domination of peoples, is beyond the beneficial intention of Christian "salvation".

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forces for a common enemy: Spain. After the signature of the treaty of peace between Portugal and the Netherlands, it was a matter of time until Nassau was compelled to resign.

⁴ The relation from the Mission to Ibiapaba Mountain Range, written in 1660, is a narrative document that tells the diplomatic mission from priest Antônio Vieira, which says a lot about Protestant Indigenous. Vieira's mission consisted of convincing the Protestant Indigenous to return to the coastal villages and the Catholicism.

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