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'Poisonous source of all these evils' Freemasonry, modernity and the church (Belém 1930-1938)

'Poison source of all these evils' framework, modernity, and the church (belém 1930-1938)

'Poisonous source of all these evils' Masonry, modernity and church (Belém 1930-1938)

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SUMMARY

This article aims to analyze the anti-Masonic discourse disseminated by the newspaper "A Palavra," which circulated in Belém do Pará between 1930 and 1938. More precisely, it examines the materials published by Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira, understanding how Freemasonry was conceived as a moral, spiritual, and social threat, connecting it to disorder, anticlericalism, and projects of modernity considered by him incompatible with the Catholic faith. For this study, the main sources used were articles from the periodical of the Archdiocese of Belém, as well as ecclesiastical documents and papal encyclicals, with an emphasis on how the narrative of opposition functioned as an instrument of religious authority, mobilized to reaffirm Christian values and strengthen the presence of the Church in the public sphere.

Furthermore, by connecting local and global events, it reveals that the fight against Freemasonry in Belém did not occur in isolation, but is part of a broader movement within the Catholic Church in response to the challenges of modernity at the beginning of the 20th century. Therefore, this...
This research contributes to the understanding of the relationships between religion, the press, and power, highlighting the role of religious discourse in constructing supposedly harmful enemies in an attempt to order society.

Keywords: Anti-Masonic; Catholic Church; Belém do Pará; Press; Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira.

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the anti-masonic discourse disseminated by the periodical "A Palavra", which circulated in Belém do Pará between 1930 and 1938. More specifically, it examines the materials published by Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira, understanding how masonry was conceived as a moral, spiritual and social threat, linked to disorder, anti-clericalism and projects of modernity that is considered incompatible with Catholic faith. For this study, the main sources used were articles in the publication of the Archdiocese of Belém, as well as ecclesiastical documents and papal encyclicals, with emphasis on how the narrative of opposition functioned as an instrument of religious authority, mobilized to reaffirm Christian values and strengthen the presence of the Church in the public sphere. Furthermore, when analyzing local and global events, it is revealed that the fight against masonry in Belém did not unfold in an isolated way, but that it formed part of a broader movement of the Catholic Church in response to the challenges of modernity at the beginning of the 20th century. In this way, this investigation contributes to the understanding of relationships between religion, press and power, highlighting the role of religious discourse in the construction of supposedly harmful enemies, with the aim of ordering society.

Keywords: Anti-Masonic; Catholic Church; Bethlehem; periodical; Manuel d'Assumpção Pereira.

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INTRODUCTION

This article, entitled **"'Poisonous source of all these evils':** Freemasonry, "Modernity and the Church (Belém 1930–1938)" analyzes how local Catholic rhetoric was... mobilized in Belém do Pará as a strategy of discursive resistance against transformations of the First Republic. In other words, the Catholic Church sought to position oneself in the face of the consolidation of the secular state, and the growing presence of ideologies. modern times and the loss of institutional prerogatives. In this way, the fight against Freemasonry... It served as a privileged discursive axis for reaffirming moral, religious, and social principles. considered threatened. In Belém, this confrontation took on particular contours: the The Catholic press played a central role in the struggle for moral authority. The newspaper "A Palavra," created in 1910 and linked to the Archdiocese, became an important instrument. from the local Church to the indoctrination, vigilance, and criticism of the enemies of the faith.

In this context, the figure of Father Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira stands out. Portuguese man who arrived in Pará in 1910 and held various religious offices. Contributor. A regular contributor to "A Palavra," he published dozens of articles with strong content between 1930 and 1938. Anti-Masonic. His criticisms of Freemasonry were frequent and incisive, relating to... organization is linked to a series of social and moral ills, such as the corruption of youth, The breakdown of the Christian family and the dissolution of the religious order, in the columns entitled "A Freemasonry, its doctrine and its works" (Newspaper A Palavra, April 7, 1938, page 1). For In addition to doctrinal denunciation, his speech proposed a campaign against the agents of modernity.

Throughout this period, the newspaper reiterated the "dangers of modernity" present in "secret societies," in going to the movies, in spiritualist groups, among communists, in fashion, and in civil institutions such as the Rotary Club. However, the focus of our ecclesiastical author, Manuel Pereira constantly focuses on Freemasonry, presented as the main enemy of... Church and order. The strength of this discourse lies in its ability to articulate tradition and reaction. faith and politics, at a time when the Church sought to reaffirm its presence in the face of Changes in the modern world, as in the first publication presented by the priest.

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"[...] and Freemasonry, as I will demonstrate in these columns, is the primary cause, the poisonous source." of all these evils. She is the colossal trunk, submerged in the subterranean caves, where all The other sects will drink from her and draw inspiration from her. She is the synthesis of all errors, the source of the most... Unbridled corruption, the greatest enemy of God, the Church, the nation, and the family; to know it is a necessity so that we do not fall victim to their tremendous traps, sinister plans and pernicious cavils [...]" (A Palavra, Sunday, November 10, 1931, p. 4).

The personification of evil in the figure of the Freemason, constructed as a harmful enemy of the faith, of the social order and Christian tradition, it is a recurring rhetorical strategy in his texts and It articulates theology, morality, and politics.

An analysis of the columns signed or attributed to Father Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira It allows us to understand how anti-Masonic discourse was systematically used as an instrument of ideological confrontation. Through this strategy, the local clergy sought to to restore its moral authority in a society marked by religious and ideological disputes. and cultural. Accordingly, in this article I seek to demonstrate that: the anti-Masonic position The priest Pereira's discourse was not limited to theological thought, but was part of a political network. from the Church to resist the loss of institutional and moral influence; the figure of the "freemason" was constructed as an ideological enemy of faith, allowing for the updating of language. Antimodern in new contexts; the newspaper "A Palavra", even though it brought together collaborations In various ways, it consolidated a publishing project in defense of Catholic orthodoxy and values. conservatives.

ENEMY CONSTRUCTION: HIDDEN DAMAGE

In the pages of the newspaper "A Palavra", Freemasonry appears recurrently as the center. a source of social, political, and spiritual ills. The vocabulary used by Father Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira in his publications entitled "Freemasonry, its doctrine and its works" It is marked by strong images, in which the institution is described as a "colossal trunk" that It would fuel other modern sects and ideologies. The use of the metaphor of the "poisonous spring" present in articles published from 1931 onwards, it synthesizes this rhetorical strategy to the same extent. a time when he personifies evil, establishing Freemasonry as a harmful enemy, whose Its presence would be felt on different fronts, but without a defined face.

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This feature gave the speech a persuasive quality, as it allowed for relating distinct phenomena, among which are communism, liberalism, spiritualism and fashion, the a single hidden origin. In this way, a coherent narrative was created in which Freemasonry She appeared as the silent orchestrator of an international project against the Church and society. Christian. Thus, the newspaper not only condemned specific practices, but also offered to The reader will find a key to interpretation capable of making sense of the changes of the present time.

Therefore, I understand that, more than a concrete adversary, Freemasonry was... constructed as a discursive figure of opposition. This fabrication operated on two fronts: In the theological dimension, it was presented as the "greatest enemy of God and the Church"; and in The political dimension, as a destructive force, is interested in eroding the foundations of family and nation. This dual characterization reinforced the perception of a total threat, against which only the Catholic faith and vigilance could offer protection. These strategies can be observed. in passages such as the following, edited in 1933, in which he said that Freemasonry, whose purpose The sinister and principal goal was to destroy the church and make the name of God hateful; thousands of women Defenseless women and consecrated men, whether they were nationals or not, were expelled from their homes. dispossessed of their property by the soldiers of Dom Pedro because he was part of that sect.(A Word, December 17, 1933, p. 3).

From this perspective, the periodical did not limit itself to arguing in doctrinal terms, but It employed dramatic and emotional language, bringing the reader closer to the feeling that... Freemasonry was an omnipresent and destructive force. In reconstructing persecutions involving the During the First Reign, Father Pereira produced a memory of victimization that reinforced the idea that historical continuity, as well as attacks against the Church in Portugal, would be equivalent to the threats against the Catholic faith in Pará. This way of narrating also had a Educational effect: the fear of the harmful enemy, presented as a constant warning, a call to action. to the moral and religious vigilance of the faithful. The violence of the descriptions — convents looted, Defenseless women expelled, priests persecuted — it served the purpose of dramatizing the struggle. spiritual, transforming it into an emotional experience capable of mobilizing the Catholic public.

In addition to the historical dramatization, the newspaper's discourse relied on a network of broader authorities. Manoel Pereira frequently cited papal encyclicals, such as the Humanum Genus (1884), by Leo XIII, to reinforce that the fight against Freemasonry was not This is not only a personal opinion, but also part of an official directive from the Catholic Church.

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This feature lent legitimacy to their texts, aligning the local press with a struggle.
presented as universal.

In this sense, the secret society was described not only as an enemy of the faith, but
also as a global force of disruption, capable of infiltrating different countries,
sects and ideologies. This perception can be seen in passages such as the one published in 1934,
when the author warned about the advance of Freemasonry in Japan and its connection with movements
revolutionaries who founded several shops, whose activity and results demonstrated their aims
criminals , shrouded in the cloak of liberalism, persecuting and stealing the Church's property,
revolutionizing peoples and ruining nations. Currently, according to Manoel Pereira, the
Freemasonry masquerades as communism, socialism, and Bolshevism, tending to
to seize national wealth by force (A Palavra, January 6, 1934, p. 2).

Therefore, by citing Japan as an example, the newspaper demonstrated how the enemy...
It was conceived on a global scale, reinforcing the idea that the local Church participated in a
A battle of global scope. This rhetoric amplified the sense of urgency, as it presented the evil...
as dynamic and changeable: if in the past it attacked faith in Portugal, in the present it could assume
the face of communism or secret societies in the East. Thus, I advocate understanding of
that the enemy constructed by the priest Manoel Pereira was not merely local or national, but
part of an ongoing conspiracy against the Christian faith, a narrative that kept the faithful
in a state of constant alert, justifying the need for continuous vigilance and resistance.

Anti-Masonic as an Instrument of Legitimation and Authority

The fight against Freemasonry in the pages of "A Palavra" was not limited to mere denunciation.
of a secret society. It was a legitimizing strategy, by which the local clergy
He reinforced his authority by aligning himself with the teachings of the Catholic Church and by presenting himself as...
A defender of faith on a universal scale. Therefore, by inserting his criticisms in line with the
Through papal encyclicals and the official discourse of the Holy See, Father Manoel Pereira sought to show
that the Church in Pará was not isolated, but was part of a single, unified ecclesiastical body.
against a common enemy.

This stance had two effects, namely: on the one hand, from an internal perspective, it reinforced the
leadership of the clergy in the eyes of Pará society, presenting it as a moral guardian in
times of uncertainty; on the other hand, it linked Belém to a larger horizon, that of the struggle itself.

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The global church against modernity and forces considered corrosive to Christian tradition. Thus, The anti-Masonic rhetoric functioned as an ideological link between the Amazonian and the major disputes within world Catholicism, while simultaneously strengthening the legitimacy of local ecclesiastical authority before the faithful.

Tonight I was able to reflect that one of Father Manoel Pereira's main assets was... constant reference to papal documents, especially the encyclical Humanum Genus, published by Leo XIII in 1884, in which Freemasonry is described as a "pestilent sect" which was diametrically opposed to God, the Church, and the Christian social order. By echoing these In his formulations, Pereira emphasized that his actions were not a personal crusade, but rather... a direct expression of the official and universal tradition of the Catholic Church. For the Pope, the struggle between The Church and Freemasonry represented nothing less than a clash between "two kingdoms". irreconcilable: that of Christ and that of Satan.

In Humanum Genus, Leo XIII asserted that humankind, after its miserable fall from God, "out of the devil's envy," separated himself into two distinct and opposing parts. One is the kingdom. of God on earth, specifically the true Church of Jesus Christ; the other is the kingdom of Satan, composed of those who refuse to obey the divine and eternal law (Humanum). Genus, 1884, paragraph 1). And further on, addressing Freemasonry specifically, which, According to the Pope, it produces pernicious and most bitter fruits, for it is responsible for complete overthrow of the entire religious and political order of the world that Christian teaching produced and by replacing it with a new state of affairs in accordance with his ideas, of which foundations and laws were derived from mere naturalism. (Humanum Genus, 1884, paragraph 10).

Accordingly, Father Manoel Pereira made moves that reinforced the legitimacy of his discourse before the readers of Pará and, at the same time, linked to The Amazonian experience was reduced to a "global" battle. What was at stake, therefore, was not just... the local controversy with specific groups, but also Belém's inclusion in a conflict. presented as universal. Given this, the periodical under examination assumed the function of echoing the The voice of Rome in the Amazonian space, transforming the fight against Freemasonry into an act of loyalty. and obedience to the papacy and presenting themselves as part of an international resistance network to the advance of modernity and the dissolution of Christian values. This rhetoric broadened the The importance of the local Catholic press legitimized the authority of the regional clergy as a spokesperson. The voice of Catholic tradition in the face of republican uncertainties.

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Beyond doctrine, anti-Masonic discourse functioned as an instrument.
pedagogical. The published texts included dramatic descriptions and warnings.
constants, presenting it as an invisible articulator of everyday practices, from cinema to
From fashion, from spiritualism to communism. In this way, the newspaper offered the public a reading experience.
The morality of everyday life, in which vigilance against the enemy was confused with the maintenance of...
faith and Catholic life. The denunciation of "modern dangers" sought not only to inform,
but also to shape the conduct of the faithful in the face of a city undergoing transformation.

This pedagogical character was built through the repetition of images and metaphors, which
They reinforced, in the reader, the perception that daily life was permanently surrounded by
pitfalls. Such as going to the movies, adopting trends, and embracing ideas considered...
"Advanced" technologies came to be seen as spiritual and moral risks, suggesting a possible...
openness to the influence of Freemasonry. In this way, the use of dramatization served the function
to keep the Catholic community in a state of constant alert, teaching them how to interpret the facts.
of the present under the key of religious combat.

According to the newspaper "A Palavra", the stonemasons of God would be responsible for spreading
a "base materialism," denying the existence of God and the soul and making use of "theatre"
immoral" and "shameless fashions" as instruments of moral corruption[1] . Given that
It operated as a form of catechesis; in parishes and sermons, the Church taught doctrine; in
Printed pages offered an "easy translation" of this doctrine, applying it to the changes.
Urban and social aspects of Belém. Public life was reinterpreted in light of the logic of threat and...
resistance; thus, the anti-Masonic attitude was not limited to being language against a
It lacked a specific organization, but it became a lens through which to interpret reality, providing the faithful with...
clear parameters regarding what should be accepted and what should be rejected within the space of modernity.
Amazonian.

Therefore, I defend the understanding that one can say that the anti-Masonic discourse
Its function was to reinforce the unity of the Catholic community around a common enemy and,
At the same time, it has the task of educating the faithful in the daily practice of rejecting novelties that the Church...
He considered them dangerous. This teaching was, therefore, also a pedagogy of discipline.

[1] "We know that Freemasonry instills in the intelligence and hearts of its followers the most vile materialism, consequently denying the existence of God and the immortal soul, and as one of its aims is to corrupt, they make use of the immortal theater, shameless fashions and a free press, sold to Jewish Masonic sectarianism, to transform men into beasts, thus enabling them to commit all crimes, even those most repugnant to human nature." (A Palavra, March 19, 1933, p. 4).

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in which the defense of the faith translated into concrete guidelines on how to live amidst the cultural transformations of the First Republic.

Although distant from the major political and ecclesiastical centers of the country, the newspaper projected Amazonian reality as part of a universal narrative. In Manoel Pereira's columns, Local events were connected to historical and international examples, such as... religious persecutions in Portugal, the rise of communism in Russia and China, and the The presence of Freemasonry in Japan. By weaving together these different scenarios, the priest presented to readers from Pará, the idea was that they were part of a global struggle, in which the same Enemies and threats are multiplying on a global scale.

"And it's worth noting that even in Soviet Russia, where (they say) the government is proletarian, it was revoked." The right to strike, and if anyone feels ticklish, the bullets of the reds will 'hit them'. Here in Pará It's a real mess; over a give and take, the trams are stopped, the traffic is suspended. etc., to the detriment of the individual and the collective" (The Word, Sunday, 04 of (impossible) (visualization) of 1933, p. 3)

In modern times, while in Russia communism represented excessive repression, in In Belém, according to him, the problem was the opposite: an excessive freedom that produced social disorder. In this line of reasoning, both the "red tyranny" and local strikes (like that of streetcars) were symptoms of a world in crisis, marked by a loss of authority. and discipline.

Therefore, it was not just a matter of warning against the risks present in the city of Bethlehem, but to situate the Catholic community of Pará within a larger battle that crossed borders. and historical periods. Thus, the secret society, although hidden as a concrete organization in daily life in the Amazon emerged as a central element of an international conspiracy against which each believer should feel called to resist. Therefore, in proposing this link between the Locally and globally, the clergy reinforced its authority, projecting itself not only as a defender of The Church in Pará, but also as an active participant in a worldwide activity in defense of Christian faith and tradition.

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FAITH, AUTHORITY AND ORDER: THE CHURCH AS RESTORER OF CIVILIZATION

The anti-Masonic speech by Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira, published in the pages of The newspaper "A Palavra" presented itself as a project of social restoration, in which the Catholic faith... It emerged as the only principle capable of guaranteeing order and civilization. Faced with a Considered a Republic that was unstable, materialistic, and anti-clerical, the priest argued that only the A return to spiritual authority and Christian values could stem the spread of disorder. modern.

In the 1930s, his articles frequently articulated critiques of politics. republican, to strikes and the dissolution of social discipline; the publication, on June 16th 1935, in which he laments the people of Pará seduced by "false promises of freedom," since they forgot that without God there is no authority and, without authority, chaos reigns . Such formulation He clearly expresses the central idea of his thought: political and moral disorders were Direct consequences of the loss of faith, restoring faith meant reshaping society itself. This concept resonated with the guidelines of the papal magisterium, particularly in encyclicals of Pius XI, which engaged with the context of crisis in liberal democracies and of The expansion of communism, especially in Mexico. In Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio, the Pope defined the "The remedy for modern society" as a return to the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ. The encyclical states:

"For this reason, being the exclusive mission of the Church [...] It is the only one that can currently not not only to restore the true peace of Christ, but also to consolidate it for the future, [...] The Church It is the only one that teaches, by divine mandate and ordinance, the obligation that men have to to align all their conduct, both private and public, as individuals, with God's eternal law. and as members of society. In this way, when states and governments consider as a sacred and solemn duty, submission to the teachings and precepts of Jesus Christ in Their political life, both internal and external, will then, and only then, enjoy internal peace and maintain... "Relationships of mutual trust will lead to the peaceful resolution of any conflicts that may arise." (Pius XI, Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio, December 23, 1922).

2 “It is that war has brought many nations into better counsel, which has seen that only the Catholic Church is capable of restoring order when it is disturbed and maintaining peace in the governance of peoples.” MANOEL PEREIRA. Sunday, A Palavra Newspaper, June 16, 1935. P.2

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As a result of citing or reproducing ideas similar to these. , Manoel Pereira no
This not only reinforced the legitimacy of his vision, but also situated Bethlehem within a...
The international civilizing project of the Church. Thus, the newspaper presented itself as an extension
of this teaching, a local instrument of the same universal mission to restore "Christendom"
amidst the moral decay of the modern world.

In several articles published between 1935 and 1936, the prelate established associations.
Direct links between modernity and spiritual corruption. In a column dated March 17, 1935,
He wrote about the Masonic government in Mexico in 1925, under President Plutarco.
Elías Calles, being the main character who barbarically and cruelly persecutes Catholics,
closing their religious schools, stealing their property and expelling them from their homeland, or worse,
shooting them on orders from Freemasonry. Priests were arrested and executed; men
And women, maidens, and children ended up in the dungeons, and some were mutilated, simply because...
They said they either went to hear mass or did not cheer the executioner; children had their tongues cut out.
"Because they shout 'Long live Christ the King' and not 'Long live Calles,' as they wanted." (Father Manuel de Assumpção)
Pereira, A Palavra newspaper, Sunday, March 17, 1935. Page 2)

Therefore, the dark and disciplinary tone of these passages reveals the character
The political and theological aspects of his rhetoric. Faith was not treated merely as an individual virtue, but
also as a foundation of government, a principle of hierarchy and social cohesion. In denouncing
What he called "republican anarchy," the priest advocated, in practice, a society
Ordered according to Catholic morality: hierarchical, disciplined, and obedient.

This idea was also similar to the social reflection developed by Pius XI in
encyclical Quadragesimo Anno, in which the Pope reaffirmed that "the social order must be
"fully restored according to moral and Christian law." In it, Pius XI warned that socialism,
Whether considered doctrine, historical fact, or action, it cannot be reconciled with doctrine.
Catholic, because it conceives of society in a way that is completely contrary to Christian truth. According to
According to Christian doctrine, man, being sociable by nature, is placed on this earth so that, by living in
society and under God-ordained authority, cultivate and fully develop all its
faculties, for the praise and glory of the Creator, and for the faithful fulfillment of the duties of their
profession or vocation, whatever it may be, temporal and eternal happiness (Pius XI,
Quadragesimo Anno, May 15, 1931, p.23).

Manoel Pereira interpreted the messages as if modern society were suffering from
incurable ills, for he abandoned the divine remedy, the Church, the sole custodian of truth and

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order. In this sense, religious discourse took on the contours of a civilizing program and the use
from a medical vocabulary, since restoring the Church meant regenerating the social body. A
Freemasonry then appeared as a symptom of the same moral disease, the cause of which was...
departure from Catholic truth.

Beyond the political critique, there is also a clear pastoral dimension. The priest saw the
A periodical as a means to educate the faithful to recognize and resist the "deceptions of the age".
Thus, the texts assume a dual role: to instruct (through moral catechesis) and to correct (through
(doctrinal vigilance). In an article dated May 17, 1936, Pereira wrote:

"How many profess to believe, yet do not practice, thinking that faith is sufficient for them, 'when faith without works is nothing.'"
"Dead" "and each one will be rewarded according to their merit." May the sinners,
While navigating the sea of life, seek reconciliation with God through penance or
A sincere confession of all sins, because when the night of death arrives, it will be too late!
(MANOEL D'ASSUMPÇÃO PEREIRA, Sunday, August 30, 1931, page 4. Newspaper A
The Word, God's Justice and Hell

As a result, the disciplinary dimension of his vision—believing in God and placing his trust in Him—is crucial.
Supreme obedience to the eternal king—appears as inseparable duties. Thus, the discourse
It enters the realm of social order, since, in his view, defending the Church was equivalent to
to defend one's own civilization.

In short, I understand that Assumpção Pereira's thinking was based on...
His conviction that the crisis of the modern world was one of faith and authority. His rhetoric resonated and
He reinterpreted papal encyclicals, adapting them to the Amazonian context. In republican Pará,
Marked by social tensions, strikes, and urban changes, the agent in question offered a
A religious reading of the present time, according to which political and moral disorders should
to be faced with fidelity to Catholic tradition and obedience to the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Through this trajectory, the newspaper "A Palavra" and, in particular, the texts produced by
Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira's work is part of a broader tradition in the Catholic press.
Brazilian, marked by the use of print as an instrument of moral education and debate.
narrative and intervention in public space. Far from performing a merely
Informative, religious typography historically constituted itself as an extension of

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pulpit, expanding the capacity for the circulation of clerical ideas and reinforcing the authority of Ecclesiastical discourse beyond the limits of the altar. [3].

In this sense, the articles analyzed should not be understood as manifestations isolated or solely the result of the priest's personal convictions, but as part of a Catholic political culture which, in modernity, identified a set of threats to order. Christian. As David Gueiros Vieira documents in his study on the Religious Question in In Brazil, "nineteenth-century ultramontanism positioned itself not only in favor of greater concentration of ecclesiastical power in the hands of the papacy, but also against a series of things considered wrong and dangerous for the Church"4 . In this way, Freemasonry, associated with Liberalism, Protestantism, and secularization operated as a damaging enemy capable of... To organize and give meaning to diffuse fears produced by the rapid transformations of the world. urban and contemporary. According to Vieira, the papal condemnations of Freemasonry, already in the 19th century XVIII, they warned that, in the shops, "men of all religions and all sects congregate, under the guise of natural honesty," which resulted in "a great danger to the purity of Catholic religion"5 . Among the transformative processes, the growth of cities, the circulation of new political ideas, the expansion of secular public space and the relativization of Traditional authorities were perceived as signs of moral disorder, associating these processes related to Masonic practice, producing, from this, a religious discourse with a moralizing and "intolerant" reading [6]of modernity, in which complex phenomena were reduced to an intelligible and combatable threat.

Given this, studies on the Catholic press in Brazil highlight that the definition of Enemies, real or imagined, have been a central element in the construction of identities. religious rhetoric and the delimitation of boundaries between what is acceptable and what is condemnable. The rhetoric of The dangers of infiltration and moral corruption, recurrent in these periodicals, functioned as pedagogical strategies, guiding the faithful on how to interpret the transformations. Ongoing political and social policies. Therefore, this same logic of constructing the "internal enemy" was

[3] Regarding the Catholic press as an instrument of moral formation, symbolic dispute, and expansion of authority. Clerical, TAVARES, Anderson Clayton Fonseca; Catholic press and political culture in Brazil. Journal of Theology and Religious Sciences, v. 11, n. 18, 2017.
[4] VIEIRA, David Gueiros. Protestantism, Freemasonry and the Religious Question in Brazil. [Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 1980]. p. 33
[5] VIEIRA, David Gueiros. Protestantism, Freemasonry and the Religious Question in Brazil. [Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 1980]. p. 43
[6] VIEIRA, David Gueiros. Protestantism, Freemasonry and the Religious Question in Brazil. [Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 1980]. p. 376

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extensively analyzed by Maria Helena Rolim Capelato in her study on the secular press.
Brazilian, when examining the role of major newspapers during times of political crisis, such as the
the 1964 coup, demonstrating how the press fabricated the "specter of communism" to
to unify its readers around the defense of order, family, and property, legitimizing the
institutional rupture[7] . Just as the secular press constructed the communist as a threat to
In the nation, the Catholic press portrayed Freemasons as a threat to Christian faith and morals, a logic that...
Note in the texts of Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira: Freemasonry appears less as a
concrete organization and more as an explanatory principle of modern disorder.

In the context of Pará, this use of the press as an instrument of combat
The religious tradition has older roots, as does the work of Dom Antônio de Macedo Costa.
in the 19th century, which already evidenced the systematic use of Catholic periodicals as a means of
Moralization of local Catholicism, confrontation with Freemasonry, and assertion of authority.
Episcopal role in relation to the State and society. As analyzed by Anderson Clayton Tavares,
To study the actions of Dom Antônio de Macedo Costa in 19th-century Pará, and the episcopal power.
It was not limited to the spiritual realm, but was structured through discursive strategies.
of the moral control of customs and the use of the press as an instrument of intervention.
in the public space. The author points out that, even during the seminary, Macedo Costa "becomes
contributor to the Catholic newspaper 'O Noticiador Católico', an important periodical that circulated in Bahia and
combated ideas contrary to Catholicism." [8]This initial experience reveals how the
Mastery of the printed word accompanied his development from his earliest steps in education.
Catholic.

Therefore, in his role as bishop of Pará, his actions through the press became...
intensified, as recorded in the newspaper "O Liberal do Pará" on February 4, 1873,
"An unsigned pamphlet circulated in the city, distributed by employees of the printing workshop."
from the periodical 'Boa Nova'",a publication controlled by Dom Macedo, in which Freemasonry was accused of
being led by "foreigners [...] without faith, without law, without a homeland"[9] . In "The structure
Regarding the power in the bishop's actions," the author demonstrates that the Catholic Church mobilized different

[7] CAPELATO, Maria Helena Rolim. Press and History of Brazil. São Paulo: Contexto/Edusp, 1988

[8] TAVARES, Anderson Clayton Fonseca. The power structure in the actions of Bishop Dom Macedo Costa: "That is why we have a free country, we must have a Catholic country". REFLEXUS - Year XI, no. 18, pp. 339-360, 2017/2. p. 342.

[9] TAVARES, Anderson Clayton Fonseca. The power structure in the actions of Bishop Dom Macedo Costa: "That is why we have a free country, we must have a Catholic country". REFLEXUS - Year XI, no. 18, pp. 339-360, 2017/2. pp. 356-357.

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mechanisms to reaffirm its authority in the face of liberalism, anticlericalism and Freemasonry, understanding the religious conflict as part of a broader dispute over power and social legitimacy. By resorting to the newspaper as a privileged space for dispute, Dom Macedo established discursive foundations that would be taken up and reworked by agents. ecclesiastics in the following decades.

Comparing these experiences allows us to understand Manuel's actions. d'Assumpção Pereira in the continuity and updating of a consolidated practice in Catholicism in Pará. Although embedded in a distinct political context, marked by the Era Inspired by Vargas and anti-communism, the prelate mobilized strategies similar to those of his... predecessors, such as the defense of the Christian order, the denunciation of external enemies, and the use of The word is printed in the faculty of moral vigilance and social discipline.

Therefore, I defend the conception that the anti-Masonic discourse conveyed in "A The word "Palavra" reveals itself less as an episodic expression of religious intolerance and more as part of... of a broad project of social order, in which faith, authority, and politics are intertwined. To construct Freemasonry as a functional enemy, Manoel d'Assumpção Pereira not only It reinforced the position of the Catholic Church in the public sphere of Belém, but also offered to Faithful: an interpretative key to understanding and confronting the uncertainties of modernity.

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