From Farce to Tragedy
António Vieira’s Hubris in a War of Factions

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Abstract

This article relates the story of the rivalry between Portuguese, Brazilian, and foreign Jesuits in the province of Brazil, seeking to identify when, how, and why an internal dispute became enmeshed in the Society of Jesus’s relationship with the outside world. In fact, the riots caused by the 1680 enactment of the charter of freedom of the Indians not only deepened divisions among Jesuits in Brazil, but also involved representatives of residents, governors, and the Portuguese crown in the Society’s internal affairs. António Vieira’s defeat in this dispute contributed to the broader defeat of the colonial tutelage project implemented by Manuel da Nóbrega beginning in the mid-sixteenth century (and which Vieira still advocated in his last political text, in 1694), as well as to the suspension of the aforementioned charter.

Keywords

villages national rivalry – Jesuit hierarchical structure – Fifth Empire

All my works and misfortunes had and have the same origin: zeal and love for the Fatherland and the princes God gave us, and an excessive desire and hope for their present and future happiness, above all other princes of the world.

ANTÓNIO VIEIRA

Introduction

The Jesuit model of ‘reductions,’ based on the political, legal, and economic tutelage of the Indians by missionaries, was developed in São Paulo beginning in the late 1550s. In light of its success, the model was repeatedly adopted (with some adaptations) over the next two hundred years throughout Spanish and Portuguese America. By the late seventeenth century, the expansion of missions in Paraguay, in the regions of Chiquitos, Moxos, and Maynas, along the Orinoco and Amazon rivers, and in the backcountry of northeastern Brazil had formed a large circle of reductions in the interior of the continent.

Given this development, António Vieira (1608–1697) could entertain high hopes for future Jesuit missions in the Americas, and for the impending rise of the so-called fifth empire, prophesied in the book of Daniel. This context may also explain the change in Vieira’s position on indigenous slavery, as he shifted from tolerating the enslavement of captives taken in unjust wars (1655) to proposing a law forbidding the enslavement even of prisoners in just wars (1680). From the committee [junta] gathered in Lisbon, Vieira obtained a charter for the freedom of Indians—without the usual exceptions recognizing just titles for holding slaves—as well as a royal charter stipulating that the Society of Jesus be given the spiritual and temporal government of Indians, and that new villages and missions be created in the backcountry.


3 “This would be accompanied by the recapture of Jerusalem from the Turks, the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire and the reappearance of the lost ten tribes of Israel. It would culminate in the conversion of all unbelievers and heretics to Roman Catholic Christianity under the spiritual suzerainty of the pope and the temporal overlordship of the king of Portugal.” Charles R. Boxer, The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion 1440–1770 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978), 116. See also Alcir Pécora, Teatro do sacramento. A unidade teológico-retórico-política dos sermões de António Vieira (São Paulo-Campinas: Edusp-Ed. da Unicamp, 1994), 213–58; Maria Ana Travassos Valdez, Historical Interpretation of the “Fifth Empire.” The Dynamics of Periodization from Daniel to António Vieira, S.J. (Leiden: Brill, 2011).


These laws incited major riots, however, culminating in the expulsion of the Jesuits from Maranhão, the removal of the province's governor, and several threats of expulsion elsewhere in Brazil, particularly in São Paulo. In that province, the chamber and the superior provincial estimated the Indian population at between sixty and eighty thousand, respectively, at the time of the riots. The overwhelming majority, however, lived outside the mission villages, which had lain empty since the expulsion of 1640. The residents' revolt in 1682 and the threat of a new expulsion from São Paulo prompted fractures among the missionaries, as some proposed abandoning the mission, while others advocated negotiating a modus vivendi with the locals.

This is the context for the writings of António Vieira I shall examine here: the letters that indicate his increasing isolation in the province, and his disappointment at the failure of the messianic aspects of his missionary project.

“A New Jacintada”

In 1663, the Italian Jacinto de Magistris (1605–1668) was ousted from his position as visitor of the province of Brazil and the mission of Maranhão for alleged mental incapacity. Twenty-eight years later, in 1691, António Vieira (appointed visitor three years earlier) confronted a group of his fellow Jesuits who intended to do the same to him, with the same justification. Writing about himself in the third person, he reported:

[T]o come closer to their desired goal and manage to have the visitor considered inept and clearly unable to hold office—despite that he was full of life (as, in fact, he remains to this today) and never so sound and mature in his judgment—he was slanderously accused of being a fool, senile, and practically moribund. [...] those who accused him of dementia...
António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, ARS1, Bras. 3-11, 296–99v.

Since the forties, it had been considered the possibility of the richer college of Rio de Janeiro to lend money to the college of Bahia. For an overview, in the late seventeenth century, see said: “We will soon have a new Jacintada,” referring to Father Jacinto de Magistris, who was deposed from the position of visitor in this province for reasons of dementia.

However, according to Vieira, his opponents did not simply want his removal from the position of visitor, but also his death: “along with the deprivation of my position, they actually intended to put me to death.” “Warned about these threats,” he continues, “the visitor slept under lock and key, and ate and drank with all due precautions, trying not to offend anyone, dissimulating in everything, entrusting himself and his life to God and to His aid, and unhesitating in the duty of righteousness to face death courageously.”

The same story all over again, first as farce and now as tragedy? From the point of view of the narrative, yes: allegedly, Magistris was ousted for mental incapacity, but the reason was essentially political. Vieira claimed to be threatened with deposition for the same farcical pretext, but with the ultimate goal of his murder. And from the point of view of historical consequences, the answer is also yes. In addition to the internal factors producing confrontations between the province and each visitor, in the 1680s a new, external consideration emerged, which profoundly inflected the Society of Jesus’s mode of operation within Luso-American colonial society, and which largely explains its expulsion in 1759.

The primary occasion for conflict in both cases concerned the distribution of hierarchical power within the order and the criteria for the admission, training, and promotion of missionaries. More than once, this dispute over the internal management of the missionaries and their vocations resulted in proposals for dividing the province.

A second point of contention, though largely settled by the time of Jacinto de Magistris’s visitation, was the definition of policies for managing the economic interests of the colleges that owned land, slaves, and production facilities in Brazil, as well as for dealing with an unresolved maze of debt and credit. By the time of Vieira’s visitation, these issues remained only in relation to the Brazilian colleges and did not provoke major conflicts.

A third, new reason appeared in the 1680s: the administration of the royal villages where Indians arriving from the hinterland were incorporated into...
into colonial society. Shortly after the establishment of the Brazilian mission, the Jesuits had assumed sole temporal responsibility for the royal villages, and thus the task of mediating between residents and the main source of indigenous manpower. Ever since, the Jesuits' role as mediators—based, on one hand, on their alleged ability to save the Indians and, on the other, on what they characterized as the corruption of residents and royal officials—had constituted the most striking feature of the Society's identity in Brazil and (later) Maranhão. By the end of the seventeenth century, however, the Jesuits renounced this role in Brazil against Vieira's will, restricting their activities to colleges and missions among Indians and blacks.

Between 1663 and 1691, there was a significant change in the situation, which explains Magistris's deposition and the threats Vieira received. That change, as I shall describe, took place in two phases. Initially, during Vieira's absence from Brazil—he was expelled from Maranhão in 1661, after a conflict with the colonists and the chambers of Belém and São Luís over the governance of royal Indian villages—the dispute within the order concerned the careers of missionaries. After Vieira's return in 1681—bringing with him a charter of freedom for the Indians without the usual recognition of just titles for holding slaves—the internal conflict deepened considerably, catalyzed by colonial society's rejection of the new law.

In this article, I will trace the story of this rivalry, seeking to identify when, how, and why an internal dispute became enmeshed in the Society of Jesus's relationship with the outside world. The riots provoked by the charter not only deepened divisions among the Jesuits in Brazil, but also caused the involvement of representatives of residents, governors, and the Portuguese crown in the Society's internal affairs. Vieira's defeat in this dispute contributed to the broader collapse of the colonial tutelage approach begun by Manuel da

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the accounts presented by Domingos Ramos, Paulo Carneiro, and Baltasar Duarte in 1695 in ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 347r–48v.

A committee (junta) composed by the governor general, the bishop and the main Jesuits, in 1584, approved that Jesuits take over the temporal and spiritual government of the royal mission villages. This decision was confirmed by a royal law three years later: ARSI, Lus. 68, 343 and Bras. 15, 388r–s, § 40.

Zeron, Linha de fé.

Vieira wrote ambiguously about his deposition: “depositio,” “obtenta,” and “iudicata” may mean a possibility as well as an actual deposition. “Brasiliensis factionis et adversus Visitatorem coniurationis brevis noticia” (António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 299).
Nóbrega (1517–1570) in the mid-sixteenth century (and which Vieira was still advocating as late as 1694), as well as the abrogation of the aforementioned charter.

Understanding the intricacies of this dispute is of no little importance, since the province's choice for a new mode of integration and operation in Brazil would seal its fate: turning into a religious order like any other, but owning assets incompatible with its newly restricted activities, the Society became an easy target for criticism and, sixty years later, found itself expelled from the Luso-American territories.

**During Vieira's Absence**

The instructions Vicar General Giovanni Paolo Oliva (1600–1681) gave Visitor Jacinto de Magistris on behalf of Superior General Goswin Nickel (1582–1664) already made reference to the division of the priests in Brazil into factions according to national origin. In fact, Brazilian missionaries thought that no Portuguese could adapt to the complex environment of Luso-American colonial society—a slave society with a predominantly black and indigenous population, speaking a wide variety of languages and dialects, but also possessing cities like Olinda, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro, where a small white population claimed the same status and rights as the metropole. Further complicating the situation was the ambiguous or undefined status of the increasingly numerous mestizos. While the urban environment of the colleges could become a haven

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13. It should be added, in Maranhão and Grão-Pará, the cure of souls in several royal mission villages, an activity reserved for the secular clergy and incompatible with the Constitutions of the order.

14. Carlos Ziller Camenietzki, *O paraíso proibido. A censura ao paraíso brasileiro, a igreja portuguesa e a Restauração de Portugal entre Salvador, Lisboa e Roma* (Rio de Janeiro: Multifoco, 2014), 55. This perception can be confirmed in letters sent from Brazil by several priests. A former provincial of Brazil, Belchior Pires, in a text defending the deposed visitor, describes how Magistris perceived the way the Portuguese missionaries who arrived in Brazil were seen with suspicion, watched and persecuted by the natives in the province. Quoted in Ziller Camenietzki, *O paraíso proibido*, 72.

for Portuguese missionaries unable to adapt to life in the mission villages or to master any of the many local languages, colonial cities were in truth nothing like those of Europe. In this context, missionaries born in Brazil demanded opportunities and authority positions within the province at least equal to those of their Portuguese brethren.\footnote{Both António Vieira and João António Andreoni valued missionaries who knew the Indian languages. The Society of Jesus granted dispensation in the examination of the missionaries who were well-versed in Brazilian languages, as they were more useful than the European languages, according to decree n. 15 of the Sixth General Congregation. João António Andreoni to Tirso González, Bahia, July 16, 1692, arsi, Bras. 3-ii, 309–12v; António Vieira to Tirso González, Baía, August 4, 1688, arsi, Bras. 3-ii, 262–63v.}

Specifically, they requested the revocation of the limit of four ordinances per year\footnote{Ziller Camenietzki, O paraíso proibido, 156.} as well as the cancellation of the prohibition on admitting men of Indian descent.\footnote{Ibid., 157. “Crucial aspects for the Society’s expansion in Brazil were not accepted—the General maintained the admission of maximum twelve priests for three years; accepted the admission of two postulants with Indian blood in the same period, but demanded special examination of their capabilities. He also assured that the Visitor would take missionaries to Brazil, in line with what he thought about the natives” (Ibid., 162).}

Nevertheless, the collection of about 130 letters examined for this research, written in Brazil in the second half of the seventeenth century and addressed, almost exclusively, directly to the superior general, clearly shows that the conflicts among national groups only gained in strength and frequency after 1681—that is, after Vieira’s return to Brazil and the arrival, in the same expedition,\footnote{“Catálogo das expedições missionárias para o Brasil, séculos XVII–XVIII,” in Leite, História da Companhia, 6:598–99.} of Giovanni Antonio Andreoni (1649–1716). These two men alone account for one third of the letters. Between Magistris’s dismissal in 1663 and Vieira’s return in 1681, the few letters written (a mere eight) do not adopt nationality as a fundamental criterion for assessing missionary careers, management of the colleges’ assets, or the prevailing enmities and personal political confrontations occasionally manifested as accusations against Brazilians or Portuguese in general. It appears as if the main issue behind the dismissal of Visitor Jacinto de Magistris had been smoothed over.

\textbf{After Vieira’s Return}

The situation changed dramatically with Vieira’s return to Brazil, after which references to conflicts among different nationalities increased substantially—first
between Brazilians and Portuguese, then between Portuguese and foreigners, and always regarding the criteria for the admission, training, and promotion of missionaries, as well as the distribution of the highest positions in the province. Such disputes were intensified by their overlap with the discussion on whether or not to maintain the temporal government of the royal Indian villages. As mentioned above, the charter of 1680 caused riots throughout the colony, dividing the Jesuits into two groups: on one side, Andreoni’s supporters, who favored resigning administration of the villages to the residents; and on the other, Vieira’s supporters, who wished to maintain the exclusive system that had been in place since the mid-sixteenth century.

Generally speaking, one can say that Vieira managed to precariously impose his choices for two provincialates during a short, five-year period, from his appointment as visitor in 1688—when the Bahian Diogo Machado (1632–1713) was designated provincial—until the premature death, in July 1693, of the Portuguese Manuel Correia (1633–1693), who had governed for only about a year.20

Vieira—who, at the end of his visit in 1691, still expected the emergence of a fifth universal empire led by the Portuguese—viewed the inopportune claims of the Brazilians as based on mere sectarianism:

> For many years, ever since the missions from Portugal no longer came every three years, this sect has been thriving. In a secret conventicle of four Brazilians (António Oliveira [1627–1686], Domingos Barbosa [1624–1685], Francisco Ribeiro [1609–1666] and Manuel Pedroso [s.d.]), it was decided that the Province should be composed entirely of Brazilians.21

Vieira, rather dramatically, entitled this letter to Superior General Tirso González (1624–1705) “Brief report on the Brazilian faction and the conspiracy against the Visitor”; by this point, the dispute had turned into an open war between two “factions,” identified since the 1680s as “vieiristas” and “alexandristas.” Despite Andreoni’s undisputed leadership, the name of the latter faction was derived from Provincial Alexandre de Gusmão (1629–1724), who served from 1684 to 1688 and again from 1693 to 1697—that is, before and after the short period of Vieira’s relative hegemony. However, the “alexandrista” faction was comprised not only of Brazilians, but also of foreigners, and even some Portuguese. In this sense, the name “alexandristas” is highly indicative of...
the dispute’s progression, as a conflict between national groups turned into a war of internal factions that united Brazilians, foreigners, and even Portuguese against Vieira’s project of assuming the temporal tutelage of colonial society.

Even Vieira’s denial of the feud, as in a letter to the secretary of the duke of Cadaval (1638–1727), served to intensify the dispute. Vieira claimed to have been “handcuffed and defeated” because the royal laws on the administration of the mission villages had been amended in Maranhão (in 1686) and Brazil (in 1696). In the latter case, this was the result of an agreement between the “alexandristas” and the residents of São Paulo, where the revolt had been most violent.

The following year, after Vieira’s death, the competition among national groups continued, but now with Italians, rather than Brazilians, featuring most prominently: in a letter to the father general in 1700, Provincial Francisco de Matos (1636–1720) explicitly mentions a “faction of the Italians,” for which “there is sufficient evidence to consider Father Andreoni as their head and foremost promoter.”

Vieira wrote nineteen letters referring to the existence of “factions” or “parties” within the province of Brazil, not including the letters sent to people who held positions in the Portuguese government. Andreoni, who from the early 1680s led the opposition to Vieira, wrote twenty letters on the same subject, using the same terms (faction, party, and so on).

Andreoni’s ascendancy over foreign and Brazilian missionaries began shortly after his arrival in Brazil; ironically, he was brought in by Vieira, who placed the highest hopes in him and paid him numerous compliments. In his first known letter, dated 1685, Andreoni already mentions intrigues against the college’s rector, the Frenchman Jacques Cocleo (1628–1710), and reports that the main offices in the college were occupied by priests from Lisbon—only two readers of philosophy being Brazilians. He also noted the existence of groups defined by national origin.

22 António Vieira to Sebastião de Matos e Sousa, Bahia, June 27, 1696, in Cartas do Padre António Vieira, 3:471.
23 ARSI, Bras. 4, 70–71v.
24 Most of them remained unpublished during this research. I sent them to the directors of the collection who were publishing the Obra Completa do Padre António Vieira (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 2013–). They appeared in the last volumes, in December 2014.
25 See, for example, João António Andreoni to Tirso González, July 16, 1692, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 309–12v.
26 João António Andreoni to the Secretary of the Society, Bahia, March 25, 1685, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 192–93v.
From that year forward, it is possible to observe a growing opposition between the two blocks that would come to be called “vieiristas” and “alexandristas”—a conflict that first arose between Portuguese and Brazilians (with foreigners later allying with the Brazilians), but which eventually assumed an organized political character, and ultimately leading to a new way of proceeding for the Society in Brazil.27 It is worthwhile to provide a timeline of the dispute, so as to better explain how the late seventeenth century became a turning point.

Timeline of the Disputes after Vieira’s Return

Between 1682 and 1684, new divisions among the Jesuits of the province of Brazil came to the fore, as a consequence of the law that Vieira had obtained from the council and the king of Portugal for the freedom of the Indians.28 In 1682, there were no indications of national divisions; a consultation signed by various professed priests, who would subsequently split into irreconcilable factions, narrated the difficulties of maintaining the mission in São Paulo in the face of residents’ opposition. They described the siege of the college, the slanderous words, threats, and “even physical fights” they endured; and the residents’ intention to expel them (again) from the captaincy.29 In anticipation of

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27 In the Mission of Maranhão there are demonstrations of this kind, as of the visit of Pedro de Pedrosa, sent from the Province of Brazil. João Felipe Bettendorff to Giovanni Paolo Oliva, Pará, April 8, 1681, arsi, Bras. 3-11, 146–49. See also Francisco de Matos to Giovanni Paolo Oliva, Lisbon, September 9, 1681, arsi, Bras. 3-11, 150–51v. Among other reasons, the problem here was also the distribution of hierarchical power within the order, but a general discontent arises among the foreign priests who are in mission in Maranhão against the Portuguese and the Brazilians (this split or division, of course, is not the same as in Brazil). In addition to the letters mentioned above, see Aloísio Conrado Pfeil to Giovanni Paolo Oliva, Xingú, October 15, 1681, arsi, Bras. 26, 90, where he declares opposition to the government of the Portuguese as superior to the Mission (Pedro de Pedrosa and António Pereira, one born in Portugal, and the other in Brazil).

28 Committees gathered in Lisbon, in 1680, promulgate the decree of April 1, 1680 which forbade the enslavement of Indians according to the legitimate titles of just war and ransom. The decree has been published in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, 66 (1948): 57–59. Vieira actively participated in the drafting of this law at the Committee of State and Overseas Counsellors (Junta de Conselheiros de Estado e Ultramarinos) which examined his plan for a temporal and spiritual government for Maranhão. António Vieira, “Informação que por ordem do Conselho Ultramarino deu sobre as coisas do Maranhão,” in Vieira, Obras escolhidas, 5:324–39.

29 “Causæ quæ afferuntur à P. Provinciali Brasiliæ, eiusque Provinciæ Consultoribus, caeterisque Patribus infrascriptis pro Collegio D. Ignatii Piratiningano in oppido D. Pauli, a
a directive from Rome in response to their message, the priests of the province formed a committee (junta) in Bahia in 1684, and decided, in the meantime, to abandon the São Paulo mission.

Shortly thereafter, however, António de Oliveira was replaced as provincial—before the end of his mandate (1681–1684)—by Alexandre de Gusmão. According to Andreoni, Brazilians and Portuguese were still divided on the issue of the distribution of offices, and generally opposed to de Oliveira, while foreigners did not usually take a position. Later, however, the latter group would take a stand on the new question of whether to abandon the mission in São Paulo, especially after news of the revolt in Maranhão (where the Jesuits were expelled, along with the governor, in that same year).

Perhaps due to what came to pass in Maranhão, Alexandre de Gusmão called a new junta in 1684, soon after taking office, which reversed the previous decision and authorized the negotiation of an agreement between the Society and the residents of São Paulo. Alexandre de Gusmão himself wrote a document setting out the reasons for not abandoning the college. Also of relevance is the
decision role of the Fleming Jacob Roland (1633–1684), author of *Apologia pro paulistis*, which outlined theological and legal arguments for an agreement between the parties; and of the Italian Jorge Benci (1650–1708), the main informant on the situation of São Paulo, who supplied key elements of the agreement finally concluded in 1694.

It was in this context that Vieira spoke for the first time about the division of the province into national groups. In a 1684 letter addressed to the father assistant, he wrote:

> I inform Your Reverence that in recent years there has been a resolution by four priests born in Brazil, namely Fathers Antônio de Oliveira and Domingos Barbosa, still alive, and Fathers Francisco Ribeiro and Manuel Pedroso, deceased. This resolution—decided by all—determined that the main and most important offices in this province were to be granted to Brazilians.33

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33 Antônio Vieira to the Assistant in Rome, Bahia, 1684, *Ars1, FG* 721-1, 89–90v. “[… ] when the few Portuguese left have died (who have already become unfit for government functions), soon the Province will become fully Brazilian or made up of those born in Brazil only, which is about the same […]. And even though a few stand out for their character, generally they are incapable, due to the innate laziness, indolence and idleness, and they do not have the European spirit and force, in addition to the bad education because they drink milk from Ethiopian breasts and, with the milk, inborn vices, of which very few let go before entering the religious life” (*Ars1, FG* 721-1, 58–59). The facts described in this letter will be referred to, under the same terms, in the letter to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, *Ars1, Bras.* 3-11, 296–99v.
The strategy to achieve this goal, according to Vieira, was simple: only inept Portuguese would be kept in the Society, and would be sent to the missions, while qualified Brazilians would be allocated to the colleges— all with the support of Alexandre de Gusmão, described by Vieira as “a strong advocate of the Brazilian faction, despite being born in Lisbon.” Thus, by his account, “in the philosophy course in Rio de Janeiro, all disciples are totally Brazilian, and in Bahia all but one are birds of the same feather.” His description is diametrically opposed to that of Andreoni, who said that at the college of Bahia there were only two Brazilian teachers, the others being Portuguese. Note, however, that the narrative and analysis offered by Vieira in 1684 are the same as those of 1691: the same four names are denounced, and he uses the same qualification of faction or sect. His perception had changed little over the years.

Against the ‘Brazilianization’ of the province, Vieira proposed some remedies: that new students should be sent from Portugal every year; that both the provincial and the master of novices should always be Portuguese; that young Brazilians should only be admitted if they had good manners and wit; and that their numbers should be restricted. Finally, after incriminating the rector, Domingos Barbosa, and the Provincials António de Oliveira and Alexandre de Gusmão, along with other priests, who “opened the road to this abominable sect,” Vieira proposed the dismissal of the newly appointed provincial. To fight against this faction, Vieira listed five priests who could exert key roles in the province; however, he was shortly to learn that he could not count on all of them—or at least that he did not know how to seek their support. Meanwhile, Andreoni continued to act as an informant for the father general, as well as paying compliments to the new provincial and to the rector of the college of Bahia.

By 1687, the dispute about these two matters—the careers of missionaries and the maintenance of the São Paulo mission—had progressed to the point that the Society considered splitting the province in two. It was in this context...
that, the following year, Vieira was appointed visitor general of Brazil. His first actions were to name a new provincial (Diogo Machado) and a new rector for the college of Bahia (Cristóvão Colasso, 1626–1698), choosing as socius João António Andreoni (who continued to communicate independently with the father general). Vieira also used his powers to intervene regarding the missionaries, whose insufficiency he had pointed out. He proposed a number of programs to prepare them for work among the Indians, including assigning indigenous languages the same status of Latin.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the letters written by Vieira after he became visitor do not mention the still-latent problem of São Paulo.

vice–province, since from the province of Brazil, he did not expect anything, neither in personnel, nor in spiritual terms. João Felipe Bettendorff to Tirso González, Lisbon, September 15, 1687, ARSI, Bras. 26, 158–59v. While Jódoco Peres, against whom Bettendorff directed various criticisms, wrote against Portugal and against the priests born in Portugal and Brazil, Jódoco Peres (Perret) to the Secretary of the Society, Lisbon, February 1, 1687 (ARSi, Bras. 26, 145–46.)

In this sense, he carried out a statistical evaluation of those who entered and graduated in the Society, and of those who were dismissed, always specifying their national origins and explaining the reasons for their dismissal. From a total of 909 entrants admitted between 1566 and 1688, 255 were dismissed. João António Andreoni, “Notícias e reparos sobre a Província do Brasil,” Bahia, 1688, ARSI, Bras. 3–ii, 248–49v.

“Your Paternity categorically prohibits admitting young mestizos to the novitiate without express dismissal from the Superior General (contrary to the distinction Father Alexandre de Gusmão used to make incorrectly as Provincial, defending that not all were excluded). Your Paternity orders the registration in the book of general ordinances; and so it has been done. However, I must represent to Your Paternity that for some years now it has been given to the Provincial of Brazil the faculty to dismiss, every three years, up until five from the number of those who at that time were still admitted, if they had any Indian blood; because I need to know if, given this recent statement, Your Paternity shall wish to repeal such faculty; and if only young men of mixed blood will be excluded, or the ones of Ethiopian blood; or of Indian blood as well; the five ones of more remote Indian ancestry excluded, who, until now, we have been able to dismiss every three years. I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to Your Paternity for having revoked all limitations on the number regarding the admission of European students, provided they are admitted with discernment (in fact, more precisely, such limitation was declared null).” António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 27, 1688, ARSI, Bras. 3–ii, 258–59v.

Moreover, he appointed the Portuguese Baltasar Duarte prosecutor general of Brazil and Maranhão with the duty to promote the sending of Portuguese missionaries to Brazil and the Amazon; in five years, he sent 65 priests and brothers to Brazil and Maranhão. According to Vieira, Baltasar Duarte was appointed “having secretly approved the election, Father Diogo Machado, provincial, Father Cristóvão Colasso, rector of this College and my socius, Father António Andreoni, whom I consulted on this matter long before.” António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 19, 1689, ARSI, Bras. 3–ii, 274v–v.
One may assume he intended to resolve the issue by intervening in the appointment of the province’s most important offices, seeking to weaken or remove those priests who, with the support of the now former-Province Alexandre de Gusmão, had reversed the decision of the 1684 junta. In fact, the first signs of disagreement between visitor and secretary arose when Vieira appointed Andreoni as visitor of Pernambuco, probably in an attempt to remove him from Bahia, where he had worked since coming to Brazil and where the major decisions about the province were made.43

In this light, I wish to advance the following hypothesis: in seeking to confront the Jesuits’ internal resistance to the new laws by intervening in the appointment of offices, Vieira ended up creating the conditions for both issues to be more openly articulated, as well as for cementing the alliance between Brazilians and foreigners—as well as many Portuguese discontented with the visitor’s ideas and style of government.

Thus, in 1690 Andreoni wrote extensively against Vieira in these terms:

Our reverend father general holds a high esteem of Father Antonio Vieira, our visitor for three years now, because he thinks that the father governs as well as he preaches; but he is a man of extravagant ideas, and unfortunate in practice. His genius is diverse and inconstant. [...] This father is of a very nationalistic spirit, and he is opposed to Brazilians. [...] We notice that Father Vieira desires several priests to come from Portugal, in order to form a larger faction; and this desire predominates with him—as he himself admitted to me—which does not seem good to me. Brazilians know him and tremble before him, and cannot [bear to] see him. His style of governance is political, and after having dismissed those who advised him well, now he has near him some of very little edification [...] and approve him in everything [...]. Regarding the administration of justice, he showed himself to be very partial, forgiving, covering up and defending some at his own discretion, and behaving more as adversary against others than judge over them.44

The allegations and accusations of Andreoni were seconded by former–Province Alexandre de Gusmão.45

43 In Pernambuco, Andreoni did not follow Vieira’s instructions, having replaced the Italian Alexandre Perier in the government of the house of Paraíba, which the visitor had demanded to dismiss. Antônio Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, August 16, 1690, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 293v.

44 João António Andreoni to José Fócio, Admonitor of Father General [if not living, to Cúrcio Sexti, Vice Superior], Bahia, June 26, 1690, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 282–84.

45 See Alexandre de Gusmão to Tirso González, Bahia, July 2, 1690, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 280.
Vieira denounced the coup a month later (that is to say, he did not obtain his information from Rome):

Just as Your Paternity had a Fonzar in Rome, in much the same way I have an Andreoni in Brazil, who, just as the former brought echoes of his rebellion to all Frenchmen, the latter being revered or worshiped by all Italians, does not cease to rebel against what Your Paternity requested me to represent in this province. After his disturbances in Pernambuco and after attracting the provincial to his party, in order to keep his nephews in the Society, with twelve testimonies of miscegenation, he attempted and did—on his own authority and against my orders—what I have written to the Father Assistant, so as not to add to the serious cares of Your Paternity with such impertinence.46

However, it was only in 1691 that Vieira reacted clearly and boldly, with the aforementioned letter, addressed to the general and entitled “Brief report on the Brazilian faction and conspiracy against the visitor.”47 Therein, Vieira identifies the heads of the “faction”48 and lists some of his former allies who were now insurgents against him.49 At this point, the coalition against Vieira ranged from the college of São Paulo to the house of Paraíba.50

The letters preserved in the archives do not tell the whole story: Vieira appears suddenly isolated, as if the division between the Portuguese on one side and the Brazilians and foreigners on the other had suddenly disappeared. According to Vieira, all had united against him, including the Portuguese:

46 António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, August 6, 1690, Arsi, Bras. 3-11, 293–93v. In the same year, the General finally received information from the college and captaincy of São Paulo, from which nothing had been heard since 1685: Vieira sent to São Paulo Francisco Frazão, who prepared a serious report on the state of the captaincy. Francisco Frazão to Tirso González, São Paulo, March 18, 1690, Arsi, Bras. 3-11, 277.

47 António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, Arsi, Bras. 3-11, 296–99v.

48 Alexandre de Gusmão, Domingos Ramos, Luís de Sousa, Marcelino de Sousa, and Jerônimo Ortiz, in addition to Andreoni, of course, designated as “lead partner” for the Italians.

49 Cristóvão Colasso, rector of the college of Bahia, described as “surely, miserly, stingy, unresponsive to what is exposed to him, unpredictable, and most often unjust.” António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, Arsi, Bras. 3-11, 298v.

50 António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, Arsi, Bras. 3-11, 298v. He continues: “[…] can someone be justly convicted based on testimony delivered by clearly suspicious witnesses? Certainly not. How then can the Visitor be convicted based on the testimony of a Colaço, a Gusmão, an Andreoni, or all Brazilians, all Italians and also by Portuguese with private interests, all of them legitimately suspicious not for one, but several titles?"
... Father Rego [s.d.] with his Portuguese triumphs, to avenge the deposition of Father Matos; Father Andreoni triumphs with his Italians, to avenge the deposition of Father Perier [1651–after 1722]; the foreigners triumph with their Brazilians, to avenge the deposition of Father Ramos [1653–1728].

Vieira could only notice—and narrate—his isolation:

... They spread my deliberations among those present and absent, interpreting them now against some and now in favor of the others, so as to bring upon myself the hatred, jealousy, complaints, and grievances of all, from every side.

It is at this point that Vieira narrates how he came to distrust the food offered to him and fear the hours of sleep, anticipating his overthrow and murder.\footnote{"[...] with deprivation of office, they indeed intended to inflict me death." António Vieira to Tirso González, Bahia, July 14, 1691, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 297v. See aforementioned.}

When Alexandre de Gusmão—who had governed between 1684 and 1688—returned to power in 1694, he found that conditions were ripe to resume negotiations with the inhabitants of São Paulo. I propose that such conditions were created not only by de Gusmão’s resumption of the provincial government, but also by Vieira’s visitation (1688–1691)—albeit involuntarily or inadvertently. It is not possible to prove that Vieira interfered in the redistribution of powerful positions with the specific aim of once again reversing the decision to maintain the mission in São Paulo—and, by extension, of confirming support for the law for the freedom of the Indians—since neither he nor any other priest (ally or opponent) explains this relationship. Nevertheless, it is certain that it was during his visit and on account of his decisions that a wide alliance of Brazilian, foreign, and even Portuguese priests formed against him and his governmental decisions.

De Gusmão acted quickly: in the annual letter of 1694,\footnote{Alexandre de Gusmão, *Annuae Litterae ex Brasilia*, Bahia, May 30, 1694, ARSI, Bras. 9, 395–400v.} he reported the negotiations and reproduced the terms of the agreement. That same year, the *Apologia pro paulistis* finally reached Rome. Its carrier may have been the Bahian Domingos Ramos, elected prosecutor of the province in Rome through a troubled election, in which Vieira and his ally Inácio Faia (1630–1696) were denied the chance to speak or vote. This fact did not stop Vieira from expressing himself, through his *Vote on the doubts of São Paulo residents regarding the
administration of the Indians.\textsuperscript{53} Some of the observations contained therein were partially incorporated into the 1696 laws called \textit{Administrations of the South}—too few, however, to mitigate the content of the agreement or the effect of the laws.\textsuperscript{54} Nor was the belated support Vieira received from eight former governors of Brazil and Maranhão and the duke of Cadaval of much use. Governor João de Lencastre (r. 1694–1702), who had Andreoni as his confessor, implemented the new laws, making the situation irrevocable.

On July 18, 1697, António Vieira died in Salvador, Bahia. The following December, the superior general published the decision recognizing the validity of Vieira and Faia’s priestly status, thus annulling their May 1694 deprivation of active and passive voices within the Society. Obviously, it was too late for Vieira, and for the Indians in the mission villages, who were already being dispersed among the houses of the residents and the recently discovered gold mines. The four royal mission villages of São Paulo, which had reached a population of about 14,000 Indians by 1640, had since been gradually emptied—so much so that, at the time of the riots, São Miguel had only 58 Indians; Barueri, 17; and Pinheiros, 16 (numbers regarding Guarulhos are unavailable).\textsuperscript{55} This was out of an estimated total population of, as previously mentioned, between sixty thousand and eighty thousand Indians!\textsuperscript{56} The agreement of 1694 became law two years later, and the discovery of gold in Minas Gerais did not contribute to the recovery of the villages. Between 1700 and 1720, the indigenous population of the royal mission villages amounted to a little more than a thousand inhabitants, and in 1766, the villages totaled only about 1,500 Indians.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{54} Despite this decisive victory for the future of the Society of Jesus in Brazil, Andreoni continued attacking Vieira, as well as the decrees against foreigners (which I shall comment later). João António Andreoni to Tirso González, Bahia, May 28, 1695, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 341–42\textsuperscript{2}. See also João António Andreoni to Tirso González, Bahia, July 19, 1695, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 345–46\textsuperscript{2}. It was a matter of confirming his position, but also curtailing Vieira’s actions which Andreoni identified, in particular his appeals to the most prominent nobles of the Kingdom of Portugal.
\textsuperscript{56} Chamber of São Paulo to Charles de Noyelle, March 17, 1685, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 189–90. Alexandre de Gusmão to Charles de Noyelle, Rio de Janeiro, May 18, 1685, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 204. Regarding these numbers, see Carlos Zeron, “Antônio Vieira e os ‘escravos de condição’: os aldeamentos jesuíticos no contexto das sociedades coloniais,” in \textit{A Companhia de Jesus e os índios}, ed. Eunícia Barros Barcelos Fernandes (Curitiba: Prisma, 2015).
\textsuperscript{57} Petrone, \textit{Aldeamentos}; Boletim do arquivo Público Estado de São Paulo, 5 (1945).
(Dis)organization and (Mis)governance of the Society of Jesus

I have demonstrated elsewhere how, contrary to the idea of a Roman orientation, beginning in the mid-sixteenth century the province of Brazil had created a domestic consensus on the need for missionaries to take control of the temporal government of the mission villages. The disapproval of successive generals and the sending of visitors to undertake a spiritual reformation of the province never managed to reverse this policy, established from the time of the first provincial, Manuel da Nóbrega.58 That consensus came to an end only in the late seventeenth century, through internal conflict. Once again, neither the provincial governmental system nor the vow of obedience to the local hierarchy was able to stop a change in the way of proceeding,59 in spite of its having defined the identity of the province for more than a century.60

Anticipating this shift and fearing it would become an obstacle to the fulfillment of the Portugal's messianic destiny—to wit, the establishment of a universal monarchy that would last for a thousand years—António Vieira sought to discredit the dispute as a conspiracy of the “foreign” Jesuits who, in conjunction with the “Brazilian” priests and in opposition to the “Portuguese” missionaries, sought to negotiate a deal with the mestizo slavocrats from São Paulo (the “paulistas”).61 From Vieira's point of view, such an agreement would doom the Indians both spiritually and physically, and thus constitute a serious obstacle to the advent of the Fifth Empire.

In fact, as demonstrated above, the struggle among national groups became a war of factions that united Brazilians, foreigners, and even Portuguese against Vieira. Based on the timeline of the dispute, I suggest that each faction adopted Machiavellian tactics to seize and hold power within the province. The “vieiristas” tried to retain their power by maintaining exclusive control over the mission

58 See Zeron, Linha de fé.
60 On the construction of this identity and the historical memory tied to it, see Zeron, Linha de fé, ch. 4.
61 Several coeval sources stressed that the São Paulo residents had unique characteristics. Vieira, despite never having been to the captaincy, highlights some of these characteristics: “[...] families of Portuguese and Indians in São Paulo are so connected to each other today, women and children are raised in a mystique and domestic way, and the language spoken in their households is that of the Indians, and Portuguese is taught to the boys at the school” (Vieira. “Voto sobre as dúvidas dos moradores,” 355).
Indians, the main economic and military asset in the colony. To that end, Vieira did not hesitate to accuse his opponents of being subject to petty national passions. The "alexandristas" sought to gain power in the province in order to undertake a spiritual refocusing—not only among the order’s members, but also among the colony’s slaveholders, through what they called a “Christian economy.”62 In pursuit of that goal, they waged a war of position, seeking to occupy positions in the hierarchy, as well as strengthening their relations with the governor general and the bishop. Despite royal interdictions, the “alexandristas” also published works about the government of slaves and actively interfered in the writing of the first constitutions of the archbishopric of Bahia.

The dispute between the two factions was described in a long correspondence (about 130 letters) between the general curia in Rome and members of the Portuguese government; in Brazil, the internal correspondence was not preserved, but there are clear indications of the dispute in the records of provincial congregations and in the appointments to the main offices of the province. All of the evidence gathered shows that the vows of obedience and the governmental system undergirding the Society seem to have worked only while there was consensus. Or, to put it another way, the consensus—even if only within a restricted group—seems to have been more of a decisive factor in defining the modus operandi than the Society’s vows of obedience or its governmental system, provided said group was hegemonic or strong and cohesive enough to impose its views by capturing strategic positions within the order’s hierarchy. In order to demonstrate how these factions operated, I interpolate a brief note regarding the organizational structure of the Society.

The Society of Jesus was organized under a monarchical principle.63 However, as Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) argued,64 even though absolute

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62 Jorge Benci, Economia cristã dos senhores no governo dos escravos (1705), ed. Serafim Leite (Porto: Livraria Apostolado da imprensa, 1954). João António Andreoni (João André Antonil), Cultura e opulência do Brasil (1711) (Paris: IHEAL, 1968). As Silvia Hunold Lara comments, the texts by Andreoni and Benci proposed “an economy that balanced survival, submission and production, ensuring domination by masters and the continuity of slavery exploitation” – as the Crown also wanted. There was “a rationality that guided the ‘economic government of the masters’ [Vilhena], and when put into terms of Christian humanitarianism, essentially took care of the continuity of the domination by masters.” Silvia Hunold Lara, Campos da violência. Escravos e senhores na Capitania do Rio de Janeiro, 1750–1808 (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1988), 51–52 and, for the comments on the texts by Andreoni and Benci, 45–56.

63 Ignatius of Loyola, Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, trans. George E. Ganss (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), n. 719. This implies the rejection of other models, e.g., within the Church, the conciliarism.

64 Roberto Bellarmino, Disputations de controversiis christianae fidei (Coloniae Agrippinae: Apud Antonium et Arnoldum Hieratos Fratres, 1628), 132.
monarchy is the highest form of government, it is better when alloyed with aristocratic and democratic elements. The Constitutions of the Society provided for such a system; as Adrien Demoustier shows, they instituted a mixed form of government, or a mixed constitution. It exhibits what José Eisenberg labels "a dialectic between obedience and prudence resulting from voluntarian elements of Ignatius of Loyola's spiritual doctrine." If obedience was one of the three vows that all religious orders demanded from novices, its combination with prudence was specific to the Jesuits. On the one hand, prudence was a corollary to the mobility and autonomy that arose from the Jesuits' special vow of direct obedience to the pope, which placed them outside the jurisdiction of local authorities. On the other hand, future missionaries were encouraged to exercise their practical reason (moral discernment) in the study of casuistry. In practice, the order's detailed written rules were supplemented by the prudence of the missionaries trained in the colleges. Jesuits frequently adapted the order's written rules to the context of specific missions, a move tolerated by their superiors, so long as it did not totally violate the spirit of the Constitutions: "the provision of accounts did not correspond strictly to institutional efficiency, but to the demonstration of the use of prudence and obedience in the practices reported through the missives."

The Society adopted a hierarchical structure: at the top was the superior general in Rome; below him were the assistancies, which congregated provinces (for instance, the province of Brazil fell under the assistancy of Portugal); and in each province were colleges, under which were collected residences, in turn embracing individual missions. The interactions between these levels took place through written correspondence, congregational meetings, and obedience to the order's three organizational texts—the Constitutions, the Rules, and the *Ratio Studiorum*.

The Constitutions and the Rules call for the monarchical power structure of the Society of Jesus to be counterbalanced by three moderating mechanisms: the principles of *formula scribendi*, the congregations, and the appointment system for hierarchical positions. Regarding the first, it is worth noting that any

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67 Casuistry comprised two of the total of four years given to theology in Jesuit education.
69 Initially four, and later six, established under linguistic criteria: Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Germany, and Poland.
Jesuit has the right to write directly to any superior.70 In relation to the second, the general and provincial congregations constitute conciliar powers with the authority to control the general and provincial priests, respectively. And finally, with respect to the third, and according to what we can observe in the organogram designed by Adrien Demoustier,71 “no Jesuit depends exclusively on one single interlocutor” and “no man can rule by himself, without taking into account the reactions of his associates, even if they are his subordinates.”72
Moreover, we see an appointment system that prevents any Jesuit from collecting minions. For example, as can be seen in the diagram, the provincial does not appoint the prosecutor, who is responsible for managing, reporting, and defending the economic and legal interests of the province; the provincial appoints the teachers of the colleges, but not the rectors. As for the rector, he does not appoint teachers, supervisors, or counselors, who are instead designated by, variously, the provincial and the general.

Adrien Demoustier’s analysis of the three organizational texts of the Society shows that “every Superior shall rule with responsible subordinates not appointed by him, and each lower echelon always has the possibility to appeal in writing to the upper echelons including the Superior General.”73
This form of organization and operation has not always contributed to the stability and growth of the Society of Jesus; the Machiavellian precept that disunity was good for republican regimes did not apply to monarchies. When there was no consensus among the Jesuits, their governmental system ended up fueling internal disputes. Additionally, it should be noted that the upper hierarchies in Rome were rarely sensitive to colonial realities. This was the case regarding the government of the mission villages, to name the most important problem in Brazil; on this issue, local officials were unable to obtain the agreement of the central government in Rome, dating back to Manuel da Nóbrega’s first proposals for the conversion of the heathen. But while internal consensus lasted, it was the dominant political force in Brazil and determined the Society’s identity there, despite persistent Roman opposition. In the last decades of the seventeenth century, however, the consensus shattered in both Brazil and Maranhão.

In summary, the fact that the power structure of the Society had taken a Polybian form of a mixed government did not exempt it from internal conflict. Those dissensions intensified in colonial contexts, due to the inherent difficulties of a society built on three cultural worlds, and the exceptional mutability of colonial
circumstances. I shall describe below how João António Andreoni and António Vieira manipulated the Jesuit governmental structure to wage a factional war for control over Brazil, an important piece of that ever-changing world.

**Machiavellian Jesuits**

In 1655, Vieira requested that the king of Portugal urge the superiors of the Society to have “missionaries come to us from Italy and other European nations, as they go to the missions in India, Japan and China.” However, when he returned to Bahia—years later, in 1681—he found foreign priests whose vocation was quite different from what he had requested: the missionaries sent to Brazil preferred to work in urban areas, in the colleges, running for positions in government and education and, in general, accepting rural missions only in the immediate surroundings. Moreover, Vieira observed the rise of what he contradictorily called the “faction” of foreigners and Brazilians—a group that gave no credence to his messianic claims about the Fifth Empire and opposed the way he conducted the mission. In his conviction that the Fifth Empire would be Portuguese, Vieira did not admit that his soldiers—the “soldiers of Christ”—were themselves foreigners.

But how many of the missionaries in Brazil were actually foreigners? During the first half of the seventeenth century, 13 foreign missionaries came to the province, compared to 18 after 1655. In the same period (after 1655), 104 other missionaries arrived, among them men identified as Portuguese, Luso-Brazilian, and of uncertain nationality. In 1654, there were 162 missionaries in Brazil; in 1694, they were 310. At the height of tensions between the two
factions, in the same year of 1694, there were 25 foreigners in all of Portuguese America: 16 in Brazil and 9 in Maranhão. Vieira himself brought along three Italians in 1681, among them João António Andreoni. Between the first and second half of the seventeenth century, there was no increase in the number of foreigners sent to either Brazil or Maranhão. Therefore, what must be taken into consideration is not the foreigners’ numbers but their qualifications, and consequently their integration into the administrative staffs of the province and the mission.

This was Vieira’s assessment as well. In 1661, when he was expelled from Maranhão, Vieira wrote to the general requesting that “the Portuguese should always outnumber [the foreigners].” Later, in 1684, he reevaluated the issue, saying that the solution was to remove foreign Jesuits from positions of authority, and instead send them to missions in the hinterlands. But Vieira was gradually becoming isolated and was content to let the subject rest until 1691, when he reported the threat of being the victim of a “new Jacintada.”

Since his opponents, in his view, made use of “political arts (not to mention Machiavelli),” Vieira did not hesitate to respond in kind, even claiming divine imprimatur for doing so:

After obtaining approval from God—the only one whom I could safely trust—and having in mind the sentence Divide et impera [divide and rule], I determined to follow it with all due diligence.

Dispersing members of the opposing faction throughout Brazil was one of the remedies that Vieira employed to maintain his power. But he did more than...
just lodge complaints and draft ordinances; he also sought to justify his actions by publishing a pamphlet, entitled *Distinction between those born in Portugal and those born in Brazil*:

1. Those born in Portugal are conceived under the heaven that generates men similar to other Europeans. In Brazil, by contrast, they are conceived in a climate in which barbarians are generated, not only barbarians, but the most despicable barbarity, idle, lazy, liars, fickle, drunkards, without law, without faith, without honor. And these are the more civilized [*politeiores*]; the rudest, in effect, are homeless and vagrants, who roam the jungles like wild animals.

2. Those born in Portugal are nourished with milk from white women; by contrast, those born in Brazil are fed with milk from black or mixed women (which they call “mulattas”), and these are much worse even than Ethiopians.

3. Those born in Portugal are sternly educated and corrected by their parents; by contrast, in Brazil, it is rare to find a parent who does not let their children live freely and wildly.

4. Those born in Portugal keep the pure paternal blood; by contrast, in Brazil, there are many who have mixed with Ethiopian or *brasílico*, and their number is great among us as well.

5. Of those born in Portugal and admitted to the Society of Jesus in Brazil, if they happen to come from humble origin, this defect remains unknown; by contrast, there are numerous Brazilians whose parents exert manual work, with the knowledge of all.

6. Those born in Portugal are free; those born in Brazil keep a close blood relationship with their mothers and especially sisters, often a severe impediment to move away and practice prompt obedience, and it is frequently a great temptation to abandon the vocation.

7. Those born in Portugal and educated in our schools do not fall into that addiction which has existed for some time now in Brazil, with the pretext to avoid syphilis. The boys in our schools have been getting used to loving themselves in a very unchaste way [*viz.*, masturbation], so that all due care is necessary to keep this bad influence from those admitted to the Society.

8. Finally, those born in Portugal are stronger and more robust to endure the work. Hence, throughout the province, all lay brothers come from Portugal, except for one or two; while Brazilians declare themselves unfit for the same services, using the opportunity to boast as if they came from a more noble condition and not of servile birth.
At the conclusion of his libelous tract, Vieira returns to his complaints and proposes remedies:

Having considered these numerous distinctions, it is likewise necessary to weigh the proportion between some natives and others.

This number is so different and unequal that at the college of Bahia there are more than fifty Brazilians, while the Portuguese seldom account for the third part. From these, only six are priests, half of which, due to old age, are already unfit for government functions. Hardly two or three remain who can be entrusted with the safety and administration of the colleges or the province. Thus it follows that, within seven or eight years, the province will be fully Brazilian, from head to toe. Given the substantial risk of destruction from such a situation (the mere thought of which makes me shiver), I shall elaborate upon it with examples. The Carmelites of Santa Teresa live in full obedience and edification here; and yet they do not admit anyone from Brazil to the Order, all of them coming from Portugal. By contrast, the Franciscans who, after having received the necessary permission from the supreme pontiff, separated from the Portuguese provinces, we now see, after a few years, fallen into such laxity that they are hardly taken for religious.

This is what the Society should expect or fear from this province, if a remedy is not promptly and diligently applied. But which one? First, that the provincial, the novice master and the Lisbon procurator in charge of promoting the missions shall all be Portuguese. Second, that masters, particularly those of theology, shall also be Portuguese, capable of maintaining large numbers of young people in the line of duty. Third, that examiners upon whom those who are to be examined for the degree rely shall also be Portuguese. Fourth, that the Brazilians be distributed into other colleges: the college of Bahia is the most important, the head and the heart, where the whole body of the province receives the soul. Brazilians themselves understand this strategy very well; it is incredible how diligently the current provincial works to increase the number of Brazilians in Bahia and to send the Portuguese elsewhere.83

As can be seen, Vieira’s proposed remedies did not change the Society’s internal rules, but royal laws that would interfere with the structure of power in the province of Brazil.

In 1692, thus, Provincial Manuel Correia received laws extending previous prohibitions against foreigners becoming heads of residences, colleges, or missions, masters of novices, socii, or provincial secretaries, or even going to Brazil. But Correia passed away a few months after taking charge and was succeeded by the vice provincial, Alexandre de Gusmão. Thus ended Vieira’s short period of relative hegemony, which had begun with his visitation five years before. The enforcement of these laws was delayed through a joint motion filed by Andreoni and Provinceals Alexandre de Gusmão and Diogo Machado. For that reason, new royal laws added more restrictions the following year (1693), including one restricting the position of provincial to Portuguese. However, it should be noted that it was after the amendment of those laws that Andreoni assumed, for the second time, the position of secretary, under Provincial Alexandre de Gusmão, and later ascended to the provincialate.

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84 Boxer makes reference to these two works by Francisco Rodrigues (without mentioning Vieira’s text) in A great Luso-Brazilian figure. Padre António Vieira, S.J., 1608–1697 (London: Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Councils, 1957). In the list of works by António Vieira created by Leite, no reference is made to this text, in spite of the original being intertwined with other letters written by him, and even between two of his letters, referred by Leite, who visibly opted, therefore, to omit this important manuscript.

85 In effect, at least since the period of the government of Vasco Mascarenhas, Count of Óbidos (1663–1667), “[…] law which was never actually enforced, because Fr. José da Costa, Sicilian, was Provincial of Brazil,” between 1662 and 1664 (Leite, História da Companhia, 7335). Equivalent laws were passed for the Spanish America during the same period; see Bernard Lavallé, “Españoles y criollos en la provincia peruana de la Compañía durante el siglo XVII,” in Los jesuítas y la modernidad en Iberoamérica (1549–1773) eds. Manuel Marzal and Luis Bacigalupo (Lima: Fondo Editorial da la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú-Universidad del Pacífico- Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos, 2007), 339–55, here 346.

86 It is important to note that between the two governments of Alexandre de Gusmão, the main positions of the province had been taken by priests appointed by Vieira: provincials (Diogo Machado, 1688–1692; Manuel Correia, 1692–1693), prosecutor in Lisbon (Baltasar Duarte) and the rector of the college of Bahia (Cristóvão Colaço, who, however, will no longer align with Vieira).

87 Andreoni was secretary of the Provincial Alexandre de Gusmão for the second time between 1694 and 1697, and later between 1706 and 1709. In this case, the appointment was approved by the Queen Regent, D. Catarina. See Leite, História da Companhia, 713.
The general curia supported the royal orders to disperse the colleges’ foreign priests (particularly the Italians concentrated in the college of Bahia) into the missions, but only later on and only in part, when some of them obtained permission to return to Europe.

The royal laws also forbade those who lived in the Portuguese kingdom or its dominions from printing any book that was not first approved by the court deputies in Lisbon—a measure against which Andreoni complained to the superior general. This law was also disobeyed, for example by the publication of books by Andreoni and Benci. The situation compelled the superior general to once again assist in the enforcement of the royal decrees, by ordering that the books of the Jesuits in Brazil be subject to review by the provincial of Portugal. This was an exceptional measure in subordinating one province to another.

In response to the general ineffectiveness of these laws, whether they originated from the royal chancery or the general curia, Vieira wrote to the duke of Cadaval in 1694: “I also hope that the power and assistance of Your Excellency will help us to be truly redeemed from another, domestic captivity, in which the Portuguese of this province are dominated by foreigners, the royal decrees notwithstanding.” It is important to note that this same letter from Vieira enables us to relate the “captivity” of which he speaks to the core issue that divided the province—namely, the efforts of the Brazilian faction to shift the temporal administration of the mission villages to the residents of São Paulo, in response to the discovery of precious metal mines. In fact, the paragraph that precedes the abovementioned sentence states:

Regarding the administration of the Indians granted to São Paulo’s residents, it was Your Majesty’s request that I also give my vote, in which I did not conform with the others, observing that all profitable power was granted to the administrators, and all the burdens was passed on to the miserable Indians, who are always brought down by the wheel of fortune, at every turn or shift. The way that suggested itself to me was to align their freedom with the conscience and the interest of those who owe

88 See Francisco de Matos to Tirso González, Rio de Janeiro, March 14, 1700, ARSI, Bras. 4, 70–71v.
89 Leite, História da Companhia, 7:110.
90 João António Andreoni to Tirso González, Bahia, July 19, 1695, ARSI, Bras. 3-ii, 345–46v.
92 Besides the fact that he had been declared unfit to vote and be eligible during the provincial congregation that discussed precisely that matter.
them so much. I will consider it concluded, when I know that I have not displeased Your Majesty, even though the promises of the mines (which I do not believe) may incline several sycophants to the opposite side.93

Vieira’s letter was buttressed by the anonymous testimony of a Jesuit who identified himself only as “Portuguese, a true Portuguese” (possibly in contrast to Alexandre de Gusmão, who, according to Vieira, behaved like a Brazilian, even though he had been born in Portugal).94 In this document—endorsed and signed by no fewer than eight general and captaincy governors95—the author comments on how, after Vieira’s resignation from the office of visitor in 1691,

this province made such a turnaround that it has become disunited in charity, cooled in zeal, and almost lost to obedience, the cause of such considerable change being a decree from Your Majesty which, for the reasons presented to you, with the advice of your ministers, demanded that no foreign fathers would govern under your dominions, this being to the benefit of your Royal service; a decree […] registered in all the conquered territories of this kingdom, but not observed here. The foreign fathers affected by this just agreement of Your Majesty, those living in the mission of Maranhão hand in hand with those in Bahia, winning the hearts of the natives […] resorted with letters to the reverend general, informing him that Fr. António Vieira, with the aim of dismissing all foreign fathers, had by his own authority written to request such a decree from the ministers.

He concludes, “[I]t is a shame that ministers of Your Majesty obey your mandates so badly,”96 most likely referring to Governor João de Lencastre.
Andreoni actively promoted the redistribution of hierarchical positions within the order, especially in the college of Bahia, and resisted the dismissal of foreigners after the promulgation of the royal orders. Like Vieira, he reported the poor quality of the college's philosophy course, but gave different reasons for it: beyond the problem of missionaries without vocations, he said, Vieira himself was to blame, because "his way of ruling is political."

From 1692 on, Andreoni reacted against royal interference into the internal government of the province, as well as against the Portuguese priests and the "slander" aimed at the Italians:

Such is the disease of the nationalities that affects this province. [...] If this disease grows, it does so at the expense of religious virtues, so we should review the deployment of Italian missionaries.

In 1693, Andreoni wrote three more times against the royal decrees. He directed explicit accusations against Vieira; against his amanuensis, José Soares (s.d.); against the prosecutor in Portugal, Baltasar Duarte (1646–1705); and against the provincial, Manuel Correia, who intended to interfere with the king's commands through his influence with the count of Alvor, Francisco de Távora (1646–1710), viceroy of Brazil from 1681 to 1686. Andreoni claimed to have evidence against Manuel Correia, since, as provincial secretary, he had access to the Correia's letters after the provincial's death.

In the same writings, Andreoni again criticized the laws against foreigners: in his view, the king's actions had been based on erroneous information. He broached the subject again two years later, in 1695, attacking Vieira in the process:
Not without a reason did I see the exasperated reactions against the Italians […] [because] speaking Italian is speaking of Luther; Father Vieira himself and another one wrote such things from the province against them; if I had had time, I would have written a very long letter about it.

He then asked, rhetorically, whether it was lawful to repel force by force, claiming that the foreigners of the province supported unrighteous decrees, extorted by means of intrigue and false information.102

In 1700, three years after Vieira's death, Andreoni was still defending himself, disavowing responsibility for the appointment of Italian priests as provincial procurators, procurators of the missions, and church rectors. Regarding the rebuke received from the general for favoring Italians rather than acting with equality towards all, Andreoni denied any wrongdoing and deflected criticism onto Provincial Francisco de Matos, who had dispersed the Italians into the missions even though (Andreoni claimed) they lacked the Brazilians' aptitude for Indian languages and were therefore better suited to the colleges. But with some irony—and perhaps spite—Andreoni rejoiced that the governor was friendly to him and even boasted that he heard the man's confessions.103 Moreover, Andreoni would still serve as provincial of Brazil and rector of the college of Bahia, against the royal decrees.

Between 1723 and 1730, the last distant echoes of those disputes were heard in a proposal to divide the province in two, as Vieira had once wanted. Most priests favored the split, although they no longer aligned according to nationality. But their wishes no longer mattered, due to the changing policy of the Society of Jesus regarding the government of the mission villages—a shift catalyzed by earlier disputes among Brazilians, Portuguese, and foreigners; by all indications, the proposal was accepted neither by the Portuguese assistancy nor in Rome.

Conclusion: Decline of António Vieira's Luso-universal Empire

A review of the documents indicates three points of divergence between the two factions: (a) the distribution of hierarchical power within the order and

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102 João António Andreoni to Tirso González, Bahia, May 28, 1695, ARSI, Bras. 3-11, 341–42v.
103 João António Andreoni to Tirso González, Bahia, June 15, 1700, ARSI, Bras. 4, 78–79v. Provincial Francisco de Matos (1697–1702) informed about the Italian priests and the order for their transfer from the college of Bahia to the missions in a letter to Tirso González, from the college of Rio de Janeiro, March 14, 1700, ARSI, Bras. 4, 70–71v. Jorge Benci, Andreoni's informant in São Paulo, lamented his condition of foreigner and the discrimination against the Italians, asking to leave Brazil. Jorge Benci to Tirso González, Bahia, May 2, 1700, ARSI, Bras. 4, 66v.
the ability to set the criteria for the admission, training, and promotion of missionaries; (b) the definition of policies for managing the economic interests of the various colleges, Brazilians, and Portuguese who owned land, slaves, and production facilities in Brazil; and (c) the primary and recurrent issue of the temporal government of free Indians, and the definition of the system of bonded labor that could be legally imposed on them. The first of these issues manifested within the Society covertly, as a strategy to control the two other, more overt aspects of the dispute.

Vieira proceeded according to the teachings of Machiavelli (1469–1527) when, to defend his preferred Indian policy, he stigmatized foreign and Brazilian missionaries, divided the aristocracy of the province, and acted as an outspoken adviser to the prince. By these means, he intended to delegitimize and undermine the initiatives taken by his opponents during the ten-year-long negotiations with the residents of São Paulo that culminated in the abdication of the temporal administration of the royal mission villages in favor of private parties.¹⁰⁴ It was during this period that Vieira tellingly wrote “não me temo de Castela, temo-me desta canalha” (I do not fear Castile, I fear this caitiff), in a letter arguing against the “adjustment” made between the Jesuits who had taken command of the province and the paulistas.¹⁰⁵

While Vieira was able to achieve the enactment of royal laws against foreigners and the division of his rivals, his opponents were not defeated. They continued to resist by delaying the enforcement of unwanted decrees and by forging alliances with governors and colonists.

The subtitle of this concluding section, referring to the decline of Vieira’s ideal of a universal Portuguese empire, deliberately introduces an ambiguity between the Portuguese Empire and the universal empire. This ambiguity is reflected in a letter from 1670 (partially reproduced in the epigraph), wherein

¹⁰⁴ It is relevant to mention here Vieira’s letter addressed to King Pedro II, in June 1691, “giving an account of the missions.” All this long missive revolved around the theme of the learning of indigenous languages, which Vieira considered as an indispensable prerequisite for the exercise of the apostolate in Brazil. By doing so, Vieira discredited the decisions made by the priests who had gathered at a committee and did not know the native languages. Vieira to King Pedro II, June 1, 1691, in Cartas do Padre António Vieira, 3:419–20.

Vieira confesses to being a victim of hubris in words that seem prescient in regard to both his personal fate and that of his theological-political project:

All my works and misfortunes had and have the same origin, which was the zeal and love of the Fatherland and the princes that God gave us, and the excessive desire and hopes for their present and future happiness, above all other princes of the world [...]. And I am so mad that no experience or disappointment is enough to mend me [...]. But now I shall follow this fate up until death, for the satisfaction that I shall have after it, that the soul of King D. João [1604–1656] shall know the loyalty which I have kept to his ashes, even though so little acknowledged by his descendants.106

Though it happened in unexpected ways, the defeat of the “vieiristas” finally allowed a “spiritual refocusing” to occur in Brazil, something that had been attempted since the generalates of Francis Borgia (1510–1572) and Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615),107 but that only became possible once the province had renounced the exercise of indirect power (potestas indirecta), that is, the temporal control of the mission villages. In giving up this power, the Society of Jesus certainly lost much of its political strength in Portuguese America. But it did not lose its economic strength; rather, it began to use the precepts of João António Andreoni’s and Jorge Benci’s “Christian economics in the slave government” to regulate private relations not just between masters and slaves in the plantations, but also between residents and Indians in the mission villages (delivered to the administration of private parties by the laws of 1696).108

The primary motive that led the “faction of foreigners” to renounce the administration of the royal mission villages seems to have been an intention to assign the missionaries exclusively to the task of caring for black and Indian souls, limiting the activity of the Jesuits to the colleges, the residences, and the missions. The

108 Both Benci and Andreoni had a decisive role in the writing of the first constitutions for the archbishopric of Bahia. See Zeron, “O governo dos escravos.”
foreigners were able to implement this shift through a circumstantial alliance with the Brazilians, who fought mainly for positions of power within the province. Joining forces, the foreign and Brazilian factions defeated Nóbrega's project—which Vieira still supported—of tutoring colonial society through the exercise of indirect power and temporal administration.