

In search of “Franciscan” Brazil: memory and territorialization in Friar António Maria Jaboatão’s *Orbe Seraphico Brasilico* (1761)

Zulmira C. Santos

Faculty of Arts, University of Porto/CITCEM
e-mail: zulmira.coelho.santos@gmail.com
ORCID iD: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4766-0818>

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ABSTRACT: The main objective of this article is the study of the chronicle *Orbe Seraphico Novo Brasilico*, by the Franciscan Friar Antonio Maria Jaboatão. The article attempts to study the ways in which the chronicle’s textual organization contributes towards a ‘Franciscanization’ of Brazil, at a time when the Society of Jesus, having been expelled from Portugal in 1759, found itself in a very difficult situation. Even though the idea of a “Franciscan World” has its roots in much older models, Friar Jaboatão’s chronicle presents a model of evangelization different from that of the Society of Jesus. He emphasizes the territorial dimension by creating a “geography” of Franciscan churches and convents, thus symbolically appropriating the Brazilian territory.

KEYWORDS: Franciscan historiography; Evangelization of Brazil; “Franciscan” territories.

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RESUMEN: *En busca del Brasil “franciscano”: memoria y territorialización en la obra de fray Antonio Maria Jaboatão, Orbe Seraphico Brasilico (1761).*- El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar la crónica *Orbe Seraphico Novo Brasilico* del franciscano fray António Maria Jaboatão. El artículo trata de estudiar cómo la organización textual de la crónica contribuyó a una “franciscanización” del Brasil, en un momento en el que la Compañía de Jesús, expulsada de Portugal en 1759, se encontraba en una situación difícil. Aunque la idea de un “Orbe franciscano” hundía sus raíces en modelos más antiguos, la crónica de Jaboatão presenta un modelo de evangelización diferente del jesuita. Subraya la dimensión territorial, mediante la creación de una “geografía” de las iglesias y conventos franciscanos, apropiándose simbólicamente del territorio brasileño.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Historiografía franciscana; Evangelización de Brasil; Territorios “franciscanos”.

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RELIGIOUS AND SERAPHIC HISTORIOGRAPHY: IN THE BEGINNING WERE THE FRANCISCANS...

Published in Lisbon in 1761, six years after the terrible earthquake which shook the Portuguese capital and only two years after the expulsion of the Jesuits, Friar António Maria Jaboatão’s (1695-1779) chronicle *Orbe Seraphico*

Novo Brasilico, ou Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brazil is by no means an unknown text. Jaboatão himself is far from an obscure figure (Almeida, 2012): he was an illustrious member of the Academia dos Renascidos, founded in 1759 as a successor to the Academia dos Esquecidos, and he had an established literary reputation¹. An extensive bibliography, both contemporary and modern, offers us a detailed account of Jaboatão’s journey

within the context of the Republic of Letters (as it does for several other metropolitan authors from the Pombaline era), and of his links to the various literary networks of his day, especially those at the heart of the aforementioned Academia dos Renascidos. The Academia sought to write the history of Portuguese America, constructing an identity which highlighted matters specific to the American continent (Kantor, 2004; Cañizares-Esguerra, 2008). This sense of identity had been a feature of the previous Joanine policy, devised in order to avoid jurisdictional conflicts, of defining an “administrative geography” for Brazil (Almeida, 2001). This article only addresses the published section of Jaboatão’s chronicle,² as the section generally referred to as the “second part”, which remained unpublished until the 19th century, demands its own independent study (Almeida, 2012).

Religious historiography of the Early Modern period in its various forms has attracted considerable attention from scholars in recent years, in recognition of these texts’ importance as vehicles for self-representation for the different religious orders (Pellegrino, 2009, 2nd vol). It has been shown that the orders used a number of strategies, such as honoring their founders’ religious experiences, promoting internal ‘holiness’, recording the lives of illustrious and virtuous men and women and emphasizing their central pastoral role, to construct spiritual and institutional identities which were important factors for cohesion. Sometimes these were aimed at a wide audience (as in the ‘general’ chronicles, for example), and sometimes at a local one, within particular territories, in that they tried to accentuate cultural geographies and to configure territories. The latter often occurred in writings produced in the context of evangelization and ultimately contributed to the formation of “regional” cultural identities (Santos, 2008). On the other hand (and even if not always evidently), religious historiography, from the foundational writings to the “histories” of the orders, along with records and memoirs, also served to establish the patrimonial rights and privileges that played an essential role in the political and symbolic construction of the territory (Almeida, 2005). Also in the meaning that Angelo Torre, while discussing the sources ‘transparency’, gives to the concept of place as a “social and cultural constant construction” (Torre, 2011: 10). In any case, the production of religious chronicles has always included a ‘vindicative’ dimension, an argument between the different religious orders and congregations, that attempts to underline its greater proximity to Christian perfection, almost always taking into account their respective founders (Artifoni and Torre, 1996). However, we do not aim to stress a “territorial” presence in its geographical sense. Rather, we intend to underline the “ideological” nature of a “discursive” sacralization of the territory, at a time in which the Society of Jesus had progressively lost relevance, having been expelled from the Portuguese dominions in 1759. The power and wealth of the disseminatory circuits of Jesuit historiography in all its forms (Nelles, 2014) often cause us to forget that “in the beginning, there was Franciscan historiography”, to use a memorable formulation which nevertheless

does not intend to overlook the subsequent output of the Cistercians, Carmelites and Dominicans. As is well known, the mid-16th century saw the publication of Friar Marcos de Lisboa’s *Chronicles* (part I, 1557; part II, 1562; part III, 1570) —“the history of a triumph foretold”, according to José Adriano de Carvalho, through which “Europe, even after the works of Pedro Ridolfi (*Historiae Seraphicae Religionis*, Venetiis, apud Franciscum de Francisci, 1586), Francisco Gonzaga (*De Origine Seraphicae Religione Franciscanae*, Romae, ex Tipographia Domenici Basae, 1587) and above all, the extremely learned Lucas Wadding (*Annales Minorum*, Lyon, C. Landry, [...], 1625-1635), continued to admire Saint Francis of Assisi and many of his children, from the 13th century until around 1520... the nearly one hundred editions of his work, both in its original and various translations into European languages, attest to its influence”(Carvalho, 2001). The effort Friar Marcos went to prepare his history of the Franciscan Order, evident from the range of documents he consulted, summarized and translated, reveals a commitment to fixing the “memory” of the Order, particularly its origins; the *Chronicles* follow the “flux of the Franciscan movement from the time of St Francis until around 1525” (Carvalho, 2001: 53). It was at that time that the “two Orders of the first rule of Saint Francis” began truly to exist (*ibid.*). In a narrower context, Friar Manuel da Esperança furthered this concern by seeking to legitimize the Observant Franciscans as the most direct “heirs of the authentic spirit of the Seraphic Patriarch” (Fardilha, 2001: 105). His work, in one way or another, revealed the whole of Franciscan historiography to be a mark of belonging to origins which did not need to be legitimized but which nevertheless covered up frequent narrative tensions. José Adriano de Carvalho has already drawn attention to the fact that Friar Marcos of Lisbon was little concerned with evangelization in this first attempt, so broad and at such broad a scale. This is despite the intense climate of apocalyptic messianism which, though more evident at the end of the 15th century, nevertheless continued into the 16th in different, and often ever-less “obvious”, ways (Carvalho, 2001: 73). We should not overlook Francisco Gonzaga’s “depiction” of the Order, *De Origine Seraphicae Religione Franciscanae* (1587), written in Latin accompanied by iconography. Gonzaga is generally credited as responsible for a kind of “internationalization”³ of the Franciscan presence (Almeida, 2012), but, as José Adriano Carvalho stresses, “it was not until the ‘Fourth Part’ of Friar António Daza’s *Chronicles*, published in 1611, and which had the “accounting” mentality which would become common in later chronicles (giving the number of monasteries, missionaries, martyrs, conversions and so on), that the few threads “woven by Friar Marcos with regard to evangelization, highlighted principally in the Third Part of his work,” were picked up and unravelled again (Carvalho, 2001: 73; Sanz Hermida, 2001). Moreover, it can be argued —barring better judgement— that, especially from Friar António Daza onwards, Franciscan historiography on evangelization acquired a growing tone of persistence, with points of great narrative tension, as if in

some way responding polemically to the hegemonic efforts of Jesuit writing practices —practices which, through chronicles, letters and martyrologies, sought a kind of control over culture, over memory, and over the territories where they evangelized (Curto, 1998: 449). At the time of the ‘evangelizing’ controversy—which was not just a rift between the Jesuits and the Franciscans—Paulo da Trindade claimed that “our Father St. Francis travelled around India making his journey in almost the same years as he lived in this mortal life” (Trindade, 1962: part I: 14, 73; part II: 14, 67). The dedication to converting Muslims, the references to the five martyrs of Morocco, the vast overseas martyrology which is referred to over the course of the work, the martyrs in the lands of the Reformation (particularly England and France): all of these could, as Carvalho repeatedly points out, revive the Franciscan tradition “in the wake of Joachimite suggestions, ‘rewritten *in sede seraphica*’”, which conceived the conversion of Muslims and other infidels as an event of the sixth age, and which would be achieved at the cost of many friars’ martyrdoms.⁴ Research on Trindade, a Franciscan chronicler based in the East, has underlined this aspect, which could symbolically translate into a special prestige for the Franciscans, crowned with the halo of providentialism, which other orders did not enjoy. Studies of his long-unpublished “Spiritual Conquest” (c. 1630), which repeatedly reminds the reader of the primacy of the Franciscans both with regards to their arrival in India (“they were the first to pass to this Orient”) and martyrdom (“the first to shed Christian blood in the Orient”), have accentuated the “topical” character of this claim. But so have studies on Friar Jacinto de Deus (Xavier, 2008; Faria, 2011, 2013), who repeatedly reiterates the same pioneerism of St Francis’ disciples (“forty-two years before any other religious order” [Deus, 1690: 1-20]) in works like the *Vergel de plantas e flores da Província da Madre de Deus dos Capuchos Reformados*. This “topical” dimension should not be separated from the way the Order faced its destiny and mission, an aspect which, at least from the symbolic point of view, distinguished its evangelizing hallmark from other religious orders (Correia, 2001; Gruzinski, 2012). It should also be pointed out that Friar Fernando da Soledade, in his additions to Friar Manuel da Esperança’s work, inscribed the mission in the East within the sphere of a “divine project of universal redemption” based in Joachimism, in which “the presence of the Friars Minor from Portugal in the far-off lands in the East were the means ordained by Divine Providence to carry out the evangelizing drive of the Seraphic Patriarch”—“authorizing, in this way, his identification as an apocalyptic figure of the Angel of the Sixth Seal” (Fardilha, 2001: 117).⁵ This view is confirmed in Friar Francisco Negrão and Friar Paulo da Trindade’s manuscripts. Indeed, the claim to primacy originates in the work of Friar António Daza, as has already been mentioned, and continues throughout all Franciscan historiography from the Orient to Brazil, establishing an interpretative paradigm which, notwithstanding the chronological differences, can be found for example in Leonor de

S. João’s manuscript “Tratado da antiga e curiosa fundação do Convento de Jesus de Setúbal”. In this manuscript, written between 1630 and 1644, the author notes that Friar Henrique Coimbra was confessor at the convent, and points out that “in the land of Brazil”, where “the storm left his companions stranded returning from India, they were the first in that part to preach to divine word, and the Catholic faith, marking with a great cross the place where they first said mass.”⁶ Arguments like appear almost topical within the sphere of Franciscan writings. Nevertheless, they seem to establish a paradigm of intense connection between the Portuguese monarchy’s plans for evangelization and the Franciscan Order (Boadas Llavat, 2002; Pacheco, 2013: 190-193; Almeida, 2012). The role of the Franciscans, particularly in terms of the evangelization of the Orient, has come to be seen as secondary to the better-known actions of the Society of Jesus, which was committed to constructing and spreading a hegemonic image both in the Orient and in Brazil (Xavier, 2005, 2008; Županov, 2005); we have already underlined the fundamental role which the “construction” of the holiness of Francis Xavier had played in the second half of the 16th century and first half of the 17th as a strategy to draw all of Europe’s attention towards the Society’s activities. In any case, we know how much the Jesuits invested in writing and circulating Francis Xavier’s *Lives*, from Manuel Teixeira’s biographical manuscript (1575-1579) to the publications of Torsellini (1594, 1596) and Lucena (1600), in the context of his beatification and subsequent canonization in the same year as that of Ignatius de Loyola (1622), and in the widespread and strategic dissemination of iconography (Osswald, 2008; Torres Olleta, 2009). Along with these, there is one work whose role we do not fully understand—Fernão Mendes Pinto’s manuscript *Peregrinação*. While it was only published in 1614, it was known, handled and read in the years immediately after it was most likely finished, around 1580 (Alves, 2010). The Castilian translation, by Herrera Maldonado, tellingly entitled *Historia Oriental*, was hugely successful in Europe and may also have helped to consolidate the image of Jesuit hegemony. The last part of the *Peregrinação* includes a series of chapters which are discursively coherent. (Were it not for this, we might wonder if they had been added later.) In these chapters, he tells of Francis Xavier’s greatest miracle, the storm, and writes in detail about his death, noting the various signs—from the prediction of the date to the “smell of sanctity”—that this was a “perfect” death. In any case, the English and Flemish translations did not include this section of Pinto’s work, comprehensively “expunging” the Jesuit missionary from the *Peregrinação*. All of these aspects, which require further study, embody a representational paradigm which made the so-called Apostle of the Indies the most widespread model for evangelization in Europe. It is hence interesting to note that Friar Paulo da Trindade, writing the *Conquista Espiritual* at a time when Francis Xavier had already been declared a saint, recovered from previous chronicles the version stating that St Francis of Assisi had also been in India (Trindade, 1962: part I: 14, 73;

part II: 14, 67). Here too, the Franciscans represented themselves as having been the first there, in the sense that “their” saint had explored the region before Francis Xavier. In 1663, in the *Chronica da Companhia de Jesu na Assistência do Brasil*, Simão de Vasconcellos had unsuccessfully presented Nóbrega and Anchieta for beatification in Rome, seeking Jesuit hegemonic harmony between an Apostle of the Indies and an Apostle in Brazil in a symbolic search for dominion on a global scale.

We must bear all of these aspects in mind—the absolute centrality of Francis Xavier to iconographic discourse on evangelization seems particularly fundamental—if we are to understand the full implications of the Franciscan claim to primacy in both India and Brazil. However, in the latter case, it should be pointed out that the Franciscans encountered not only the hegemonic discourse of the Jesuits but also the prestigious image of the Spanish Franciscans in South America (Trias Folch, 1999).

JABOATÃO’S ORBE SERAFICO, NOVO BRASÍLICO: BRAZIL AS A FRANCISCAN CONSTRUCT

At first, Brazil seems to be a world apart from India, China or Japan as a region for evangelization (indeed, from the Orient in general), in terms of the connections between the different religious orders, the power structures, and the methods used. However, Jaboatão’s chronicle on the history of the so-called Seraphic Order in the lands of Vera-Cruz sought from the outset to fit into the wider history of the Franciscans. Indeed, when discussing his choice of title, he explains that his text does no more than continue the Order’s series of written chronicles, drawing attention in particular to Dominique de Gubernatis’ *Orbis Seraphicus* (Gubernatis, 1682-1685). As has often been emphasized, particularly by those focusing on the Franciscans in the Orient, the written output of the Order (without narrowing it down to “branches”), can in no way be compared to that of the Jesuits. (At this point, we refer specifically to Portuguese writing, although the situation is similar for other languages and other territories.) The Jesuits, as is again well known, invested in a wide range of methods: not only the written form (in manuscript and print) but also in various disseminatory circuits, which were often secured by founding colleges around the world. When considering the contemporary realities of Brazil, we must bear in mind not just Simão de Vasconcellos’ published *Chronica da Companhia de Jesu do Estado do Brasil* (Vasconcellos, 1663) or texts, like Bettendorf’s *Chronicle of the mission of Maranhão*, which remained unpublished until the 20th century, but also the great effort put into writing and publishing *Lives* of holy people. These *Lives* sought to do two things: on the one hand, they sought beatification for the “Brazilian” Jesuits (i.e. those active in the region); on the other, they sought to create a kind of “territorial” sanctity, putting great value on Vera-Cruz, a region which from many points of view (perhaps above all symbolically, both in

political and religious terms) did not enjoy the prestige still afforded to the Orient. This is despite the fact that, in the 18th century, Brazil was taking the place of India as the economic powerhouse of the Portuguese Empire (Bethencourt and Chaudhuri, 1998; Costa, Rodrigues and Oliveira, 2014).⁷

We must also bear in mind Almeida’s aforementioned important and informative studies when thinking about the different meanings, functions and intentions of Jaboatão’s chronicle. However, this paper argues that, by highlighting other dimensions of the work, we can offer a more analytical angle on Jaboatão’s vast output in the context of religious historiography in Brazil in the Early Modern period. Above all, if we are to understand Jaboatão’s strategies and intentions, we must do two things. On the one hand, we must locate it in the context of the decline of the Jesuits, which culminated in their expulsion in 1759. (As far as we know, Jaboatão began writing his text in 1758, and it was published in 1761.) On the other hand, we must draw constant but almost implicit comparisons with the Jesuit model of evangelization in Brazil put into writing by Simão de Vasconcellos nearly a hundred years earlier in the mid-17th century.

ON A TITLE AND A TEXTUAL ARCHITECTURE

The lengthy title which Jaboatão gave to his chronicle systematizes and configures a textual place within the writing practices of the time, which he himself tries to explain by grounding the choice on two fundamental poles: on the one hand, the representation of a Franciscan world (the “Orbeseráfico”), and on the other, the construction of a “Brazilian” imagination (the “Novo Brasilico”). This latter term he qualifies as “discovered, established and cultivated by the influx of new light from Italy, Spain’s bright star, Padua’s shining sun, the greatest star of Francis’ heaven, and Portuguese miracle worker St. Anthony, to whom a glorious theatre is consecrated, and Part One of the Chronicle of the Friars Minor of the strictest observance in the Province of Brazil”. If the title suggests that the two worlds overlap, both accepting one another, the paratexts open up the space to clarify his ways of writing, alluding to the networks of “literary” and “clientelistic” sociability in which the author moved. The title identifies a kind of Seraphic “planet”, set apart by the work of the Franciscans, in an update of the Order’s “providentialist” calling, simultaneously emphasizing the importance of Brazil to the Order and affirming the primacy of the Franciscans in the discovery, establishment and “cultivation of the influx of the new light of Italy”, proclaiming from the outset the appropriation of a “Franciscanized” territory (Almeida, 2012). The writer’s authority is legitimized by his recognized excellence in the literary field—one need only recall his activities in the Academia dos Renascidos—which would have most likely granted him the license to undertake such a task, as indicated by a brief glance at the “*anteloquio*” of his chronicle. Of course, we must not forget the topical dimension of the whole argument of his prologue:

And if these men of such distinguished rank and learning could not conquer what we now, with our weakness and shortcomings, have managed to achieve, I have more than enough reason to believe that it is not men’s disposition, but Supreme Providence, which rejects the wisest and greatest for the most difficult tasks, and often chooses for those tasks the most humble and least noteworthy men, (Jaboatão, 1858: “Preface”).

Putting aside the *facta humilitas*, inscribed in the Franciscan “symbolism” of accentuating “the most humble and the least noteworthy”, Jaboatão recognizes that he has unquestionably “succeeded” in fulfilling the task with which he had been institutionally charged and which was most likely linked to his position as an academic in a group which aimed to do no less than write the history of the Americas —a “Brazilian History”, in the context of boundary definition, administrative circumscriptions and the controversial application of the Limit Treaty (Neumann, 2004). Notably, the license signed by Friar Estevão Cardoso Telles, dated 3rd January 1760, calls the “author of this work [a] unique geographer”, highlighting that it “launches the eyes of consideration by the very extended and fertile field of new Orbe Brasilico, subject to the Supreme Domain of our most faithful monarch”. As well as alluding to the Order’s compliance with the Portuguese monarchy’s plans —a recurrent argument, as has been mentioned, in the work of Franciscan chronicler Marcos de Lisboa, Esperança or Soledade— it is difficult to resist identifying this with the political choices of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis of Pombal at the time, at least those regarding Brazil’s protests of fidelity to the “most faithful monarch”. Moreover, the different censors showed their praise for the author, “who in the literary sphere has acquired great credit and become lender of the greatest compliments” (Jaboatão, 1858, Fr. João Evangelista’s license). Taking into account the date of writing, of the different licenses (granted between 1758 and 1760) and of publication (1761), right in the middle of the Marquis of Pombal’s time in office, and precisely during the years when measures were taken which were to cause significant consequences, the decision to create such a broad-reaching title (even if the author claims it merely revived the title *Orbe Seraphico* used by Dominico de Gubernatis) cannot but bring to mind the absence of the Jesuits. This is despite the fact that when the Jesuits were expelled on 3rd September 1759 the chronicle was already finished, and undergoing the usual processes of licensing. As we know, the king’s relationship with the Jesuits culminated in their expulsion, but this was the result of complex prior events set into motion by the law of 3rd September in opposition to the application of the Limit Treaty. However, we must also note that the Marquis of Pombal’s attitude to this complex question changed with his brother’s actions in the lands of the Vera-Cruz (Monteiro, 2006: 67-76), and the attempt to ‘usurp’ the state of Brazil.

The care and attention which Jaboatão put into explaining his title in the paratexts on either side of the main body of the chronicle exceeds what we would usually expect from authors of texts like these. The references to

humility and to his (im)probable lack of literary abilities, and to the need for painstaking research of documentation,⁸ often considered to be incomplete or inaccurate, are unsurprising. These features are present in all writings of this kind, although the Franciscan “mode” perhaps accentuates a little more the lack of records and documentation.⁹ Neither is the dimension of memory which sits above, organizes and structures this identity-constructing work surprising. However, in addition to the strategies that fit with the usual practices of religious historiography, Jaboatão does more than write a “chronicle”, in the sense of the dialectic between memory and amnesia in the construction of a “Franciscan” imagination in Brazil. Instead, he opts for a wider-reaching project, eminently understandable at a time of Jesuit decline,¹⁰ and which makes an attempt to conceptualize a Franciscan empire which, in narrative terms, proceeds from the appropriation and sacralization of the Brazilian world. The title *Orbe serafico novo brasilico*, followed by the explicatory *Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brazil*, capitalizes upon a comprehensiveness which, even if justified because it was the word chosen by Gubernatis, highlights the Order’s worldwide presence, “because in it were contained the Proceedings of the Franciscan and Seraphic Family, spread and dispersed over all four parts of the world, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America” (Jaboatão, 1858: “Preface”, III). Furthermore, Jaboatão insists on the idea that Brazil, while only part of America, also sustains this worldwide Franciscan character:

[...] and therefore, with a singular naturalness, this our *Orbe* comes also with the name *New*; and because it deals with the Friars Minor, it will be *Seraphico*, as it was the other [Gubernatis’s *Orbe*]; since it concerns the Province of Brazil, should be named, or distinguished by the name *Brazilico*. And taking these reasons together, the title which we have given to our work conforms well with it. And it can not be any opinion against this title which does not degenerate to an impertinent criticism, more scathing than judicious.”¹¹

As we know, and have already mentioned, the attempt to highlight Franciscan primacy in different contexts of evangelization was not new. Quite the contrary. Although Paulo da Trindade’s well-known claims must be located within the controversy of Maffei’s attempts to hegemonize the Jesuits’ evangelization practices, there is no doubt that the various Franciscan writings on evangelization argue that St Francis of Assisi’s disciples arrived first in the various lands —not only before the Jesuits, but also before other religious congregations. It is not necessary to cite the range of Franciscan texts written in the Orient, which have already been studied by Ângela Barreto Xavier, Zóltan Biedermann and Patricia Sousa de Faria (Xavier, 2008, 2014; Biedermann, 2014; Faria, 2013), to mention only the most recent contributions. Focusing specifically on Brazil, it is sufficient to mention Friar Manuel da Ilha’s “Narrativa da Custódia de Santo Antonio do Brasil: 1584-1621” (?-1637), which was finished, as far as we know, in 1621. Arguments about its origin are

irrelevant: it may have been a copy of an unknown chronicle on the *Custódia* of Brazil, possibly written by Friar Vicente do Salvador, sometimes considered to be part of the *História do Brasil* and mentioned by many of the Order's historians (Ilha, 1975; Amorim, 2005). It may even, the more likely case (Palomo, 2014) be a copy of Friar Apolinário da Conceição's *Primazia Serafica na Região da America* (Lisbon, 1732), which mirrors the persistent tone of Jaboatão's title: "As the primary purpose of this Treatise is to demonstrate the primacy which my Seraphic Order has had in the glorious conversion of America [...]" (Conceição, 1732: "Prologo aoLeitor"). From this point of view, Jaboatão seems to limit himself to reproducing an almost topical argument in Franciscan chronicles, without saying anything new. However, by taking on a global scale while at the same time recovering a present idea from the "story" of the history of the Franciscan Order, Jaboatão reinforces the depiction of the Friars Minor as the "greater" order in the evangelization of Brazil, occupying the symbolic space formerly held by the Jesuits.

A NARRATIVE EMPIRE: TERRITORIAL PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

The chronicle's evocative title is accompanied by a narrative structure that establishes the "construction" of Brazil as if it were a Franciscan "symbolic" empire. The work is organized in a seemingly unbalanced way: two larger parts, the first of which, the "Preamble" (*Preambulo*), is made up of six "Digressions" (*Digressões*), each divided into "Estâncias", and the second of which is divided into two large blocks by a "Preliminary Book" (*Livro Ante-primeiro*) and by a set subdivided into Book I and Book II (*Livro I&II*), each of which is made up in turn of chapters completed by "Reports" (*Relatorios*), "Certificates" (*Certificados*) and "Additions" (*Aditamentos*) in unequal numbers.

The "Preamble" focuses on discovery and geographic description: "how and by whom it was discovered, its size, its major rivers, and the foundation of its captaincies, cities, towns and villages, and in particular everything which must be covered to fully understand the subject" (Jaboatão, 1858: 2), taking them as "principal objects of all this history, both temporal and spiritual". It is divided into five "Digressions", which are longer narrative blocs, which include several "estâncias" focusing on the discovery of Brazil and the simultaneous arrival of the Franciscans, and, at greater length, the description of the various indigenous peoples who occupied the territory, giving great detail about their habits and customs. The number of "estâncias" ranges from the three devoted to the arrival of the Portuguese fleet and Friar Henrique Coimbra (both in "Digression I") to the eighteen contained in "Digression IV", which describe the different captaincies. While "Digression III" concentrates on the depiction of the various Indian "tribes" in thirteen "estâncias" (one for each tribe), from the Tapuyas ("Estância I") to the Tobarará ("Estância XIII"), "Digression III" consists of five "estâncias" narrating the life and adventures of Diogo

Álvares Corrêa, Caramurú, insisting that it was the Franciscans who baptized the children born of the hero's union with Princess Paraguassu, and who also married two of Caramurú's daughters with two Europeans. The importance attributed to this event and its place in the structure of the text, straight after the account of the discoverers' and the Franciscans' arrival ("Digression I") and the description of the various Indian tribes ("Digression II"), led António Almeida to the following conclusion: "The European man and the Brazilian woman, the primordial man and woman who give birth to a New World. With the blessing of the Franciscans, this *Novo Orbe* will lead to the birth and raising of New Brazilians, or, to be faithful to the language of the chronicler in question, a New Brazil" (Almeida, 2012: 151). The remaining "Digressions" look at "districts and boundaries": "Digression IV" "covers the Captaincies of the State of Brazil from Grão Pará to the River Plate, and the districts and boundaries of each [...] in eighteen "estâncias", while "Digression V", in five "estâncias", lists custodians, provincial ministers and "religious people who have written, and that which is printed and in manuscript"; "Digression VI" adds information that Jaboatão claimed to have received belatedly, and could therefore not include in the proper places.

The second part of the work contains, as already mentioned, a "Preliminary Book" and a First and Second Book. The "Preliminary Book", consisting of sixteen chapters, attempts to tell "the whole story which relates to them [the Franciscans] in this sphere" (Jaboatão, 1858: "Livro Ante-primeiro", 2), recalls again the arrival in Brazil ("Show[ing] how this new sphere was discovered, cultivated and established by Friars Minor, who were the first to arrive"), and defines a timeline that goes from 1500 to 1585, the date of the foundation of the first house of Olinda. However, Jaboatão adds that he will also talk of missions, of the "exquisite" death of some friars and, despite previously defining his timeline, of "a brief summary of more, right up to the present"; this occupies Chapter XIV, beginning in 1585. It is in this part of the "Preliminary Book", immediately in Chapter I, that he takes up the theme of Brazil as a paradise once more, though cautiously; he does not go as far as to identify the land with the text of Genesis, which had previously led to the Jesuit Simão de Vasconcellos' text being censored (Holanda, 1992; Ramos, 2001; Santos, 2001, 2008):

A fertile land, a beneficial climate, a cheerful air, favorable skies, and a new world, where its Author appears to sometimes amend some verses from today, and of the stars of the old world; because here the day speaks, and it also runs through the night; the breeze tempers the heat, and neither is winter too cool nor summer too warm. A new world, no less, and such a well-disposed season for the innocent man, who wished to plant in it the earthly Paradise, or at least describe it with the excellencies and prerogatives of an earthly Paradise, (Jaboatão, 1858: 5).

The different chapters expand on themes already covered in the "Preamble", at times almost repeating them, at

other times providing more detail and discussing issues such as the well-known expression “*sem lei, sem rei, sem fé*” (“without law, without king, without faith”) and its non-absolute correspondence with the absence of the letters F, L, R, in the sense that, Jaboatão claims, the R “is one of the most used in their language” (Jaboatão, 1858: 8). He insists upon the “spiritual conquest of Brazil”, trying to append “all that we judge to be sufficient to be able to verify not only their primacy in this spiritual conquest, but also how they have cultivated it since those beginnings, in the space of fifty years, and the great work they undertook” (Jaboatão, 1858: 8). Jaboatão also discusses the nationality of some missionaries, quoting sources such as Jorge Cardoso’s *Agiológico Lusitano* (Chapter VI), and the Franciscans’ arrival in various places such as Bahia and Olinda, after which he sets out at length Friar Pedro Palácios’ “exemplary penitent life” (Chapters X-XII), looking at the years between 1549, “in which the first Jesuit missionaries arrived in Brazil, to 1585, when our Order founded its first convent in Olinda” (Jaboatão, 1858: 31). By noting the Jesuits’ arrival in Brazil, he traces a line which defines the chronology of the different orders’ arrival in Brazil: first the Franciscans — “At the first hour, and so at *primo mane*, that is at the break of day, at the same time as the light of the Sky broke out, God sent the first workers of this vine to the place called Brazil, Father Friar Henrique de Coimbra and his companions, as has been mentioned elsewhere, in the year 1500.” After this came the Society of Jesus: “after [...] the *Tertia* hour [...] the second order of Workers [...] the Reverend Jesuit Priests, in the year 1549”. Despite arriving later, they did not work any less hard; “the vine of Brazil and its spiritual cultivation” are due to both the Jesuit and Franciscan families (Jaboatão, 1858: 32). Much later “came the Carmelite Observants, in 1580” and “even later, the Friars of the Great Patriarch Saint Benedict, in 1581”; finally, “much later, came the Reverend Priests of Saint Philip Neri, who, as they were the last, arrived with all the work already done.” Interestingly, Jaboatão’s positive attitude towards the Jesuits’ work in Brazil is not a one-off; a similar view is expressed elsewhere, if not often, such as when he refers to Father António Vieira as “great”, to Simão de Vasconcellos’s chronicle of the Society, and to the fact that Friar Pedro Palácios had a Jesuit confessor (Jaboatão, 1858: 39). Nevertheless, the text, like other chronicles, recalls (in appendices entitled “Reports”) the disagreements between Franciscans and Jesuits (Jaboatão, 1858: 60), invariably won by the former, recording the pervasive climate of competition and controversy during the process of evangelization (Bettendorf, 1990). Report III, “On the works, persecutions, exiles, deaths and other misfortunes which the Friars Minor of the *Custodia* of Brazil endured and on what they had worked on all this time, which was tyrannized by the Dutch heretics in the captaincy of Pernambuco and its surroundings”, completed by several “Certificates” which attest to the Franciscans’ brave presence in the battles against the “heretics”, precedes the last chapter (the Preliminary Book’s sixteenth), which tells “[o]f what else the Friars Minor of

this province worked on, from the Restoration of Pernambuco to the present day”.

Book I, made up of five chapters, revisits the same themes, focusing on the personalities of the Franciscans sent to Brazil, the foundation of monasteries and the figures considered to be fundamental to the Order’s establishment in Brazil, such as in Chapter V, “Recalling the illustrious hero Jorge de Albuquerque Coelho, the Lord and holder of Pernambuco”. “Book II” continues in the same vein, recounting over the course of thirty-five chapters the “excellencies the House of Our Lady of the Snows of Villa de Marim and the City of Olinda, as well as those of this Province, of which Olinda was the Capital [...]” and “exemplary lives”, focusing in particular on Fr. Melchior de Santa Catarina (Chapters III-XV) and Friar Francisco de S. Boaventura (Chapters XVI-XVIII). Chapters XIX-XXIX cover the lives of several other friars; Chapters XXX-XXXIII, the “Beginnings and progress of the Venerable Third Order of Penance and the House of Our Lady of the Snows” (Chapter XXX) and other chapels and miracles (Chapters XXXI-XXXIII); Chapter XXXIV “a miraculous case, to which we can attribute the events at the House of Our Lady of the Snows in Olinda”. Finally, in an “Original Addition Patent from the most Reverend Friar Francisco Gonzaga, to bring the Friars Minor to Brazil to found convents” (Chapter XXXV), the work reaches its end.

As this brief description shows, the textual architecture of the chronicle is not sequential or chronological, but rather progresses in an almost circular way. The first part, the Preamble, defines the macrostructure, making clear the “mixture” of the discoverers and the Franciscans and defining the “spiritual” nature of Brazil. It is also something of a geographic “reconnaissance” of the territory, bringing to the fore the other “mixture” — almost as symbolic as the first — represented by an origin that combined European and Indian blood in the descendants of Caramurú and Catarina, blessed by the disciples of St Francis of Assisi.¹² The space given over to this narrative, immediately following the “reconnaissance” of the territory and the long description of the all the “tribes” of natives, evokes the illustriousness of Caramurú’s adventures, binding them to the Franciscan world in Brazil and conferring it with an almost mythical status: in the beginning were the Franciscans (in the spiritual domain), and Caramurú and Catarina (in the temporal one). Moreover, Jaboatão takes great effort to dismantle another version of the story which, in his words, attributed to the Jesuits the baptism of Diogo Álvares Correia’s children and the marriage of his daughters. We must be aware of the “territorializing” dimension of this association which, in a way, makes the Franciscans more “Brazilian” in their claims to independence from their European counterparts.¹³ The second part of the work focuses on the Franciscan “history” in Brazil, returning to every one of these themes, through additions and a spiritual “territorialization” which turns Brazil into a Franciscan “land” in its origin, in its essence, and in the process of defining its frontiers. Jaboatão had already presented in the afore-

mentioned “Preface” a kind of narrative program, justifying “the phrasing, style, method and order” he would follow. He establishes that the order and method “shall conform to the passage of the years, and the foundations of convents”, adding “all the events concerning the friars and through which their virtues flourished”, in line with a writing practice which makes the *Chronicle* a true *Flos Sanctorum*, with an exemplarity that functions above all for “internal consumption” as the mark of an aspired perfection, often imitating the founders’ best-known “virtues”. On the other hand, we must note that the narrative structure does not make use of fabulations, although any writing of this kind is by nature a “representation” of reality, not intending to reflect the exact facts but rather the facts as he wanted them to be remembered. On the one hand, such fabulations could be considered an attempt to captivate the reader, but on the other they could project collective memories, connecting them directly to Franciscan presence. In any case, the text seems to allow for the hypothesis that Jaboatão felt the repetitions and reiterated thematic accounts to be a weakness of a text which is in fact far from sequentially organized. Furthermore, he resorts to a wide range of types of text —digressions, “*estâncias*” books, additions, reports and certificates to name but a few— which may in some way be connected to the literary practices of the time, which were characterized by a style of writing concerned with neither clarity nor discursive transparency, and which translated the difficulties in organizing information (or the attempts to do so) in “different”, “ingenious” ways into an imitation of the many Baroque texts which sought to surprise and delight their readers. Jaboatão himself points out that he does not follow the natural “order” of the captaincies, because he sometimes recounts the founding of monasteries, and elsewhere limits himself to recording the progress of the missions in which the Franciscans often had primacy:

In the discourse of this history we will need that I go with the narrative in each of the Captaincies of the Province of Santa Cruz, or Brazil, and because there we cannot do it according to the order, which follow each other, because we need to speak on them when we get there, with the foundations of convents, or in which there weren’t, when the other they take us by any reason, such as the religious who, first of some other, went to them with their Missions, and this cannot be in conformity with order and situation they keep between them; with this we want demarcate now, to avoid later embarrassment, or any other occasion, that can enjoy the thread of History, (Jaboatão, 1858: 56).

One of the aspects of the *Orbe Brasilico* that stands out within the architecture of the work is the mimetic effort of running through the administrative organization of Brazil and the network of Franciscan monasteries. In this, each monastery is associated with the formation of each circumscription, as if the establishment of the Order had always followed territorial changes, in a kind of sacralization of the space. If that marks the trajectory of the different “*estâncias*” around which each “Digression” is or-

ganized, as if this were a reconnaissance mission around the territory, the reference to the Captaincy of Porto Seguro may be significant. Jaboatão, justifying the absence of a Franciscan monastery and the presence of a Jesuit “house” since 1553, underlines that “our priests were also repeatedly and persistently sought out by the residents of Porto Seguro to found a Convent there, putting forward several arguments of some gravity, as that was the first part of Brazil that our people had trodden with their feet, illuminated with the light of the Gospel, sanctified with the Sacraments of the Church and irrigated with their blood” (Jaboatão, 1858: 84). The allusion to this mark of primacy, emphasized in the accumulation of topics known and repeated in the religious chronicles (stepping foot on pagan land, bringing the light of the Sacred Scriptures, sanctifying the territory with the blood of martyrs), shows how the narrative and authorial axes slide from a kind of sacralizing cosmogony of space to the ideological construction of belonging. The “Digressions”, made up of any number of “*estâncias*” draw a map of Franciscan Brazil that offers much more than the foundation of convents and seeks to put forward a strategically tight, cohesive network that almost ignores the other religious congregations, even while making fleeting references to Simão de Vasconcellos’ *Chronicle*, which it sporadically corrects.¹⁴ Jurisdictional questions are in no way overlooked in the *Orbe Brasilico*, from the wish, approved by the Holy See, that “the Holy See’s visitors, and the presidents of chapters, were its Brazil’s very children” (thereby avoiding controversies and serious disagreements), to searching for the deeds of donations confirming ownership and territorial limits. As is the case in many of the so-called “foundational writings”, the *Orbe Brasilico* takes the opportunity to organize memories and fix records, privileges and patrimonial rights: “The most that this Text [record of donation] contains are the agreements, pacts and donations with which they donated the lands where the said brothers wanted to found their monasteries [...]” (Jaboatão, 1858: 198).

THE CONSTRUCTION OF “FRANCISCAN” SANCTITY IN BRAZIL

Jaboatão highlights in several places the rigorous adherence to poverty and the complete renunciation of property by the friars whose behavior he holds in esteem. From this point of view, the emphasis he gives to the narration of exemplary lives is not far removed from common practice. When studying Friar Manuel da Esperança’s chronicle, Luís de SáFardilha drew attention to the emergence of a model of compositional techniques in religious chronicle writing, especially in the so-called “foundational writings”. Jaboatão’s work also is loyal to this model, although is not strictly speaking a “foundational writing” but a compilation that makes the text into a mosaic composed of practically everything that was important to accentuate Brazil’s dimensions as a Franciscan empire, at a time when the Jesuit hegemony was shrinking irretrievably. The structuring stages indicated are:

1. Establishment of the historical circumstances surrounding the foundation of the monastery: identity and motivations of the founders or patrons and survey of the legal texts that define the organizing principles of community life; 2. Physical description of the buildings and sites where they were built; 3. Historical trajectory of the monastic community, from the beginning up to the time of writing, and description of relevant events; 4. Biographical memoirs of venerable friars and nuns who are in any way connected to the monastery, (Fardilha, 2001: 103-119).

Although in the case of the *Orbe Brasilico* these stages are not sequential, the last part, entitled Book II, is a lengthy compilation of Lives which makes use of this method, following a practice that makes religious chronicles valuable repositories of “heroic” biographies which sought to emulate the saints of the Order or the congregation who were held up as models (Luongo, 2000; Cavalotto, 2009). Jaboatão does not abandon this technique of sanctifying figures, which is so common to religious historiography; he creates a gallery of portraits which naturally begins with the Casa de Olinda, providing examples of perfection and heroism in the context of the Dutch invasion:

BOOK II. On some of the excellences of the Casa de N. Senhora das Neves da Villa de Marim and the City of Olinda, and also those of this Province, of which it was capital, and of the brothers, who led exemplary lives, embodied Christian virtues, and showed holy faith, and on other events worthy of memory, (Jaboatão, 1858: 199).

The list of different missions and monasteries, with their names and dates, illustrates the constant progress of the Province of Santo António do Brasil from its very beginnings, forming, in the words of the author, “a body” of which Olinda was “neck and head.”¹⁵ In addition to the many children of the Province who made their name through writing, many others had been “[s]hields of holiness, and virtue, many living and facing death in various places and Convents elsewhere [...], or becoming martyrs for their cause”. Moreover, many of the chapters included in Book II must be read in the light of Chapter II (“There are in the monastery of Olinda many religious men of virtue and holiness”). This chapter is cautioned by Jaboatão’s repeated claim that he found a “memoir” noting the absence of records of exemplary lives, in places where they have proliferated: “There are many religious men endowed with great virtues and the gift of letters, who professed and resided in this holy Convent of Our Lady of Neves, which have glorified and adorned this our holy Province of Santo Antonio do Brasil, and some of them are buried in this Convent, after living there renowned for their holiness and great virtue, and about whom we do not write here, because our ancestors failed to leave any memories of them: it is only passed to us through tradition that there are many holy and virtuous men resting in this Convent” (Jaboatão, 1858: 207). The list of illustrious biographies begins with the “Life of Fa-

ther Melchior de Sancta Catarina, first Custodian and founder of this Province of Santo António do Brasil”. Jaboatão follows the discursive structure of this type of narrative, lingering on Friar Melchior’s genealogy, birth and upbringing. Although he begins by admitting some doubts about the origin and even the place and date of his birth, Jaboatão ends up following (although not thereby dispelling doubt) Friar Thomaz da Apresentação’s version which, like most chronicle “hagiographies”, highlights Friar Melchior’s noble origins (“his ancestors were the heads of the House of Britiandos”¹⁶) and his parents’ virtues, particularly his mother’s, describing in detail the care with which she tended to her son’s spiritual and religious education. This is the most common theme in hagiographizing topics, though there seems to be a particular emphasis on the mother as a spiritual mentor and educator compared to other hagiographies. The other details mentioned, from intellectual ability to the suffering caused by hairshirts and fasting, constitute a well-known model of virtuosity, but in this case Jaboatão pays special attention to Friar Melchior’s observation of poverty and his willingness, even as a child, to share, thus constructing a model of renunciation and “inclination” for the poor which naturally evokes the emblematic example of Francis of Assisi. Moreover, Friar Melchior’s exemplarity recovers a model of mortification of the flesh, which has more expression and importance here than in the biographical accounts of the Jesuits in Brazil written by figures like Simão de Vasconcellos, in whose work that dimension is either completely disregarded or is mentioned as secondary to the missionary dimension. In Jaboatão’s model of exemplarity, poverty, mortification and humility acquire an evocative connotation that emulates the model represented by Francis of Assisi, no doubt because it was about a founder, the “origin” of the order in Brazil; the Jesuit examples are constructed, naturally, in the shadow of Francis Xavier, who had projected himself from India onto Brazil as a less prestigious space from political and religious points of view.¹⁷ Friar Melchior is inscribed in a framework that privileges the strict observance of poverty, the renunciation of material possessions, obedience, vows of silence, temperance, mortification practices,¹⁸ and humility, “because the good Novice was always found obedient without replicates humble without repugnance, cheerful without disgust, and always serene without disturbance, with an agile and ready docility, which is what with more energy, explains and makes known the unfeigned virtue, and that is legitimate daughter of the true spirit” (Jaboatão, 1858: 230). His rigorous compliance with the Rule of St Francis, underlined several times in Jaboatão’s account, naturally evokes a fascination with the perfection of the earliest days which is mentioned in all chronicles, leading in time to deviations, quarrels and disputes. As we know, such disputes were current not only among different religious congregations, but in the case of the Franciscans within the different branches of the Order, all of whom claimed to be more loyal to the original model. Almost a century earlier, Simão de Vasconcellos had characterized the first “Brazilian holiness”

around two essential poles, Nóbrega and Anchieta, sharing Jabotão's interest for the list of "illustrious and virtuous" lives. He had considered them to be the engines driving the first years of Jesuit evangelization, less controversial and therefore deprived of some initial "purity". Interestingly, Jabotão also selects the first person responsible for the Order in Brazil (Friar Melchior de Santa Catarina) and a model of evangelization, Friar Francisco de S. Boaventura, who preferred preaching and converting the native peoples to any other occupation. He became, eventually, the second founder of the Custody in Brazil (Jabotão, 1858: "Chapter XVII: In which the most venerable Father Francisco de S. Boaventura is named the second founder of the Custody of Brazil, and of the work he carried out until his blessed death"). Like Anchieta, Friar Francisco also had the gift of "tongues", surprising the gentiles with his accurate command of their language.¹⁹

The lives of the various different friars, some held up as "living saints", although mentioned as exemplars in various places throughout the chronicle, are mostly found in Book II. The biographies are mostly quite short, except for those of Friar Melchior de Santa Catarina and (in less detail) Friar Francisco de S. Boaventura.

BUILDING A FRANCISCAN BRAZIL

In her work *Esquecidos e Renascidos. Historiografia acadêmica luso-americana, 1724-1759*, Íris Kantor concludes that Portuguese-American writers in the Pombaline era resisted trends to secularize historiographic discourse, at least in terms of scholarly techniques —trends which sought to harmonize theological-political paradigms with enlightened conceptions of history and which interpreted this position as a way to "claim privileges of immemorial possession of land, but also to attribute new meanings to the learning of colonization". Jabotão's chronicle can be considered an excellent topic for the discussion of religious historiography in the context of the Enlightenment. In terms of compositional technique, based in compiling and organizing materials, there are no great differences in the weight of documental research found in 17th-century chronicles. Jabotão obviously emphasizes the number of documents gathered, while simultaneously complaining about their scarcity. He occasionally discusses them, as his predecessors had done in the previous century and the first half of the 18th century, but generally accepts the information in the documents at face value, especially records and donations —undoubtedly an important part of chronicle accounts— which ensured privileges and rents. There are few traces in the chronicle of an "enlightened" view of historiographic writing, although it is curious that Jabotão, in his role as an experienced scholar, clearly distinguishes the most pompous style of panegyric from the style of historiographic discourse which was considered simpler. In any case, the structural organization of the account, the constant remissions and the appeal to different forms of text —which do not mask the repetitive nature of many de-

scriptions— are part of normal Baroque writing methods. These methods valued *ingenium* as a compositional technique, in the sense that the same themes (the "Franciscanization" of Brazil since its discovery; the Franciscan presence in the different administrative circumscriptions; the exemplary nature of the members of the Order), in different forms, seek to occupy all the empty spaces — somewhat obsessively— in the text. Indeed, the model of perfection which Jabotão puts forward owes nothing to the "enlightened" pieties of the pared-down "Jansenizing" style. As he sought to show, the text articulates a paradigm of affective piety, which is clearest in the biography of the first Custodian, Friar Melchior de Santa Catarina, who was sensitive to mortification practices, hairshirts and fasting and to the observation of the strictest poverty, establishing a model of sanctity that differs from the more active Jesuit model but was removed from the "enlightened" versions which were hostile to the excesses of Marian devotion, tears, the affective which Friar Melchior showed. It cannot be forgotten that Jabotão draws particular attention to the first Custodian, the founder —he who, in a certain way and with due caution, sought to "replicate" the image of Francis of Assisi. That is undeniable. But there do not seem to be any traces of "enlightened" piety in Jabotão's descriptions. In any case, the most consistent characteristic of the work seems to be the "territorialization" of Brazil, at a time when borders were the object of much discussion. If the administrative division forged an "American" personality for the region of Vera-Cruz, the Franciscan monasteries and foundations conferred on it the spiritual personality of the sons of Francis of Assisi. While the other Franciscan chronicles claimed a primacy that the Jesuits actively challenged, Jabotão's text sought to construct a Seraphic Brazil, where the Jesuits, the builders of a spiritual empire, no longer had any place.

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NOTES

- 1 The biography of Friar Antônio Maria Jabotão is well known nowadays, following the significant informative work carried out by Marcos Antônio de Almeida. Indeed, much of the data used here has been taken from that study, thereby dispensing with the need to resort to (Almeida, 2012: 27-57). Antônio Coelho Meireles was born in the parish of Santo Amaro de Jabotão in Recife, Captaincy of Pernambuco, in 1695, son of the sergeant-major Domingos Coelho de Meireles and Francisca Varela. He studied Humanities under the tutelage of his uncle Agostinho Coelho Meireles, vicar of the parish between 1710 and 1715. On 12th December 1717, he entered the Monastery of Santo Antônio de Paraguaçu of the Franciscan Order of Bahia, where he studied theology and philosophy. In 1725 he was ordained in Pernambuco. He was master of novices in the Monas-

tery of Igarassu in Pernambuco, professor of philosophy, in Bahia (1737), guardian in the Convent of Santo António in Paraíba from 1741 to 1742 and from 1751 to 1753. He was definitor in the Monastery of Santo António in Recife in 1755 and, in that same year, appointed head chronicler of the Order. He died in Bahia on 7th July 1779. Of the many works covered by Marcos António de Almeida’s exhaustive study the following manuscripts are worthy of mention: “Nous avons pu répertorier quatre manuscrits de Jaboatão. L’un d’eux, la deuxième partie de sa chronique, a été publié par l’*Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* au XIXe siècle, entre les années 1859 et 1862. Le deuxième, la *Genealogia* ne sera publiée qu’en 1985, par l’État de Bahia. Par contre, Jaboatão avait gardé plusieurs manuscrits qu’il avait rédigés sur des thèmes divers. Il était persuadé de l’importance de ses idées et les a rassemblés sous le titre d’*Obras Académicas*” (Almeida, 2012: 58-59). Some examples of printed works, *Discurso histórico, geográfico, genealógico, político e encomiástico, recitado em a nova celebridade, que dedicaram os pardos de Pernambuco ao santo de sua cor o B. Gonçalo Garcia*. Lisbon, 1751; *Sermão da Restauração de Pernambuco do domínio holandês, pregado na Sé de Olinda em 1731*. Lisbon, 1752; *Orbe Seráfico Novo Brasilico, ou Chronica dos Frades Menores da Província do Brasil*. Lisbon, 1761. *Sermão de Santo Antonio*. In *O dia do Corpo de Deus*. Lisbon, 1751; *Sermão de S. Pedro Martyr, pregado na matriz do Corpo Santo do Recife*. Lisbon, 1751; *Josephina Regio equivoco-panegyrica, trespraticas e um sermão do glorioso Patriarcha S. José, oferecidos ao Serenissimo Rei D. José I, pregados na Igreja matriz da Paraíba*. Lisbon, 1755; *Gemidos seráficos. Exéquias celebradas pela Província de Santo António na morte do fidelissimo rei D. João V*. Lisbon, 1753; *Jaboatão Mystico, em correntes sacras, dividida em: corrente primeira, panegyrica e moral*. Lisbon, 1758.

- 2 The work was published again in 1858 by the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute in two volumes. For convenience quotations will be taken from this edition alone, however when necessary, references will be made to the first edition, of which copies exist in the Porto Municipal Library and the University of Coimbra General Library. In 1859, the second unpublished part of the work was later published with the title: *Orbe Seráfico Novo Brasilico or Chronica dos frades menores*. Second part (unpublished), Rio de Janeiro, v. I in 1859, followed by the publication of the other two volumes, the v. II, in 1861 and v. III in 1862.
- 3 Almeida, 2012: “L’année 1587 inaugure ce que nous considérons comme le début d’une histoire franciscaine organisée d’une façon mondialisée au sens moderne du terme: expansion et occupation des quatre parties du monde. Introduisant un Brésil jusque là absent de la géographie franciscaine, Francisco de Gonzaga va compléter la géopolitique de l’ordre”.
- 4 Let us recall the words of P. di G. Olivi: “nel sesto anno della sua conversione come Angelo del sesto sigillo e come segno che per mezzo del suo ordine nel sesto stato della Chiesa devono essere convertiti a Christo; poi di nuovo, per una terza volta, nel tredicesimo anno della sua conversione, come segno che nel tredicesimo segno della passione e della resurrezione di Christo” (apud Carvalho, 2001: 76).
- 5 Soledade (1705: 488-489): “Descuberta, & já vadeada a careyra da India pelo illustre, & sempre memoravel Dom Vasco da Gama, (...) determinou o afortunadissimo, & muyto glorioso Rey D. Manoel conquistar aquellas regiões remotas para Deos, & para si. E repartindo o cuydado desta empresa pelos sugeyos que lhe pareciaõ mais idoneos para o desempenho, encõmendou a conquista das almas ao veneravel P. Fr. Henrique de Coimbra, & a outros sette Frades, todos da nossa Província. (...). Foy aprasivel a todos a eleyção dos nossos Religiosos; porque além de seu zelo, que era notorio, consideravam que a pureza do seu estado humilde, & pobre havia de confundir a cegueyra dos idolatras (...). Quão mais, que a conversão dos Indios nos pertencia por direyto, pela posse que della tinha tomado N. Patriarca Serafico, quando assistindo em Italia, por virtude Divina foy visto em Regorà, terra de Bengala, aonde prometeu vida

muyto extensa, & mocidade perenne a hum Gentio em remuneração de o passar em seus hombros em hum rio, braço do famoso Ganges. (...) E posto que não penetramos os segredos profundissimos da Divina Providencia, bem podemos suspeytar que assi como mostrou a Abrahão a terra, que havia de ser senhoreada por seus descendentes, tambem querendo consolar a nosso Patriarca glorioso (...), ordenou que fosse ver com seus olhos os dilatados campos, em que seus filhos haviaõ de conseguir famosos triunfos; os milhões de milhões de almas, que haviaõ de converter, as caudalosas correntes de sangue que haviaõ de derramar em testemunho da Fé, exaltação do nome de Christo, & trofeo de sua doutrina sagrada. E por ventura que este fosse o Anjo, que vio S. João com o sinal de Deos vivo, ou com as suas Chagas, caminhando da parte do Oriente, & clamando a outros Espiritos celestiaes que suspendessem os flagelos, em quão assinalava os servos do Senhor, por não perecerem todos a impulsos da vingança Divina: porque já na figura do mesmo Anjo conhecerão disfarçado a N.P.S. Francisco o Papa Leão X. S. Boaventura, S. Bernardino, & muytos Doutores Ecclesiasticos”. [“Discovered and already waded the career of India by renowned, & always memorable Dom Vasco da Gama, (...) the very fortunate and glorious king D. Manuel determined to win those remote areas to God, & for him. And sharing the care of this company by men that seemed to him the most suitable for performance, ordered the conquest of souls to the venerable P. Friar Henrique de Coimbra, & the other seven Friars, all of our Province. (...) It was pleasant to all the election of our Religious; because in addition to their zeal, which was notorious, they considered that the purity of their humble and poor state will confuse the blindness of idolaters (...). When more than the conversion of the Indians belonged to us by right, by the possession that had taken our Seraphic Patriarch, when, watching in Italy, was seen in Regorà by divine virtue, land of Bengal, where he promised very long life and perennial youth to a Gentile, because he passed him over on his shoulders in a river, the famous Ganges arm (...) And since we don’t penetrate in the very deep secrets of Divine Providence, we may well suspect that just the earth was showed to Abraham, that he should be lorded by his descendants, also wanting to console our glorious Patriarch (...) he ordered him to be seen with his eyes dilated fields, where their children had to get famous triumphs; the millions of millions of souls who will be converted, the torrential streams of blood that they will drain pouring torrential as witness to the Faith, exaltation of Christ’s name, & trophy of his sacred doctrine. And perhaps this was the Angel, which saw John with the living God sign, or with his wounds, walking from the East, and calling the other heavenly Spirits to suspend the scourges while marked the servants of the Lord, to not perish all with the impulses of divine vengeance: because in the figure of the same Angel, they knew disguise our Seraphic Father Francis, Pope Leo X, Saint Bonaventure, Saint Bernardino, & many ecclesiastical Doctors.”]. Cf. Carvalho (1991: 66).

- 6 São João, Leonor de, *Tratado da antiga e curiosa fundação do Convento de Jesus de Setúbal*, fol.78. (Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, Cód. 7686). For other copies: Pacheco, 2013: 28-35.
- 7 Let us recall that, unlike India, the king’s representative in Brazil did not have the same title as that of the state of India. Brazil had its first viceroy in 1640 and the territory only became a viceroyalty in 1714 (V. Costa; Rodrigues; Oliveira, 2014: 137).
- 8 Jaboatão, 1858: “Preface”, V: “Sobre a citação de Autores, não duvidamos ser notados de o fazermos muito poucas vezes; mas será por aquelles, que não advertirem, escrevemos a Historia primitiva de huma Província, da qual se não escreveo athégora por author algum, e só não aproveitamos para ella, das noticias da mesma Província, e nem estas as achamos em livros, ou quadernos, ordenados com títulos, capítulos, e numeros, e só em alguns papeis, e assentos avulsos, e por isso muitas vezes, ou quasi sempre, os não apontamos á margem”. [“About the citation of Authors, we n doubt to be noticed that we do this very few times; but it will be for those who do not warn, write the early history of a Province, which is not written so far by any author, and just do not take to it the news of the same province,

- and even these we don't find in books or notebooks, ordered with titles, chapters, and numbers, and only in some papers, and single judgment, and so often, oral most always, we don't not point it in margin"]].
- 9 Vasconcellos (1663: 128); Santos (1710: Prólogo).
 - 10 Interestingly, Friar Antônio Maria Jaboatão states that he wrote the text quickly, in just two years, seeking to exculpate himself of stylistic faults or errors. Regardless of the licensing times, the reader could always speculate that what had happened to the Society and which culminated in the expulsion in 1759, and would provide surely the right time to claim a Franciscan Brazil, although Frei Jaboatão refers without acrimony—and even he follows them promptly—the writings of Simon de Vasconcellos, especially the *Crônica da Companhia de Jesu no estado do Brasil*: “Outra censura mais, e talvez causa das muitas, que poderão cair sobre esta escrita, he o pouco tempo, que tomamos para ella, porque, se o quizerllos reduzir a annos, não se poderão contar por muitos, pois ainda agora, que a completamos, não chegaõ a dous e sendo nós o proprio amanuense, e escrevendo da nossa letra dous volumes deste theor, além de outros muitos traslados, como em similhante especie he preciso” (Jaboatão, 1858: “Preface”, V) [“Another more censorship, and perhaps because of the many that will fall on this writing, is the short time we take to it, because if you want to reduce they ears, shall not be able to account for many, because even now that it's completed, they are only two and we were the own amanuensis, and writing with our letter two volumes of this content, as well as many other transfers, as in similar species is necessary”].
 - 11 (Jaboatão, 1858: “Antiloquio, IV”): “e por isso, com uma naturalidade muito própria, vem também a este nosso *Orbe* o nome de *Novo*; e por tratar dos Frades Menores, ha de ser *Serafico*, como aquelle outro; e por ser da provincia do Brasil, se deve denominar ou distinguir com o adittamento de *Brasilico*. E com todas estas razoens, bem se conforma com esta Obra o titulo que lhe damos, e que não poderá haver sobre elle parecer algum encontrado, que não degeneere para huma critica impertinente, e mais mordaz do que judiciousa”.
 - 12 It is precisely the case with the “Digressão III” which discusses in detail, over five “Estâncias”, the adventures of the famous Caramúru. Jaboatão legitimates this option by arguing that he found a manuscript in the convent of Bahia, according to him contemporary to the narrated facts, and uses it as a source: “Dá noticia de Diogo Alvares Correia. Caramuru, como passou do Reyno ao Brasil, seu naufragio na entrada da Bahia, e circumstancias admiráveis delle; como passou a França e tornou á Bahia, com outros mais particulares acontecimentos, dignos de memoria, em que, como principal, entra o da miraculosa imagem de nossa Senhora da Graça” [“It gives news of Diogo Alvares Correia, Caramuru, as passed from the Kingdom to Brazil, his wreckin the Bahia entrance, and its admirable circumstances; as he came to France and returned to Bahia, with more particular events, worthy of memory, where, as principal, enters the miraculous image of Our Lady of Grace.”] (Jaboatão, 1858: 35).
 - 13 Jaboatão, 1858: 36: “Outra razaõ, e muy forçosa, nos move a intrometermos nesta escrita os feitos deste Herõe, e he, conforme a ordem, que levamos, descrever as Capitanias do Brasil, por onde andarão antes, e fundarão depois Conventos os nossos Religiosos, quando se descobrião ellas, e quaes foraõ os seus primeiros Povoadores, e os que as fundaraõ; e como esta gloria se deve na da Bahia a Diogo Alvares Correa, antes que fallemos em os primeiros Religiosos nossos, que vieraõ ter, por disposição do Ceo, a ella, he preciso digamos também quem foy, por acaso da fortuna, o seu primeiro Descobridor.” [“Another reason it is very forcible, moves us to put in this writing the deeds of this hero, and it, according to the order we carry, describe the captaincies of Brazil, where they were before, and later our religious founded convents, when they found them, and what were their first settlers, and those who founded them; and how this glory is due at Bahia to Diogo Alvares Correa, before we talk about our first Religious, who came to it, by dis-
- position of Heaven, it is necessary to say also who was, by accident of fortune, his first discoverer”].
- 14 “For peace, which in this Province filed this Prelate, there is no doubt contributed much grace achieved by the Apostolic See that they were its Visitors and Presidents of Chapters their same children, that they are those of other commonly born on this, or if they set more disputes, which was of up to the present, as those of ordinary are usually raised in those Republics, moving by heads, that don't belong to the body; because when these with the Domestic and natural break apart sometimes, and suffer so much, how they can unite, compose, and heal at all with the strange and false.” (Jaboatão, 1858: 326)
 - 15 Jaboatão, 1858: 201: “Com todos estes Conventos se compõs, e formalizou a Provincia de Santo Antonio do Brasil desde o seu principio de Custodia, indo-se seguindo huns aos outros, conforme a ordem, e carreira dos tempos; estas foraõ as partes, que formaraõ o seu corpo, ficando-lhe cõllo, e cabeça a Casa de Olinda, e todos juntos huma formosa, e levantada torre, com tantos Escudos de fortaleza, e honra, quantos Filhos de espirito, de virtude, e santidade, de sciencia, e letras, de cargos e dignidades tem gerado, e produzido de si.” [“With all these convents was composed and formalized the Province of Santo Antonio in Brazil since its beginning as Custody, following each other, according to the order, and career of the times; these were the parties that formed its body, with her lap and head in Olinda House, and put together a fair and raised tower with many fortress and honor shells, how many Children in spirit, virtue, and holiness, science, and letters, positions and dignities has generated and produced.”]
 - 16 Jaboatão, 1858: 211: “Ainda que a julgamos mais conforme pela expressão de algumas particularidades com que a escreve, que o não faria sem aquellas circumstancias, que pedia a sua obrigação, deixando sempre a melhor indagação desta verdade para o Padre Chronista da sua Provincia, a quem, como a causa própria e tanto de casa, lhe compete saber melhor o que nella passa: *Foy* (diz a referida memoria) o *P. Fr. Melchior de Santa Catharina, natural da nobillissima Villa de Ponte de Lima, seus Progenitores foraõ os Chefes da Casa de Britiandos, Casa taõ nobremente fidalga, que se prezaõ de descender della os mayores Titulos, e nobreza de Portugal*. Esta, diz, foy a Patria illustre, este o nobre solar do Venerando P. Fr. Melchior de Santa Catharina.” [“Although we judge it more according by the expression of some characteristics with the writing, that would not do without those circumstances, which called its obligation, always leaving the seeking of this truth to Father chronicler of the Province, to whom, as the own cause, he's the best to know what's in it: *Fr. Melchior Santa Catharina* (says that memory) *was born in the most noble village of Ponte de Lima, his Parents were the heads of Britiandos House, House so noble, that the largest Titles and nobility of Portugal descend from it. This, he says, was the illustrious homeland, this was the noble house of Venerable Fr. P. Melchior Santa Catharina*”].
 - 17 Jaboatão, 1858: 229: “Tambem o provava empregando-o nas occupaçoens mais vis, e humildes da Comunidade; mas nisto mesmo, que lhe offerencia por mortificação, e desprezo, achava o Noviço o mayor allivio, e consolo: e vindo o Mestre neste conhecimento, tratou de o mortificar por outro estylo. Em muitos dias o não occupava em cousa alguma, como não fazendo caso do seu préstimo, e dando-lhe a entender que era para a Religiaõ de pouca serventia.” [“Heal so proved it, employing it in the vilest and more humble occupations of the Community; but even in this, that he offered by mortification and contempt, the Novice found his largest relief and consolation: and the Master, knowing this, tried to mortify him in another style. On many days he doesn't occupy him in anything, ignoring his services, and giving him to understand that he was for the religion of little use”].
 - 18 Jaboatão, 1858: 244-245: “Ainda lhe restava o peito por armar; porque os cilicos, e coletes não podiaõ chegar a elle, e não achava na Armeira da Mystica arnêz determinado para a sua defeza; mas o seu espirito, como artifice engenhoso de novas maquinas, para subjugar a rebeldia do corpo, e resistir ás suas

desordenadas paixões, descobrio, e forjou hum, tanto mais admiravel, como nunca praticado. Mandou fazer huma Cruz de páo de hum palmo de comprido, e tres dedos de largo, e nella fez cravar trinta pontas de agudo, e penetrante ferro, e este instrumento assim lançava ao pescoço, humas vezes sobre as costas, outras para a parte de diante, mas sempre immediato, e unido á raiz da carne, como tomando a peito não ter hora, nem instante, em que não ajudasse ao seu Redemptor a levar sobre os hombros o pezado jugo da sua CRUZ, figurando nas trinta pontas desta, os tres Cravos do Senhor: não porque quisesse na demazia do numero exceder o mysterio da figura; mas porque achava que, por cada hum dos Cravos do Senhor, merecia elle reduplicar em infinitudes de vezes, pelo numero de dez, o seu sentimento”. [“He still had his chest for arming; because the cilices and jackets could not be enough to him, and he didn’t find in mystical “weapons” a particular harness for his defense; but his spirit, as ingenious artifice of new machines, to subdue the body’s rebellion and to resist to his disordered passions, discovered and forge done, all the more admirable as never practiced. He ordered to make a wooden cross of a long span and three fingers wide, and in it he made insert thirty tips of sharp and penetrating iron, and this instrument was thus throwing the neck, sometimes on the back, others for the front part, but always immediate and attached to the root of flesh, such as taking seriously does not have time or instant in that he did not help to their Redeemer to carry on his shoulders the yoke of his heavy CROSS, figuring in thirty ends of this the three nails of the Lord, not because he wanted with so heavy number exceed the mystery of the figure; but because he thought that, for every one of the nails of the Lord, he deserved redoubling infinity of times his sense, by the number of ten”].

- 19 Jaboatão, 1858: 291: “e supposto que todos estes, com pouca differença, fallavaõ a mesma lingua que era a geral de toda esta Costa, com tal diligencia, e facilidade a aprendeo, e soube com tanta elegancia, e em tão pouco tempo... que affirmavaõ todos parecia cousa sobrenatural e que só por milagre podia ser, e parecia dom do Altíssimo communicado a este seu Evangelico Ministro, porque até os mesmos Gentios não deixavaõ de reparar na perfeição, e propriedade, com que o servo de Deos lhes falava”. [“and alleged that all of these with little difference, spoke the same language that was the general in this entire coast with such diligencia, and easily learned it and knew with such elegance, and in a short time... that all said it seemed a supernatural thing and that only a miracle could be, and seemed a gift from the Almighty, communicated to his Evangelic Minister, because even those Gentiles did not fail to notice the perfection and property the God’s servant spoke to them”].

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