



Priest António Vieira – A lesson of Freedom)

Todos merecemos respeito (We all deserve respect)

Voz off:

Música e roupa:

Priest:

Slave:

Indian:

Portugueses colonizer:

Portuguese princess, Catarina de Bragança, daughter of D. João IV:

Voz off: Let's travel, now, to the seventeenth century so that we can meet Priest Antonio Vieira, the "Big Father", as the natives called him, a profound humanist that couldn't stay neutral to the brutality with which that the indo-american people and the black slaves were treated in Brazil, mainly by the hand of the Portuguese and the Spanish. He asked for dignity and tolerance towards the victimized, during the colonization. In fact, a practice consented by all of colonizing Europe. This missionary saw everything and used his sermons to draw attention to all the atrocities, in the Portuguese court.

PAV (saying it to the colonizer): Sir, pay attention to the excellent work of the portuguese missionaries, mostly the Jesuits, the order I'm a part of. Help us in this humanitarian quest of evangelization and acculturation of the populations.

Colonizer: I know, dear preacher, that the action of the missionaries has been decisive for the alphabetization of the local communities, for the miscegenation and for the Christianization, to the point that some European integrated, here and in Africa, mostly, in native communities, adopting their lifestyle. Although the national politics speaks louder.

PAV: Look at these prisoners and tell me if the politics is the most important thing! They are human beings, not objects!

Colonizer: Father, I'm not going to explain this to you. We all know that we need the natives and the black slaves to serve us, the white.

PAV: What a terrible thought, so unhuman! Tell me why are these men different from us?

Colonizer: They were born to serve... I just follow the court orders.

(bow with the arrival of the princess)

Princess: I'm ashamed of the court choices. My father, king D. João, the fourth, despises all of those ridiculous laws and believe me when I say that, unfortunately, these decisions came, mainly, from the Pope himself. We have earned so much with the maritime expansion, we don't need to hurt other human beings... We have different cultures. It's a fact. I was surprised, for instance, by their habit of eating with 2 chopsticks, in China, or their nudity, polygamy, cannibalism and sorcery, among the African and Brazilian people. But we need to accept and, on top of everything, respect them.

Slave (chained): If I'm allowed, and speaking from my own experience, the opposition to the diffusion of the European culture becomes more difficult, when we are victims of the violence from the colonizers. We don't deny to serve you, my lords, but we want to be respected as human beings.

PAV: For example, in the Congo reign, the christianisation of the royal family, the adoption of the portuguese model in administration, the construction of fortifications and cities, as well as the education of the younger in Portugal.

Princess: I don't understand why, even though the Crown has allowed the Christianisation and as well as that the local populations can be treated as equals, we watch, on the contrary, the discrimination, based on religion, culture and the colour of their skin? What will the world become with such prejudices?

Indian: It's a fact, princess Catarina de Bragança! Today, I already know how to speak portuguese thanks to our Payassu, as he is known among the natives. He defends us in front of your father, he argues so that we can be treated as human beings and not animals.

Princess: Yes, the barbarities practiced by the white colonists are an outrage to the humanist conscience of all of us, especially of our dear Father António Vieira. The ethnic barriers don't justify slavery!

Slave: Nevertheless, we already have some accomplishments, for instance, through the marriage between the portuguese sailors, soldiers and merchants and the local women, even because the link with the African women allows a better integration in our communities. That is, as I learned, assimilation.

Colonizer: History isn't that pink. Some of them get married with the purpose of taking advantage of the young women that fear them and because of a bigger access to contacts for the slave trade.

Indian: In Brazil, there are only a few marriages of Portuguese with natives, daughters of tribal chiefs, yet there are some mamelucos or caboclos, their descendents.

PAV: But, on the north of India, although the castas system is against the matrimony with Europeans, because these are, yet, faced with mistrust, the marriages with Portuguese, thanks to the maritime expansion, became accepted.

Slave and Indian (a dance with a mix of feelings): We want to be free, desperately!

PAV (in front of the public): Believe me when I say that I'll keep fighting, with all my strength, to finish, once and for all, this massacre to the human race, for all of those that are discriminated just for being different.

Voz off: On the contrary of what it's said and thought, Father António Vieira didn't get to propose the abolishment of slavery, specially in the seventeenth century, because slavery it was a needed evil in order to produce wealth in Europe. He fought in favour of it, he even got arrested, because of his literature works and public sermons. However, in 1761, almost a century after, Portugal was the first country to abolish the slave trade in the metropole, declaring the slaves that entered Portugal as free. This was the first step to the official abolishment, on the 27th of February of 1869. The last Portuguese slave died, in Lisbon, in the decade of thirties, in the twentieth century, but, unfortunately, in Portugal and in the world, there still are other forms of slavery...