

**Abstract.** Father Antonio Vieira reported his position in the defense of the **freedom** of Brazilian Indians and gently shunned the violence of white settlers against the indigenes during colonial times. In his *Relatório da missão de Ibiapaba*, an *ad hoc* document written in 1655, Vieira shows for the first time a deep interest in the “Indigene issue” and reveals to be not merely a historian of the Jesuit missionary activities in northeastern Brazil (particularly in the states of Ceará and Maranhão) but also an anthropologist who endeavors to give a “voice to the Indians” through the narrative of their dreams which, from the priest’s point of view, may be interpreted as the manifestation of grace or the wiles of the devil. Current paper presents the opinion of Antonio Vieira on the “Indigene issue” from the point of view of freedom. The paper verifies 1) whether the religious feelings for the protection of the Indians comply with the modern concept of human rights; and 2) whether Vieira’s struggle for the protection of the Indians would not be in conflict with less noble strategies such as those manifested by the Society of Jesus, or rather, the strengthening of its influence in Portuguese and Spanish America.

**Keywords:** Freedom - Rights - Colonial Philosophy -Violence -Vieira.

