

# Free essay about pero vaz caminhas letter (brazils birth certificate)

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Pero Vaz Caminha Letter, also known as the Brazil's Birth Certificate is a document that Pero Vaz Caminha wrote in 1500. Pero was one of the scribes in a ship carrying explorers from Portugal to landfall in Brazil; people used to call it a "new world". He had been commissioned to accompany the voyage that was under Pedro Alvarez Cabral's command. Pero was a Portuguese knight who acted as the royal factory's secretary. The letter was a detailed official report detailing the month of April 1500 in Brazil. The author of the letter addressed Manuel I, the king of Portugal. It was his first account that contained extensive description of people and land that came to form Brazil. In other words, he was describing the existence of Brazil.

The paper focuses on extraordinary lifestyles of inhabitants of the "New World". By presenting people's culture, Pero provides a rich research source that any reader could recommend. Today, the letter is still considered being amongst the most accurate accounts regarding the real picture of Brazil in 1500. Pedro started drafting the report on 27th of April, and completed on 1st May, a day when one of the fleet's vessel sailed back to Lisbon, Portugal. By doing so, Pero intended to deliver good news of Brazil to his king in Portugal, Manuel I. Therefore, it is the comprehensive report in the letter that makes Pero's work resourceful.

Pero met people of the Mesolithic period, the time when people were changing their lifestyles from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to that of a sedentary and agricultural one. From their behavior and coexistence, the writer finds the people amazing. For instance, he first saw them walking on the shores of the sea completely naked. Even Adam and Eve had long discovered the need to cover their bodies the moment they sinned. This

feature presents the people of the new world as primitive. When he met the reddish brown-skinned people, they surprisingly contradicted the first group, they walking comfortably in twos and threes. The latter group was advanced; approaching the narrators' ships determinedly with arrows and bows in their hands, maybe ready for a fight (Finger and Carla 116).

## **General Description of the Native People in the “ New World”**

Pero explains the people to be more different than his colleagues in Portugal. They had a reddish complexion although their skins were brownish. They had good-looking faces characterized with long protruding noses making them unique and unusual. They were less concerned about their private parts. It was a clear indication of their innocence. There was no big deal regarding the nakedness of their sex parts. Further, the interesting thing about them was their hygienic standards. Their bodies were ever clean and plump and with attractive shapes. What an innocent this world was. They lived like birds eating fruits and seeds from trees. Their stable food was yam, which was plentiful in the area. The narrator says they had plenty to eat in Portugal, but these people looked finer and sleeker compared to them.

They had pierced lips. We later learnt that lip-piercing tool place in their childhood. It was done by use of two sharp stones, a painful experience since anesthesia was never used. They had limited knowledge about domestic animals. The narrator says they had little attention to a ram they gave them. They were even afraid of a hen showing their total innocence. It was the person in an entirely different world, a new world (Finger and Carla 74). As Pero describes his experience with the people,

“ We gave them things to eat: bread, boiled fish, sweetmeats, cakes, honey, dried figs. They would hardly eat anything of this kind at all, and if they tasted it, they spat it out at once. We brought them wine in a cup; they merely sipped it, did not like it at all. We brought them water in a pitcher but did not drink it; they just put it in their mouth and spat it out” (Ley 45).

What a people they were. Completely different from the people the narrator knew. This forced him to write Brazil’s Birth Certificate to give their king the real picture of the people they met who had a very unthinkable culture.

Their women were beautiful and tempting. Like their men, they left their bodies uncovered. They had very long and very black hair, loosely hanging to their backs, but still clean and neat. They were marvelously shaped and rounded. For sure, they were much better looking compared to the narrator’s compatriots. Pero says they were left ashamed, but the people seemed unconcerned. The truth is that the narrator had not encountered such beautiful women with weird lifestyles. He says that if the women back in his country had seen these women’s wonderful shapes and appearances, envy was bound to arise. Only innocence had overwhelmed them because they left their private parts exposed, and this did not bother them (Braga-Pinto and César 51).

One notable thing about this letter is that the American and European cultures in the 1500 were two opposites. There were zero interactions between these two kinds of people. It is evident because upon their arrival at the shores of the “ new world”, Brazil; the people thought that they were enemies. The Brazilian men approached them determinedly, holding arrows and bows in their hands maybe ready to fight. Communication was also a

problem. They never knew the language of the Brazilian people. Much communication was in the form of signs. Even the two young people they requested to accompany them for directional purposes found it hard communicating. Signs did a great part in information exchange. The food the two groups of people ate was different. The Brazilian people entirely lived on fruits, seeds and yams. The Portuguese ate many vegetables and other kinds of food like meat, bread and cakes. They were two extremes who had little or no similarities at all. They were both from different types of worlds. This is a clear indication on the existence of zero interactions between these two communities.

## **Works Cited**

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