

CHAPTER 8: DESTRUCTION OF THE MANAOS

The valley of the Rio Negro, though blessed with the same benign climate and carpeted by the same seemingly endless rain forest, presents a remarkably different environment from that of the Rio Solimões. The river is nearly as vast and as dotted with islands as the Solimões, but it is much less generous in its supply of key elements for the maintenance of human life. The "black" water which gives it its name drains primarily from areas with badly leached terra firme soils, and is rather poor in suspended minerals and sediment. The river's banks lack, by and large, the high natural levee and the wide level stretches of alluvial soil which are to be found the Solimões. Rather, they slope up gradually; and their lower elevations are covered by the permanently or periodically inundated forest known in Amazonia as igapó. The decomposition of enormous quantities of organic matter in that perpetual swampland consumes oxygen and releases acids, which make the river a comparatively sterile environment for aquatic life. It is only in a few exceptional areas of the Negro basin, principally in the lower valley of its northern tributary, the Rio Branco, that anything approximating the prodigious fertility of the Solimões várzea is to be found. By and large, the horticulture of the indigenous peoples of the Negro valley forests was of the terra firme slash-and-burn variety, producing more manioc than corn, squashes or peppers. Communities were smaller and less permanent than on the Solimões; the diet included less fish, turtle and manatee, and more wild fruits and game. Particularly ill-suited to produce surpluses of food for trading with passersby, the Negro and other

"black water" rivers of Amazonia were known as "starvation rivers" to 18th and 19th century travelers.¹

Cristóbal de Acuña managed somehow to learn a good deal about the Negro and its peoples, when he passed briefly by its mouth in 1639. This is remarkable because at that time the river was all but unknown to the men from Pará with whom the Jesuit chronicler was travelling. He observed the celebrated blackening of the course of the Amazon for several leagues after the Negro emptied into it, and attributed the clearness or "blackness" of its waters to the great depth of the river and the presence of innumerable "lakes" (igapó) along its banks. The Tupí-speaking guides in Pedro Teixeira's party, who had ascended the Negro for just two days on their way up to Quito the year before, called the river the Vruna, or "black water" in their lingua geral. Acuña was correctly informed that much of the course of the river ran west to east, though the course is more nearly north to south for some two hundred kilometers above its mouth, and that its banks were thickly peopled by a great number of "tribes." The names of the Rio Negro peoples he listed were Canizuaris, Aguayaras, Yacucaraes, Cahuayapitis, Manacurus (Manaos?), Yanmas (Yanoamas?), Guanamas, Carapanaris (Caribs?), Guaranacaguas, Azerabaris (Barés?), Curupatabas and Guaranaquazanas (these last, apparently a people of the tributary Rio Branco basin). All of them were said to do their fighting with bows and arrows tipped in poison. On the high banks of the river, Acuña was told that there were extensive stands of timber suitable for construction and boat-building. Fish were much less plentiful than on the Solimões; but somewhere up the river (on the upper Branco, as would be revealed more than a century later), there were extensive pasture-lands suitable for grazing cattle. Perhaps most surprising of all, Acuña learned of the navigable channel connecting the Negro and a "Rio Grande," presumably the Essequibo, at whose mouth the Dutch were said to have settled.

¹Meggers, *Amazonia*, p. 12; but see Janet M. Chernela, "Managing rivers of hunger: the Tucano of Brazil," in D.A. Posey & W. Balée (eds.) *Resource Management in Amazonia: Indigenous and Folk Strategies* (NY, 1989), pp. 238-49, on the system for the effective utilization of the forest and fish resources of the igapó practiced by today's native inhabitants of the Rio Vaupés, tributary of the upper Negro.

Alarm at this last revelation caused the Spanish Jesuit to propose building a fort at the portage, against the day when "the covetous" might attempt to conquer the entire Amazon valley from that quarter.²

During the half-century following Acuña's visit, as we saw in Chapter Five, the Paraenses had more and more occasion to visit and grow familiar with the lower reaches of the Rio Negro valley. The forests there did not attract the collectors of cacao, cravo and salsaparilla; but for several decades there was considerable work in the region for traders in Indian slaves. Jesuit and later Carmelite missionaries established outposts on the river; and a fort was constructed at its mouth. Throughout the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the central concerns of the colonial government in this region were to extract slaves from the Rio Negro valley, and to intercept the exchange of slaves and the forest products of the region for European trade goods with the Dutch at Kijkoveral Fort on the Essequibo. Both undertakings were to bring the Paraenses into serious conflict with the interests of the powerful Manao³ chiefdom of long-distance traders, with its base of operations on the middle Rio Negro.

Manao Society and Prehistory

The Manaos were a numerous and powerful people settled in the middle Rio Negro valley, who ranged freely over much of central Amazonia in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Contact with the Europeans awoke in them so great a demand for useful manufactured goods, that like other Native American peoples they proved willing to alter drastically the patterns of their production and trade in order to obtain them. But the Manaos were distinctive in that they resisted stubbornly all of the other cultural and territorial encroachments by the white men that usually went along with such goods. For

² Cap. 65 (English ed., pp. 109-111). Cf. Pedro Teixeira's brief account of his own observations on the Negro, which covers a few of these points as well. *Relação* (Quito, 2 jan 1639) in Cortesão, "Significado," pp. 191-92.

³ Various written Manaho, Manahua, Manoa, Manau, Manavi, Managu, Amanaguz, Maganout, Magouw and Manave in the sources.

this reason they were drawn in the end into an all-out war against the Portuguese for their very survival. They lost that war, and as a result many thousands of them were transported into slavery in Pará and Maranhão. The Manao survivors on the Negro then abandoned armed resistance and proved surprisingly capable of adapting to a new status as collaborators and dependents of European and Paraense settlers in the Negro valley. By the end of the colonial period, though both their language and their culture were virtually extinct, they remained as an important element in the new caboclo racial and cultural amalgam of the region. The Manaos left their name to the capital city of the modern State of Amazonas, and they bequeathed a legendary chief named Ajuricaba to the gallery of Brazilian indigenous culture-heroes. Yet the nature of their society, the forms of their adaptation to European expansion and the manner of their ultimate obliteration have scarcely been studied. The little that is generally known about the society and culture of the Manaos can be summarized in a few paragraphs.⁴

The earliest references to the Manaos are those of Acuña (1639) and Fritz (1689), both of whom learned on the Solimões of a fearsome and warlike trading people who were in the habit of travelling down to that region from the Negro basin during each flood season, to trade with the more sedentary Aisuar (Curuzirari), Yurimagua and Ibanoma peoples of the várzeas around the mouths of the rivers Japurá and Juruá. Fritz encountered a party of Manaos travelling in ten canoes, and reported that they went entirely naked and kept their heads hairless--"in order, they say, that they may have nothing to be laid hold of in battle." Their foreheads as far back as the ears were smeared with a black pitch (genipapo?); and the goods they traded were "small plates of gold, vermillion [presumably the red dyestuff urucú or onoto], manioc graters, hammocks of 'cachivance' (?) with various kinds of clubs and shields, they worked very curiously." The hand-crafted gold objects they traded were

⁴ As by A.C.F. Reis in História do Amazonas, pp. 77-84.

not of their own manufacture, but were themselves obtained in trade from other tribes living on the upper tributaries of the Rio Negro.⁵

Fritz also refers to a three-way trade conducted by the "Cavauri" people, in shell necklaces from the Solimões for slaves on the Negro, who were then exchanged up the Branco for Dutch iron tools, to be taken back to trade for shells on the Solimões. These "Cavauris" were the people known as "Caburicenas" to the Portuguese, because they lived on the river Caburís (modern Caurés), which flows into the Negro just across from the mouth of the Branco. There is reason to believe that they were a branch, or a people closely associated with, the Manaos;⁶ and if that is the case, then we may assert that by the 1690's the Manaos were already in the process of shifting over from a trade long-distance trade in artisan products to a new trade in Indian slaves, under the influence of the recently asserted demand from the Dutch on the Essequibo and their Carib allies (see Chapter Four). Such a development was greatly facilitated in the late 17th and early 18th centuries by the activities of the Paraense slavers themselves, who were by that time eating away at the Tarumãs and other peoples of the lower Negro valley.

The Tarumãs seem before that time to have been much involved in dealings with the Dutch, and at first better located for reaching them than were the Manaos. North of them, in the lower valley of the Rio Branco, were the Carajaís, who traded Dutch goods for slaves with the Tarumãs, as well as with the Manaos living to the west and up the Rio Negro from

⁵ Fritz, *Journal*, pp. 62-63. The exact meaning of "cachivance" (Sp. "cachibanco") is not clear; but the production of finely-woven hammocks of tucum and other natural fibers has been an important branch of commercial artsanry on the Negro since earliest historical times. Both Acuña and Fritz presumed that the gold objects traded by the Manaos had been produced along the Negro itself; but Condamine reasoned in 1743 that they must have come there down the Rio Vaupés from "a mountainous country with mines," or New Granada. *Viaje*, p. 82. There is no indication in the sources used here that there were gold workings anywhere in the Rio Negro basin in any period; but gold was being panned at least as early as the mid-16th century along the Andean headwaters of several Amazon tributaries; and it had been worked with consummate craftsmanship by the Chibchas and other North Andean peoples long before that.

⁶ The Manao-Cavauri connection can be deduced from Sampaio's version of the exploit of Sgt. Guilherme Valente described below. *Diário CCXCIX* (1903 3d., p. 63). Cf. Prat, *Notas II*, citing P. Massa, *Pelo Rio Mar*.

the mouth of the Branco. The Tarumãs then supplied these goods in exchange for slaves to the tribes on the lower Solimões and Madeira valleys, while the Manaos traded on the upper Negro and middle Solimões. But in the last quarter of the 17th century the Manaos conquered the Carajaís and either sold them as slaves or drove them to migrate, and in this way they extended their own territory east to the "Isle of Timoní" and mouth of the Branco. At about the same time, the Paraenses began capturing the Tarumãs to send down the river as slaves, driving a portion of that tribe into taking refuge far up the Branco, while others held on at a Jesuit mission station, later run by Carmelites, which was set up to house them not far above the new Portuguese fort at the mouth of the Negro. This left the Manaos in firm control of the middle Negro, and of the route of access to the trading posts of the Dutch, by the turn of the 18th century.⁷

In as yet unspecified prehistoric times, the Manaos and other Arawak-speaking groups (the Passés, Cauixanas, Jurís and Uainumas of the Rio Negro and Japurá valleys) are supposed to have migrated southward from the Orinoco basin and the Guianas.⁸ The Manaos seem to have settled primarily along the rivers Cauaburís, Uneiuxi (Iniuxi), Jurubaxi, Ariraha (Uarirá) and Padauri (see Map Eight), tributaries of the middle Negro, before moving in the early 18th century to extend their influence down that river to the "Isle of Timoní" near the mouth of the Rio Branco, and to the valley of the Rio Caurés.⁹ The

⁷ Cf. David G. Sweet, "Francisca: Indian Slave," in D.G. Sweet & G.B. Nash (eds.) *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America* (Berkeley, 1981), pp. 276-84.

⁸ Nimuendajú, "Relatório," *JSAP* 39 (1950):125-82. That the now-extinct Manao language, of which only a few written fragments survive, was "Arawakan" is the consensus of linguists Brinton, Goeje and Joyce in addition to Nimuendajú (see refs. below).

⁹ Sampaio, *Diário CCCXII* (1903 ed., pp. 78-79). Fritz places the Manaos on the river "Yurubetts" (Jurubaxi). *Journal*, pp. 62-63. Casal has their territory extending "from the Aririaha to the Chiuara." *Chorographia* IV, p. 349. Métraux cites Martius to place them on the south bank of the Negro between Santa Isabel and Moura, as well as up the Rio Padauri to the north (where there was a people who called themselves "Ere-Manao"). The location of the "Isle of Timoní" is unclear; but a mid-18th century traveller placed it across from the mouth of the Rio Chivara, modern Jufarí. Noronha, "Roteiro," p. 70. This suggests that it was not an island at all, but the large peninsula lying due north of Carvoeiro and west of the mouth of the Branco -- a fine location for controlling both the passage up the Negro and the trade up the Branco, two operations fundamental to the latter-day Manao economy.

river Jurubaxi, centrally located in this territory, has its headwaters near those of the Igarapé Maráa and other tributaries of the lower Japurá. Fritz was informed that the Manao had a "capital city" called Yenesiti located not from a great Lake Marahi near the Japurá; years later Noronha spoke of this "Yanauauoca" as one of several large Manao towns. During the annual flood season, the Manao canoes travelled up the Jurubaxi from this base and across a series of lakes to the Japurá, with little or no need for portage, and thence to their trading rendezvous with the Yurimaguas, Aisuares and others on the Solimões.¹⁰

Francisco Xavier Ribeiro De Sampaio, a Portuguese visitor to the region in 1775 who was an assiduous collector of local traditions, reported that in pre-contact times the Manao had been the most numerous people in the Rio Negro country, the most advanced culturally, and the people of greatest military prowess. His informants agreed that at some point (around the turn of the 18th century) they had destroyed their "downriver" neighbors the Carajaís, in the process of extending their territory eastward toward the source of Dutch trade goods on the Rio Branco. The Baré people of the lower Rio Negro, about whom there

¹⁰ This trade route must have been well-known among the Indians on the Solimões before 1639, when Acuña learned from them that the country around the Rio Japurá was all flat and "so shut in by other rivers, branches of the Caquetá [Japurá] that great lakes are formed, many leagues long, extending until, mingling with the Rio Negro, they unite with main stream." Cap. 58 (English ed., p. 103). Condamine was told on the Solimões in ca. 1740 that five days up from the mouth of the Japurá there was passage in rainy season by way of Lake Marahi (later Maripí) to the Jurubaxi. *Viaje*, p. 83. In the 1780's Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira followed Sampaio in assuming that the Rio Ariraha, which appeared on the official maps of that day with its headwaters providing access to the Japurá via "muitos e extensos lagos" had been the Manao's home territory. "Diário," in *RIHGB* 48,1 (1885), p. 22. But on modern maps the Ariraha is a short stream that runs nowhere near the Japurá; so it seems likely either that these writers confused it with the Urubaxi, or that the route to the Japurá was by way of the Ariraha and thence via flood-lakes to the Urubaxi and on to the Japurá. In the mid-1760's it was reported that in flood season the easiest route from the Negro to the Japurá was by way of the Jurubaxi, navigable "by means of pools and swamps" as far as Lake Amaná in a journey of some eight days by light canoe. Anon. "Synopsis de algumas notícias geográficas..." (Barcelos, 1764), in *RIHGB* 67,1 (1903), pp. 322-31. In the 1780's, while exploring the Northwest Amazon as part of an effort to locate the border between the Spanish and Portuguese empires, Portuguese officers took depositions from a number of Indians and transfrontiersmen on the Negro and Solimões who revealed an extensive folk knowledge of the intricate seasonal waterways connecting the Negro, Japurá, and Solimões -- much of which must have been derived originally from the Manao traders.

is even less historical information from this period about the Manao, had also been formidable rivals, and had held the expansionist Manaos at bay for a long period.¹¹

Alfred Métraux, a 20th-century ethnologist who collected data on the Manaos but was not always explicit with regard to his sources, describes them as having been good farmers who cultivated manioc and corn intensively in their slash-and-burn forest plots -- as well as the non-indigenous bananas, watermelons, sugar cane and other plants. Their preferred form of preparing manioc was in beijú cakes rather than the more widely used farinha. They lived in circular houses with conical roofs, and slept in hammocks woven from tucúm fiber. Men wore a fringed skirt made of the same palm fiber, and travelled about in large and shapely dugout canoes made from the hardwood trunks of the angelim tree. They fought and hunted with bow and poisoned arrows.¹²

There is a widely accepted impression in the literature that the Manaos had achieved some sort of sociocultural integration on a level above that of the individual village, with a supreme chief who exercised authority through local representatives. These chiefs are thought, even in aboriginal times, to have owned "slaves" captured in their wars against other

¹¹ Of the mysterious Carajás' language Goeje writes that it was very similar to Manao. "La langue Manao," PICA 28, pp. 157-71. Ferreira reported in 1786 that they lived on the Uerere below the Padauri, across from the town of Thomar. Nothing emerges from the early colonial documents on the characteristics of either the Barés or the Carajás beyond the names of the Carmelite mission villages in which their survivors were settled, nor does the HSAI provide information about them. It seems likely that the Carajás were pushed down to around the mouth of the Branco by the Manaos, and that their survivors were obliged to seek the protection of the Carmelites in the period just prior to the war with which this chapter is concerned. Those of historical times were settled at the mission of Santa Rita da Pedreira dos Carajás near the mouth of the Branco. Casal speaks of a "Carnaos" people living on the Rio Marauia who "fizerão" larguissima resistencia aos Manaos," and may have been the same. Chorographia II, p. 350.

In the 20th century the Baré survivors, linked to the Baniwas, have lived in the upper Negro valley along the Cassiquiare, Vaupés, Apaporis and Canamari rivers. Gillin in HSAI 3, p. 802; Prat, Notas II, pp. 33-34, citing P. Massa, Pelo Rio Mar. Early in the 18th, they were found in most of the Carmelite missions on the lower Negro, and even in the first aldeia around the Fortaleza do Rio Negro in the 1690's. This suggests perhaps the early descimento of some of the defeated Barés to the missions, and the withdrawal of others to the upper Negro at some point to escape from the Paraense slavers.

¹² Métraux, "Tribes of the Middle and Upper Amazon," HSAI 3, pp. 709-12. The bulk of his information appears to have been drawn from two relatively reliable observers -- Sampaio, who knew the Negro region well in the 1770's; and Martius, whose travelling companion Spix had spent some time on the Negro in 1820.

tribes, and customarily to have assigned such slaves to menial tasks. Chiefs may also have been polygamous, though this practice was not common among the Manaos. But the notion of "chiefdom" must be applied with great caution to the Manaos. As Ferreira observed in the 1780's, the Manaos in their great days appeared to have functioned as a confederation, but "for all that their villages were entirely independent from one another, and several of them were as populous as Irananauoca [their putative "capital"].¹³ European observers of Indian life were always hopeful and on the look-out for indications of the kind of political organization (viewed by them as advanced) which would predispose the natives to accept the status of obedient vassals to a distant European king, and take their places in a colonial labor system. Such observers were ever quick to ascribe monarchical trappings and authority to leaders who might be viewed by their own people as "first among equals." The Portuguese would indeed have occasion to be much impressed by the "confederation" of villages which made war on them in the 1720's; but it seems unlikely that that confederation had much in common with the centralized structure of an incipient state or chiefdom. More likely it was an ad hoc, temporary association drawn together hastily in the face of Portuguese hostilities.

Métraux's summary includes some intriguing details about domestic and religious life among the Manaos. Men (rather than women!) would take to the hammock and fast for a few days after the birth of a child. Boy babies were circumcised. Girls having their first menstruation would be wrapped in hammocks, painted, and have their skin incised. Boys entering puberty were obliged to pass through a rite that involved severe flogging. The dead were wrapped in hammocks or strips of bark, and buried with their possessions in graves dug inside the communal houses in which they had lived. After the graves were filled in, the mourners wailed and trampled down the soil upon them. They would keep a fire burning on the grave of a beloved child; on the other hand the Manaos were said to have the custom

¹³ "Diário," in *RIHGB* 48,1 (1887). Cf. Baena, *Ensaio corográfico*, p. 11: "são confederados; e as suas malocas [villages] independentes uns dos outros."

of killing misshapen babies by putting them into a pit around which the family and neighbors moved, knocking soil over the infant until he smothered.

Key figures in Manao communities were the shamans who healed the sick by shaking rattles and muttering incantations, blowing tobacco smoke on their patients, massaging them and then sucking out of them pathogenic objects such as red mushrooms, bugs, grubs and centipedes. They possessed an esoteric knowledge of the materia medica of the forests, prepared amulets for children consisting in pieces of wood, birds' claws and the like, and could also divine the future with the help of spirits who visited them in the guise of frogs, mosquitos, snakes and other animals. These pagés (lingua geral for "shamans") were trained from childhood for their role, in a discipline which included long fasts, sexual continence, periods of silence and isolation in remote and gloomy places. When the novice shaman appeared before the tribe after a final year of seclusion, he wore black paint and showed scars which had supposedly been inflicted on him by a jaguar. Then, in a sort of ordination ceremony, he would dance until exhausted before being made to endure the bites of ants without flinching, and as a final test having tobacco juice poured into his eyes. The men who passed through such rigors successfully enjoyed great prestige (which was seriously impaired if they married), and were expected to protect their fellow tribesmen against disease and other natural enemies.

A great Manao feast took place at the time of the first full moon in March, for which the chiefs had people prepare for months in advance by storing large amounts of food and fish. During the feast, both men and women underwent flogging--the men with arms uplifted and the women with arms crossed over their breasts--to demonstrate their endurance of pain. Among their religious beliefs was a tradition that the world would be destroyed by a great fire originating in the mountain and spreading through the forest. Eclipses were explained as the work of a heavenly jaguar which tried to eat the sun or the moon, and when they occurred the Manao would dance and wail to put the monster to flight. In pre-Christian times they believed in the existence of a god of good (Mauri) and a god of

evil (Saraua), as well as in fearsome nature spirits including a water demon names Camainha and a forest demon known as Camainha-pichene, and some small forest spirits (motacu) with turned-up feet.¹⁴

An ethnographic sketch such as this is difficult to work with for historical purposes. The data upon which it is based, although very possibly accurate as far as they go, were collected for the most part by a Portuguese government functionary who visited the Rio Negro for an extended period in in the 1770's, and by the Bavarian scientific traveller Johan Baptist Spix during the 1820s, nearly fifty and a hundred years after the Manaos had lost their independence -- but during periods in when there were still some surviving Manao individuals who may be expected to have remembered a few of their people's cultural traits, and in a region all of whose inhabitants had become quite familiar with the Manaos as neighbors and co-workers only a couple of generations back. For these reasons, and because most of the traits mentioned are common in Amazon Indian societies and therefore quite plausible, I have assumed that the sketch as essentially accurate one and include it here in an effort to round out the portrait of a "barbarous enemy" which emerge from the contemporary Dutch and Portuguese documents refering to the Manaos.

The Manaos and the Madmen

The first contacts between the Manaos and the Portuguese may well have been violent ones, occurring during the brief visits of tropas de resgate to the lower Negro valley in the second half of the 17th century. Hilario de Souza Azevedo claimed to have brought "many" people down to Pará from that region between 1675 and 1682; and Fritz remarked that as of 1689 the Manao had "offered resistance for years to a Portuguese troop," presumably in

¹⁴ Métraux, "Tribes," pp. 709-12. The mountain-fire myth is curious, since there were no mountains in Manao territory. Presumably it refers to the chain of hills separating the Negro from the Orinoco basins, through which the ancestors must have migrated to the Negro.

their home country on the Negro.¹⁵ Five years later, an officer reporting to the governor of Pará on a voyage to the Negro and Solimões remarked that there was no real need to provide information about the Rio Negro, since it was "so frequented by the whites from Belém who go there for trading purposes" that by then it was well-known to all. Nevertheless the bulk of the evidence suggests, as was indicated in Chapter Five, that in the 17th century Paraense operations along the Negro were concentrated on the lower reaches of the river--the country of the Tarumãs and Barés. The Paraenses must seldom if ever in those early years have penetrated as far as the Manaos' territory beyond the mouth of the Rio Branco; and it is therefore possible only to guess at the nature of their first interactions with the most influential people of the region.

The historical record of this relationship generally begins with a more benign (if perhaps legendary) encounter between Manao and Paraense. This is the remarkable feat of Guilherme Valente, a sargent stationed at the new fortress at the mouth of the Rio Negro, who travelled alone up to the territory of the "Caburicenas" (Cavauris, Caburis) in the late 1690's to trade. There he formed an alliance with the daughter of a Manao chief, and settled with her in a village near the mouth of the river Caurés. Valente's original mission was perhaps to organize (or corral people!) for a descimento to the service village at the Fortress; soon, however, he was functioning as a freelance trader in Indian slaves for sale in Pará, one who prospered by figuring out how to work in close cooperation with his new relatives the Manaos.¹⁶

¹⁵ Conselho Ultramarino, Nomeação de pessoas para o posto de capitão-mor do Pará (Lx, 22 sep 1690), ms. AHU Pará Cx 2; Fritz, *Journal*, p. 62.

¹⁶ Sampaio, *Diário CCXIX* (1903 ed., p. 63); and Reis, *História*, p. 78. No information has yet emerged concerning the remainder of Valente's career; but the community he joined or founded appears to have formed part of the original Carmelite mission of Aracary. Cf. Ferreira, "Diario," in *RIHGB* 50,2 (1887), who was told that Valente "primeiramente fex amizade com os Caburicenas, pouco depois com os Carajaís, e ultimamente com os Manaos."

Thereafter, through the mediation of this pioneer transfrontiersman, the Manaos were intermittently in contact with Portuguese slavers and with Carmelite missionaries as well. But their relations with the Carmelites were for the most part not friendly. In 1716, an officer sent on official business from Belém to the Rio Negro was instructed to try and trade some axes and cutlasses for the numerous firearms of Dutch origin with which the Indians of the Manao, Xapuena and Mativena nations . . . have killed some people, and it may be feared will perpetrate greater outrages --destroying the villages of mission Indians, and killing Carmelite missionaries as they have already done [my emphasis].¹⁶

This errand was to be carried out with the greatest caution, however, lest the soldiers of the expedition offend the Manaos and give them occasion to rise up against the Portuguese. The Manaos seem already by that time to have acquired a reputation among the Paraenses for their military strength and their determination to resist domination. Referring to the work of the Carmelites on the Rio Negro, the Governor of Pará was obliged in the early 1720's to report that although several tribes had allowed themselves to be reduced to Christian vassalage, "the most numerous, that of the Manaos, still refuses to allow the preaching of the Gospel."¹⁷

One version of this missionary failure is that at some point before 1720 a Manao chief sent emissaries down to the Carmelites' Vice-Provincial in Pará to ask that they provide a missionary to work among his people. Frei Mathias de São Boaventura was assigned to the task, travelled to the middle Rio Negro and founded a Manao mission there in an "aldeia of Jurupurá" whose location is not indicated in the sources. The chief of the village was friendly at first, and allowed his followers to be persuaded by the Carmelite to build him a church and residence. Soon afterwards, however, he lost patience with Frei

¹⁶ Ferreira, "Diário," in RIHGB 51,1 (1988), pp. 6-7, citing the regimento given by Gov. Christóvão da Costa Freire to José da Cunha d'Eça (Pará, 17 jul 1716).

¹⁷ Berredo, Annaes, paragraph 728 (1905 ed. I, p. 290).

Mathias' efforts to get him to stop living "scandalously" (that is, to cease practicing polygamy and abandon some of his wives), with the result that the missionary was obliged to escape for his life. Boaventura was said to have gotten away from that first mission with the help of a faithful servant named José Cardoso, and a small Indian boy. But not long afterwards, he was found abandoned and at the point of death somewhere on the banks of the river Jurubaxi, and was taken in by another Manao chief named Camandri, in whose village he was allowed to stay and preach the Gospel for a period of three years.¹⁸

At some point, probably still late in the 17th century, the Manaos ranged up the Rio Branco and came into contact with the Carib-speaking trading-partners of the Dutch who lived there, if with the Dutch "outrunners" themselves. The result of this encounter was that increasingly they became oriented towards the Kijkoveral Fort in their long-distance trade, and in time they came to specialize in slave-raiding to meet the Dutch demand. The Manaos also became dependent upon the Indians of the upper Branco as sources of the European tools and other trade goods which they came to require.¹⁹ It was this specialization of the Manaos as slave-traders to the Dutch which determined the nature of their future contacts with the Portuguese of Pará. Rumors concerning the presence of the Dutch in the Negro valley itself flew wildly in Pará; and in 1718 or 1719 the Governor was officially informed by the Captain of the Rio Negro Fortress that "a great convoy of Dutch goods is trading with our Indians of the Manao tribe at the headwaters of the Branco."²⁰ The Manaos

¹⁸ Borromeu, misc. notes in Prat, Notas II, p. 16. This author, who like Prat himself was exasperatingly careless with his facts and sources, cites "Pires, p. 81," with no indication of the title of this source. Cf. Ferreira, "Diário," in RIHGB 48,1 (1887), p. 87 & Prat, Notas II, p. 32.

¹⁹ Edmundson, "Dutch on Negro," p. 24n, and his introduction to Fritz, Journal, p. 42. This scholar's researches were subsidized by the British government in its effort to demonstrate an early Dutch presence in the Branco basin, as a means of supporting its case as heir to the Dutch colonial government on the Essequibo, in a litigation over the location of the boundary between British Guiana and Brazil. It may be suspected that it was for this reason that he presumed that the Manaos had dealt with the Dutch directly, rather than through Indian intermediaries.

²⁰ Conselho Ultramarino, Consulta (Lx, 8 jul 1719), ms. AHU Cód. 274, ff. 265-66. Veteran transfrontiersman Francisco Xavier de Moraes (who had labored for half a

themselves were not averse to doing business with the Paraense slavers when an occasion arose, and indeed by the 1720's they were actively engaged in exchanging slaves for European merchandise along routes which led both to the Essequibo factories and to Pará. But the trade with Dutch was unacceptable to the authorities in Pará; and as time would tell neither negotiation nor threats were sufficient to persuade the Manaos to cut their ties with the Dutch and concentrate on trading any slaves they could acquire for shipments of inferior trade goods from Pará.

Preparations for "Just War"

The alarming depopulation of the lower Amazon valley by 17th-century slavers had led the Jesuits and the Portuguese government to devise the system of officially-regulated slave-taking which was sketched in Chapter Three. Annual tropas de resgate and the occasional tropa de guerra were expected to maintain the labor force of the colony, while satisfying administrative and ecclesiastical scruples about the "justice" of enslavements and at the same time providing much-needed revenues to the Crown. In practice, however, such official slaving expeditions were expensive to outfit and were sent up the river only erratically; indeed they seem to have fallen completely into disuse for several years after about 1710. Throughout this period, it seems likely that the majority of the people sold as slaves in Belem were obtained without any sort of supervision by private individuals--often as an adjunct to their normal business of the collection of forest products in the várzeas of the lower Madeira or Solimões--and sold surreptitiously in Pará.

The resulting anarchy and corruption in the administration of the slave trade, the wholesale licensing (or overlooking) of the private trade by bribed officials, and the blatant disregard of the legal requirements of priestly "examination" and registration for tax

century as soldier and slaver on the Negro, and knew it as well as any man) testified in 1775 that though trade up the Branco had been active since before he first visited the river in 1725, the Dutch themselves "never travelled beyond the upper Essequibo and Rupunini." Testemunha in Sampaio, "Auto de justificação" (Barcelos, 19 abr 1775), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, p. 106.

purposes, were the occasion for a spate of bitter complaints to the Crown from the Jesuits, public prosecutors and even some moradores of Pará and Maranhão. The complainants generally pled for a restoration of the tropas de resgate, without which there could never be enough Indian slaves nor any semblance of "justice" in the process of their procurement, and for a fair distribution of these slaves in Pará. If this problem were not solved, the colonial economy would stagnate and royal revenues were sure to languish. Indeed in 1721 and 1722, attentive to such pleas, the King ordered that the tropas de resgate be reinstated at once. But Governor Bernardo de Berredo, to whom he sent this instruction, was by that time on his way out of office; and he was moreover deeply involved in the illegal private trade for his own profit. His successor, João da Maia da Gama, was a royal functionary of quite a different sort. The new governor was a man very much in sympathy with and under the influence of the Jesuits, and he was sent to Pará on a mission of reform.²¹

Not long after Governor João da Maia da Gama's arrival, he took account of the King's orders and moved to remedy the "commonly acknowledged shortage of slaves from which the settlers are suffering." Together with Jacinto de Carvalho, the Jesuit mission visitador of the colony, he moved swiftly to organize a new tropa de resgates with the customary administrative structure, and provide it with a generous endowment of trade goods from the stores of the Royal Treasury. This tropa, led by cabo Tomás Teixeira of Maranhão with the Jesuit Francisco Cardozo as chaplain, made its way up the Amazon in

²¹ Câmara Pará-King (Belém, 11 jul 1720) and Ouvidor Fonseca-King (Belém, 21 & 22 may 1720), ms. AHU Pará Cx 4; King-Berredo (Lx, 11 jan & 13 may 1721), in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 177 & 181; King-Gama (Lx, 25 mar 1722), in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 198-99. On the same date, the King wrote to the Jesuits of Pará instructing them to return forthwith to the work of accompanying tropas de resgate to which they had been assigned by the Regimento of 1686. King-Carvalho (Lx, 6 feb 1726), Evora Cód. CXV/2-12m ff, 138v-139; J.F. Lisboa, "Apontamentos... historia do Maranhão" in his Obras III, pp. 547-50. Gov. Gama's pro-Jesuit sympathies are fully expressed in the testimony he provided to defend them against the charges of abuse of privilege and of tax-exempt status which were brought by Paulo da Silva Nunes in representation of the Câmara of Pará in Lisbon during 1729-30. Gama, Testemunha (Lx?, 22 & 28 feb 1730), ms. Evora Cód. CXV/2-12, ff. 212v-222.

late January of 1723. Soon afterwards it split into two parties, one led by Teixeira and Cardozo which travelled up the Rio Xingú, and another under the seasoned sertanista Manoel de Braga which proceeded to the Rio Negro. The party on the Xingú sent back a total of five hundred and twenty-nine "peças" within a few months' time, who arrived in Pará in small lots, perhaps a canoe-load at a time, and were forwarded for sale in São Luis.²² Another hundred and seventy forced laborers reached Pará during the same period, in "descimentos" arranged by Manoel de Braga with the help of the missionaries and cooperative Indian chiefs of the upriver Jesuit and Mercedarian missions, with the help of generous donations of trade goods by the Treasury. At least half of these appear to have been recruited on the lower Rio Negro; and the Jesuit visitor was proud to report that all of them had been acquired through peaceful exchanges with chiefs who assured them that they had obtained the people in question through "legitimate" intertribal warfare. This expedition had not been marred, wrote Carvalho, by any such unprovoked assaults on the Indian communities as had previously been the custom -- even in the officially-sponsored portion of the trade. Cabo Teixeira, for his part, must have been suspected of some malfeasance on the Xingú. On returning to Belém, he was arrested on orders from the Governor and held until the Indians he had brought with him could be cross-examined by a Jesuit to establish "legitimacy" of their enslavement.²³

²² Two groups, each numbering twenty-seven survivors of the long trip from the Xingú, arrived at São Luis in June, 1724 and were immediately sold to the moradores by officials of the Royal Treasury. *Escrivão da Fazenda Pereira, Certidão* (São Luis, 27 jun 1724), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser. Cx 1. The use of the term "piece" for enslaved person was the customary in the inland as well as the Atlantic slave trade. The Jesuit Carvalho uses "pessoas" (persons) here as well; but in early colonial references to Indians as merchandise, that usage was exceptional. *Carvalho-King* (Pará, 1 sep 1725), ms. AHU Pará Cx 5.

²³ *Gov. Gama, Portaria a João Paes do Amaral* (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112; *Carvalho-King* (Pará, 1 sep 1725), ms. AHU Pará Cx 5. Carvalho reveals a tension in the administration of the trade by asserting that this tropa was sent out by him, commanded by Cardozo with Teixeira as cabo. The official correspondence of the day

The detachment of the *tropa de resgates* under Manoel de Braga had in the meantime made its way to a point somewhere above the last Carmelite mission on the Negro (at that time Aracary, just across from the mouth of the Branco). There they set up an arraial or base camp for their operations, and sent out parties of men with quantities of trade goods to "rescue" or trade for as many slaves as they could find in the upriver settlements. This was apparently the first Portuguese expedition, or at least the first formal *tropa de resgates*, to venture past the mouth of the Branco into what was by then the territory of the Manaos. Braga and his men were obliged to travel that far upriver on this occasion, because the slaving activities of the first two decades of the century had removed or driven away the bulk of the population of the lower stretches of the Negro, whose few survivors were now gathered in the recently established Carmelite missions. Braga was perhaps encouraged to attempt this bold move, because in recent years the private Paraense slavers had themselves managed to establish a business relationship the Manaos. In 1722, one Manoel da Silva Tavares had in fact appeared in Pará with a canoeload of illegally acquired slaves who turned out themselves to be Manaos, "purchased from a chief of that same tribe."²⁴ By this time it is clear that at least some of the Manao chiefs had refocused their own energies on the Indian slave trade; and the *tropa de resgates* now expected to be able to trade with them on a larger scale than any before them.

The details of the interactions that ensued during the weeks following the arrival of the Paraenses on the middle Negro in the summer of 1723 are not at all clear. Braga's efforts were directed among other things at persuading as many Manao chiefs as possible to

refers uniformly to the despatching of *tropas de resgate* by governors and under the command of *cabos*, with the chaplains in a decidedly subordinate capacity. In this instance the King congratulated the Jesuits for their work with the reinstated *tropas*, and especially for helping to prevent violent attacks on Indian villages and ensure that the captives were "legitimate," or if not (sic) that in Pará they would serve not in perpetual slavery, but only as long as it took to repay the cost of their purchase! King-Carvalho (Lx, 7 feb 1726), ms. Evora Cod. CXV/1-12, ff. 138v-39; Gama, Regimento (Belém, 16 jan 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 95-99v.

²⁴ Junta das Missões, Termo (Belém, 23 nov 1722), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 177-177v.

enter into friendly relations with the Portuguese, and perhaps even to settle in their mission stations, while at the same time encouraging them to shun all further contacts with the Dutch and concentrate on delivering slaves to the *tropa de resgates*. He must have pursued these objectives with a combination of promises and threats; and it is clear that he was remarkably effective at first. Several Manao chiefs came around so far as to agree to fight if necessary on the side of the slavers against their fellow Manaos! Among these was one Carunama from a village situated on the "Rio Xiuara" not far from the Uneiuxi, who was seen as the strongest and most "loyal" of the Paraenses' new allies. Five or six of these chiefs even made the long trip to Belém at about this time, as a demonstration of their friendship and "to declare their obedience to His Majesty, and to embrace the Faith of Jesus Christ."²⁵ How Braga achieved this initial "softening-up" of a portion of the Manaos' leadership can only be imagined. His work may well have been facilitated by pre-existing tensions between the Manao principais themselves, or by previous contacts between the chiefs in question and the Carmelites or private traders from Pará.

In mid-September of 1723, Governor Gama was preparing to send a second *tropa de resgates* which would join Braga on the Negro and hopefully bring back more Indians for sale to the moradores of Pará, when he received news that a party of Manaos had attacked Manoel de Braga's camp just he was beginning to trade for slaves. In the course of this "unprovoked" attack they had killed the Paraenses' friend and guide on the river, chief Carunama, and a Portuguese soldier. The Governor professed astonishment and outrage at this development, and wrote to ask that the King send him two or three hundred

²⁵ The King speaks of "alguns principaes, que com os ameaços [my emphasis] que lhes mandareis fazer o anno passado se apartarão da comunicação dos olandezes e dos índios seus parciaes." King-Gov. Gama (Lx 17 feb 1724) in Nabuco, *Limites I Mem Bres Ann I*, pp. 34-36; Ferreira, "Diário," in *RIHGB* 48,1 (p. 87; Gama-King (Belém, 21 aug 1723), ms. Itamaraty 340-1-2, doc. 51. The "five or six" Manao visitors presumably included some of those mentioned as allies in Gama's *Portaria ao Cabo J.P. do Amaral* (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112: Jaricaua-Merim (son of Jaricaua?), Mandaxari, Momajuacuba, Maduir, Guanina, Gomguaxi, Comsuberim, Canauna, Guara, Comvainupy and Amani.

soldiers as quickly as possible, and the weapons and ammunition necessary to send a full-fledged *tropa de guerra* against the "rebellious" Manao. Without such support he could not proceed with this project, because at the time there were only eighty soldiers in all of Pará and Maranhão, and these were needed for the defense and public security of the twin capitals themselves. Manoel de Braga, thought the Governor, had done his work as a slaver on the Negro quite properly; but this had not prevented the barbarous Manaos from continuing to perpetrate "the murders which they were in the habit of committing" against the King's loyal Indian vassals there. As a result the river was "afame with rebellion," and even the fort at its mouth was in danger of being overrun.²⁶

Both Manoel de Braga's diplomatic campaign and the subsequent preparations for war against the Manaos were made necessary, in the Governor's eyes, by the formidable strength of this people and their allies on the Rio Negro. The Manaos were alleged to have armed themselves to the teeth through trade with both the Dutch and the private slavers from Pará; and unlike most other Amazonian peoples of the day, they were said to have learned to use their firearms effectively. They had fortified themselves in well-defended stockades, even though up until the time of Braga's expedition they had apparently never been attacked by a *tropa* "for fear of their arms and their valor." Gama believed that it was precisely this "impunity" that had encouraged the Manaos to flaunt their power, to continue their dealings with the Dutch despite all warnings, and at the same time to provoke the Portuguese by raiding defenseless mission aldeias and trading parties. On some occasions they had even made so bold as to carry off Indians who had already been baptized and "reduced" to mission life, people for whom the Manaos presumably could find an especially ready market on the Essequibo because of their already proven docility.

²⁶ Gov. Gama-King (Belém, 21 aug 1723), ms. Itamaraty 340-1-2, doc. 51; King-Gama (Lx 17 feb 1724) in Nabuco, *Limites I Mem Bres Ann I*, pp. 34-36. Gov. Gama believed that couple of small pieces of artillery ("meios canhões de bronze") would be required to knock down the Manao stockades. The King paraphrases extensively Gama's report dated 17 sep 1723, a key document for the present purpose which I have unfortunately not seen.

The real reasons for Governor Gama's "all-out war" against the Manaos were not, however, made explicit in his official correspondence. Letters to the King dealt only with the transparent pretexts for this undertaking -- some relatively minor attacks on Portuguese outposts and the unsubstantiated rumor of their continuing close commercial ties with the Dutch -- and with the governor's own careful preparation of a legal case for a declaration of "just war." But elsewhere he had made it clear that in determining the acceleration of the slave recruitment on the Negro and Xingú had been responding to a continuing urgent demand for labor to serve the moradores of Pará and Maranhão. The *tropa de resgate* of 1723 had delivered only seven hundred people, not enough to meet that demand; and by this time the terrible smallpox epidemic of 1724 and 1725 (see Chapter Two) was wiping out a large proportion of the "domestic" Indian labor force in both colonies. Some means had urgently to be found for bringing in many more; and the news of Manoel de Braga's reverse on the Negro allowed the governor to be "persuaded by the moradores" that the interests of the colony were better served by a *tropa de guerra*, which could simply attack the enemy and take as many of them captive as possible, than by one limited in principle to peaceful trading. Preparations for a full-scale war against the Manaos were therefore gotten underway in the fall of 1724; but they were themselves held up by the epidemic, which killed most of the Indians brought in from Jesuit missions who were to man the canoes of the punitive expedition.²⁷

The much-touted direct relationship of the Manaos with the Dutch appears to have been much less close than was charged, if not altogether trumped-up -- though the Governor himself may not have been well informed about the case. During the months just preceding the assassination of Carunama, Manoel de Braga had been collecting information about the trade of the Manaos up the Rio Branco; and in August Gama reported to the King that he had learned that the Dutch were making great inroads there with the help of their "allies" the

²⁷ Gama, Portaria (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112. The text is eaten away at a crucial point, but appears to say that the moradores demanded a *tropa de guerra* specifically against the Manaos.

Manaos, and that their slave-buyers had now reached the extreme of travelling down the Rio Branco to its mouth on the Negro, where they were encouraging the Manaos to raid the very Carmelite missions in their search for captives. Nothing but a full-scale war would suffice to punish such transgressions; and the impossibility of reaching a peaceful solution was symbolized by the fact that the chief "aggressor" among the Manao chiefs was now travelled the Negro with a Dutch flag flying from his canoe!²⁸

Dutch documents of the same period suggest a very different relationship to the Manaos. An officer reported to the Political Council of the Essequibo that on the night of September 8, 1723, the lookout at the first rapids or falls on that river had seen the "Maganout" nation on their way downstream. This news caused great consternation among the few settlers of the colony, who gathered in a body to prepare their defense. The "nation" in question turned out to be a party of Manao emissaries travelling in three canoes; and when interviewed at an outlying plantation with the help of interpreters, their leaders made it clear that all they wanted was to do some trading. These visitors were then sent to a nearby Dutch fort to be "entertained as friends" while a detachment of soldiers returned to the rapids to ascertain whether more Manaos were on the way. But while the visitors were being escorted to the fort under guard, they sensed that something was wrong and all of them leaped overboard to escape into the forests. The Dutch sent volunteers after them, but managed to capture only eight of the Manao refugees while lookouts were posted to watch for the rest. Then on September 15th, a group of men who had gone to salt fish at the falls were warned by some Caribs and Ackoways of the neighborhood that the Manaos were gathering a force of fifty canoes not far upriver, and preparing an armed attack. This story

²⁸ Gama-King (Belém, 21 aug 1723), ms. Itamaraty 340-1-2, doc. 51. The Governor had also reported on the Dutch threat soon after his arrival in Pará in 1722. Gama-King (Belém, 26 sep 1727), in Nabuco Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 36-38.

appears to have been viewed as an exaggeration, because at this point only a few armed men were sent to defend the colony against an invasion from that quarter.²⁹

A year later, the Commander at Essequibo heard reports the Manaos were killing anyone who fell into their hands on the upper Essequibo, and driving away all the tribes friendly to the Dutch. He thought it necessary to send troops against them for the protection of the colony; but a reluctant Council agreed only to send a Company trading factor (posthouder) named Jan Batiste up the river to see what was what. In December, 1724, Batiste set out up the Essequibo with the largest force of friendly Indians (presumably Caribs or Ackoways) he could muster, armed with bows and arrows and the necessary munitions for their firearms. They were to march against the Manao "rebels" and kill or capture all they found. The posthouder and his men would receive two large axes for "each head, and for each slave captured and brought to Essequibo the price of his public sale."³⁰ In the mid-1720's, it seems, the unfortunate Manaos were the object of war plans being made by two imperial powers operating from bases greatly distant from their country, on the basis of limited (and mostly inaccurate) information about them. The Paraenses would prove by far the more formidable foe.

The Dutch sources should not be taken to suggest that the Manaos were not engaged in the regular exchange of slaves from the Rio Negro for Dutch goods on the Branco or Essequibo; all indications are that they were indeed active in that trade, and had been for many years before 1723. But these exchanges appear to have been made through intermediaries rather than directly with the Dutch.³¹ As the dispatch of 1723 suggests, the

²⁹ Political Council, Dispatch (Essequibo, 5 oct 1723), in Nabuco, Limites III Mem Bres Ann III, pp. 7-9. Seven of the eight Manaos were captured by two Dutchmen later on, an one by a "free Negress."

³⁰ Political Council, Proceedings (Essequibo, 3 sep 1724), in Nabuco, Limites II Mem Bres Ann III, pp. 113-14. The French translation of the Governor's terms for the purpose of this expedition is "extirper et annihiler."

³¹ Reis, História pp. 86-87 cites a letter from Surinam dated 15 jun 1724 (in "Nabuco," no ref.), for the assertion that the Manaos traded slaves for Dutch goods and weapons with the Badon, whose chief Arune then dealt directly with the Dutch posthouders on the river Correntyne.

Carib allies of the Dutch may themselves have been hostile to the Manaos and looked upon them as rivals. When the Manaos attempted on this occasion to carry their wares directly to the Dutch, thereby perhaps hoping to bypass the middlemen and obtain more trade goods per slave (if not to request assistance from the Dutch in their impending struggle against the Paraenses), the ambassadors themselves were perceived as dangerous enemies and candidates for enslavement. As Nabuco observed about the Dutch trade in general with the tribes of the interior:

sellers and buyers were strangers to one another, concerned only with their transactions. . . Each day the Indians came to sell their products, dyestuffs and slaves, at the fort. The factors had no idea whence they came. Politically speaking, the role of the authorities at

Kijkoveral Fort in this transaction was the passive one of the buyer

to whom the foreigner comes from afar to offer his merchandise.³² The chief of the Manao "aggressors" of whom Manoel de Braga had complained to Governor Gama in September of 1723 was Ajuricaba, a powerful and charismatic leader whose base was a large village on the densely settled "Rio Hiyaa."³³ In regional tradition he is remembered as having been a brave warrior who traded slaves to the Dutch up the Branco. In the course of these dealings, he had gotten hold of the notorious Dutch flag which he flew from his canoes on the Negro just to exasperate the Portuguese; and his men had indeed made some raids on the "Portuguese settlements." These may have been outlying Carmelite missions, but it is perhaps more likely that they were Manao or other villages which had experienced some friendly contacts with the Portuguese and were gathering slaves for them. The few documented acts of hostility against the Paraenses seem much less patterned or systematic than some writers have suggested; but the Manao raiders were

³² *Limites II Mem Bres III*, p. 6 (author's trans.).

³³ This was possibly the modern Cauaburis, one of whose tributaries is known today as the Iá. Ferreira was informed that Ajuricaba's was one of three large villages on the "Riacho Hoisaa," a northern tributary of the Negro above the Riachos Xibaru and Mabaá. "Diário" in *RIHGB* 48,1 (1887), pp. 51-52

in any event soon feared up and down the river by both Indians and whites. But Ajuricaba's principal achievement appears to have been the formation of a kind of Manao confederation, in which when necessary for military purposes the warriors of many villages would subject themselves to his leadership. The purpose of this confederation was to prevent the Portuguese from passing beyond the rapids of the middle Negro, and thereby bypassing the Manao traders as middlemen in the slave trade with the populous region beyond them. The notion that this confederation³⁴

A legend concerning Ajuricaba relates that he was the son of a Chief Huiuebeue,³⁵ one of the principal leaders of the Manaos, and grandson of Caboquena, distinguished for his hatred of the Portuguese. As a young man he had been unusually strong, and had been sought after by the women of the Barés and Tucanos of the upper Rio Negro; instead, he had chosen the prettiest cunhantã of the powerful "Tarias" for a wife. Later, Ajuricaba had left his father's house in disagreement over an alliance that Huiuebeue had made with the white men; when he returned, it was to avenge his father's assassination by the men of Pará.³⁶ The historical meaning of this tale is difficult to grasp. At a minimum, it suggests that in the early 18th century the Manaos enjoyed friendly relations with some of the tribes up the Negro, presumably their partners rather than their victims in the slaving business, and that Ajuricaba's hostility to the Portuguese was to some degree the result of violence and misunderstanding in his people's encounters with the Paraenses during the period just prior to the 1720's. The reference to Chief Caboquena's hostility may support Fritz's contention that the Manaos had been resisting the Portuguese for several years already in 1689.

³⁴ Sampaio, Diário CCCLXX-VI (1903 ed., pp. 80-81). Cf. Amazonas, Dicionário, p. 734 and Baena, Compêndio, p. 147.

³⁵ Gama, Portaria a J.P. do Amaral (São Luis 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112 has him as the son of a Chief Javanari. This may be of significance, since "Javinari" was an ally of the Portuguese who was trading slaves with Amaral's tropa during the Manao war in 1726-18! Azevedo, Requerimento (Pará, 3 feb 1731), ms. BNL Fundo geral 4517, ff. 121-25.

³⁶ Reis, História, p. 79, citing Stradelli, "Duas lendas amazonicas," which I have not seen.

Ajuricaba is portrayed as a "rebel" when not as a "traitor" in the few contemporary sources and in most of the history books which treat him at all; and his "confederation" is portrayed as having represented a genuine threat to Portuguese "rule." At the same time, following the revisionist interpretation of Sampaio, he has occasionally been depicted as a valiant resistance leader, a man with the stuff of greatness, a hero "differing from our own only in his purposes."³⁷ In reality, Ajuricaba was never a Portuguese subject but the chief of an independent tribe, the dominant personality in an area recently invaded by Portuguese fighting men whose object was to transport as much as possible of its entire population into distant slavery. Regarding his "greatness" there is no evidence at all; having emerged as principal leader in a moment of crisis for his people, as we will see, he was quickly and without great difficulty removed from the scene by the invaders. This left the challenges of leadership during the difficult period of transition to Portuguese rule to be solved by others, men who struggled longer and achieved less fame. With regard to his having undertaken to wage a full-scale war of resistance against the sertanistas, doubts were entertained by some even among his contemporaries. A Jesuit commentator pointed out indeed that the version that "Gaujuricaba" was indeed bent on war of any kind 'has not been established conclusively."³⁸

The real reason for the war against the Manaos seems, therefore, to have been neither that Ajuricaba represented a serious threat to the existing Portuguese enterprises on the Negro, nor that there was competition in that quarter from the Dutch. The Manaos were neither "rebels" nor "agressors;" rather, they were collaborators in the Dutch and Paraense trade with the other Indian peoples of the region, who stood in the way of aggression. The King himself had the initial impression that Ajuricaba's attacks must have been caused by some hostile act by the Indian allies of the Portuguese against the Manaos. But the stage was set for conflict. On the one hand, the chronic demand for slaves in Pará and Maranhão

³⁷ Diário CCCLCCVI (1903 ed., p. 81).

³⁸ [Jacinto de Carvalho?], Aviso (? , 27 apr 1731), in Nabuco, Limites II Mem Bres Ann III, pp. 11-13.

had been exacerbated by the recent epidemic; and on the other the Manao, having been willing enough to collaborate with the first Paraense visitors in a slave trade of modest proportions, were unwilling simply to stand aside and open the way, when Braga and his men revealed their determination to pass them by and make their own arrangements for rounding up and transporting the still-numerous people of the upper Rio Negro .

The Manaos had come to depend for their iron tools and other trade goods on the fulfillment of their function as a link in the changing trans-Amazonian network of trade; and in the interest of security they had long since developed alternative markets for their human wares on the lower Negro and on the upper Branco and Essequibo. But the demand for Indian slaves that they represented was finite in its proportions; and their system for acquiring them could function only in the context of carefully maintained reciprocal relations with the peoples that served them as both buyers and suppliers. It was no part of their purpose, and would presumably have been beyond capabilities of the Manao slave traders, simply to depopulate the Negro valley in response to a demand for slaves in distant places. Faced by the challenge posed in the 1720's by Manoel de Braga and his men, Ajuricaba and his allies were encouraged by their own superior numbers and by the apparent reliability of the trading-partners of the Dutch as suppliers of needed trade goods, to believe that they could hold off the Paraenses and maintain their pre-eminent position on the middle Negro. The initial raid on Manoel de Braga's camp was probably a response to the first indications that Braga might be forging alliances with some Manao chiefs against the others, or planning to enslave the Manaos themselves. The presence in his company of Carunama, perhaps despised by Ajuricaba and his comrades as a weakling and traitor to his kind, may have been enough to bring them to risk a war with the Portuguese. In the background, however, was the ineluctable fact that the demand for slaves which Braga represented was too great to be satisfied by the the Manaos, or by the existing middle Amazonian system of intra-regional trade.³⁹

³⁹ King-Gama (Lx, 17 feb 1724) in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 34-36.

War Against Ajuricaba

Lacking sufficient troops and materiel for a full-scale *tropa de guerra*, Governor Gama sent a captain of infantry with a dozen soldiers and a notary to the "sertão dos Manaos" late in 1723. The captain was the seasoned sertanista Belchior Mendes de Moraes, son of an Indian slave woman by a Portuguese settler of Pará, who had a reputation for excessive drinking and for cruelty in the treatment of Indian crewmen. His assignment was to defend the Carmelite missions of the Rio Negro against any attack, while at the same time collecting testimonies from reliable (that is, Christian) inhabitants of the settlements along the river concerning the "crimes" of the Manaos. These would form the dossier required by the Ouvidor of Pará to construct the required legal case for a "just war" which would be taken before the Junta das Missões and with their recommendation eventually forwarded to the King.

Days before Moraes' party arrived on the Negro, Ajuricaba's men had carried out a raid on the mission of Aracary, and made off with a number of the baptized Indians resident there. The soldiers' first undertaking was therefore to pursue the twenty-five Manao canoes, overtake them, and in accordance with their orders reprimand the chief and demand that the prisoners be returned -- without doing them any violence. The notary then proceeded to conduct his inquiry among witnesses resident at Aracary and elsewhere on the Negro, and was able to return to Pará in a few weeks' time with twenty sworn testimonies condemning the Manaos.⁴⁰ These revealed that the assassination of Principal Carunama had been the work of two brothers named Debarí and Bejarí, Manao chiefs from the "Isle of Timoní," rather than of Ajuricaba himself. Ajuricaba's own "crimes" (apparently not clearly specified during the inquest) were nevertheless deemed quite sufficient for punishment.⁴¹ Once

⁴⁰ The papers from this *devassa*, sent to Lisbon with Gov. Gama's letter of 7 sep 1724, would be an invaluable source for the history of the Manaos and of the Carmelite missions. Unfortunately, they have not come to light.

⁴¹ Sampaio, *Diário CCCLXX-CCCLXXVI* (1903 ed., pp. 80-81). Ouvidor José Borges Valerio, charged with preparing the legal case for this war, was later accused of

these legal preliminaries were out of the way, Belchior Mendes fortified the Carmelite missions on the Negro as well as he was able, then established an arraial somewhere above Aracary and devoted himself to serious slave-trading during a period of several months.

By September of 1724, Governor Gama had completed his collection of legal depositions and gained the support of his principal collaborators in the colonial administration of Pará for a war against the defiant Manaos; but he had not received the material support from Lisbon that he needed to wage it. It was all but impossible, moreover, to recruit the large number of Indian crewmen that such an undertaking would require, so long as the epidemic of smallpox was raging in Para. Reports from the Negro indicated in the meantime that the Manaos were continuing their hostilities "without fear of the soldiers under Captain Belchior Mendes, nor respect of the trade goods left with them in exchange for future deliveries of slaves." As an interim measure, therefore, the governor designated João Paes do Amaral as captain of the "tropa de resgates, e de guerra;" on that front; and after a long delay occasioned by the epidemic, dispatched him up to the Negro in March, 1725. Amaral travelled in a single great cargo canoe containing the "necessary equipment for a war," and was instructed to take over from Belchior Moraes at the "camp which he established to protect the mission allies." There the tropa was to carry on with its peaceful resgates and insofar as possible avoid conflict with the Manaos, until such time as the King responded to the government's urgent requests for support and they could be supplied with the "forces necessary to punish Ajuricaba's pride, barbarity and rebelliousness, and his killing of many of his Majesty's vassals." If the smaller expedition seemed sufficient to impose terror on the Manaos and dissuade them from their truculent attitude, Amaral might go ahead without the reinforcements; but Governor Gama was greatly concerned lest this

collaborating with Gama's successor, Gov. Alexandre de Souza Freire, in the administration of the illegal Indian slave trade to Pará. Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8.

tropa move on to full-scale war prematurely, risking defeat and with it the all-important reputation of Portuguese arms, in a hastily-prepared encounter with mere "savages."⁴²

With João Paes do Amaral on his way, the governor waited impatiently in Pará for the military support he had requested from Lisbon, and instructions from the King about how he was to proceed against the Manaos. But neither the support nor the instructions ever arrived. Gama had earlier been given permission, however, to proceed against the Manaos as he saw fit -- with the suggestion that since the royal revenues were chronically scarce, and the moradores of Pará and Maranhão were "so interested in the profits to be obtained from the sertões," they should pay for the expedition themselves. In the meantime the Manaos continued, as he saw it, to provoke and exasperate the governor from from a distance:

poking fun . . . at our forces, they made off with Your Majesty's trade goods, some unwilling to pay for them [with Indian slaves], other insulting and attacking our slaving companies by blocking their passage up the rivers by force of arms as they attempted to trade, killing some of our people--even when they presented themselves with signs of peace.⁴³

Relations on the Negro itself were not, however, uniformly hostile. The Manao chiefs made use of the temporary lull in Paraense agressions during 1725 and 1726, to try and acquire some of João Paes do Amaral's trade goods by exchanging slaves for them. Principal Guarunama, for example, exchanged a child of the "Movenominao" people with

⁴² Gama, Portaria a J.P. do Amaral (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112; Gama-King (26 sep 1727) in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 26-28.

⁴³ King-Gama (Lx, 17 feb 1724) & Gama-King (Pará, 26 sep 1727) in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 34-38, author's trans. The governor later maintained that he had had held back as long as possible from declaring an all-out war, "in the face of the general grumbling and complaining" of moradores who were impatient to get on the the slave-taking.

Braga's men for a colored cotton skirt and a spade.⁴⁴ On the Portuguese side, the temptation to engage in this trade was so great that the soldiers of the *tropa* sometimes sold their very weapons, or weapons which had been rounded up in Pará and sent to the Negro for this purpose, with the Manao chiefs--knowing full well that at some later time they were likely to be used against them.⁴⁵

During this period, an effort was made through the good offices of the Jesuit José de Souza, to work out a *modus vivendi* with Ajuricaba and entice him into becoming a willing and responsible collaborator in the Paraense slave trade on the Rio Negro. The missionary

wore himself out in an untiring effort, undergoing hunger and discomforts . . . to work out some arrangement with these savages, especially with the traitorous Ajuricaba, arrogant and insolent, who called himself the governor of all those nations.

At one point Souza even visited the Manao chief in his camp, where he claimed to have gotten Ajuricaba to make peace with the Portuguese and as a symbol of the new relationship persuaded him to exchange the controversial Dutch flag on his canoe for a Portuguese ensign. In the course of this parley, he also provided the Manao commander with "fifty *resgates* for fifty slaves." Afterwards, Souza sent glowing reports to Pará of Ajuricaba's outstanding qualities as a leader, and the great services to the King (that is, the great increment in the slave trade) which could be brought about with his help. He even sent a

⁴⁴ Souza, *Certidão* (Arraial de São José e Santa Anna, 28 jul 1726) in Lisboa, *Obras IV*, p. 729.

⁴⁵ Gov. Gama was obliged to prohibit this illicit traffic in firearms as "*resgates de peças, os quaes se costumão resgatar aos Manaos, Mayapenas e mais nações do Rio Negro.*" He decreed that no one might transport these weapons upriver to trade or even to supply the *tropa de resgates*, under any circumstances. Each man who made the journey was to carry his own weapon, and would be responsible for bringing it back to Pará when he came! Gama, *Bando* (Belém, 11 dec 1727), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 128-129v.

group of mission Indians skilled in construction to build the chief a new house!⁴⁶ But while the Jesuit Souza's negotiations were still in progress, the Carmelites on the Rio Negro were writing to the Governor to report that the hated Ajuricaba was continuing his attacks on their missions, and that he was not to be trusted. The missionaries, permanent residents on the river, were understandably fearful of the Manaos; and they may have been concerned even more with the implications for their fragile establishments of the arrival of a large *tropa de guerra* on the Negro, with its inexorable demands for food and manpower, and its explicit purpose of removing as many Indians as possible from that region. Frei Manoel da Esperança, the leading Carmelite missionary on the Negro, was demanding that the *tropa* do its work and put a quick end to the pretensions of the Manaos; but the commanders themselves preferred to wait for orders from Pará.⁴⁷

Padre Souza's "alliance" with Ajuricaba proved short-lived. The Manao chief soon violated an "agreement" which must, from his point of view, have been more than anything else a means of temporizing with the enemy, and doing a bit of business on the side, while taking note of the Paraenses' capacity to make war). He "rose up with most of the trade goods, thumbed his nose at our forces, and in full sight of our slaving camp, joined three times with his allies to attack our mission villages." Thereupon Souza acknowledged his failure and instructed João Paes do Amaral to proceed with the capture of Ajuricaba. This Amaral was reluctant to do without explicit authorization from Pará, but he did send a representative down to talk with Governor Gama, bearing with him yet another set of notarized testimonies concerning the causes for a "just war." Armed with these documents,

⁴⁶ Gama-King (Pará, 26 sep 26 sep 1727) in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 36-38; cf. Leite, HCJB II, p. 379.

⁴⁷ Gama, ibid. enclosing a new set of testimonies from the Negro on Manao hostilities, presumably including those of the Carmelites, to support his case for a total war. These have yet to be found, though the King did acknowledge their receipt. King-Gama (Lx, 23 jan 1728) in Livro Grosso 67, p. 219; Boaventura-Serra (Pará, 10 aug 1734), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser Cx 1; Reis História, p. 81.

the Governor convened the Junta das Missões of Pará and had the proposed war against the Manaos declared legitimate at last. Except for the rector of the Jesuit colégio, the Junta's members were all satisfied at last that what Gama characterized as the "theological and juridicial requirements" for a just war had been fulfilled -- not to mention those laid out in the law of 28 April, 1688 (see Chapter Three). By this time the Governor was able to proclaim that: "it was clear that a war against the chief of the 'Mayapenas' was a matter not only of justice, but of obligation."⁴⁸ Since to kill the recalcitrant chief might cause more problems than it solved, it was that the first step was to capture Ajuricaba and subject him to exemplary punishment.

Since he had no reinforcements to send to the Negro, the Governor resolved to pull together the "soldiers and settlers" already resident there, along with those in the tropas de resgate, into a single force commanded by Amaral which could prosecute the long-awaited war. What appears in fact to have occurred at this time, is a general mobilization of the sertanistas of the middle Amazon, to finish off the Manaos for once and for all. Soldier Joaquim Gervásio da Mota, for example, a deserter from the garrison of Pará some years before, had been hiding out on the Rio Tocantins when he was caught and sentenced to ten years' degredo at the Fortress of the Rio Negro. Mobilized not long afterwards to accompany João Paes do Amaral against the Manaos, he served on the upper Negro for two

⁴⁸ Gama-King (Pará, 27 sep 1727) in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 36-38. "Mayapena" (Mayapima, Mayapema, Mayapina) is a term found only in the documents regarding this war, which appears to refer not to a people of the Rio Negro (there is no mention them as an independent people, for example, or as inhabitants of missions or slaves being transported to Pará), but to the members of Ajuricaba's "confederation" itself. Reis suggests the possibility that they were a separate tribe who became the leading figures in the anti-Paraense coalition after Ajuricaba's death, and were all but annihilated in the war that ensued. One Portuguese veteran of the Manao War spoke of "o régulo insolente Aguajuricaba, con todos os seus aliados Manaos e Mayapenas," Albuquerque, Testemunha (? sep 1728), ms. Evora Cod. CXV/1-12, f. 271v; half a century later Ferreira noted in passing that there were "Mayapena" along with Macu and Mapuri Indians on the Rio Curicurihau, a tributary of the Rio Mariá in the upper Negro basin. "Diário," RIHGB 48,1 (1887), p. 97.

years before falling ill and been sent back to Pará . There, in recognition for his services to the Crown, he received at last a full pardon.⁴⁹

Once the tropa de guerra was gathered on the Negro and had received the necessary supplies from Pará, plans were made for the capture of Ajuricaba in consultation with José de Souza and Padre Anibal Mazzolane, a Jesuit missionary from the mouth of the Rio Xingú who was visiting his colleague at the time in search, presumably, of a descimento with which to repopulate his own mission aldeia.⁵⁰ Amaral then set out in search of the defiant principal leader of the Manaos,

and when our men went to find him in his village, he organized defense before we could surround them; but with the help of a small artillery piece which our force had with them, they were obliged to abandon the place and flee along with the other chiefs who had come there to help defend them.⁵¹

The Paraenses followed the fugitive Manaos for several days, searching for them in the villages of some of their allies, until at last they caught up with them at place known in the local tradition as Point Azabary, where after a furious battle they managed indeed to capture Ajuricaba and six or seven of his principal collaborators, including Ajuricaba-merim or "little Ajuricaba," presumably the great chief's son. Another son, Cucunaca, was among those killed on that fateful day. Along with the leaders, the Portuguese made prisoners of some two hundred of their "vassals" -- all of whom, including a number of small children,

⁴⁹ King, Alvará (Lx, 6 sep 1728), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 45-45v. The tropas at work on the Negro at this date appear to have those led by Manoel de Braga, Belchior de Moraes and Amaral himself, though a Carmelite report speaks of ten tropas "assim de guerra como de resgates" who visited the Negro in the late 1720's, under cabos such as Leandro Gemac de Albuquerque, Severino de Faria, Bernardo de Souza and Tomas Teixeira in addition to the above. Boaventura-Serra (Pará, 10 aug 1734), ms. AHNU Pará 2nd Ser Cx 2..

⁵⁰ Leite, HCJB III, p. 352, places Mazzolane in charge of the Xingú mission from 1718 to at least 1730.

⁵¹ Gama-King (Belém, 16 sep 1727), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 36-38 (author's trans.).

were immediately shipped down to Pará to be sold as slaves.⁵² Among these captives was a seven-year-old Manao boy named Hudu, a fragment of whose particular experience filters down to us quite by accident in the documents. An "ally of Principal Ajuricaba," he was viewed by the Jesuit examiner an appropriate candidate for enslavement. He belonged at first to a soldier named José de Albuquerque, due perhaps to his having been captured by him, and was baptised Christóvão at the slavers' arraial with another Portuguese soldier standing in as his godfather, on the very day of his official registration as a slave by the Jesuit priest who had performed the ceremony. Not long afterwards, he was sold or given away (or lost in a card game!) to a third soldier of the tropa, before being loaded onto a canoe and shipped to Pará.⁵³ Meanwhile Governor Gama was reassuring the King that with this punishment having been meted out to the enemies of the Crown and Faith,

the Rio Negro and its missions can live in peace and tranquility,
and great is the number of vassals brought under the rule of Your
Highness and souls brought to God -- at least those of the children,
because the adults will be harder to save due to their practices of
eating one another, failing to distinguish mothers from daughters
[that is, incest] and keeping large numbers of wives.⁵⁴

⁵² *ibid.* Among the captive chiefs were others named Guajaury and Mavix (?). Junta das Missões, Termo (Pará, 28 sep 1727), ms. AHU Pará Cx 5. See also Reis, *História*, p. 82. Ferreira, "Diário," RIHGB 48,1 (1885), pp. 51-52 maintains that two thousand captives were taken with Ajuricaba; but this is probably mistaken, since Gov. Gama's figure for the total number of slaves brought to Pará from all areas during his six-year term of office was only four thousand. Testemunha (22 & 28 feb 1730), ms. Evora Cod CXV/2-12, ff. 212v-222. On the other hand, Gama's figure seems small and refers in any event only to the slaves sold under official offices. Many slaves sent to Pará even by members of the official tropas de resgates and de guerra were sold privately to avoid the payment of taxes; so Ferreira's figure is not altogether implausible.

⁵³ Sousa, *Certidão* (Arraial de Nossa Senhora do Carmo e Santa Anna, 2 aug 1727), in Lisboa, *Obras IV*, pp. 728-29.

⁵⁴ Gama-King (Belém, 26 sep 1727), in Nabuco, *Limites I Mem Bres Ann I*, pp. 36-38. The reference to "unnatural practices" was a standard form harking back to the day when officials still believed that the justification for Indian slavery lay in the Indians' customary violations of "natural law."

The Junta das Missões of Pará, which met two days later to discuss an urgent request from the Carmelites on the Rio Negro that especially stern justice be meted out to Ajuricaba and his captive allies as a means of discouraging any further "rebellion," shared the Governor's overly sanguine view of the success of Amaral's mission. Now that the key leaders had been captured, it seemed reasonable to conclude that the danger of armed resistance was past; and they determined that no sterner measures were called for than perpetual enslavement for all of the Manao captives, though they did suggest that those who purchased the Manao slaves be asked to ship them on for resale in far-away Maranhão or Piauí, in order to discourage them from escaping later and making their way back to the Rio Negro.⁵⁵

The story of Ajuricaba's death is essential to his legend. Having been captured by Amaral's men, the two hundred (or two thousand?) Manaos were "examined" by the Jesuits and load in the great canoes for shipment to Pará. Along the way, at a spot somewhere on the Rio Negro known locally as the Bay of Boiacú, the seething Ajuricaba instigated a riot among the shackled prisoners in his canoe, who attempted to kill their guards and escape. This mutiny was put down by the guards only with great difficulty, whereupon "with some of his allies bleeding, and others dead," the chief and one of his comrades leaped into the river with their leg and wrist-irons on, and drowned rather than face the execution which they believed awaited them in Pará. This news caused mixed regret and jubilation in the Governor, who observed with a sententious piety mixed with irony that "aside from regretting the loss of his soul, it must be acknowledged that he did us a great kindness by freeing us of the burden of guarding him."⁵⁶ Among the Manao captives who survived the mutiny and went on to be placed on trial in Pará were Ajuricaba-merim and a "slave" of Ajuricaba's considered especially dangerous by the Carmelites. The proceedings of this trial,

⁵⁵ Junta das Missões, Termo (Belém, 28 sep 1727), ms. AHU Pará Cx 5, pub. by J.R. Carvalho in Boletim Pesquisas CEDEAM 1,1 (jul-dec 1982).

⁵⁶ Reis, "Exploração," p. 318; Gama-King (26 sep 1727), in Nabuco I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 36-38; and Sampaio, Diário CCCLXXVI (1903 ed., p. 81).

like several other key documents for the reconstruction of this war and its consequences for the history of the Rio Negro region, appear not to have survived to the present, nor has evidence concerning the ultimate distribution of the captive Manaos. What is certain is that the majority of these people spent the remainder of their days as slaves in Pará and Maranhão.

The victors' optimism notwithstanding, the task of "pacification" on the Rio Negro was far from complete. In September of 1727, soon after defeating Ajuricaba, the *tropa de guerra* found itself rendered inactive by the annual flood. They could use the time for slave trading and a bit of refurbishing, but they were unable to carry out any long-range expeditions because of the difficulty of procuring food in that season. In December, the Governor nevertheless assured the King that they would soon carry on to the upper Negro, there to deal out a harsh punishment to the "Mayapenas." Once that clean-up operation had been completed,

the passage through the rapids of the Rio Negro will be free and Your Majesty's *tropas de resgate* will be able to acquire great numbers of captives. Alongside them, the missionaries will be free to "reduce" many thousands of souls among the friendly tribes, if the Carmelites can only do their work with the exemplary zeal that characterizes the Jesuits.⁵⁷

With guardians of the rapids removed, slaving on the upper Negro might proceed without impediment. Gama saw the defeat of the "arrogant rebel" Ajuricaba and his men with such limited forces, as a clear demonstration of divine support for the Portuguese enterprise.

War Against the "Mayapena"

The sequence of events in the war following Ajuricaba's defeat is difficult to reconstruct. By then it was viewed by the Paraenses as a "clean-up operation," requiring

⁵⁷ King-Gama (Lx, 23 jan 1728), in Anais BAPP 2 (1904), p. 207; and Livro Grosso 67, p. 219 (author's trans.), paraphrasing a report from Gov. Gama.

less legal justification than a full-fledged war; accordingly, it produced a less extensive documentation. This phase of the war was also directed by a new and very different Governor of Pará. João de Maia da Gama had sought to wage the Manao War within the legal prescriptions for such cases, with the full cooperation of the Jesuits, and in furtherance of explicit government policies; as a result, he had been able to report on its progress to Lisbon in a comparatively straightforward and explanatory way. Alexandre de Souza Freire, a less zealous and punctilious servant of the State, appears to have been more interested than Gama was in exploiting the slave trade to make himself rich. His reports to the King on the subject were accordingly much less detailed, and perhaps even calculated to deceive. One gathers the impression that there was a tendency in Governor Freire's time to put as little as possible down on paper. The new governor was, however, both feared and despised by the Jesuits; and as a result they put a considerable effort into writing detailed reports as they pursued a major lobbying effort in Lisbon to discredit the Governor and his appointees. In so doing, the Jesuits came under severe attack themselves -- both from their traditional enemies the powerful slave-owning settlers, and from the officials who were prospering by taking advantage of the opportunities provided by Freire's energetic if unprincipled administration. The result is that the few documents we have for the final phase of the Manao War are for the most part fervent complaints about its misconduct, and these make it next to impossible to establish what actually happened.

At some point following the capture of Ajuricaba in September of 1727, an escort of soldiers and their Indian allies was sent out from Joao Paes do Amaral's camp on the middle Negro to trade for slaves with the friendly chiefs living just above the river's first rapids. This party was ambushed as it poled and hauled its way through the rapids by a force commanded by ten "chiefs of the Mayapenas," who killed several Indian crewmen and one or two Europeans, and captured their considerable supply of trade goods. Then the Mayapenas fortified themselves at that strategic spot, engaged the slavers in a few other skirmishes, and for the time being effectively prevented anyone from traveling beyond the

rapids. Captain Amaral informed Governor Gama of this serious setback; and the Governor instructed chaplain Jose de Souza to conduct yet another hasty inquiry into these conflicts and their causes. Then on the basis of the new set of testimonies, he got the Junta das Missões and the Ouvidor of Pará to agree hurriedly to a new "just war." The leader of the Mayapena (Manao?) forces was now a Chief Majurí; and the tropa was authorized anew to capture and enslave any of his followers, or those of his allies Camerí, Agoara, Gaaú, Caaú, Manatuba, Mandicani, Jubaí, Canacorí, and Daá.⁵⁸

In July of 1728, when the flood waters had receded, José Paes do Amaral sent a party of soldiers under Ajudante Thomas Teixeira to lay siege to the "aldeia do Principal Majurí," strategically located on a tall rocky hill two or three miles around at its base near the rapids, with a sweeping view of a long stretch of the river including the villages of several of the new leader's allies. Majuri's village (see map 9) was fortified partly by a ring of huge boulders, and partly by a double row of tree-trunk palisades which were so strong that they did not yield to small cannon-balls. The Mayapenas were also well-armed with Dutch muskets as well as with lances, bows and arrows; but as it turned out they were too poorly supplied with water. The siege lasted for twelve days, at the end of which the defenders rushed out desperate with thirst. Many were killed, but most managed to escape to the forests or up the river.

Among the attackers on this occasion was a Chief Cabacabarí, ally of the Paraenses, who conducted himself with the "bravery for which he is well-known, causing envy among the soldiers." This chief, probably himself a Manao, was later baptized Alexandre de Souza Cabacabara. His home village, not far below the rapids on the middle Negro, became in time the Carmelite mission of Santa Rosa de Bararoá and Cabacabarí seems to have been among the first indigenous leaders of the region to work out a genuine and lasting accommodation with the Portuguese.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ P. Jacinto de Carvalho-King (Belém, 14 jan 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3.

⁵⁹ Anon., Planta da Aldeia do Principal Majurí, ms. AHU Col. Cartográfica Brasileira (Iria, no. 1) & accompanying letter in Rio Negro Cx 1, doc. 1.

At this critical juncture, Captain João Paes do Amaral fell seriously ill and asked to be replaced in his command, so that the *tropa* might better carry on the war against the Mayapenas. Belchior Mendes de Moraes, who had been sent back to Belém some months earlier to deliver a load of slaves and carry a request for reinforcements, was at that point in temporary retirement from slaving. Overcoming the handicap of his well-earned reputation for drunkenness and "insolence," he had somehow seized the opportunity of the change in the administration in Pará to have himself appointed as the new governor's officer in charge of the *repartição* of Indian wage laborers from the mission aldeias of Pará. Now, having received Amaral's request from the Negro, Governor Freire wrote to Lisbon to renew his predecessor's plea for more troops and supplies, alleging once more that there were not enough of either in Pará both to carry on Indian wars and at the same time guarantee the defense of the colony. Sixty soldiers were already stationed on the Negro, in addition to the several hundred domestic Indian auxiliaries who were served there on what was beginning to look like a semi-permanent basis. This petition met, however, with no more success than Governor Gama's had enjoyed; and it was perhaps the paucity of resources available for the prosecution of the war against the Mayapena may be one reason why the competition was lean and a disreputable character such as Belchior Moraes could gain appointment at this juncture as successor to the respected João Paes do Amaral.⁶⁰

The Jesuits of Pará despised Belchior Mendes de Moraes; and despite their official responsibility to the government-operated slave trade, none of them would agree to go along

⁶⁰ Moraes' reputation in Pará was indeed problematic. Gov. Freire later wrote that he had received so many complaints about his work as *repartidor* that he had been obliged to fire the veteran sertanista and give his position back to the Jesuits. Freire, *Resposta ao P. Jacinto de Carvalho* (n.d.[1730?], ms. BNL Col. Pomb. 642, ff. 74v-75v). Jesuit writers complained that he had bribed Freire and several members of his household to obtain the appointment with gifts of slaves brought from his first tour of duty on the Negro, and that the assignments to succeed the respected Amaral as *cabo* of the *tropa de guerra* and the *tropa de resgates* on the Negro were incompatible, empowering him as they did to capture slaves there in whatever way he saw fit. Lopes-King (Pará, 8 oct 1729), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 104-14; Carvalho-King (Belém, 14 jan 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3.

with him as chaplain of the reconstituted tropa on the Rio Negro. Their Superior went so far as to enter formal representations against the appointment of a man "morally unqualified for such an assignment" and notorious for his wrong-doing, to which Governor Freire responded that Moraes was being sent to the Negro not because of his virtue, but because he was an experienced cabo who was likely to bring some slaves back to Pará. In any event, he was sure that his worship would agree that the cabo could not be denied the appointment as punishment for crimes he was only alleged to have committed, without the completion of a proper legal inquiry, which at the present time it would be impossible to undertake. The Jesuit on assignment to the tropa under João Paes do Amaral, Padre Salvador de Oliveira, was obliged therefore to abandon his position once Moraes arrived on the scene. Governor Freire then attempted to legitimize the operation by appointing a Carmelite chaplain, Frei Ignacio Xavier dos Anjos, to serve alongside Belchior Mendes de Moraes; but that effort failed when the Carmelite Vice-Provincial objected that he could not in conscience assign Frei Ignacio to this task, because he considered him incapable of performing it satisfactorily! The result was that the slaves who would be sent to Pará by the new cabo over a period of many months could only be examined and certified as legitimately enslaved some weeks or months after they had been "ransomed" on the Negro, and on the eve of their being sold on the block. So dubious were these certifications, in turn, that the Jesuit examiners themselves would forbid the resale of these people, pending royal approval of their enslavements; and that, it was said, led to the death of many of the hapless slaves from hunger when it developed that some of the speculators who had bought them for resale lacked the resources with which to feed them in the meantime! The Royal Treasury, for its part, later claimed to have lost some eight thousand cruzados in sales tax revenues as result of this fiasco, and of the excessive scruples of the Jesuits.

It was ironic, though not in the least surprising, that the Jesuits of Pará should protest so vehemently against the activities of Governor Freire and Belchior Mendes de Moraes. The black robes had themselves played a crucial role in the earlier phase of the war

against the Manaos and Mayapenas, and before that in the relentless depopulation of the lower Negro valley since the late 17th century. In 1722, they had been ordered by the King to return to accompanying the tropas de resgate -- a task which they had abandoned a few years earlier because of disagreements over the government's conduct of the slave trade. Under Governor João da Maia da Gama, they had performed these tasks willingly once more, because the strongly pro-Jesuit Governor had respected their wishes in appointing the respected João Paes do Amaral as cabo de resgates. Like Gama's predecessor Governor Berredo, however, Freire was not in the least concerned with these precedents and refinements. He considered the Jesuits at best a necessary embarrassment to the serious business of slaving; and he was at pains to appoint the cabo who seemed most likely to bring in a large number of slaves, or who could pay the largest bribe for his appointment. The result was that although Padres Souza and Oliveira had served under Amaral without complaint, presiding over a great deal of slave-raiding as well as slave-trading, and actively urging on the tropa in its war against the Manaos, at this point they were no longer willing to cooperate.⁶¹

Moraes left Belém for the sertão in December of 1728, with a party of eight canoes which was later increased to thirty to accommodate the six hundred "war Indians" whom he recruited with some difficulty from the down-river Jesuit mission villages. This was the season for cacao collection on the Amazon and Solimões, and most of the normally available indios de repartição were employed already in canoe-service, whether to their missionaries or to the moradores of Pará. Moraes' recruiters were therefore obliged simply to impress all the crewmen they could find in each settlement, without regard for any legal restrictions on the distribution of the Indian labor force; they took as many as fifty men from each of seventeen Jesuit missions, for a total of four hundred seventy-three; another hundred and twenty were rounded up in fourteen Franciscan aldeias, and a final few from

⁶¹ Carvalho-King (Belém, 14 jan 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3; Lopes-King (Belém, 8 oct 1729), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 109-19; Freire-King (Belém, 12 oct 1729), ms. AHU Pará Cx 6.

the Mercedarians on the Rio Urubú. Moraes' men apparently also "abandoned themselves to great disturbances," presumably raping and pillaging the inhabitants of the missions they visited. They were remembered as a conquering enemy horde in a time of war, in addition to leaving many aldeias bereft of able-bodied men and hard put to sustain themselves. In at least one mission village, the inhabitants organized armed resistance. Testimonies submitted to a legal proceeding sometime later revealed that the missionary with three white settlers of the place, and Indians armed with sixteen muskets and two small field cannon, had risked the royal displeasure by firing upon the recruiting-party's canoe during an entire night and forced them to withdraw without a single man. But the general experience was one of helpless devastation. One group of the men who were rounded up had only recently settled in a Jesuit mission with their families, as a hopeful descimento from somewhere in the sertão. They had undergone this relocation on the firm promise from the missionary that they would not be subjected to forced labor during at least the first two years. When one this group went beserk on the way up the river, threw down his oar in anger and grabbed a knife to stab several of his fellow-crewmen, Moraes called a halt and had the madman tied to a tree. Then he ordered each of a hundred of his followers to flog the unfortunate conscript one after the other, until it was found that they had beaten him to death.⁶²

⁶² Freire-King (Pará, 14 sep 1728), ms. AHU Pará Maço 35; Carvalho-King (Belém, 14 jan 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3; Azevedo, Certidão (Belém, 13 sep 1732), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 114-17; King-Freire (Lx, 11 feb 1730), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser Cx 1, pub. in *Anais BAPP* 3 (1905), pp. 287-89; Freire, Resposta (n.d.), ms. BNL Col. Pomb. 642, ff. 74v-75v. Moraes' defenders argued that he could not be blamed for these "excesses," because he had issued orders beforehand that his men treat the mission Indian population correctly, because the missionaries had obliged him to take drastic measures by refusing to hand over the required crewmen voluntarily. Governor Freire had erred, moreover, in sending an expedition up the river before the cacao canoes returned, which had made it necessary for Moraes to violate the law in recruiting his crewmen. Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8. So many complaints about Moraes' brutality and his utter disregard for the law eventually reached Lisbon, that the King eventually instructed Governor Freire's successor to conduct an investigation into the illegal slaving that had been encouraged by Governor Alexandre de Souza Freire and the misconduct of the "Rio Negro War," and to take the necessary measures to correct whatever errors were found. King-Serra (Lx, 26 may 1732), in *Anais BAPP* 6 (1907), pp.

Belchior Moraes' assignment once he reached the Negro was to continue the war of slave-raiding against the Manaos and Mayapenas, and in addition against a "Principal Cubiabá and his relatives, friends and allies." It is not clear from the available documents just who this new enemy leader was, except that he appears to have exercised some influence over chiefs living in the vicinity of the Rio Cababuris, a tributary of the upper Negro beyond the first rapids, and to have sought as did Ajuricaba to keep the Portuguese slave-traders from gaining direct access to the upper Rio Negro and the still densely-populated rivers feeding into it. The additional clause in Moraes' instructions was added by Governor Freire, presumably at the cabo's own request, despite the facts that the Junta das Missões had found little cause for hostilities against Chief Cubiabá (and none for war against his neighbors), and that no official legal "sentence" for such a war was ever issued. The King later quoted Governor Freire as having written that this war had been officially declared against the "Indians of the Mayapena nation and all of their neighbors."⁶³

In August of 1729, Moraes reported from the Negro that he had captured a "Principal Teymoteo" with all of his followers, alleged to have been allies of Ajuricaba. Cubiabá then apparently attempted to sue for peace; but Moraes ignored that opportunity to establish the normal kind of slave-trading relationship with a cooperating chief. In September he prepared a surprise attack on Cubiabá's village; but the chief was forewarned by his neighbors, and withdrew with his people up the Cababuris to the territory of his allies the "Caranais." When Moraes found that his prey had escaped him, he raided all the neighboring villages in reprisal and captured a number of chiefs along with many of their followers. Among the victims of this roundup were the people of the Manao chiefs Javinarí

140-41. Dezembargador Francisco Duarte dos Santos was the special investigator appointed by the King and the Mesa da Conciencia in Lisbon to conduct this devassa or official inquiry. By this time, of course, the war was over and the damages done. At no time was any restitution proposed for the Indian victims of abuse, nor were any of the illegally acquired slaves returned to their homes in the sertão.

⁶³ King-Freire (Lx, 11 feb 1730), ms. AHU Pará 2nd ser Cx 1, pub. in Anais BAPP 3 (1905), pp. 287-89.

(Jabonary, Janavary) and Janapu, remembered as allies of Ajuricaba, Jauá and Camabiana (Camoviana, Camahiana). Among the several others of unspecified nationality were chiefs named Tiburí, Mabazarí, Jaraví, Carazajarí, Bumejaua and Iramoca, all accused of having been friendly to Cubiabá and warning him of the impending Portuguese attack. In December, Moraes captured a Principal Manaparuví and his people, described also as allies of Cubiabá.⁶⁴

None of these people were "subjects" of the Mayapenas or even of Cubiabá; no war had ever been legally declared against them; and in fact there was no evidence of their ever having committed acts of violence against the Portuguese. On the contrary, most of them appear to have been in the habit of trading foodstuffs to the tropas de resgate e guerra from Pará, and when necessary providing them with crewmen and auxiliaries. Veteran slaving chaplain José de Souza testified in Pará sometime later that he had himself visited the Manao villages of Javinarí, Janapu and Camabiana, and had traded amicably with them for much-needed supplies during the war against Ajuricaba; another Jesuit writer added that these chiefs had traded regularly with Amaral's men (including Moraes himself) for a period of three years, "receiving trade goods from private parties as well as from the Royal Treasury, and repaying them promptly." Some of these chiefs had even supplied men to João Paes do Amaral for the war against Principal Majurí. Their previous relations with the Paraenses had been so friendly, in fact, that in several of the aggrieved villages Moraes' men had themselves been warmly received, fed and installed as guests in people's houses before they began their work of trying to round up everyone they could find. The government investigator who was charged a few years later with collecting evidence regarding the "excesses" of Belchior Mendes de Moraes, concluded that "the innocence of the said chiefs

⁶⁴ Lopes-Freire (Belém, 6 oct 1729), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 156-56v and AHU Pará Cx 3; Boaventura-serra (Pará, 10 aug 1734), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser Cx 1; [Jacinto de Carvalho?], Representação (?, 27 apr 1731) in Nabuco, Limites III Mem Bres Ann II, pp. 11-13; and especially Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8.

was the cause of their ruin. Had they been enemies of the Portuguese, they would have defended themselves or managed to escape as Cubiabá's people did."⁶⁵

Chief Cabacabarí, João Paes do Amaral's ally in the war against the Mayapenas, was so outraged at the enslavement of one of his friends by Belchior Moraes that he traveled in person down to Pará just to register a complaint -- taking along with him a number of slave women for sale in the capital, and presumably relying on his reputation as a loyal collaborator as a guarantee of good treatment. When the party reached Gurupá, Governor Freire's captain there expropriated the slaves in the chief's canoe, and compounded the offense by having Cabacabarí beaten, clapped in irons and sent as a prisoner to Pará -- on the pretext that he had failed to register his slaves at the fort as he passed, as was required by law of the legally authorized Paraense slavers. Once freed of his incarceration in Pará, the enraged principal carried out a night raid upon the building in which his slave women were being held, and retrieved them through a hole cut in the wall. At this the Captain-Major of Pará set out after him in person, caught him and beat Chief Cabacabarí severely with a club. Both Portuguese officials were later exonerated for this ostensibly uncharitable treatment of a one-time ally. But the Governor did return the impounded slaves to Cabacabarí, and made an effort to assuage his resentment by stocking his canoes for the return trip to the Negro out of the warehouses of the Royal Treasury. This episode makes it clear that at least by this period, when the conduct of the Indian slave trade was in full tilt and beyond pretense, "friendly chief" in the sertão was no more than a despised tapuya in the eyes of many of the citizens and government officials of Pará. Gone were the days when a cooperative attitude might produce something akin to the full status of citizen for the chiefs of tribes friendly to the Portuguese presence. There is no indication in the

⁶⁵ Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8; Azevedo, Requerimento (Pará, 3 feb 1730), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 121-25; Souza-Lopes (Pará, 23 aug 1730), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 148-51.

documents for this case, that Principal Cabacabari's complaint against Belchior Mendes de Moraes was given so much as a hearing by the colonial authorities.⁶⁶

Moraes and his men captured a large if unfortunately still uncertain number of slaves on the upper Rio Negro; and they did so in blatant violation of the legal provisions for the operation of tropas de resgate e guerra, and even of his own instructions from the Governor and Junta das Missões of Pará. The truculent cabo acted so independently, indeed, that he neglected even to take counsel with his own officers before ordering this series of unprovoked attacks upon the Indian settlements of the region. Moraes and his faithful collaborator Frei Ignácio then proceeded to draw up documents justifying these enslavements across the board, alleging simply that their captives were all relatives and allies of their officially recognized enemy, Chief Cubiabá. Legal testimonies were also taken to this effect, for the most part from the soldiers of the expedition itself, men "interested in the spoils, and the instruments of the injustice." These testimonies concerned matters about which the soldiers can have had no first hand knowledge, and could report only what was rumored among the Paraenses. This was especially true of the main charge against the captive chiefs, of which the official investigator later observed that it was of dubious validity, having "no more basis than the word of a tapuya:" that they had warned Cubiabá of the Portuguese attack, and enabled him to escape with his people to safety.⁶⁷

News of these developments reached Pará along with the shipments of illegally captured slaves which began to arrive there late in 1729. Almost immediately there arose a great outpouring of complaints by the Jesuits against Belchior Mendes de Moraes. The despised mameluco cabo de resgates was accused among other things of having taken with him to the Rio Negro a large quantity of trade goods purchased on his own account and that of a number of other moradores in need of slaves, as well as of having neglected the niceties

⁶⁶ Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8.

⁶⁷ *ibid.* In legal proceedings in Pará in this period, the affirmations of domestic or Christian Indians were suspect; those of the still-unmissionized had no legal standing at all.

when making out the necessary legal documents for each slave. From the Jesuit point of view, the process of legitimation was in this case a travesty. Slaves bought from the Indians had come down on the same basis with slaves captured in war; and with Governor Freire's approval they had been distributed to the settlers without restrictions of any kind. Most of the people involved were not in fact "Mayapenas," since by the time Moraes returned to the Negro most of that tribe (his officially recognized enemy) had been killed off or transported already, and their survivors dispersed over a wide area. Rather than content himself with normal slave-trading in these circumstances, he had sought pretexts for declaring war such as that anyone who had so much as received in his village one of the fugitive "vassals" of the ten Mayapena chiefs was an enemy. By thus loosely interpreting his instructions, Moraes had authorized himself to raid the villages of some forty-five previously cooperative chiefs, and to make slaves of all he found in them without reservations of any kind. Governor Freire, who had authorized and presided over these lawless proceedings, had managed by these means to make himself very rich in a short period of time. The official inquiry into these events, conducted several years later, revealed that Moraes had also committed a fraud against the Royal Treasury as part of his operation. Slaves taken in war were supposed to be sold in the public square with a portion of the proceeds reimbursed to the Treasury as repayment for the cost of outfitting the tropa, and another fifth of proceeds as payment of the Royal Fifth (quinto) as a tax. The remainder, after the Governor's cut was removed, was to be divided among the officers and soldiers of the tropa in proportion to rank. What Moraes had done was to divide up the people in the slaving-camp on the Negro, setting aside the healthier and better-looking slaves for the Governor, other public officials and officers of the tropa and reserving the sicklier and least saleable slaves for the Treasury! In these circumstances, legal efforts were made by the Jesuit critics to have all of the captives in question declared "free" (forros) and parcelled out among the downriver mission villages; but in the circumstances such efforts could be of no avail.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Carvalho-King (Belém, 14 jan 1730); Lopes-King (Pará, 8 oct 1729), BNL Fundo-Geral

In a confusing postscript to the Manao-Mayapena War, Governor Alexandre de Sousa Freire informed the King in April of 1731 that Belchior Mendes de Moraes was back in Pará. The captain, he was pleased to report, had decisively put an end to Indian resistance on the middle Negro, "leaving those people reduced out of fear of Your Majesty's arms, by means of a battle in which he killed 20,800 Indians [my emphasis]." The time and place of this battle are not specified; but the mortality figure is impossible. Though we have no real demographic data for the region in this period, and no reliable figures for the numbers of Indian slaves transported to Pará; there were probably not many more people than that along the entire middle stretch of the Rio Negro even before the war. All that can be said with any confidence so far is that as a result of the Manao-Mayapena War, the country adjacent to the middle reaches of the Rio Negro was very largely depopulated by 1730, and that this left the passage to the populous upper Negro basin virtually unimpeded for the slave-raiders from Pará.⁶⁹

A Carmelite missionary wrote not long after the war was over that the banks of four tributaries of the middle Negro, the "Xoara, Cababuris, Mariá and Megua" had been very densely populated before the war, by peoples who regularly traded both foodstuffs and slaves to the Portuguese. By 1734, he lamented, only one chief remained there with his people -- and he was in the process of arranging to lead his people down to Pará under Jesuit protection as a *descimento*, in order to avoid being enslaved and transported there by force. The chiefs whose followers had been taken into custody by Moraes and his men had escaped enslavement themselves, even though most of their people had been carried away;

4517, ff. 109-19; Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8; and Lopes-Freire (Belém, 6 oct 1729); Souza-Lopes (Pará, 23 aug 1730); and Azevedo, *Requerimento* (Pará, 3 feb 1730), all ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 156-56v, 148-51, 121-23.

⁶⁹ Freire-King (Belém, 5 apr 1731) in *Anais BAPP* 5 (1906), pp. 392-94. The figure has been picked up uncritically by A.C.F. Reis, *Processo histórico*, p. 12 and by Eduardo Galvão, "Encontro de sociedades," p. 330, n.3 among others. I have not seen the ms., but it is possible that the printed version contains a typographical error (2800 as the complete figure for Indian casualties and slave captives in the war would perhaps not be out of line). Cf. Edmundson, intro. to Fritz, *Journal*, p. 43.

but most of the people of the region who had not been killed or captured during the terrible conflict, had been forced to flee to remote places. This was, moreover, a process which had continued even after the conclusion of hostilities. When Belchior Moraes returned to Pará in 1730, he had left fifteen Indian villages intact on the middle Negro. By 1734, these had all been removed in the course of what the Carmelite referred to as descimentos, by tropas de resgate led by Diogo Pinto da Gaya, João da Cunha, Narcizo Ignácio and eventually the long-time commander of the Fortress of the Rio Negro, Diogo Rodrigues Pereira -- each of whom returned to Pará with the inhabitants of at least one village. little record has come down to us, with the result that from then on the river's banks were entirely depopulated from the Carmelite mission of Santo Angelo do Dary, to a point some distance above the first rapids.⁷⁰

Governor João da Maia da Gama had perhaps suggested the real character of the Manao-Mayapena War in the letter with which he submitted to the King his first harvest of testimonies concerning the hostile actions of the Manaos in 1724. The King later recalled having learned from this communication that

all the nations of that river, except those living in our mission villages, have been killers of my vassals and allies of the Dutch who impede the propagation of the Faith and are continuously robbing and assaulting my vassals. They eat human flesh and live like animals in violation of the laws of nature.⁷¹

Gama's and Freire's war against Ajuricaba and his allies was in reality a war against all the Indians of the middle Rio Negro. Its purpose was to clear away the barriers presented by

⁷⁰ Boaventura-Serra (Pará, 10 aug 1734), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser Cx I; Serra-Pereira (Belém, 29 oct 1732), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 161-161v.

⁷¹ King-Gama (Lx, 17 feb 1724), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, p. 34-36, paraphrasing at length Gama's letter of 17 sep 1723, which I have not seen. Gama's plea for assistance had gone on to say that the war would be necessary "because without it, they will attack all the missions around the mouth of the Rio Negro, and all of those newly-converted Christians will be lost..."

the "barbarous" Manaos and their neighbors to the full-fledged prosecution of the slave trade on the upper Rio Negro, to put a stop once and for all to the Dutch and Indian trade in the Negro basin, and to bring about the repopulation of the villages and estates of Pará and Maranhão -- a measure seen as indispensable to the economic development of that colony. The war on the middle Negro was an unmitigated disaster for the peoples of that region as such; moreover, it left the region too short of manpower for the purposes of any subsequent colonial economic development. In its consequences, the war was directly contrary to the expressed purposes of the Carmelite missions on the Negro; yet it was supported throughout by the missionaries themselves -- whether out of fear of the Manaos or as a consequence of the Carmelites' economic involvement in the slave trade. It did perhaps contribute indirectly to increasing the population of the missions themselves. By destroying, transporting or dispersing the more powerful peoples of the middle Negro, the Paraenses obliged a few of the surviving Indians of the region to seek the protection of the missionaries, and of the other white and mameluco transfrontiersmen who settled there by the 1730's. Thus finally, in its terrible way, it laid the ground for the development of a "society without government" in the central Amazonian transfrontier, the society whose new forms of social organization will be examined in Chapter Ten. But before turning to an examination of the society forged in the heat of the central Amazonian slave trade let us sum up what we have learned of the operation of that slave trade itself.

