

CHAPTER 9:
The Indian Slave Trade of
Pará in Central Amazonia

The last quarter of the 17th century saw a determined thrust westward into the central Amazon valley by a tiny band of transfrontiersmen from Pará, emboldened by their own economic backwardness and chronic poverty. By the turn of the century, the largest remaining populations of native Amazonians, and the more accessible remaining stands of the commercially exploitable trees of the valley, were to be found west of the mouth of the Rio Madeira; and during the next several decades, the Paraense sertanistas strove valiantly to extract such wealth as was to be had from this vast region. The results of their effort were both culturally and demographically catastrophic for the central Amazon region, and barely satisfactory to themselves. By the year 1700, most of the Indian slaves destined for service in Pará and Maranhão, and most of the cacao and other forest products that were being exported from Belém were being gathered along the Solimões and Negro. This work was done with the indispensable help (and despite the occasional mild protests) of the Portuguese Carmelite missionaries.

In seeking to exploit both kinds of wealth, the Paraenses strung themselves out far beyond the "settlement frontier" of Pará, then located at about Cametá on the lower Amazon (see Map 2), into regions that were barely susceptible to the implantation even of a Paraense version of the European colonial social order. On the Negro and Solimões, these sertanistas generally arrived in groups of no more than a dozen determined and like-minded men, traveling at the head of modest but reasonably well-outfitted companies of Indian auxiliaries. The Indians were themselves far from home and alien to the region, and they were perhaps as fearful and as potentially murderous and

predatory as the Paraenses themselves. The life the men of both groups encountered in the Amazonian sertão was a harsh one; and it was only minimally remunerative to either of them. But of those who survived it, many chose to remain in the region and somehow managed to forge a way of life there, on the basis rather of an ability to adapt to the land and its peoples than of an ability to impose themselves upon them.

Private Slaving, the Constant Mode of Livelihood

In 1688, the royal government had in principle established the acquisition of Indian labor for Pará and Maranhão as a state monopoly. Its intention had been to impose some minimal standards on the labor recruitment process, while at the same time deriving more reliable public revenues from the sale of slaves. According to the law issued that year, as we have seen in Chapter Three, a *tropa de resgates* was to be outfitted by the Royal Treasury during each collecting season, manned by soldiers from the King's garrison and by Indian crewmen drafted into the Royal Service. This expedition was to be sent up the river to exchange trade goods for slaves under the supervision of the Jesuit chaplains, viewed as coordinators of the *tropas* as representatives of the Crown. Any slaves legitimately obtained by the *tropa* were to be parceled out among the needier settlers by officials of the Municipal Councils of Belém and São Luis, and sold to them at cost by Treasury officials.

Until the 1730s, however, this official system was in operation only erratically and incompletely. A *tropa de resgate* was difficult to organize and expensive to outfit; the Jesuits would sometimes express dissatisfaction with the personnel selected, or with the way a *tropa* was led in practice, by refusing to accompany it to the sertão. Generally speaking, the black robes preferred instead to carry out "peaceful descimentos" to their own mission aldeias as they were able and saw fit to arrange them, and then to collect the royal subsidy for each new resettlement once it was accomplished. The Ouvidor of Pará complained in 1710 that as a result of the steady decline in the recruitment of slave labor by means of official resgates, the Treasury found itself burdened excessively by having to supply the food rations, tools and clothing required by the great numbers

of Indians who were being resettled voluntarily as a result of these missionary efforts. In some periods indeed, as in 1718-19 when about a thousand people were "brought down" and installed in the Jesuit settlements, this alternative system appeared in fact to be working quite satisfactorily as a means of replenishing the labor force of Pará.¹ But in general and over the long run, as we have seen, it could never suffice.

The Governors of Pará and their Captains-Major were themselves often loathe for their own reasons to promote the official *resgates*, because in practice that system deprived them of profits that might be derived from the exercise of control over the distribution of Indian slaves to the *moradores*. Generally speaking, leading government officials like the other wealthier *moradores* of Pará preferred to send such Indian crewmen as they could mobilize up the river each year on private account, to collect whatever they could find of both forest products and slaves. The result was that most of the actual slaving that was carried out during this period was done in the service of those who could afford to outfit such expeditions, and who had sufficient influence in Pará and Maranhão to recruit the indispensable Indian crewmen from mission *aldeias*.

This unregulated system was hard in practice on the poorer settlers of the colony, because it denied them access to the inexpensive labor that was indispensable for every kind of enterprise. It denied critically needed revenues to the Royal Treasury. Not least among its effects, though this was not a matter of concern to the officialdom of that day, was the fact that in practice the private trade made every Indian crewman on every expedition to the *sertão*, whether slave or free and regardless of the expectations that he or his missionary supervisor may have had at the time of his employment, an accomplice in the cruel business of recruiting more people like himself to serve at forced labor in Pará. Periodic efforts by the King and Overseas Council to get the practice of the slave trade back onto the basis laid down by the law of 1688 were to little avail.²

The record is confusing with regard to the actual year-by-year operation of the both the private and the public Indian slave trade during the first half of the 18th century. Occasionally, a formal *tropa de resgate* or *tropa de guerra* was sent out by the Governor and Royal Treasury more or less as prescribed by the law. Such was the expedition under Ignacio Correia de Oliveira which

we encountered in Chapter Six, at work on to the Solimões between 1707 and 1710—operating sometimes as "de resgate," sometimes as "de guerra," and always in disregard of the pious legislation designed to govern its activities. Occasionally, a Jesuit or some other missionary might still be persuaded to go out with one of these official expeditions, and make some attempt to keep them in line; but the cabos de tropa were seldom selfless servants of church or state, and there were frequent expressions of dismay at such excesses as "obliging the chiefs to sell their very women and children as slaves, or to make unjust war against other tribes" in the blind pursuit of profit, about which the King would note helplessly that such behavior did not "further God's service or my own." In search of remedies, at one point he instructed the Junta das Missões in Pará to take charge of appointing all future cabos da tropa, seeking out in each case "a worthy individual who would take along with him God-fearing men so as to make sure that the work is done without violence or extortion." In addition, he ordered the Ouvidor of Pará to conduct an annual inquiry into any reports of misconduct.³

The Royal Treasury in Pará appears to have tried for a time to restore a measure of control over this business by insisting that all slaves sent down the river by anyone be sold to the Crown for a fixed price of "four pieces of hardware" apiece—a price intended to discourage the private slavers, since it would barely pay their expenses and leave no room for profit. This measure led in turn to a series of settler pleas that the tropas de resgate be abolished altogether, and that the moradores be allowed to outfit their own expeditions and conduct the entire trade on a wide-open, tax-paying, free enterprise basis. In the end, all such "anarchic" argumentations were rejected by the King.⁴

The result of all these contradictions was that in practice, and regardless of any royal prohibitions, an illegal private slave trade flourished all but openly in Pará and Maranhão throughout the first half of the 18th century. The Jesuit missionaries denounced it to the authorities at every opportunity, in an effort to have as many as possible of the ill-gotten slaves transferred for supervision to their aldeias; and on the occasions when the Jesuits did succeed in resettling some slaves, the guilty moradores would as a matter of course complain bitterly that they had been robbed

of their property. But the "informal" trade nevertheless continued without interruption; and it seems likely that in most years it provided the majority of the Indian laborers newly recruited to Pará.⁵

By the late 17th century Indian slaving on a small scale had, in fact, become a normal feature of the settlers' annual expeditions to the sertão for the collection of forest products. Cabos sent after cravo or cacao were instructed to buy or kidnap a few healthy men, women or children whenever the opportunity presented itself. If the harvest of the forests was poor, they were even obliged to do so in order to cover expenses. In 1700, a dying morador acknowledged in his will that several of the slaves laboring on his fazenda were in fact legally "free" men and women "because he had acquired them in the sertão—some by bartering them for trade goods, and others as gifts of friendship from the chiefs." Informed of this, the King decreed in response that the slaves in question (presumed to be ignorant of their own legal status) should be informed that they were now free persons, and from that time forward paid wages and treated kindly by the settler's heirs, while continuing to labor as before on the same plantation!⁶ At about the same time, a Jesuit observer acknowledged that if the truth were told, in the Amazon valley there really was no cannibalism to justify the "rescue" of índios de corda. The slaves arriving in Pará were generally people who had been captured in war by the upriver tribes for the exclusive purpose of being sold as slaves to the Paraenses; and those who went to the sertão for any purpose were in the habit of traveling around to ask the "friendly chiefs" to hand any such people over to them in exchange for small amounts of trade goods. When the price offered was refused, they would simply capture the Indians in question, and if possible round up their erstwhile masters along with them.⁷

The same observer was eloquent in his denunciation of the cabos of these privately owned canoes, who would visit the Jesuit missions simply to shanghai the necessary crewmen (with or without any pretext of being on the Royal Service), and would sometimes even raid the upriver missions themselves to capture slaves. The latter practice, he insisted, had in fact nipped a great many very promising Jesuit descimentos in the bud. The Governor and other officials would send their own private canoes out in September, in order to get first choice of the available mission Indian crewmen and make their way first to the most promising areas of the sertão for their collections.

Then they would delay licensing the moradores to send their canoes out until sometime in October. The Indian crewmen required by one and the others were rounded up and beaten, and where necessary tied up and dragged to the canoes in which they were to serve. They would then be gone from their families for eight to nine months, rowing night and day, even sleeping on the hard benches of their canoes, suffering greatly from overexposure to the hot river sun, very badly fed and completely unattended in illness. Frequently these men died from overwork, or were killed in battle with other Indians; and in these cases their bodies were simply thrown overboard to be eaten by the *piranhas* and *jacarés*. Others might be gone for three or four years or more, if the moradores decided to take them back to Pará or Maranhão to work on their private estates rather than returning them to their home villages during the off season. Workers to whom that happened often ended up simply abandoning their families in the aldeias, allowing themselves to be remarried to the moradores' own slaves and remaining with them indefinitely in a condition of total dependence. Others might resist such treatment, escape into the forest and join a *mocambo* or community of runaways; but the effect on their home aldeias and their families was the same. This Jesuit critic also pointed out that the cabos of collecting expeditions often recruited more canoemen (and brought down more slaves) than they could so much as feed with the supplies of farinha de mandioca they had stocked, and that the result of this was that both slaves and crewmen were frequently on the verge of starvation by the time they returned down river to Pará.

Private slaving as an aspect of the business of forest product collection continued for a long time after the reinstatement of regular official tropas de resgate in the 1720s, and presumably even increased during the second quarter of the century. The numbers of people brought to Pará by this informal trade cannot be estimated with any certainty; but they were substantial. A Jesuit writer asserted in 1719 that several dozen (or as many as three hundred) collecting canoes were being sent to the sertão each year with licenses from the Governor and other officials, and that together they were bringing in about a thousand slaves a season. In 1726, a hundred and fifty collecting canoes went to the sertão. In 1729, the *dízimo* or tithe on forest production was reduced in an effort to encourage this trade; and a year later, the Câmara of Pará asked that it be removed altogether. By the

mid-1730s, the Governor had grown so generous with licenses to travel to the sertão that almost anyone who could afford a canoe was able to get into the business. As an average, more than two hundred and fifty canoes were licensed each year—each of which required twenty to twenty-five crewmen for a total of five to six thousand, more than were then available though the legal system of repartição from the aldeias. In 1736, three hundred and twenty canoes made the trip upriver with perhaps seven thousand crew. Many or perhaps most of these canoes succeeded in bringing back a few slave captives, generally people who had been kidnapped wherever the collecting parties found them in the sertão. When government officials tried from time to time to inquire into such depredations, they were hard put to find an eye-witness who was not himself guilty of the charge.⁸

Cametá, at the mouth of the Rio Tocantins, was the principal center of these illegal private slavers and the surest market for their human wares. The sertanistas could come in there to sell a few slaves on the way back to Belém with a cargo of cacao; or they could avoid the capital altogether by selling all their wares in Cametá, loading up on supplies there and returning upriver for more of the same. The merchants and officials of the Câmara at Cametá were themselves deeply involved in the slave trade, and generally did nothing to cooperate with any official efforts to control it. In 1709, the Captain-Major at Cametá was reputed in Lisbon to be "a great lover of justice, and of the punishment of criminals." But neither he nor the Ouvidor was in fact capturing any slavers.⁹ The result was that in Cametá after a time the slave traders no longer even bothered with subterfuge, but actually flaunted their outlaw exploits. Twenty years later, the officials there were being accused of the very same kinds of unrestrained rapacity; and the King was insisting as always on severe punishment for the perpetrators of all "crimes of the sertão" while at the same time continuing freely to grant permission to settlers to bring down their own gangs of "couples of free savages" for employment in any top-priority branch of production.¹⁰

Punishment for illegal slaving was much more easily decreed than meted out in practice. The Ouvidor of Pará was supposed to conduct an annual *devassa* (legal inquiry) into these crimes, and to castigate all the guilty parties severely.¹¹ But by the time such an infraction was duly investigated and charged, the guilty morador was very likely to be off again in the sertão. Once

there, he could only with the greatest difficulty be caught. Friends in the city would advise him of the danger before he came back; and the culprit had little difficulty in avoiding arrest even in the immediate vicinity of Belém. Those caught and tried, moreover, were seldom actually punished. One of the worst offenders during the first decade of the century was one Manoel de Braga, condemned for illegal slaving on the Rio Negro in the devassa of 1706. Two years later, Braga was still hiding out on the fazenda of his friend Pedro da Costa Rayol, the Sergeant-Major of Pará; and though the King himself had ordered Rayol to hand the culprit over to the Ouvidor for trial, Braga would occasionally even make so bold as to appear at night in person on the streets of Belém. The Governor maintained that there were no Indian crewmen with whom to send out the soldiers that would be needed to capture the dangerous Braga. In the meantime, some Indians attacked and killed two Franciscan missionaries on the Rio Guatumã (hard by the Mercedarian missions east of Lake Saracá); and the Sergeant-Major was sent up with a tropa de guerra to punish the malefactors. Along with him went Braga and another veteran Indian slaver, chosen not inappropriately for this work "as people experienced in the sertão." This expedition was a great success, bringing in a large number of slaves for repartição; and not long afterward, Manoel de Braga was officially exonerated of the charges that had been laid against him.¹²

In 1729, the annual devassa revealed more than sixty moradores guilty of illegal slaving. A few months later, thanks to the active complicity of the Ouvidor, nearly all of these slavers were at liberty; and their improperly acquired slaves were at work in the miscreants' households and estates. Many of these offenders had even received licenses to go back to the sertão for more! On the rare occasions when settlers were actually sentenced to jail for the crimes revealed by these annual devassas, they would often insist on the right to house arrest (one of the old perquisites of the citizens of Oporto, granted to the founding settlers of Belém and São Luis) and succeed in obtaining it. Those who did find themselves in the poorly constructed and indifferently guarded calaboses of the twin capitals were often enough able to escape.¹³

The wealthier moradores did not themselves, for the most part, undertake to make these arduous collecting and slave-trading trips into the sertão. They generally employed trusted Black or

Mameluco members of their households as cabos for this purpose, sending them forth in command of crews consisting partly in the owner's own slaves. When charges of misconduct arose in such cases, the gentlemen of the Municipal Council were apt to attribute them rather to the presumed racial attributes of their cabos and crewmen, gone amok far from the watchful eye of their masters, than to any defect in the system itself. When in 1714 an Ouvidor threatened to punish all canoe owners for the crimes perpetrated by their cabos in the sertão, there was a sudden decline in the number of canoes officially licensed to collect cacao; and when this also led to a decline in the royal revenues, the King lost no time in instructing the Ouvidor to stop threatening the respectable owners of canoes, and concentrate his efforts on punishing the guilty cabos instead.¹⁴ The law of 1688 had in any event forbidden any "skilled craftsmen, soldiers, foreigners, mamelucos or Blacks" from going to the sertão under any circumstances; and it was commonly maintained by peninsular officials that these non-white cabos were more apt than others to perpetrate wanton atrocities on crewmen and on the as yet "undomesticated" Indians alike.¹⁵

In 1706, the Municipal Council of Pará protested that the laws governing the Indian slave trade were more honored in the breach than in the observance, and that since its members were well acquainted with practically everyone in the colony, it was they who should be empowered to grant all licenses for travel in the sertão. People in all of the forbidden categories were traveling up the river on a regular basis, with licenses obtained by bribing the Captain-Major of Pará, a man who was unduly friendly towards these unsavory characters and in any event had no basis for judging their qualifications to serve. But in reality the concern of the council members was not with the color of the cabos or even with their treatment of the Indians. It was that the numbers of independent slavers on the one hand, and the official restraints on their activities on the other, be kept to a minimum so that the Indian slave trade might continue to provide a material basis for elite privilege in the colony. Within two years, however, the vereadores had made an about-face and were complaining now that the restriction on sending non-white cabos to the sertão was depriving them of anyone to whom they might "entrust their business affairs."¹⁶ At this point they were enjoying a very cordial relationship with a new Governor, Christóvão da Costa Freire, under whose

administration the wealthier moradores were able to carry on their slaving activities without the handicaps of Jesuit "examinations" and government taxes; and they were generally able to hold on to most of the slaves their enterprising cabos could acquire each year in the sertão. Years later, an official inquiry (residencia) into the administration of Governor Freire revealed that in addition to such activities as imprisoning the moradores arbitrarily, sleeping with other people's wives and engaging in a contraband trade with nearby French Cayenne, he had long been in the habit of sending upriver for slaves on his own account, and selling them publicly at considerable profit.¹⁷

Governor Bernardo Pereira de Berredo arrived at his post from Lisbon in 1718, bringing with him some new legislation regarding Indian labor recruitment by private individuals, as well as instructions that the official Jesuit-led tropas de resgate should be reinstated. The King now allowed that Indians might be gotten into the labor force of Pará by either peaceful or violent means. Peaceful descimentos were obviously most desirable; and with regard to bringing people down by threats or by force,

there may indeed be a scruple, because these people are free and exempt from my jurisdiction [my emphasis]; and they may therefore not in principle be forced to leave their country for a way of life that is not agreeable to them, and which (though it is not a particularly harsh captivity) in some respects does restrict their liberty.

Nevertheless, thought the King, this "scruple" need not be an insuperable barrier. As always, the legal experts were agreed that recalcitrant tribesmen might legitimately be brought to down Pará and Maranhão by forceful means if they proved to be

wild savages who go about naked and do not recognize the authority of a king or a governor like citizens of a genuine Republic, or who violate the laws of Nature by practicing lust on their own daughters, or eating each other's flesh and making unjust war to satisfy this gluttony, even shooting innocent children with the bow and arrow just to eat them;

and the Jesuits and legal authorities were charged with determining which peoples fulfilled these requirements. Descimentos carried out by force should of course be done in such a way as to kill as few Indians as possible; but if these savages chose to resist by force of arms once the human

purposes of such an operation had been explained to them, the King acknowledged that a good many of them were certain to die. Indians settled in mission aldeias who later escaped and returned to their home countries and pagan ways might also be rounded up and brought down by force to Pará, though it was specified that runaways who returned voluntarily were thenceforth to be treated as free vassals of the King and paid reasonable wages for their labor.¹⁸

The most controversial element in this new legislation was not that in practice it authorized almost unlimited slave-raiding, whether official or private, against the upriver tribes on grounds of their presumed "barbarity," but rather its provision that all of the Indians brought down to Pará and Maranhão, by whatever means or on whatever pretext, were now to be settled in the Jesuit aldeias. Soon after his arrival, Gov. Berredo consulted with the Câmaras and the Juntas das Missões about the feasibility of implementing this radical new proposal; and he was easily persuaded by the leading men of the colony not even to try to put it into effect. Local opinion was in agreement that perhaps it was a better plan to bring the Indians in as "free men" when that was possible, but that they should then be assigned directly to the moradores to work for specified wages, rather than being placed in the mission aldeias. In line with this consensus, and in defiance of his own explicit instructions from the King, the governor then undertook the wholesale licensing of private individuals to go after slaves; and he did not so much as make an effort to restore the tropas de resgates.¹⁹

Ouvidor Francisco Galvão da Fonseca, the man charged with prosecuting any violations of the laws governing the slave trade during Berredo's first year in office, complained bitterly to the King about the governor's high-handed determinations. Not only were slaves now being captured and sold illegally on a regular basis and large scale, but the Governor himself had turned out to be a man easily "persuaded" by bribery to grant exceptions to the law for any especially favored individual. Fonseca went on to cite a dozen cases of the *ex post facto* legitimation of illegal slaving by Berredo; and these are worth examining for the insight they provide into the workings of the "informal" slave trade during this period.

Mathias da Sylva, a leading citizen of the colony who had been contractor (tax farmer) of the royal tithes just two years before, had obtained the appropriate license and sent a canoe to the Solimões after forest products. When these proved hard to obtain, his cabo had simply rounded up (or perhaps traded for) a group of forty-four men, women and children of the "Guaraxia" ("Guareicú"?) tribe there, and transported them in chains to Pará. Sylva later acknowledged to the Governor that all of these people been acquired illegally; but he requested permission nevertheless to put them to work on his sugar estate—which, due to the brief survival-period of Indian slaves assigned to agricultural labor, was chronically short-handed. Berredo had no hesitation in granting this request with the strictly *pro forma* proviso included in all of these cases, that the Indians in question were being granted not as slaves but as free persons, and that they were to be treated as such and paid the customary wages for their labor. The government register would show them as having been assigned to Sylva's supervision in perpetuity; but though they might live and work in the same manner as slaves, they were not legally their employer's property. To justify this illegal grant, Berredo recalled that the King had instructed him to encourage sugar production in the colony! Not long after, the veteran sertanista Colonel Hilário de Moraes Betancourt obtained fifteen slaves in the same manner. Manuel de Oliveira, alleging that his crewmen had been unable to collect any cacao for lack of manpower, and that they had therefore been obliged to barter some trade goods for twelve "pieces" whom he required for farm labor, had these people granted to him on the grounds that they had been bought and paid for rather than simply kidnapped.

Captain António da Fonseca had also sent a canoe after cloves and cacao during that year; but he incompetent cabo whom he had employed had bungled the job, and then fallen sick and chosen to remain in the sertão rather than returning to Pará to face the charges that were sure to be made against him. In the meantime, he had sent down a propitiatory gift of five slaves, including some children. Asserting that he was a poor soldier obliged to support his widowed mother, Fonseca too he had been granted four of the slaves in question—though the Governor had decided to give one of the Indian children to someone with an even stronger claim. Cabo António da Cunha had arrived from the sertão bringing with him a pregnant Indian woman and a boy and a girl whom

he claimed to have bought there with his own trade goods; and these people had been granted to him without any further justification.

Manoel de Carvalho had sent out a canoe with the explicit purpose of collecting slaves, in partnership with a soldier named Xavier Pereira. Their crewmen had brought back a total of eleven people, of whom seven were thought to be Carvalho's share. Berredo had granted these servants to him claiming that Carvalho was an "honorable and poor" man who was in need of these slaves for personal service as well as to cultivate the fields of his estate. Manoel Gomes Rocha's canoe had searched the Solimões for cloves and cacao unsuccessfully, under cabo Severino dos Passos. Passos' men had then made their way up the Rio Japurá, where they had captured thirty-two people of whom they thought that eight were "prisoners waiting to be killed." Twenty of these people belonged to Rocha, who admitted freely that they had been illegally taken but also succeeded in gaining their legal custody. Severino dos Passos was granted the other twelve, in recognition of his poverty and numerous children "who had no one to serve them."

Antônio da Costa Silva (the son-in-law of one of the early settlers of Pará) had lost twelve servants from his household to epidemic disease during a period of just ten months. To recoup this loss, he had sent a canoe to the Madeira with a license to collect cacao. Finding none, his cabo had pressed on to the headwaters of that river to look for some of the ferocious Torá Indians who had recently killed a white man and been pursued in reprisal by a tropa de guerra. He succeeded in bringing a few of these people in, to try and cover the not inconsiderable expenses of the expedition; but he had neglected to register them with the authorities. When the Governor sent soldiers to Silva's estate to remove these slaves, the guilty proprietor succeeded in persuading the Governor that three of them be left behind to serve so honorable a family in its "misery."

Manoel Oliveira Pantoja had received three Indians in payment of a debt; and he was allowed by the Governor to keep them although all had been illegally captured by private parties in the sertão. Not long afterward, he too sent a canoe to the Madeira which found no cacao and raided a village to capture some twenty men and women with their children. Acknowledging that he had no right to them, Pantoja had argued that he needed these people to work a new indigo plantation; and

he had agreed moreover to respect all regulations covering the use of free Indians in that kind of labor. Again, the petition had been granted. Francisco Soeiro de Vilhana, for his part, had confessed in his will to owning five slaves who weighed on his conscience because they had been illegally acquired; and these had been given to his wife and daughters, as respectable women living in "poverty."²⁰

Petitions from private persons for permission to engage in Indian slaving were quite common during the 1720s. During a period of just six weeks in 1728, Governor Alexandre de Sousa Freire would issue some eighteen *alvarás* in the King's name, granting settlers permission to go to the sertão and enslave a total of some two thousand Indians during the following collecting season. The number of Indians authorized for enslavement is unclear in some cases, but the average appears to have been about fifty *casais* (couples) or a hundred adults, plus whatever children they might have with them. In practice, of course, the slave-traders were little concerned with the marital status of their captives, or the human relationships that might exist between them; and these relationships were seldom respected in the distribution of slaves in Pará and Maranhão. Most of the slaves in question would come from the Negro and Solimões valleys; yet at the same time, as we have seen in Chapter Eight, a *tropa de guerra* was at work on the Negro with the objective of rounding up and enslaving if possible the entire Manao nation. In each of these eighteen cases, the governor justified his authorization by referring to the applicant's critical need for manpower for a specific productive enterprise.²¹

A few years later, the poignant request of Francisco de Melo Palheta was forwarded to the Court in Lisbon. Palheta, a minor public official in Pará with a salary of only 48\$000 a year, claimed personally to have financed and led expeditions to the Rio Madeira and to the nearby French colony of Cayenne in the King's service—returning in fact from Cayenne with the first coffee beans and bushes ever seen in Portuguese America, from which several promising plantations had sprung already. (This is generally acknowledged to have been the point of origin of the commercial cultivation of coffee in Brazil!) But in 1733 this exemplary citizen found himself lacking in funds and with five children to feed, the owner of a promising plantation on which a

thousand coffee bushes and three thousand cacao trees had been set out, but with no servants to help with their cultivation. Accordingly, he requested that fifty Indian couples from the mission aldeias be assigned to him for permanent service, and that in addition he be granted permission to bring in a hundred more couples from the Rio Negro, receiving in advance the standard royal subsidy that was given to missionaries to enable their descimentos, to help with the expenses of so large-scale a recruitment of critically needed labor. Palheta's permission was granted, but not the subsidy.²²

Private slaving on a large scale was, then, a permanent feature of the regional economy of Pará and Maranhão from the very beginning of the colony in the 17th century until the official abolition of Indian slavery in the 1750s. For many decades afterwards, and in some places down until the early 20th century, the corralling of Amazonian Indians for forced labor continued on a smaller scale wherever "unacculturated" tribes people were to be found. During the 17th and 18th centuries, most settlers and most aldeia Indians in the colony were involved in this trade in one way or another, as a supplement to the main enterprise of forest product collection and as a means of replenishing the supply of labor necessary for the collecting expeditions themselves, as well as for agriculture, construction, transportation and domestic service. Sometimes and for some especially enterprising and well-connected individuals, including both settlers in the colony and "friendly chiefs" in the sertão, this private Indian slave trade was carried on as a business in itself. Although reliable figures for this trade in human beings will probably never be established, it seems likely that more people were brought to Pará by the private slavers before 1760 than by the tropas de resgate, the tropas de guerra and the missionary descimentos combined. In the central valley, it is clear that private slaving predominated on the Rio Solimões—where the best stands of cacao and *cravo* and *salsa* for collecting were to be found, where the supplies staple foods were comparatively plentiful, and where as a result perhaps dozens of Paraense collecting parties were at work during every season after the 1680s. Official Indian slaving by the tropas de resgate and tropas de guerra was probably more important in the depopulation of the relatively less prodigal Rio Negro. But both

kinds of slaver were to be found on both rivers and most of their principal tributaries, working separately or in conjunction, during most if not all years of the first half of the 18th century.

Private and Official Slaving in the 1720s

Ouvidor Fonseca recommended in 1720 that the best means for correcting the wide-open illegal private slave trade in the colony was to reinstitute the annual tropas de resgates from Belém and São Luis. In 1712, the King had authorized the governor of Pará to continue subsidizing the Jesuit-led tropas from the revolving fund of three thousand cruzados assigned to the Treasury for resgates, even though by that time they were operating far away in the central valley and were therefore considerably more costly than the descimentos carried out occasionally by the Franciscan missionaries on the nearby Cabo do Norte. He had issued this determination on the understanding that thanks to these movements of people the labor force was growing, and with it the taxable production of Pará and Maranhão. But in fact the official resgates had been infrequent for some time before that; and when the last tropa had gone up in 1713, it had returned with no more than a disappointing ninety-four slaves. Since then, Governors had been unwilling to organize any tropas on the Treasury's account, claiming that they simply did not pay. The Ouvidor now argued that the resgates could once again be made into a lucrative proposition, if the Governors themselves were put in charge of the repartição—which would give them an opportunity for supplementary enrichment that would be more than sufficient incentive to help make the system work as it should. Slaves brought in by the Treasury could by this time undoubtedly, he thought, be sold at a price sufficient to pay for themselves, to "gratify" the Governor and other officials and to generate substantial royal revenues as well. Slaves brought in by private parties, as experience had shown, were apt to contribute no taxes at all.²³

In 1721, the King demanded of Governor Berredo an explanation of why it was that he had not dispatched any tropas de resgate as provided by his instructions and by the law of 1688. As he put it then, the unwillingness of his Governors to fulfill his responsibility was depriving the Treasury of the tax of 3\$000 per slave, and forcing the unfortunate moradores to "bring in pieces

by barter or by assault." A few months later, he wrote that according to his informants the Governor was neglecting to send out the tropas because he had his own uses for the required Indian crewmen, and that the chief sufferers from this inexcusable negligence appeared to be the all-important sugar mills of the colony on the one hand, and the poorer moradores on the other—both now deprived of the indispensable supply of new manpower for (taxable) production. Later in the same year, the King sent *desembargador* Francisco de Gama Pinto to Pará to conduct a new devassa into illegal slaving, convinced by this time that everyone in the colony except the Jesuits was up to his ears in that trade.²⁴

Visiting inspector Pinto confirmed the King's impression, reporting that a proper investigation was impossible since virtually every settler who had ever been to the sertão was guilty of illegal slaving and could be relied upon to give false testimony. Most of the moradores, as far as he could tell, held illegally captured Indians in their possession at that very moment; and in the last analysis it was doubtful that slaves anywhere in the colony were being held under what was strictly speaking a "just title." The only viable solution in Pinto's view was a general pardon such as had been handed down in 1691, followed by the complete abolition of Indian slavery itself. However, since it was clear that the colony could not survive without Indian manpower, and since the Indians there were unlikely to provide the necessary services on a voluntary basis, it would then be necessary to reassign the freedman to their former masters to work for officially determined wages in perpetuity. At the same time, recruitment from the sertão should be stepped up by restoring and expanding the system of Jesuit-administered tropas de resgate. Four of these should now be sent out each year, two from each capital, to be accompanied exclusively by

persons concerned solely with the proper treatment of the Indians, in sufficient canoes to provide them with comfortable transportation and food with which they are familiar, since experience shows that because of bad treatment most of them die on the way down to Pará [my emphasis], while others escape or arrive on the point of death; and these do not survive very long, which means that all the work and expense involved in bringing them down is for naught.

Pinto went on to say that in order to derive the best results from his proposed system, the *indios de resgates* as they were brought in should be handed over directly to the settlers for their administration and re-education (and for their religious indoctrination as well!). This would give the *moradores* an added incentive to treat them well; and in any event, the *desembargador* was reliably informed that the good citizens of Pará were quite conscientious about providing such services for the Indians already in their possession, people "for whom they entertain the very highest regard!" The settlers should in any case pay all the expenses for the *resgates* of new recruits; and they should be subject to fines and to the loss of any Indians under their administration, if convicted of violating the terms of their custodianship. The *Ouvidores* should be charged especially with investigating and prosecuting any abuse of Indians by their employers. With these reforms in place, Pinto was convinced, Pará could at last become one of the "more opulent lands of the world," with an ever-increasing population of productive Christian Indian laborers brought in from the forests, where according to his informants they were still "numerous as leaves," and where without the assistance of Europeans they would continue to "live in a state more brutish than that of the wild beasts themselves. Neither the King nor the newly appointed Governor of Pará were at all moved by this ill-informed but pragmatic line of reasoning. The instructions given to Governor Berredo in 1718, and successfully ignored throughout his tenure, remained in effect for his successor: put the slaving business back into the hands of the Jesuits, and stick to the Law of 1688.²⁵

When Governor João da Maia da Gama took office in 1722, he assumed responsibility for the full-fledged "*tropa de guerra e resgates*" which Berredo had deployed not long before on the rivers Solimões and Japurá. Portuguese intervention in the Solimões valley before 1720, as we have seen, had for the most part been the work of private collectors, slavers and Carmelite missionaries. These men had proved sufficiently numerous and persistent virtually to remove or exterminate the once-dense populations of the islands and *várzeas* of the great river by this time; and they had already begun their penetration of the populous lower valley of the Japurá.²⁶ Then in 1721, Governor Berredo had dispatched his *tropa de guerra* under the command of Diogo Pinto da Gaya against the few surviving the Juma and "Maguazes" (Aisuares?) said to be residing at "Lake

Cupacá," somewhere above the traditional private slavers' corral at Caiçara or Paraguarí and below the mouth of the Rio Juruá on the south bank of the Solimões. These peoples were charged with having murdered Samuel Fritz's old nemesis Frei Antônio de Andrade, whom we met in Chapter Six and who had grown so notorious by 1716 that the King himself had ordered his removal from the Solimões missions for having "mistreated the Indians and regularly neglected his other obligations, way observing in no way the behavior that is to be expected of a genuine missionary." Andrade had nevertheless obtained permission to travel to Portugal, complete his studies and undergo ordination to the priesthood before returning with the full support of Carmelite Superior to his old haunts on the Solimões, not long before he died. Gaya's charge was now to destroy the village of the "Jumas and Maguazes" who had killed Andrade at that place, and to carry all its people into slavery—in practice an authorization to round up all the members of either tribe that he could find anywhere in the area.²⁷

Diogo Pinto da Gaya's expedition served in practice rather to complete the depopulation of a wide region than to "punish" anybody guilty of crimes. The peoples "sentenced" to this "just war" were the rebellious mission villagers of the Juma and "Maguazes" peoples; but when the tropa began forwarding its slaves to Pará in 1722, it gave no indication of whether in fact they were members of these tribes or had had anything to do with killing the Carmelite. At least some of the people sent down were captured on the Japurá and elsewhere, at great distances from the scene of the putative crime. A year later, Governor Gama asked the Junta das Missões in Pará to declare that an entire shipment of slaves from this tropa were free persons because they had been sent down without the required certificates of legitimate enslavement, and were not in fact members of the sentenced tribes. On this occasion the Junta conducted its inquiry by talking both with the Indians and with veteran sertanistas from the tropa, and it was nearly unanimous in finding that although some of the slaves were indeed not "Maguas," having been taken from among their allies the "Maraguas," since the latter were guilty of having attempted to resist alongside the Maguas when attacked by the tropa de guerra, they too were guilty and had quite legitimately been enslaved.²⁸

The question of how many people were removed from the Solimões valley by the *tropa de guerra* under Diogo Pinto da Gaya is impossible to answer with any certainty. By Gaya's own reckoning and the official Treasury accounts for the expedition (see Appendix F), two hundred and sixty-nine slaves were sent to down Pará to cover *gastos* (the expenses of the Treasury in outfitting the expedition), *quintos* (the King's fifth, a tax on the sale of the slaves) and *joyas* (the Governor's cut of the proceeds, sometimes including smaller gratifications for other officials), and a small share (perhaps ten) for the soldiers of the expedition. Of these, two hundred and twenty-six survived the harrowing voyage and were sold by the Treasury at a public auction in Belém. But these figures make no reference to the slaves from whom Gaya and his companions must have obtained their own profits from the effort. In 1723, the Captain himself brought thirty-two people into the capital (the survivors of a group of over ninety with whom he had set on the long journey from the Solimões!); and though the legitimacy of these people's enslavement was duly certified by the Junta da Missões, they were not entered in the Treasury's registry. That same year, an officer was sent to the Japurá by the slaver Belchior Mendes de Moraes (who may have been serving then with Gaya, or was perhaps simply lending support to the *tropa* as an interested private citizen of Pará). Once there, Moraes' man distributed trade goods among the Indians of the Carmelite mission to obtain their assistance in gathering slaves; and as a result was able to return to Pará with "forty-two 'pieces', of whom only fifteen belonged to His Majesty, and the remainder to private parties." These were presumably not the only slaves sold by members of this expedition on personal account. The enslavements of all of these people had been declared legitimate in formal certificates signed on the Solimões by the cabo and chaplain of the *tropa*; and they could therefore legally be sold in Pará; but they should probably not be counted among the larger number included in the official reckoning.²⁹

Generally speaking, it appears that the total numbers of slaves taken in any expedition to the sertão were kept as nearly secret as possible—as a means of keeping the taxes and "gratifications" at a minimum, and allowing the slavers themselves to distribute their captives to the highest bidder. Governor Gama remarked later with regard to the *tropa de guerra* against the Manaos on the Rio Negro (see Chapter Eight), that on the occasion of the capture of Ajuricaba "two or three hundred

prisoners were taken, of which forty came down to cover the expenses paid by Your Majesty's Treasury, and thirty for the royal fifth."³⁰ This suggests that as many as three or four times as many slaves might be taken as were sent in for sale by the Royal Treasury. All were in principle supposed to be registered at the Fortress of Gurupá as they emerged from the main stream of the Amazon en route to the capital; but very often (or perhaps usually) they would shipped past there in clandestine fashion and taken directly to the fazendas for sale—thereby escaping the historical record altogether.

Applied to the tropa of Diogo Pinto da Gaya on the Solimoes, this guesstimate would give us between eight hundred and a thousand captives in all, of whom perhaps five to seven hundred and fifty were sent down river privately by the slavers themselves. If we project the percentages lost in transit from the documented figures cited above, somewhere between a hundred and four hundred of these people probably died of disease, hunger or violence on the way to Belém or shortly after arriving there, before the surviving few hundred were forcibly "resettled" in Pará. The several hundreds of people removed from the Solimoes and Japurá valleys during this three-year period, for the most part able-bodied men and women of reproductive age, may seem an insignificant quantity in modern demographic terms. But the devastating social impact of their removal comes more clearly into focus if we recall the settlement pattern along the Solimões after the depopulation of its várzeas—widely dispersed and impermanent villages with perhaps a hundred to two hundred people in each—and the fact that many or perhaps most of these people came from tribes already greatly diminished by a half-century of slave-raiding and disease.

In 1727, the Junta das Missões took the important step of authorizing private citizens to joining any tropa de resgates while it remained in the sertão, and to trade for slaves on private account along with it—providing that the private slavers followed the same rules in buying their slaves and having them legitimized by a missionary chaplain as had been laid down for the tropas themselves.³¹ This determination must have confirmed what was already common practice; but by making it "official," it served to pull the public and private slave trades into one. It also took some of the edge off of official hostility to the private trade. This was the beginning of a new system of

slave-trading in which all interested parties joined together in a systematic effort to remove as nearly as possible the entire population of any territory they chose to visit. It did not by any means accomplish the professed objectives of protecting the Indians against the destructive and "disorderly" procedures employed by some slavers, and preventing the cabos and soldiers of the tropas from enslaving Indians with an eye rather to making themselves rich than to serving the King. The new system was first tried out in the "tropa de guerra e de resgates" then serving under João Paes do Amaral on the Rio Negro (see Chapter Eight).

Amaral had been instructed by Governor Gama to consult with the resident Jesuit slaving chaplain as soon as he got to the Negro, so as to find the best place for carrying on his resgates as quickly as possible. Then he was to go to that place with his troops and his fellow-travelers, to trade for slaves in every spare moment and "everywhere else the tropa went," when they were not doing battle against the Manaos. One of the cabo's principal duties was to establish and maintain slave-trading relationships with as many Indian chiefs as possible. Another was to make sure that those chiefs understood that to receive a consignment of Portuguese trade goods (usually distributed in advance of the delivery of any slaves) was to enter into a serious business deal with the slavers, and that violations of the implied agreement to deliver their human merchandise within a reasonable period of time would not be taken lightly. As a safeguard, he was to make sure as well that all the men with him understood the legal procedures that had been laid down for the trade, and the penalties that existed for any transgressions on their part, so that the members and companions of the tropa could not later plead ignorance if charged with abuses.³²

Within the tropa de resgates on the Negro, the old slave-trading habits seem to have survived every effort at regulation. Belchior Mendes de Moraes, a seasoned sertanista sent there initially to collect the testimonies required for the declaration of just war against the Manaos, stayed on for many months after that work was done—as a soldier in the royal service and a subaltern to Captain João Paes do Amaral. Nevertheless, he seems to have been almost exclusively concerned throughout with his own private slaving operation. He and his men would trade for slaves with their own goods well as with those belonging to the King, and then ship the captives down to Pará to be

sold secretly by their friends where possible, and only as a last resort by the officials of the Royal Treasury. Due to the desperate shortage of manpower that had been created by the 1724-25 smallpox epidemic in Pará, these slaves could be sold for astronomical prices (60\$000 per head or more) at this time—even when there was no pretense of their having been "examined" by a missionary. (Amaral's instructions required the same examination of the slaves bought by private parties as was customary for those bought by the Treasury; but as we have seen the Jesuits shunned contact of any kind with the likes of Belchior Mendes de Moraes.) By bribing the appropriate officials in Pará, Moraes' representatives could usually manage to avoid paying taxes on the sales as well. Moraes, who had traveled to the Negro in the first place with just enough supplies to carry out his official assignment, even made so bold as to send down to the Treasury for more, claiming that the government should supply the additional trade goods that he required, because they were necessary for his defense against the Manaos! By the fall of 1725, Moraes had sent down not less than a hundred slaves on his own personal account; and he had sold these people for perhaps six *contos de reis*—a considerable fortune in the poverty-stricken colony of that day.³³

Whatever the nature of their own involvement with the trade, the members of a *tropa de resgate* were expected to arrest anyone they found on the river with illegally taken slaves, or in canoes which had not been registered on their way upstream at Gurupá. In such cases, the arresting crew were allowed in principle to keep a portion of the confiscated slaves, and of the value of the canoes and trade goods.³⁴ Nevertheless the most outrageous violations of the laws governing the slave trade commonly went unpunished. In 1728 or 1729, the seasoned sertanistas Gabriel de Torres and João Pinheiro de Amorim were sent to the Lake Saracá region by some moradores of Pará, to bring about an illegal "descimento" from the Mercedarian missions. In the bungled effort to do this, they killed at least seventeen Christian Indians and kidnapped several more. On their way back to Pará, they captured another group of already missionized people whom they ran across as they were on their way as a descimento to settle in the aldeias along the Rio Urubú.

Weeks later, on the heels of these slavers, there arrived in Belém three chiefs from the Urubú mission villages who complained to the Junta das Missões about these outrageous

injustices. The Junta determined in short order that the people in question had been illegally enslaved, and ought by rights to be returned to their homes in the sertão. But this was not to be, because the Ouvidor of Pará (whose job it was to prosecute illegal slavers, and who would in the opinion of one observer have been fully justified in sentencing Gabriel de Torres to the gallows for a lifetime of shameless *amarrações de tapuyas*) saw fit rather to defend the truculent cabo before the Junta, as a means of currying favor with the pro-slavery Governor Alexandre de Sousa Freire. The Bishop of Pará took a similarly collaborationist view of these events, maintaining that it was better for the Indians in question to be placed in the households of "civilized" people, where they might learn Christian doctrine, than returned to their homes where they were sure to fall back into "savagery." The result was that the outlaw Torres remained on the loose, and lost no time in applying for another license to continue his work as an Indian slaver.³⁵

The Manao War of 1725-28 on the Negro was fought so ferociously and destructively, as we saw in Chapter Eight, that by 1730 the Jesuits, Carmelites and more conscientious royal officials were clamoring once more for the establishment of a disciplined annual *tropa de resgates*. Jesuit Superior José Lopes wrote to the King that the resgate system was after all both humane, in that it "rescued" Indians held captive by their enemies, and fiscally beneficial to the Crown. Its proceeds made the operation potentially self-supporting; and in addition they paid for the establishment of the new Jesuit missions by *descimento*! The responsibility for organizing resgates and reporting on their progress to the King lay, in principle, with the Jesuit Superior. Unfortunately, it had to some extent recently been usurped, and irresponsibly exercised, by Governor Freire.

For the year 1730, there was in any event little to report. No *tropa* could be sent out from Belém so long as Belchior Moraes kept most of the available crewmen on the Negro; and the *tropa* from São Luis was accomplishing nothing. Lopes had appointed cabo Gregório de Moraes Rego to lead the latter expedition, with instructions that he do his trading in "Sertão dos Manaos" of unspecified location (presumably somewhere beyond the middle Negro, where Moraes was said to be "desolating everything"). But Governor Freire had ordered Rego to proceed to the Rio Japurá instead, believing friends who told him (plausibly enough) that there were more slaves for sale there

than among the Manao . Moreover, the Governor had undermined the discipline of this tropa by informing the cabo that he was under no obligation to accept any sort of orientation from a "mere chaplain." As a result, Rego and his Jesuit companion Padre Lucas Xavier had fallen out and split company; and the Jesuit was awaiting instructions in a nearby Carmelite mission.³⁶

Not many months later, the Carmelite missionary on the Japurá, Frei José de Paiva Real, complained to Governor Freire, and at Freire's suggestion to the King, about the outrageous procedures being followed by this same Padre Lucas (now reconciled with his cabo) and the tropa from Maranhão. Frei José asserted that before the tropa arrived he had been happily and successfully at work at work in his newly-established Aldeia do Japurá on the lower reaches of that river. There he had persuaded Indians of the Coruna, Jipiva and Popuri tribes to settle and become Christians, and with their help he was busily breaking down the resistance to resettlement of others still living on their own. The aldeia had grown to the point of having to be sub-divided into colonies distributed along the river, each with a chapel in which Frei Jose would teach the Faith, while at the same time "preparing them serve the King and help increase the royal revenues." But just at that point, the tropa from São Luis had appeared on the scene to wreck the whole enterprise. The slavers had established their base camp in the friar's very mission headquarters (presumably to take advantage of the manpower and the manioc gardens established there), and from then on had refused to budge.³⁷

Resgates, insisted Frei José, were intended to bring into the Christian fold savage Indians who had been tied up by their enemies and were in danger of being eaten. But Rego and Xavier had shown no hesitation in rounding up the people whom the missionary had already persuaded to come in and settle in his aldeia, subjecting themselves to its mission disciplines, and shipping them off to Maranhão as slaves. The result was that the remaining hangers-on at the mission had taken fright and withdrawn to the forests. When Paiva had protested this transgression, he had been subjected to such vile abuse by the Jesuit and cabo that he had thought his life in danger and felt obliged to travel down to Pará so as to register a complaint. In Frei José's opinion, the Jesuit intervention in central Amazonia was aimed not only at wiping out the Carmelite missions, but at

establishing trade connections with the Dutch or perhaps finding the age-old Indian source of gold (believed to lie somewhere far up the Japurá) to exploit for their own profit.³⁸ The missionary went on to ask permission to resettle the surviving Christian Indians of his flock at a spot near Paraguarí (Paravari) on the Solimões— "where they will be of better service to the Lord and to the King, and far enough removed from their home countries so as to be able to forget the barbarous rites to which they were previously accustomed." He also requested (vain hope!) that the slaves who had been taken from the Japurá to Maranhão be shipped back to their homes, so as to reassure their relatives that joining a mission aldeia was not tantamount to enslavement!³⁹

The occasion for a new "just war" presented itself on the Solimões in 1730 or 1731, when the Cayuvicena and Pariana Indians killed their Carmelite missionary Frei Mathias (Diniz) de Santo Ignácio and his two mestiço assistants at the mission of São Christóvão de Eviratuba (Imbirativa) or Maturá, near the mouth of the Rio Içá. The missionary's own harsh administration was said to have provoked this uprising: he had ordered the public flogging of the village chief and his wife for some misdemeanor, and then had the dishonored principal shipped off to Pará. When Governor Freire took the matter before the Junta das Missões, most of its members found the evidence against the Indians inconclusive. But the Governor sent out the tropa de guerra regardless, having accepted a bribe of ten thousand cruzados from one José Rodrigues da Fonseca (or Santarém) for his appointment as Cabo. The amount of this bribe reveals the true purpose of the tropa, since even had all the Indians involved in the missionary's murder or settled at Eviratuba been enslaved, their sale price would not have covered a tenth of the sum—leaving aside the costs of outfitting the tropa, paying the royal fifth, and the profits Fonseca and his men might reasonably expect from the enterprise. Appointment as cabo da tropa was seen, at least in Governor Freire's time, as a blanket authorization to capture and sell as many people as the tropa could lay hands on, whatever the circumstances.⁴⁰

On his way up to the Solimões, cabo Fonseca encountered a cacao collector who told him that the Cayuvicenas had by this time "pacified" themselves, and were already returning voluntarily to the settlement at Eviratuba; so he sent a messenger to ask the Governor what to do. Freire replied

that any Indians who had returned to the mission were exempt from punishment with captivity until a legal investigation could be made into the matter—but that "any other Indians of the sentenced tribes," whether or not they had had anything to do with the murder or for that matter with the Carmelite missions, were fair game so long as they remained in the forests. Fonseca proceeded to round up at least one canoe-load of slaves, who then managed to break loose as they were being brought down the river, kill their guards and escape along with the Indian crewmen who were transporting them.⁴¹ A few weeks later, the Carmelites in Pará prevailed upon the new Governor, José de Serra, to instruct this would-be large-scale slaver to suspend his hostilities against the Cayuvicena people altogether, until further inquiries could be made into the case. Fonseca was ordered to release any additional Cayuvicena captives, and to pull his men back to a position far to the east of Eviratuba and the nearby Rio Tonantins, from which his men would no longer be in a position to do the Cayuvicena harm.⁴²

In October of 1732, Cabo Fonseca was asked to check out a report that the Cayuvicenas had recently been "pacified" and resettled with a new Carmelite missionary. If proved untrue, he was to go ahead with the war as originally declared but adhere strictly to his regulations, since depriving Indians of their "God-given liberty" was a most serious matter of conscience and something justifiable only in extreme circumstances—a more important consideration, according to the still-inexperienced Governor Serra, than any material interest of the Royal Treasury.⁴³ But by the time this tentative go-ahead reached the luckless Fonseca, he and his entire tropa had fallen victim to the seasonal fevers of the Japurá valley; and nearly all of them, including Fonseca, all of his officers, most of his soldiers and a hundred and fifty Indian crewmen, were dead. The few surviving crewmen fled down the river as best they could, many dying along the way; and only a pitiable few of them finally made it to Pará. There the veterans continued to die, "wounded as by the plague." This disaster was so complete that there was no one left from the tropa who could account for what had become of the King's trade goods.⁴⁴ This expedition was perhaps the most resounding failure in the entire history of the Amazonian slave trade. Unfortunately for the inhabitants of the Solimões

and Negro valleys, however, its experience was altogether atypical. Most of the tropas de resgate and tropas de guerra sent into this region were only too effective in carrying out their project.

Independent enterprise was, as has been demonstrated, a major component of the slave trade both public and private, before and after the re-establishment of the tropas de resgate with their moralistic legalism and ostensible determination to bring the trade under government control. In practice, the private trade usually enjoyed the active support even of the royal authorities, who could always find a way to derive personal profit from it. We have as yet no basis, unfortunately, for estimating the portion of this genocidal trade which may be assigned to the public or private sectors in any period; nor can we do much more than guess at the total number of slaves who were transported to Pará in any period. Governor João da Maia de Gama boasted of having had some 3,370 captives brought down to meet the needs of the settlers during his six years in office (1722-28); and most of these must have been products of the government's war against the Manaos. But there is no doubt that a larger number of people were transported under private auspices during that period, or as the private property of the officers and soldiers of the tropas themselves.⁴⁵ Moreover, it is clear that both the official and unofficial tallies must have increased under the wide-open pro-slavery administration of his successor, Governor Alexandre de Souza Freire. Nothing we have seen in the documents for this period gives cause to doubt that a minimum of a thousand slaves a year were brought to Pará during the decade of the 1710s, as appears to have been the case before; and this "guesstimate" takes no account of the also incalculable but perhaps roughly equal numbers of people resettled in Pará and Maranhão by means of the Jesuit, Carmelite, Franciscan and Mercedarian "descimentos" that continued to be made from the upriver missions to these orders' aldeias in the lower valley. That something like this rate of forced recruitment was maintained after 1730, was due largely to the ruthless operation by the government of tropas de resgates, particularly on the Rio Negro.

The Era of the Tropa de Resgate

"Resgates" were the customary and only legal way of obtaining slaves by the second quarter of the 18th century—even, as we have seen, for the occasional trumped-up *tropa de guerra* in its off weeks.⁴⁶ *Tropas de resgate* were in action at virtually all times on the Negro, and frequently on the Solimões as well, between 1724 and 1750. Included in their ranks by that time were substantial numbers of private traders, who would acquire their slaves under the protection, and in principle according to the established procedures, of the government-sponsored slave-trading institution. By this time most tribal leaders of the Central Amazon who had ever been in touch with Paraenses had learned that the only reliable way to keep the white men from attacking and destroying their villages without warning, and carrying their people off into slavery, was to be prepared at any time to trade them slaves for the manufactured goods they generally brought with them. By the same token, they had learned that it was generally easier to obtain these valuable goods from the white men by trading for them than by raiding their settlements to steal them. This awareness had led the more adaptable and warlike peoples to make a specialty of raiding other tribes in order to obtain captives for the trade—which practice had in turn often driven the enemies of these peoples to take refuge in remote places. The slave-trading Indians, for their part, had fallen into a state of permanent dependence upon the white men as suppliers of the iron tools, cloth goods, distilled beverages and other outlandish productions without which by this time they could no longer imagine living.⁴⁷ The *tropa de resgate* was an institution developed to exploit this life-destroying situation in the most efficient and thoroughgoing way possible, and with the greatest possible benefit to the Portuguese colonial treasury.

Every *tropa de resgate* consisted in an experienced bush-captain or *cabo*, with a second-in-command *cabo* and one or more assistants (also known as *cabos* when in command of a canoe patrol split off from the main party),⁴⁸ a Jesuit missionary or two, a scrivener (*escrivão*), a quartermaster (*thezoureiro* or *almoxarife*), a number of mostly Paraense soldiers, some independent slave-traders attached to the *tropa* for protection, and a large number (often a hundred or more) of Indian levies serving as canoe crewmen, procurers and preparers of food, and military auxiliaries. The few European and the Paraense members of these expeditions were appointed in

Pará and paid salaries to be supplemented with a cut of the proceeds. They were provided there with supplies of food and trade goods by the Royal Treasury, which were often supplemented with goods put up as an investment by private individuals, who might or might not travel along with the tropa. They were then sent forth in one or more canoes with a skeleton crew of Indians from the aldeias devoted to the Royal Service. Before leaving, the cabo was expected to have each of his men go to confession and ask for Divine Guidance in their mission—making sure that they understood that they were expected to behave "like Christians" along the way, and to accept guidance in their work by the Jesuit chaplain of the tropa.⁴⁹

On their way to the Amazon, the members of a tropa were obliged to stop as any other canoe-crew would do at the Fortress of Gurupá to register, and to pick up additional supplies. Cabos were to make sure that they went nowhere without adequate supplies of food (basically farinha de mandioca, to be supplemented whenever feasible with fish and game brought in by the crew as they went); food for the crewmen was in principle supposed to be abundant, "as a token of respect for their work." The tropa was on the King's business, and for that reason all officers, Indian communal leaders, missionaries and others whom they might encounter along the way were expected (and required by law) to provide whatever the cabo might reasonably require in the way of supplementary supplies or of assistance of any kind. The privilege to requisition such supplies and assistance was easily and very commonly abused.

Cabos were provided by the Governor and the Jesuit Superior with letters to the (usually Jesuit) missionaries of aldeias on the lower Amazon, instructing the padres to provide the expedition with specified numbers of crewmen from their villages. Recruitment was to be done peaceably if possible. Otherwise, the cabos were instructed to round up the men they needed "in whatever way you see fit, doing your best to avoid unnecessary punishment," and employing violence only in moderation. The mission Indians could be assigned at will by the missionary to such extended terms of forced labor, on short notice and without consultation. But if the missionary proved unwilling to cooperate with the process, the men needed were simply kidnapped and forced into service. The crewmen in any event had no choice in the matter; they went like slaves to the

galleys. Often enough, in desperation, they would desert later on at some lonely spot along the river, leaving the cabo to recruit replacements at some other aldeia or mission outpost along the way. On the other hand, most crewmen served out their full terms with the expeditions they joined, and by and large even "worked with a will;" and there is some evidence that mission Indian men preferred this work with slaving expeditions (or in canoe crews traveling anywhere) to any other available in colonial Pará. The cabo provided the missionary at each man's home aldeia with receipt for the men he signed on; he himself kept a registry-book with the name, the contracted period of service and the place of origin of each crewman; and each missionary kept a record of the people he had out in service. Half of each man's wages for the fixed six-month period of service (that is, six *varas de pano*) were supposed to be deposited with the missionary before he left—a provision which was presumably fulfilled wherever the transaction was peaceable. Crewmen were then supposed to be returned to their home villages by the end of that contractual period; but in practice they were unlikely to see their families before the work of the tropa was done, if ever again.

Sometimes, when the scarcity of manpower in the down river aldeias was thought to be exceptionally critical, the cabos of royal expeditions to the sertão were instructed to recruit the bulk of their crewmen from the Mercedarian or Carmelite missions in the Central Amazon itself. This same practice was followed when an expedition lost considerable numbers of its crew to desertion or disease, despite the fact that the missions of the transfrontier were themselves always fragile entities and chronically shorthanded. Not surprisingly, this aspect of the normal conduct of the resgate system produced a considerable tension between the tropas de resgate and the missionaries resident in the sertão, on whom the tropas were frequently dependent for supplies and other services as well.

Every effort was supposed to be made to prevent the Indian crewmen and Paraenses in the expedition from disturbing the peace, and particularly from molesting the women, in any mission village they passed. To achieve this, the crewmen were often obliged to sleep in their canoes (on or under the wooden seats on which they had just done a hard day's rowing!) whenever the expedition was camped near a settlement. Cabos were expected to treat the missionaries they met with

deference, even veneration, and to support their work in any way they could, so as to help sustain both the lifeline of "outposts of civilization" in the sertão and the symbolic apparatus of Portuguese power. But when the missionaries made so bold as to resist the demands of an expedition in the royal service, and parties of armed men had to be sent into their villages to round up crewmen or supplies, it was impossible to guarantee the observance of these strictures. Generally speaking in its day-by-day relationship with settled communities of any kind, whether Christian missions and aldeias or the villages of their allies the slave-trading chiefs of the sertão, the *tropa de resgate* was as thoughtful and punctilious as a swarm of locusts.

Trying to "win friends and influence people" was nevertheless a normal and an important part of the work of a *tropa*, whose success insofar as it did not engage in the outright capturing of slaves was due entirely to the numbers of *principais* who could be persuaded to collect groups of captives for sale, and missionaries who could be gotten to provide men and supplies. This was especially true in the 1730s and 40s, when the chiefs who had traded with the first slavers on the Rio Negro were either dead or themselves living as slaves in Pará, if they had not withdrawn with their people to remote places from which they were watching the movements of the Portuguese with distrust. After 1730, the object of any parleys was to persuade these chiefs to move back to villages near the Negro and cooperate once more with the slavers. To bring this about, the *cabos* were authorized to lie to the distrustful chiefs, saying that their old enemies among the *Paraenses* had been punished by the King, and to offer them guarantees of Portuguese friendship and protection. *Cabos* were instructed to impose strict penalties on those found guilty of *assaltos* which might antagonize potential suppliers and trading partners (though it is clear from the repeated complaints of Jesuits and others that these regulations were not regularly enforced). On the other hand, if the *tropa* were attacked without provocation, it might defend itself and proceed to capture and enslave as many of the aggressors as possible on the day of combat. It was forbidden then to set out in pursuit of the same people in a spirit of vengeance, without first following due process and obtaining royal permission for a just war.

The cabo's first obligation was talk with the chiefs of any villages they visited. This formal *falla* with the chief, conducted through interpreters and when possible in the presence of the Jesuit chaplain, enabled him cabo to discover in the first place whether the Indians in question were a people established in permanent settlements who acknowledged the authority of chiefs, and who abjured both cannibalism and incest.⁵⁰ With peoples who did not fulfill these requirements it was impossible, from the Portuguese point of view, to engage in serious dealings of any kind; and in such cases the cabos were authorized by the law of 1718 to draw up a legal document attesting to the "barbarity" of the people in question, and then if possible proceed to round them up and ship them as slaves to Pará without further ceremony. As a practical matter, the *tropa* would usually wait until it had disposed of its trade goods in normal *resgates*; then, if it had enough canoes at its disposal to transport any additional people, the cabo would kidnap them from communities viewed as "savage," often in cooperation with the Jesuits so as to send the additional captives as a "descimento" to a down river *aldeia* be placed under missionary tutelage. Cabos in later years were especially encouraged to help bring about *descimentos*, whether in this fashion or by helping the Jesuits to locate communities "willing" to make the move to Pará, and providing them with gifts of trade goods to help persuade them to do so. There was, as will readily be understood, little distinction in practice between the various kinds of "persuasion" involved in bringing about these relocations of entire communities. As the acerbic Gov. Furtado put it in 1751, "descimentos are made today on almost the same basis as enslavements."⁵¹ If, on the other hand, the initial parley with their chief persuaded the cabo that a particular Indian community was suitable for civilized dealings with the slavers (and especially if they were well-enough organized and avid enough for trade goods to have slaves already captured and available for exchange), the cabo's job was to try and bind them in some kind of a formal alliance.

The "treaties" signed with these cooperating *principais* (sometimes the product of genuine man-to-man agreements, but perhaps more often drawn up in an atmosphere of fear and misunderstanding), were formal legal documents, signed by the cabo and missionary, and with an "X" by the chief as well. Sometimes they established the chiefs and their people as full-fledged

vassals of the Portuguese King, Indians who had agreed to serve the state and open themselves up to Christian teaching by a resident missionary. On other occasions, the chief made no other commitment than to serve as a friendly and equal partner in the slave trade. Those who allied themselves on either basis with Portugal were guaranteed in principle against any sort of violence perpetrated by the Paraenses, unless the Indians themselves made the mistake of initiating hostilities. In addition, those who accepted full vassal status were entitled to Portuguese military assistance against their enemies; but in return for that they were declared formally subject to Portuguese law, "and to the orders of Portuguese officers." An even greater risk for the Indian signatories derived from the fact that the Portuguese missionaries were expected to preach their version of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to both vassals and trading-partners: and from that day forward if any allied people were found guilty of interfering with the work of a missionary, they could be punished (after the appropriate formal inquiry and royal sentence) with a "just war" leading to the enslavement of all.

The Jesuit missionary in each tropa had the responsibility of supervising the distribution of the government's trade goods, though this work was actually handled on a day-to-day basis by the quartermaster of the tropa. In addition, he was to examine personally each slave acquired by the tropa to determine the "legitimacy" of his or her enslavement. Beyond that, the division of authority between missionary and cabo was not altogether clear, and this was occasionally the source of serious conflicts. According to regulations, the cabo was to work closely with the Jesuit and be guided by his wisdom in all matters concerning the resgates themselves and the interpretation of law. The Jesuit for his part was very much in need of the cabo as leader of his military escort, and as the man with the indispensable knowledge of how to survive in the sertão. The best relationships were those in which the missionary and the bush captain had agreed to work together beforehand, on the basis of a certain degree of mutual interest, respect and tolerance. In these case, presumably, each could be relied on to support the other's efforts to turn the work of the tropa to private (or in the Jesuit's case, to institutional) advantage.

Once they reached the Negro or Solimões, the *tropa* would proceed to a likely spot and set up permanent camp at an *arraial*, which was to serve as their base of operations for the duration of their stay. There a few of the Indian expeditionaries would generally be put to work clearing ground and planting roças. The site needed to be on high ground near the river bank, with a vantage point from which to keep a lookout for any approaching enemies and some open ground for building a stockade (*caiçara*) in which to keep the slaves while they waited to be taken to Pará. Nearby, there should be forests rich in game, and the best possible fisheries or shallow pools for hunting turtle and manatee. Sometimes, thanks to its productive roças and especially good location, the *arraial* might remain as a permanent community or even as a mission station after the slavers had withdrawn (the case at least at Paraguarí, originally "Caiçara" on the Solimões, and of Avidá on the Negro, and probably of several other settlements in the modern State of Amazonas as well).⁵² From the base camp, where the Jesuit chaplain and the quartermaster and scrivener were installed, the *cabo* would go forth or send out subalterns at the head of small *bandeiras* to visit the chiefs who were supposed to have slaves available for sale, or with whom there was other business such as shaping up a treaty of cooperation or trading for foodstuffs. The *bandeiras* might make their ways along rivers several hundreds of miles, or several weeks' journey, from the *arraial*. Each party carried weapons with which to defend themselves if the need arose, and a portion of trade goods which were parceled out sparingly by the quartermaster and had to be accounted for to the last fishhook on their return. These goods were to be exchanged for slaves where possible, or for food and services if necessary along the way.

Not every contemporary observer could agree with the foregoing formal characterization of a *tropa de resgate*, drawn on the basis primarily of governors' instructions to the *cabos da tropa*, and on the generally apologetic correspondence of Jesuit writers. For purposes of comparison, let us take note of the savage caricature penned in the early 1750s by the reformist Governor Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado: the *cabo da tropa* in his understanding of the institution was generally a bandit (*celerado*); his associates, men of "the same comportment"; his scrivener a man of "the same conscience." The gang of ruffians was then joined as a rule by a "so-called

missionary," a few ignorant soldiers, and "every base and loose-living fellow who could be found in this colony." This unsavory crew then established itself on one of the well-populated rivers and sent out small patrols to obtain slaves by either of two unscrupulous means:

by tempting the Indian chiefs with gifts of rum, beads and iron tools which they sometimes forced them to accept, so as to obliged them to make war on neighbors with whom they had previously lived in peace, and tie up whole families of captives. Only thus could they provide slaves in exchange for the bagatelles they had received; and if they did not bring in enough slaves to satisfy these unprincipled men, the chiefs and their families and followers would simply be rounded up and carried off to Pará.

Alternatively, the bandeira would

enter an Indian community under the banner of friendship so as to fool the people, and then turn on them, tie them all up and carry them off to the arraial, where the missionary would ask the necessary questions to establish the legitimacy of their enslavement.

Thus might the institution be described by a harsh critic. Furtado's contemporary the Jesuit João Daniel could later write, however, that "ambition" was apt to get the best of these slavers, and that in practice they would often force the cooperating chiefs to sell their own followers if necessary, or they would simply capture everyone in the village and take them to the arraial on the pretext that all had been captives waiting to be eaten. The limits on the numbers actually enslaved were therefore imposed not so much by the scrupulous observance of legal regulations, or by the amounts of trade goods available, or by the number of people available for exchange at any given time, but by how many the slavers were physically able to tie up and deliver!⁵³

No one was allowed to take leave of the *tropa de resgate* while it was on duty in the sertão. Those who tried to do so, whether Indians or Paraenses, were to be punished as the cabo saw fit. The same was true for those who traded for slaves behind the chaplain's back—that is, without benefit of his guidance as representative and interpreter of the King's law. In general, violations of every kind of discipline were dealt with in the 18th-century military fashion, with a liberal administration of floggings and clappings in irons. When crimes too serious for punishment by

these means were committed, the cabo was instructed to take testimonies for the prosecution, and forward them along with the chained miscreant for delivery to the authorities in Pará.

Once the slave-trading was underway, the quartermaster first distributed the trade goods supplied by the Royal Treasury, as long as they lasted; then he moved to those that had been provided by the cabo and other officers in the tropa (sometimes including the Jesuit himself!), as investments in the expedition; then to those of the soldiers, and finally to those of any licensed private parties who had attached themselves to the expedition for this purpose, or of any unusually enterprising members of the Indian crew itself. No one was to be allowed to trade for slaves in the sertão, without demonstrating to the cabo that he had sufficient canoes and victuals to transport and sustain all the people he bought during the long journey to Belém. This provision, designed to diminish the danger that the captives might die on the way from due to starvation and overcrowding, seems all too regularly to have been ignored. Disbursements of the King's goods could be made only on orders from the chaplain or cabo, and with a legal receipt drawn up by the scrivener. In general, the strictest accounting was to be made of all disbursements, so that the Governor might be provided with regular written reports from the field, and upon their return, with a final accounting of all transactions. Unfortunately, few such records have survived to help us with the work of reconstructing this trade. Trade goods other than those belonging to the King were handed out by their owners in the arraial, or perhaps also consigned to the quartermaster for safekeeping and orderly disbursement. But all slaves obtained by anyone or under whatever auspices were supposed to be registered and examined by the Jesuit chaplain on the same basis. Slaves were bought or captured, usually in ones and twos or small lots (but sometimes several dozen at a time) from many different villages spread over a wide region, and they were then tied up and brought back under guard to the base camp.

Back at the slavers' arraial, each new captive was subjected by the Jesuit to an elaborate ritual "examination" to determine the legal basis for his or her enslavement. The basic procedure had been laid down by António Vieira in the 1650s.⁵⁴ Each man, woman or child was brought before the chaplain by the officer in charge of the squad which had brought him in, in the presence of the cabo

and the scrivener. Working through an interpreter in most cases, the priest would inquire into the circumstances in which the Indian had become a slave in the first place, in principle to establish that he had been taken in a "just" or traditional inter-tribal war, rather than simply being captured to be sold to the Paraenses. The questioning then proceeded, according to Daniel, "with all the refinements and small points required by a business of such great import as that of the liberty, or the perpetual captivity, of a human being."⁵⁵ Informed observers with opposite views regarding the legitimacy of this process reported the impression that the captives were usually whipped before being brought into the arraial, and had often seen one of their number killed in the presence of the others, as a means of persuading them to answer the Jesuit's questions in the "right way." The cabo was apt, moreover, to stand behind the examiner looking sternly at the slaves to remind them what was expected of them. The chaplain was not unaware of these pressures; but he could not prevent them, and in any event, he had his own economic reasons for wanting to send every possible Indian on his or her way to Pará.

When the examiner was persuaded that a slave had in fact been taken forcibly by the soldiers of the tropa, or had been made captive "unjustly" by the chief who sold him or her to the tropa (and had therefore never been in any danger of being eaten!), he was to make note of this fact on the certificate so that the unfortunate victim might be shipped to Pará not as an ordinary slave, but as an *escravo de condição* (a semi-free person who could not be sold on the block, and was in principle obliged only to work for a period of five years to repay the cost of his resgate). In practice, such slaves generally served in perpetuity; the "condition" was conveniently understood in Pará to mean no more than that neither the slave nor any descendants could ever be sold. This restricted guarantee was itself then seldom observed, because the mechanisms for effective enforcement were lacking, and because the owners of slaves were often obliged to sell them out of financial necessity.

A Jesuit critic noted that

since no one ever concerns himself with these people again [my emphasis]
 those who buy them are free to resell them on the very day of purchase, if
 they so desire and can find a buyer,

and it was not uncommon for a slave (whether or not *de condição*) to have four or five owners in a single year! Azevedo adds that in the cases in which a certificate denying the legitimacy of an enslavement was drawn up, it was often conveniently lost in transit or mislaid in Pará, so that many people declared "forros" in the original examination at the arraial ended up in fact being denied the benefit of the doubt in Pará and held as slaves indefinitely. This was, moreover, the case with all those captured through the extra-legal private trade, who were generally not provided with registros of any sort and were sold in secret, or in collusion with bribed officials.⁵⁶

The examination nevertheless produced a formal legal document, drawn up by the scrivener according to a standard form, in which the Jesuit declared "*secundum allegata e probata*" the tribal origin, name, age, distinguishing marks and price of each captive, and whether he or she was "slave" or "free." If baptism had occurred, the Christian name assigned to the new subject of the Crown was also indicated. This document was signed by the priest and the cabo, copied into the registry-book of the Tropa, and then sent along with the officer charged with transporting the slave to Pará to serve as the basis for his or her disposition by officials of the Thezouraria dos Resgates and the Junta das Missões.

When the slaving expedition was a tropa de guerra, the purpose of this examination was simply to establish whether in fact the slave taken was a member of the specific tribe against which war had officially been declared.⁵⁷ A typical registro document read like this:

Guarynama, Manao chief, this year on the 8th of May sold a girl called Coeminao of the Movenominao nation, approximately seven years old with a black spot above the right breast. Seller said she was his slave captured in just war against his enemies, and the girl confessed this was true. Reverend Rather Missionary and Cabo da Tropa therefore certified her to be a slave, and she was bought on behalf of the Treasurer of the Tropa, Jose Ferreira Sampaio, for one satik skirt (*saya de chita*) and one spade (*ferro de cova*). Signed Joao Baptista de Azevedo (scribe). Rio Negro, Arraial de Sao Jose e Santa Anna, July 25, 1726. Jose de Souza (missionary), Severino de Faria (cabo), Braga. She is solemnly baptized Custodia. Godfather was Antonio Pereira. Rio Negro, Arraial de Sao Jose e Santa Anna, July 28, 1726. Jose de Souza.⁵⁸

Duly certified, the slave was placed in a compound with others brought in from various places, people of all ages, both genders and varying physical conditions, speaking a variety of languages, some of them from peoples which had recently been at war with one another; and they were kept there under heavy guard until such time as it was feasible and convenient to ship the lot down to Pará. This might mean waiting in confinement for periods of weeks or even months, living exposed to the elements and on very poor rations. Slaves who had been bought according to regulations and with the King's trade goods, and who were therefore destined for delivery to the Treasurer of the Resgates in Pará as slaves without qualification, might also be branded in the arraial for ready identification. Many people died in the *caicaras*; the official correspondence with the cabos de tropa frequently warned them against letting greed get the best of their judgment, and buying more people than they had the space to keep under guard or the food to keep healthy. In 1738, a Jesuit chaplain wrote to the Governor that he was sending along a mere seventy "pieces," but would be sending more if those he had in his corral were not so "skinny and broken-down" (*magras e desfeitas*) that he was afraid they'd die along the way.⁵⁹

People were shipped to Pará as soon as there were enough of them to fill an available canoe, and a small squad of soldiers with whom to send them. The cabos were expected to see to it that no one left the arraial with a load of slaves who had not loaded sufficient food to feed them on the way, and allowed enough space in the canoes for them to travel comfortably. The regulations strictly forbade shipping people "so jammed together and piled on one another that they expired from this cause." The official estimation (*arqueação*) of the carrying capacity of each canoe used for shipping slaves was supposed to be done by two men experienced in the business, with the results entered in the official book of registros. One such *termo de arqueação* referred to an *igaraté* (large canoe) which had been borrowed from a Carmelite missionary. The experts certified that this vessel measured seventy-five *palmos* in length by fifteen in width and five and a half in depth of the hold, and that it could therefore carry a hundred and fifty people under guard by four experienced soldiers "quite easily." The estimators had seen canoes of the same size loaded with three hundred people or more!⁶⁰

The death rate among slaves in transit to Pará reached shocking (and economically disastrous) proportions. Diogo Pinto da Gaya had once set out from the Solimões with over ninety captives and arrived in Belém with 32!⁶¹ The reasons are not difficult to establish: slaves were transported "*emtrancados*" (tied up in ingenious ways with lengths of pole, their arms behind them, so as to make it difficult for them to move); the canoes were usually overcrowded, and they were seldom given enough to eat:

Exposed to the elements during a month or two, immobilized, the miserable slaves suffered greatly to the point of death. In their lassitude they would reject the small rations of manioc which their torturers distributed among them. In the morning the canoes were inspected, and the dead were removed to be cast into the river.⁶²

Cabo Miguel de Sequeira Chaves boasted that once in 1722 when he had brought a group of "Magua" slaves from the Rio Japurá down to Gaya's *tropa* on the Solimões, some of them had pulled loose and attempted to escape by throwing themselves overboard, still tied to their *troncos*, but that he had managed to get them back aboard before they drowned.⁶³ During the night a few people might make good an escape by working loose and creeping away from a camp pitched on the riverbank, or letting themselves silently overboard and swimming ashore as the rest attempted to sleep in their canoes; but these people, lost and far from home, were as likely as not to die a bit later of sickness and exposure, alone in the forest.

The official slave trade was an important source of royal revenue in Pará, and as such it was subject to attempts at rigorous supervision. The law required that the legal registro for each slave be shown, and the slaves themselves counted and registered, at the official fortress check-points on the lower Amazon (Gurupá, and later Pauxís at the narrows just below the mouth of the Madeira as well). The temptation for a cabo bringing in a load of slaves simply to avoid these checkpoints by cruising down the opposite bank silently at night, or to bribe the officials there to let him by without a thorough inspection, was great indeed. If he succeeded in this, and managed to sell most or all of his slaves directly to the settlers, or to the religious orders on their estates, without having presented them to the authorities in Pará, he might make a very much greater profit for his pains.⁶⁴ But this

was a risky thing to do without the full cooperation of his cabo and missionary (and perhaps the scrivener) on the Negro—because when the tropa finally returned from the sertão, its registros were sure to be checked against those in the fortresses and those in Belém for any discrepancies.

Once landed in Pará, each shipment of slaves was delivered to the Governor, whose staff would verify the registros before handing the lot over to the Ouvidor, the Tezoureiro dos Resgates (special assistant to the Provedor da Fazenda for this purpose) and officials of the Câmara for repartição. If the registros were not in order, or if the slaves came from an illegal private shipment which had been sequestered, or if the cabo was in some kind of trouble with the authorities (such as having been jailed for the non-registration of his slaves at Gurupá), the disposition of the slaves was left to the Governor and Ouvidor. In these cases, the slaves were usually either expropriated outright by these functionaries for their own personal use and resale, or declared forros and sent to the Jesuit aldeias. There was pressure from all sides to hold the public sale of any shipment of captives as soon as possible, before too many of the miserable captives had died. But if they came in "unexamined," or if there were any serious doubts about the validity of the examinations performed in the arraial, the legal scruples would first have to be satisfied by the Junta das Missões—a process that might take several weeks, during which the slaves were generally confined in the military prison (corpo da guarda) in Pará.⁶⁵

People who bought slaves in whatever category of servitude were obliged to pay the "price of the resgates" (either a pro-rated share of the cost of the entire expedition, or in later years a standard 3\$000 per slave), which was a payment normally made in the conventional trade goods employed for resgates. These goods were deposited in the Treasury of the Resgates, to be used in outfitting the next tropa, or in providing the tools, clothing and farinha necessary to help the next missionary descimento from the sertão make it through their first year in "civilization."⁶⁶ In addition, the buyers paid much larger amounts which varied with the market demand for slaves and their physical condition—and which went directly to the owners (who might be members or fellow-travelers of the tropa, government officials or the Royal Treasury itself, all of whom normally got a "cut" of the slaves sent down by any tropa). Early in the century it had been established by royal

order that slaves captured in war were also to be sold in the public square, with deductions from the proceeds as follows: 1) to reimburse the Royal Treasury for its expenditure on the *tropa*; 2) to pay the quintos (in principle, a full fifth of the gross); 3) to provide the Governor-General with his *joya* (of unspecified amount). The remainder of the Treasury's share was to be divided among the officers and soldiers of the *tropa*.⁶⁷

The documents concerning the prices and conditions of sale of Indian slaves in colonial Pará are fragmentary and confusing. Just before the terrible smallpox epidemic of 1724-25, two hundred and twenty-six people sent down by Diogo Pinto da Gaya's *tropa* on the Solimões were sold for prices ranging between about 17\$000 (presumably children or the sick) and 34\$000, with the average price at about 28\$000. Not long afterwards, in the wake of the epidemic, the slaves sent by Belchior Mendes de Moraes from the Rio Negro were selling for as much as 60\$000. It is possible that this discrepancy reflects not only the increase in demand caused by the increased mortality among slaves, but also a difference between the prices for slaves sold on the block by royal officials in Belém, and those obtained illegally by private sellers on the settlers' estates themselves.⁶⁸

All Indians parceled out under whatever heading to the *moradores* were supposed to be listed in an official registry, which indicated to whom they had been delivered and whether or not they were to be thought of as perpetually and unconditionally enslaved. This book was supposed to be used by the Governor and Ouvidor for keeping track of the labor force and seeing to it that people were not abused in the terms of their servitude; the Bishop was also expected to use it to make sure that every new arrival received the benefits of some indoctrination into the Christian faith.⁶⁹ However, the real use of any such books, like that of their counterparts listing the *indios forros* resident in the mission *aldeias*, must rather have been to assist the Governor in recruiting forced labor for the Royal Service. There is no evidence so far that an effort was made at any time by the colonial government, to enforce its "labor law" in the work-places of Pará.

Having completed this rather "ideal-typical sketch of the *tropa de resgate* in its mature and fully institutionalized form, we may now return to the story of its operation during the years

following the elimination of the Manaos as a barrier to Paraense slave-trading beyond the rapids of the Rio Negro. The middle Negro valley of the mid-1730s was a very different place from the valley down to the time of Ajuricaba, and of João Paes do Amaral and Belchior Mendes de Moraes. There were now a great many fewer people living there than before; and there was now a rather more extensive chain of Carmelite missions, housing most of the native inhabitants who remained.

The Adaptation of the Manao Survivors

All observers agree that following the Manao-Mayapena War of the late 1720s, the middle reaches of the Negro were a severely depopulated area (as they continue to be to the present day). This was due in part to the ravages of war and of transportation into distant slavery, and in part to the hasty withdrawal of many Manaos and people of other tribes from the banks of the Negro. Entire communities removed themselves to locations far up the northern and southern tributaries of the black river, as distant as possible from the slave-raiding route along its the main course. The more remote of these new settlements may possibly have managed to avoid further contact with the Portuguese altogether, subsisting in somewhat reduced circumstances by dint of their own hunting, fishing and horticulture, and without the benefits of iron tools and other trade goods. Some of them functional (or at least were perceived by the Portuguese) as *mocambos* to which Indians from the Negro mission-stations might escape during the next two decades, whenever they became impatient with the labor system, or ran into other difficulties with the Carmelites and Paraenses. But however successful these modes of resistance might be, the Manaos and other peoples were widely dispersed by them, and had been forced to abandon a large portion of their aboriginal territory. By the 1760s, for example, there were said to be no Manaos at all along the Manaos' old Jurubaxi-Japurá trade route to the Solimões.⁷⁰

Within a very few years, however, most of the Manao survivors in particular seem to have been driven by declining numbers, fear of the Portuguese and the continuing need for trade goods to abandon their strategy of resistance and withdrawal. By 1740, great numbers of them had in fact attached themselves to the Carmelite missions on the Negro.⁷¹ There they tried to make themselves

useful to one group of Europeans and Paraenses, in return for protection against the other; and above all, they sought to reestablish a way of living which included the manufactured goods upon which they had come to depend. These Manaos now fished, farmed and gathered forest products under missionary supervision; and when the opportunity presented itself they went forth willingly to serve as crewmen, guides and military auxiliaries for the very Paraense slavers against whom they had so recently fought and died. Before long, parties of "loyal" Manaos were once again raiding and trading for slaves in the far reaches of the Negro basin and beyond, much as their fathers had done when first they learned to sell their neighbors to the Dutch. For example Chief Camandri, an associate of the Carmelite missionary Frei Mathias da Boaventura who had settled with his people in the mission headquarters village of Marivá (modern Barcelos) on the middle Negro, was hard at work in 1740 alongside cabo Francisco Xavier de Andrade, gathering slaves on the Rio Uaricoera in the upper Rio Branco valley. This accommodation provided opportunities for a few especially pragmatic or opportunistic Manao chiefs to prosper, and even to become leading figures in the evolving Indian-mestiço "society without government" of the Rio Negro region. At the same time, it may also have hastened the dissolution of the tribe by creating occasions for conflict between the collaborator-chiefs themselves over privilege and the division of spoils.⁷²

One of the more curious developments of this period, for which the documentary evidence is by no means clear, seems to have been the settlement of a group of Manaos at the private slave traders' base of Paraguarí on the Rio Solimões, near modern Tefé by the mouth of the Japurá, at the southern end of their old trade route. There is no indication in the sources of how the Manaos got there, or what function they performed; but it is a reasonable guess that they were assisting the Paraenses in their slaving operations up the then still-populous Japurá. But for several years from the late 1720s until at least the late 1740s, the location at Paraguarí was known locally as the "Aldea dos Manaos," or Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Manaos.⁷³

The pressure for an accommodation of this kind is eloquently illustrated by the case of a Chief Jacabary from the village of the middle Negro which the Portuguese called Castanheiro. In 1733, his village was one of the few remaining on that stretch of the river, and it had been greatly

reduced in population by a series of slavers' raids. Jacabary, determined to hold on to his territory and to his cultural autonomy as well, nevertheless refused an invitation from the Carmelites to bring all the survivors and settle in a mission station. By 1734, however, his village was

by now reduced to so miserable a state and so close to disappearing altogether, that this chief had no more than seventeen followers left, with their women and children ... this year he himself offered to come to the mission with his people—because he found himself so weak and persecuted that he had been obliged to hand over a son and daughter in exchange for his own freedom.⁷⁴

The Manao village of Avidá (Auacihidá) became a slaving arraial with a resident Jesuit "missionary" in the 1740s; and it was later joined to the Carmelite mission of Dary (itself named for the Christian Manao chief João José Dary). The mission of Cumarú was established by a Manao chief named Aduana, succeeded as principal there by his Christian son, Sebastião de Souza. The Manaos under Chief Camandrí, the above mentioned enterprising collaborator in the slave trade, were settled in the mission headquarters at Marivá, which came to be the largest settlement on the Negro with a population of some two thousand baptized individuals. But the greatest concentration of Manaos was at the mission of Bararoá under chiefs Cabacabarí and José Menezes Caboquena. There is some evidence that in these settlements the Manaos remained for a decade or two the dominant element in the ethnic mix of the missions, and that for a time, at least until the mid-1750s, their language (rather than the *lingua geral*) was the *de facto* lingua franca of the Rio Negro missions.⁷⁵

Having established themselves firmly within the latter-day mission and slaving systems of the Rio Negro region, the Manaos would prove as resistant as others to the unwelcome changes of the 1750s, when the new Pombaline government of Pará launched its effort to impose European governmental institutions and a more efficient system for the exploitation of Indian labor on the Negro. When that happened, the Manao chiefs of Dary and Bararoá led the revolt of 1757 in which the ex-Carmelite missions of those towns were destroyed, and a last futile effort was made to drive the Portuguese out of Northwest Amazonia altogether. Long after the suppression of that rebellion, visitors to the Negro valley would report that the *caboclos* on the river, mestiço descendants of

these Manao collaborators and of the Paraense transfrontiersmen of that era, retained a messianic belief that Chief Ajuricaba was still alive, and would return some day to lead them in revolt against the outlanders.⁷⁶ The myth was by that time a defense, not of Manao society per se, but of the composite society which had replaced it during the second quarter of the 18th century, and which the Manao surviros had contributed mightily to help build.

By the end of the colonial period, the few Manao survivors were virtually indistinguishable from the rest of the population of the Rio Negro settlements. Johan Spix learned during his visit to the region in 1820 that the Manaos and Barés had once been the most powerful tribes on the river, but that they were by then "almost entirely subjected" and had "disappeared in racial mixture with the white settlers.... Only with difficulty could one find an individual who spoke their language."⁷⁷

The Heyday of Official Slaving

In 1733, Governor Jose de Serra was informed by the Cámaras of the pressing shortage of slaves in Pará (following a several-year period of almost unrestricted public and private slaving!), and urged to do everything he could to reinstitute the annual tropas de resgate. The Junta das Missões agreed with this recommendation, but added that since the tropas alone could not themselves possibly fill the need, the Governor should grant full license to private parties so that they might trade "in the shadow" of each official slaving expedition. The Governor was convinced; and since he was new to the colony and felt incompetent to decide who should travel with the tropas, he put the Municipal Council of Belem in charge of distributing the licenses. But one thing gave Serra pause: everything he had heard about the operation of such tropas during the years before he arrived was downright scandalous. He had, in fact, been at pains since his first days in office to persuade such people as the notorious Belchior Mendes de Moraes and Gregório Rego to return from their flagellation of the sertão. The cause of these problems, concluded the Governor, was that these sertanistas and their ilk were half-savage native-born Paraenses. The solution was to appoint gentlemen as cabos de tropa!

Serra's choice to lead the first reformed *tropa resgates* to the sertão was, however, a veteran slaving-captain: Infantry Captain Diogo Pinto de Gaya, "a rich officer, responsible in his actions, who has a somewhat different sense of honor than the native-born, and therefore promises to give satisfaction." The old slaving-captain, wealthy from his despoiling of the middle Solimões less than a decade before, was dispatched soon after in the company of the Jesuit Manoel Miranda, to launch a new era in government-sponsored slaving on the Rio Negro. There is so far very little documentary evidence regarding what they accomplished there; but some success is attested by the fact that they managed to return quickly to Pará within a year of their departure—having caused no scandal nor given cause for complaint.⁷⁸ At a minimum, Gaya and Miranda appear to have completed in orderly fashion the process of the depopulation of the middle reaches of the Rio Negro begun by Amaral and Moraes—leaving no Indians there at all except those gathered in the few Carmelite missions. From their time forward, all slaving on the Negro was to be done in the upper reaches of the valley beyond its rapids, or around the headwaters of the Rio Branco and other tributaries.

The Paraenses, who had fought so long and destroyed so much in order to gain access to these remote slaving grounds, were for some reason not quick to exploit them. In 1736, a *tropa* from Pará under Christovão Ayres Botelho joined forces with a (Manao?) Principal Donarí (Donaire) from one of the Rio Negro missions; and they concentrated their efforts on slave trading up the Rio Branco. This was the pioneer effort at the systematic depopulation of that region, which was for several years thereafter to be one of the principle sources of manpower for Pará.⁷⁹ Beyond that brief note, there appears to be little documentary evidence for the operation of the official slave-trade in the mid-1730s. At least one *tropa* must have gone up, however, and failed to bring back enough slaves to pay for itself, because in 1737 the Treasury of the Resgates in São Luis do Maranhão was out of funds.

At that point, an energetic morador of Maranhão named Lourenço Belfort stepped forth with an offer to fit out a *tropa de resgates* at his own expense, and lead it in person to the Rio Negro. He had learned that a petition from the Câmara of São Luis for the organization of a *tropa*

had been denied because of the poverty of the Treasury; and unwilling to see his neighbors suffer any longer for the lack of manpower, decided to meet the need himself. Belfort was confident that with the proceeds of such an expedition he could repay his own out of pocket expenses, and at the same time replenishing the Treasury's revolving fund for the resgates; and he was willing to assume full responsibility for any losses. This proposal was accepted with alacrity by the Governor, and Lourenço Belfort and his men soon went forth to the sertão.⁸⁰

Early in 1739, cabo José Miguel Ayres replaced (or perhaps joined) cabo Belfort on the Negro, at the head now of a new expedition outfitted by the Treasurer of the Resgates in Belém. From that time until about 1750, the exploration and systematic depopulation of the Rio Branco and of the upper Rio Negro valley (with its tributaries the Vaupés, Ixié, Marié and others) proceeded without interruption.⁸¹ Ayres returned after a year to be replaced by his second-in-command, João da Cunha Correia; Correia was succeeded late in 1741 by Estácio Rodrigues, who remained in charge of the tropa until Lourenço Belfort returned once again in 1744. But the formal tropa de resgates remained on the Negro throughout this period, and with it a good many soldiers and crewmen, not to mention its missionary chaplain.⁸² Sometimes the cabo was from Belém and sometimes from São Luis; at any time he might be accompanied by individuals or smaller groups from Cameté, Vigia or elsewhere—all of whom were expected to do their trading under the supervision of the Jesuit missionary and cabo they found on duty when they arrived. Carmelite missionaries on the Negro were advised that this was all-important work in the King's service, and that the Governor expected them to provide all the "guides, pombeiros and village chiefs with their vassals" who might be needed by the cabos to carry on their business effectively. Each tropa was to trade its own supply of manufactured goods for slaves as expeditiously as possible, always in accordance with the royal regulations; and in addition it was expected to provide assistance to such (licensed) private slavers, and missionaries in search of people for descimentos, as might join them while they were there.⁸³

The Jesuit chaplain assigned to work with both Belfort and Ayres was a curiously principled individual by the name of Aquiles María Avogradri. Father Avogradri seems at the outset

to have been greatly disturbed by the moral implications of this work. He was not a seasoned Parensé priest, but an Italian who had come to the American tropics in 1726 with a vocation to save souls.⁸⁴ Cabo Belfort reported to Pará soon after they arrived on the Negro, that his chaplain was "reluctant to approve any resgates." The response of the Governor and the Jesuit Superior to this complaint was to write right away and remind Avogadri of his duty.

The Padre's instructions were to collaborate with the Cabo and his officers in every way possible in order to help make a success of the tropa, an expedition which, he was reminded, had been sent to the sertão at great expense by the Governor, with the full approval of the Junta das Missões and in fulfillment of the King's will. It would scarcely be appropriate that so great an enterprise come to naught for the lack of cooperation by its duly designated missionary chaplain. Any doubts that Father Avogadri might have while examining the "pieces" brought before him might be cleared up by simply sticking to the written regulations governing this trade, which were based upon the law and upon the poderations and consultations of other Jesuit slaving-chaplains over a period of several decades in this work. The priest was not to express disapproval of the procedures even in conversation with the men of the tropa; and he was to keep in mind at all times the essential justice of his mission: "the problem of conscience is altogether as great if you judge slaves to be free, as it would be if you judged free persons to be slaves."⁸⁵

These admonitions had their desired effect on the conscientious Avogadri. Within a few weeks, the once recalcitrant chaplain was hard at work drawing up certifications of legitimate enslavement; and he could even write to the Governor that he was concerned not only with the success of the tropa, but with serving the Lord in this capacity. There was, he had concluded, no conflict at all between the Divine interest and that of the settlers and the State:

what greater service to God than pleasing men by rescuing savages from the horrible captivity of their inhuman, or better their diabolical enemies ... continually wandering in their forests in defiance of human nature?

The captives would of course spend the rest of their lives as slaves in Pará; but as Catholics they would enjoy the truer liberty of being children of God. Avogadri was at pains to point out that he

had no personal economic interest in the resgate business, and therefore had nothing to do on the Negro except work as hard as he could for the glory of God and the success of the *tropa de resgates*. In time, he became the most successful and perhaps least scrupulous slaving-chaplain of them all. He remained with the successive *tropas* on the Negro for some fourteen years, until the abolition of the trade sent him into retirement (with a large descimento from the Negro!) at the Jesuits' great *aldeia* of Mortigura—where he remained until the expulsion of the Jesuits from Pará in 1757.⁸⁶

Bandeiras sent out from the *tropas* in this period would of course exchange trade goods for slaves if they found any for sale; but by now they were just as likely to scour the country for people too weak and scattered to defend themselves against being captured. In 1740, a party from Belfort's *tropa* under Francisco Xavier de Andrade, the nephew of Belchior Mendes de Moraes, was sent far up the Rio Branco to explore and depopulate its western tributary the Uaricoera. The group included several Paraenses, an old Rio Branco explorer named Francisco Ferreira, and at least half a dozen Manao chiefs from the Rio Negro missions, in addition to dozens of crewmen recruited on the Negro as well as in Pará. It was rather larger than the ordinary *bandeira de resgates*. On an island near the rapids of the lower Uaricoera, they established a small *arraial* of their own from which Andrade sent parties up through the lush savannas along the banks of the river, in search of people to capture from the Uapixana, Macuxi and Sapara tribes. These patrols traveled for nearly two months by canoe and on foot, until they passed beyond the savanna country and into the forests where the headwaters of the Uaricoera ran near those of other rivers tributary to the Negro. They returned only when they began to fall ill from the seasonal fevers; but the documents unfortunately do not tell us how successful they were in capturing slaves! Not long afterwards, another *bandeira* was sent to the Branco by José Miguel Ayres, which was joined there by a separate group that had come up from Cameté for the purpose; and between the three of them they may have extracted as many as a thousand slaves from the Branco valley in that single year.⁸⁷

The most celebrated accomplishment of the *tropa de resgate* on the Negro in those years was the discovery in 1744, in the course of scouring the upper reaches of the valley, of the

Cassiquiare canal which connects the Negro and Orinoco basins. This connection had the been the object of speculation by mapmakers for some time previously; but the Spanish Jesuit missionaries on the Orinoco had determined that it could not exist. In 1744, cabo Francisco Xavier de Moraes (brother of Belchior, and a veteran of slaving on the Negro since the 1720s) led a bandeira across the Cassiquiare-Rio Caura route to the Orinoco without being obliged so much as to disembark and carry their canoes over a short portage. There they met the Superior of the Spanish Jesuit missions, Padre Manuel Roman, and persuaded him to accompany them back to the arraial of Nossa Senhora do Avidá, across from the mission of Santo António do Castelinho some forty-eight leagues below the rapids of the Negro. Again, and characteristically, the records provide us with no information with regard to any slaving the explorers may have done along the way!⁸⁸

A rare report to the Governor from cabo Belfort gives us some sense of the week-to-week activity of a tropa de resgates in this later period. The trip up the river from Pará had taken his party more than two months' time, with the usual delays and controversies over the recruitment of crewmen from the down river Jesuit aldeias. As they approached the Rio Negro, Belfort had gone ahead of the main party in a small canoe to avoid arriving at the Carmelite missions en masse, which in the circumstances was certain to frighten people and cause them to hide both themselves and their provisions. Reaching the missions in mid-February of 1738, he found the Indians (many of them Manaos) more than ready and willing to cooperate with the tropa de resgates. By the time the main party arrived in late March, therefore, they had the arraial well-established, with canoes caulked and outfitted, ready to send forth with three bandeiras. The three groups left almost immediately, bearing "two hundred and eight resgates on the King's account, and about as many belonging to the missionary [that is, the then still-doubtful P. Avogadri!] and members of the tropa," and all three were led by men with long experience in slaving along the Negro.

While Lourenço Belfort was setting up camp at the arraial, his men had captured a canoe sent to the sertão by three moradores of Pará which was returning down the river with sixty-two illegally acquired "pieces" or Indian slaves. The canoe and slaves had been confiscated, and left under guard by three soldiers at the mission of Santo Angelo do Dary. The missionary there, Frei

João Caldeira, had apparently been in cahoots with the illegal slavers, however—because as soon as Belfort was gone, he had persuaded the soldiers to leave the canoe so as to help put down an imaginary riot in the town. Then, while the soldiers were distracted, the wily cabo of the arrested canoe had simply moved off downstream; and that was the last that Belfort's men had seen of them. Belfort wrote of all this to the Governor, in the hopes that he could keep these slavers from selling their illicit cargo in Pará.

Not long afterward, a morador from Cameté arrived at Belfort's arraial, saying that he had come to collect a debt owed to him in the mission of Bararoá, and asking permission to stay for a few days to repair his canoe. The permission was granted; but a few days later, the visitor left and went to the "roças of some Indians, where they say he killed four people, burned their houses, and captured eight whom he tied up and carried off down the river." Belfort did not learn of the crime until a week later, when the criminal was long gone from the Negro; and he could find no one able to provide the eye-witness testimonies required for legal proceedings against this morador. Another individual from Pará, visiting on the Negro with dubious purpose, had had the foresight to persuade the Ouvidor in Pará to appoint him "advocate of the dead and missing" for that region. This man had arrived accompanied by his own scrivener and notary, apparently intending to register any slaves he could acquire on his own account.⁸⁹

Finally, Belfort reported, his second-in-command Bento Tenreiro had gone up to the rapids of the Negro to establish a supply-base for the bandeiras which might pass by there carrying slaves. The rapids were about half-way between the arraial and the place where at that time the resgates were supposed to be done on the upper Negro; and in this way, the cabo hoped to avoid the "many deaths caused by hunger in the pieces coming down from that region, due to the absence of surplus food supplies for sale anywhere above the arraial." The tropa was doing its work as rapidly as possible, and the cabo hoped to return to Pará within the year as per his instructions. The only problem to date, reported Belfort, had been the serious shortage of farinha on the upper Negro—something which he trusted the Governor would attempt to remedy by sending a supply-canoe at the earliest possible date.⁹⁰

When supplies of any kind ran short, there was no help for it but to send for them to Pará. Virtually every kind of merchandise (even fresh fish and farinha) was chronically scarce in the underpopulated villages along the hungry Rio Negro. The Carmelites could occasionally supply some food and cloth or hardware; but by and large they themselves were hard-put to keep the essential goods and staples in stock. Supply canoes would set out from the capital every few months while the tropa was in the sertão (at least once a year, in the autumn sailing-season, but sometimes more often in response to demand), bearing merchandise such as the following: farinha by the dozens of paneiros; rolls of cotton or linen cloth; salt; paper; items of luxury clothing for trade (shirts, skirts, capes, elegant hats, pantaloons and the like); axes, knives, cutlasses, hatchets, needles, fishhooks; cases of ordinary agoardente for the crewmen, and of fine (or even imported) agoardente for the privileged; dried meat, oil, wine, vinegar, sugar, sweets and tobacco for the officers' table; wine, boxes of communion wafers, pounds of white candle-wax and perhaps a portable altar for the chaplain's ritual; sometimes an extra canoe, or a large sail with which to propel one. Or the lading might be less specific, of "a variety of goods to make up 140 resgates," to be selected from whatever merchandise the Thezoureiro dos Resgates had on hand. The order to send such a canoe came from the Governor; it was stocked by the Treasurer, and manned like any other—by crewmen recruited under duress in the down river aldeias. In later years, there is some evidence that such crewmen were normally paid wages by the Treasury—either on the Negro itself, or when they returned to Pará with a payload of slaves.⁹¹

One reason for the continual sending of supply canoes was that there was some difficulty in keeping track of the King's trade goods in the sertão. Despite all the requirements for careful accounting, they might sometimes be lost or embezzled. Perhaps even more of a problem was the fact that, because of the custom of distributing them to the cooperating village chiefs in advance of the deliveries of slaves, there was always a backlog of accounts receivable. When cabo João da Cunha Correia returned to Pará in 1741, he left a great many trade goods in the hands of these chiefs in payment for slaves not yet delivered; and at the same time, there were apparently accounts still unsettled which dated from earlier tropas as well. The new cabo was instructed accordingly to

take special care to "collect on all the resgates still owed to the Royal Treasury," by whatever means seemed necessary—always following the guidance of Chaplain Avogadri. When these accounts were all settled, the *tropa* would at last be able to return to Pará.⁹²

Alongside their regular activities as slavers, the *tropas* of this later era were expected to do what they could to continue with the voluntary descimento of entire communities to the mission settlements in Pará. In practice, this operation seems to have been conducted in a manner that was not much different from the resgates themselves: at a minimum it involved dickering with friendly chiefs, laying out payments in trade goods and eventually transporting large groups of people down the river under guard. The move was apparently somewhat less involuntary on the Indians' part; but in the absence of any detailed report on the conduct of a particular descimento, it is difficult to bring the distinctions into focus. Perhaps the main difference from the point of view of the Indians involved was that in a descimento they were relocated as an entire community, and entered upon the new life in Pará speaking their own language for a time, and maintaining to some degree their own customs in the company of relatives and friends. In 1741, Cabo Estácio Rodrigues was instructed to proceed with a descimento of Banibas from the upper Negro to the Jesuit aldeia of Mortigura in Pará. The people in question had been persuaded (*praticados*) to make the move by a Captain Francisco da Costa Pinto, who had traveled up to do this work at his own expense (that is, by means of trade goods which he had provided on his own account). Pinto had then come down river to persuade the Junta das Missões to authorize the transportation of these people from a spot near the slavers' arraial on the Rio Negro to the village where they might be of most use to the Royal Service. Rodrigues was now instructed to have them sent to Mortigura as soon as possible once he returned to the Negro, in canoes well-supplied with food according to instructions to be obtained from Padre Avogadri, and that he was to have these people guarded by people who would treat the Indians well and "avoid any escapes during the journey."⁹³

That same year, a chief Francisco from somewhere on the Rio Negro appeared in (or was brought to?) Pará, "to offer himself and a village of his relatives as vassals of His Majesty." The Governor instructed the Provedor da Fazenda to provide him with a suit of clothes, and proceed

with the arrangements. A few years later, the same premium together with a staff (*bastão*) of office was given to a Chief Manoel who had brought a group of people from his native Rio Japurá to settle at the Fortress of Pauxis. Not long afterward, after the last official slaving expedition had been withdrawn from the Negro, the Commander at Pauxis reported that a Chief Mamandá there, who had likewise been appointed Principal by Governor Furtado, was offering to bring in a group of his relatives from the Negro. This collaborator asked in return that the commander send a soldier from the fort along to accompany him, and that he provide him with a "new weapon, powder, shot and tobacco—which is what is customarily given to these chiefs in their own countries, to persuade them to come down." At the same time, it is worth noting, other Indians were deserting the royal service at Pauxis, and withdrawing to places of refuge on the Rio Negro and the Rio Anibá.⁹⁴

Detailed information about Indian slaving on the Solimões and Japurá during this period, whether official or otherwise, is likewise exceedingly scarce. In 1740, one Pedro Antônio of Pará petitioned the Governor with the curious complaint that he had traveled to the Amazon the year before with government license, and that while collecting cacao there he had been attached by Cabo Jerónimo Peixoto to his *tropa de resgates* bound for the Japurá. Once there, Peixoto had left the group because of certain difficulties, and had returned to Pará leaving Antônio in command of the operation. The petitioner reported that he had continued exchanging trade goods for slaves as instructed, but that in the absence of a missionary chaplain he had found himself accumulating "unexamined pieces" who could not legally be shipped to Pará. He therefore requested an exemption which would allow him to transport the slaves directly for examination by the Junta das Missões, which the Governor willingly provided. Condamine was told in 1743 that the tribes of the Japurá were all warlike cannibals, and that for this reason no Europeans frequented that river other than "some Portuguese of Pará who go there under false pretenses to buy slaves." A Carmelite mission visitor in the late 1740s reported annual expeditions up the Japurá and other northern tributaries of the Solimões, in search of cacao, cravo, vanilla and slaves.⁹⁵

Decline of the Official Slave Trade

Late in the 1740s the system of *tropas de resgate* los favor in Lisbon—whether because of news about the atrocities regularly perpetrated under its aegis, or because it had proven chronically unsuccessful as a means of raising the royal revenues, is uncertain. In 1747, when the King learned that a Paraense named António dos Santos Aula had gone up the Negro to "rescue" slaves with no more than an authorization from the Junta das Missões (which agency had no authorization to grant such licenses), he instructed the new Governor Francisco Gurjão to withdraw the *tropa* on the Negro "which had been in the sertão for years in violation of royal decrees," for once and for all. The Governor ignored this order, and sent a last expedition to the Rio Branco under José Miguel Ayres in 1748. In the following year, the King wrote again to forbid Gurjão from continuing these *tropas de resgate*: "You are not to permit these enslavements, or descimentos carried out by the public authority—whatever the Junta das Missões may say about the matter." By this time, the confusion of the official *tropas de resgates* and the private slave trade was so complete that it seemed to the royal government that, far from preventing the private and illegal trades, the *tropas* had served to encourage them by providing them with a legitimate institutional context—and that the only way to put an end to all of these abuses was to abolish the *tropa* system altogether. Instead, thought the King at this point, the Governor ought perhaps to see to the establishment of more missions in those remote places. This was the beginning of the end for the official slave-trade, and for legal Indian slavery itself in Pará. But like any other well-established pattern in human relations, the century-old system would prove difficult to eradicate altogether.⁹⁶

From the point of view of the settlers of Pará and Maranhão, it was a singularly bad time for the royal government to be trying to put an end to the trade in Indian slaves. The last half of the decade of the 1740s was precisely the period of the highest death rate from epidemic disease (a terrible outbreak of the smallpox, followed closely by another of the measles) in the entire history of the colony. In 1751, after Governor F. X. M. Furtado had arrived with clear instructions and a strong determination to do away with the system of Indian slavery altogether, and replace it with new and more efficient forms for the exploitation of Indian labor, the *moradores* were still petitioning as in the old days, for permission to travel up the river in search of desperately-need

"pieces" from the sertão.⁹⁷ As late as 1754, Gov. Furtado was advising the King not to grant such petitions from private parties, "because in this country it is the custom to use the term descimento to refer to what is really no more than a rounding up of Indians," and because the determination of the terms of people's servitude should never be left up to those who would profit from any abuses.⁹⁸

Notes

¹Gross, p. 67, citing ms. AHU Cod. 268, f. 161; Manoel de Seixas-King (Pará, 13 jun & 16 jul 1719), ms. AHU Para Cx 4. The Jesuit Seixas believed that if it were not for the settlers' excesses in exploiting Indian manpower, Pará could be made a populous and prosperous territory by means of the descimento alone. The Amazonian Indians, he pointed out, were not convinced idolaters such as were to be found in other Portuguese colonial territories; and they were ingenuous enough to believe whatever "com mediocres razões se lhes propõe;" so it was quite a feasible project, he maintained, for the Jesuits to make them into a docile labor force of Christians and vassals of the King.

²Azevedo, Jesuitas, pp. 190-192. Soon after the law of 1688 had been handed down, the king had been obliged to deny the Governor, Ouvidor and Provedor da Fazenda the permission they had requested to be allowed to maintain the privately employed gangs of Indian crewmen in the sertão, whom they had dedicated to slaving and other activities for indefinite periods. King-Gov. Carvalho (Lx, 17 feb 1691), in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 102-03 (no. 55). At about the same time, he reminded them that it was their duty to distribute the few available *índios resgatados* equitably among all of the settlers of Pará and Maranhão, rather than keeping them for the service exclusively of their friends and themselves. Kiemen, Indian Policy, p. 173. The Livro Grosso is full of vain instructions that the laws of 1686 and 1688 be obeyed, and even of dire threats of punishment for those who violated them. But in practice the King was virtually helpless in the area of law enforcement in faraway Pará; and in 1691 he went so far as to grant a general pardon to violators of the law of 1688, having been informed that already they were "too numerous to punish," Alvará of 6 feb 1691, cited in Pinto-King (Pará, 20 aug 1702), ms. AHU Pará Cx 4. Victoriano Pimentel noted in 1704 that no matter who did the actual slave-taking, it was well-known in Pará that Indians "só se repartem entre os grandes, Governadores, ministros e oficiais da Câmara, com evidente prejuízo dos mais humildes." Cited in Wermers "Estabelecimento," p. 550n.

³Azevedo, Jesuitas, p. 191; King-Gov. Pará (Lx, 23 sep 1705 & 15 jul 1706), in Livro Grosso 66, pp. 263-64 & 284; Kiemen, Indian Policy, p. 175, citing a document of 26 may 1723 (which I have not seen) in the AHU Maranhão Caixa series. According to this source, Jesuit-led tropas brought 19 Indians to Pará in 1691; 87 in 1692; 310 in 1693 and then none until 1702. Thereafter, there were occasional Jesuit-led tropas until 1714, and then none again until 1724. At some point, the King is reported actually to have told the Jesuits (in direct contradiction of the law of 1688) that their resgate expeditions need not be made annually, or at any particular time of year-but only when convenient and when necessary, "for the good of souls or of the aldeias." In 1701, on the other hand, the King informed the Carmelites and others that undertaking resgates and descimentos was an obligatory function of all missionaries. King-Junta das Missões (Salvaterra, 3 feb 1701), in Regimento e Leys Sobre as Missões do Estado do Maranhão (Lx, 1724), printed work sewn into Evora Cod. CXV/2-12, ff. 154-56. The Crown, though perhaps genuinely concerned with the legal and moral issues raised by the slave trade, was also impatient with the cost of the system of legal resgates. In 1703, the King reprimanded the Jesuits for dragging out unduly the process of the examination of slaves for "legitimacy." King-Jesuit Superior of Para (Lx, 6 may 1703), in Livro Grosso 66, pp. 250-51. To cut costs and expedite the trade, he then authorized the missionaries of the districts in which tropas de resgates operated (that is, by the early 18th century the Carmelites and Mercedarians primarily) to draw up the required certifications of legitimate enslavement. Then, since the matter was one of "tanto escrupulo," the King decided that the slaves should be reexamined by the Junta das Missões in Pará, which would decide whether they had been properly enslaved or should be sent to the "free" aldeias. King-Gov. (Lx, 15 jun 1706), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, p. 25. The Carmelite Pimentel noted that non-Jesuit missionaries were often not qualified by training and intellect for the delicate work of "examination." Wermers, "Estabelecimento," p. 550n.

⁴King-Gov. Moura (Lx, 30 oct 1702), in Livro Grosso 66, p. 223 (also in Anais BAPP 1, p. 119 & Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, p. 23); King-Ouvidor (Lx, 6 may 1703), in

Livro Grosso 66, p. 249. The King recalled that the law of 1688 governing resgates had been issued specifically to prevent the kind of wholesale slaving which would result from returning the administration of the Indian slave trade to unsupervised settler enterprise.

⁵Azevedo, Jesuitas, p. 192. In 1730, the Jesuit superior wrote that confiscated illegally-captured slaves were seldom in fact given to the padres for their aldeias. The law itself was contradictory in this regard: the same Alvara of 6 feb 1691 which provided for that disposition also allowed the Governor to give some of the confiscated slaves to the *denunciante* or to the officers who had made the arrest, and others to the Thezouraria dos Resgates, "to serve for life as free men," on the quite unenforceable condition that they never be resold by their new owners. (A close reading of these royal decrees make it clear that officials in Lisbon frequently confused the status of the aldeia Indians with that of the independent "free" laborers of the colony, since both were legally obliged to serve the settlers for wages at any time and during whatever periods seemed necessary to the authorities). Jesuit Superior Lopes once proposed that illegal slavers be paid the cash value of any confiscated slaves, so that the people themselves might be remanded to Jesuit care. Lopes-King (Para, 16 sep 1730), ms. AHU Para Cx 6; cf. Gross, p. 84.

⁶King-Gov. Carvalho (Lx, 15 nov 1700), in Livro Grosso 66, p. 199.

⁷Anon. (Jesuit), "Informatio de Maranonensis missionis statu anno 1701" from the Propaganda Fide archive in Rome, Cod. America Meridionale I, ff. 518v-528v, which I have not seen but of which Wermers publishes extensive excerpts in "Estabelecimento," pp. 528-30. This is a scathing criticism of the labor system of Para, written in considerably less measured terms than were customary in the Jesuit reports written in Portuguese to be forwarded to the Royal Government. Cf. the complaint of Samuel Fritz that the Indians of the Solimões islands suffered terrible "vexations and cruelties" at the hands of the Portuguese cacao-collectors "for not wishing to hand over to them their captives and to carry on war with those of the mainland." Journal, pp. 89-90.

⁸Manoel de Seixas-King (Para, 13 jun & 16 jul 1719), ms. AHU Para Cx 4; FXMF-Pombal (Pará, 21 nov 1751), in Mendonça, Amazonia I, pp. 63-78; Baena, Compêndio, pp. 148-49; Manoel da Fonseca-King (Pará, 10 sep 1736), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3.

⁹Conselho Ultramarino, Consulta (Lx, 12 jun 1709), ms. AHU Para Cx 3; King-Ouvidor (Lx, 18 nov 1709), in Livro Grosso 67, p. 63. The King instructed the refractory officials of Cameta to send any guilty parties to Para for judgment, as a means of preventing "tao horriveis delictos"; King-Ouvidor (Lx, 17 feb 1730), in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 243-44, commenting on the Ouvidor's *devassa* into *crimes do sertão* conducted during 1729.

¹⁰King-Ouvidor (Lx, 6 may 1703), in Livro Grosso 66, p. 249, in which he says that he has seen the Ouvidor's recent report on illegal resgates, and instructs him to punish the guilty parties quickly. Later, he authorized punishment for illegal slavers even without the full-fledged legal inquiry. King-Ouvidor (Lx, 5 jun 1706), in Ibid., p. 281. In 1710, he ordered the Ouvidor to have those guilty of "vexações e roubos que se fizerão aos indios pelos brancos" captured and punished, and obliged to repay the Indians what they took from them (a very unusual stipulation), King-Ouvidor (Lx, 9 jul 1710), in Livro Grosso 67, p. 79. People might in principle be punished for these crimes at any time up to twenty years after the fact. For examples of the granting of open-ended permission to moradores for bringing in people from the sertão see Livro Grosso 67, pp. 33, 118-20, 123-24 & 217. One request in 1708 was to buy these people from among those the "chiefs who customarily sell to the tropas de resgate." Nevertheless, the King piously instructed the moradores that these people should be treated as "free laborers" once they got to Pará.

¹¹According to an Alvará of 1691, in cases of "crimes do sertão" half the expropriated goods (including slaves) were to go to the informer, and half to the Royal Treasury. But most such expropriations in practice resulted not from *denúncias* but from *devassas* by the Ouvidor. In these cases, the King ordered that the whole sum should go to the Thezouraria dos Resgates. King, Alvara (Lx, 4 jul 1710), in Livro Grosso 67, p. 74.

¹²King-Ouvidor (Lx, 12 oct & 20 oct 1707 and 10 apr 1709), in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 11, 15 and 44. King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 9 apr 1708, 27 aug 1709 & 2 jul 1710), in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 26, 61 & 69. No explicit connection between Braga's service on the Guatumã and his ultimate acquittal is made in these sources.

¹³Lopes-King (Pará, 16 sep 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 6; Gross, p. 84, citing King-Ouvidor (Lx, 24 sep 1705), ms. AHU Cod. 268, f. 203.

¹⁴King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 22 aug 1716) in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 150-51 (also in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 140-41); & King-Ouvidor (Lx, 22 aug 1716), in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 141-42.

¹⁵Conselho Ultramarino, Consulta (Lx, 24 nov 1711), ms. AHU Cod. 274, ff 211v-212. The Council had asked Gov. Freire for an opinion about this; and the governor had replied that although not all "*pretos*" were guilty, the devassas into "crimes do sertão" showed that many had indeed committed violent assaults on Indian villages, "mau trato que dão aos indios remeiros e pouco respeito que tem aos missionários." Moreover, since they were becoming numerous in the colony there was some danger that "as in the Palmares of Pernambuco" they might one day rise up against the settlers. The mamelucos of Pará he saw as less troublesome, because they were natives of the country and familiar with its ways. It must be observed here that the documents do not provide any basis for this contemporary charge against non-white cabos de tropa. A great many cabos de canoa in Pará in all periods were mamelucos; some presumably were blacks or mulattos; many were white; and in the course of the century with which we are concerned here, a great many atrocities were in fact perpetrated. But in most cases, the racial background of the specific cabo is not indicated in the sources.

¹⁶Câmara-King (Pará, 28 feb & 18 jul 1705), ms. AHU Para Cx 3. Cf. Pimentel in Wermers, "Estabelecimento," p. 550n. In addition, the *vereadores* requested a seat on the Junta das Missões, which had gotten into the habit of making important decisions concerning the administration of the Indian population without consulting them. The King would not allow them a seat on the missionary Junta, but did order that the Câmara be consulted both in the granting of licenses for cacao collection and the sending-out of tropas de resgate. King-Gov. Maranhão (Lx, 5 dec 1705), in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 123-24 (no. 81); Conselho Ultramarino, Consulta (Lx, 24 nov 1711), ms. AHU Cod. 274, ff. 211v-12. The settlers' interest was so well served by Freire that they lobbied later on to have him reappointed for a second term. Azevedo, Jesuitas, p. 193. It was Freire who complained to the King about the excessive zeal of an Ouvidor who was threatening to punish canoe-owners for their cabos' mistreatment of the Indians (note 14 above); but the same Governor had earlier asked the King whether "crimes of the sertão" such as "matando-se a muitos indios queimádo-lhes e roubádo-lhes as aldeias" ought not to be punishable by death. The King had found that suggestion excessive, urging instead that such crimes be prosecuted like any others. King-Freire (Lx, 20 aug 1710), in Livro Grosso 67, p. 86. Gov. Alexandre de Sousa Freire in the late 1720s was also particularly lax about allowing "undesirable" individuals to travel to the sertão as cabos de canoa for illegal slaving in his own or the moradores' service—and as a result he was also very highly thought of by the settlers. Jesuits of Maranhão-King (1729), ms AHU Pará Cx 3. Cf. Lopes-Freire (Pará, 16 sep 1729), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 160-160v.

¹⁷Câmara -King (Belém, 22 jul 1720) and Fonseca, Residencia (Belém, 21 may 1720), both ms. AHU Pará Cx 4.

¹⁸King-Gov.-elect Berredo (Lx, 3 mar 1718), in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 155-57; King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 9 mar 1718), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 28-29. Azevedo, Jesuitas, p. 198, explains that this law was the royal response to a *requerimento* of 1713 in which the Governor and Câmaras had asked that tropas de resgate be restored on the terms of the law of 1688, and the Jesuits be required once more to do their duty by the slave trade. The Jesuits had added at that time (shortly before withdrawing altogether from the resgate business in 1714) a request that they too be authorized to make slaves of any "wild" Indians who refused peaceful descimento—and that all the Indians brought by the tropas should be

settled in aldeias rather than distributed as slaves among the moradores! In other words, the Jesuits were then willing to continue cooperating with the resgates, but only in return for a free hand in determining who should be enslaved, and complete control of the Indian labor force once it was settled in Pará and Maranhão. Azevedo does not indicate a documentary source for this description of Jesuit policy.

¹⁹King-Berredo (Lx, 25 sep 1718), in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 162-63. The King remonstrates with the Governor for having consulted before even putting the law into practice. The Governor is expected to obey any royal order; and he is to commence settling people in the aldeias near Belém and the royal fortresses forthwith, so that they can be civilized and come to be of use to the settlers and the State. In effect, what Berredo had done was refer the whole matter of seeking a basis for the legitimization of the slave trade to Lisbon once again, and for an indefinite period of time. Oliveira Martins, João da Maia da Gama I, pp. 46-48; Azevedo, Jesuitas, p. 199.

²⁰King-Freire (Lx 22 aug 1722), in Anais BAPP 1, pp. 150-51; Fonseca-King (Belém, 23 jul 1720), ms. AHU Para Cx 4. The Ouvidor had obtained his data from the *escrivão da fazenda* in Pará, with whom such petitions and the Governor's determination of each had to be recorded. The same Caixa contains several petitions from moradores for the confirmation of illegal acquisitions of Indian slaves which were directed to the King during the same period as well. Jose Sanctos de Brito claimed in 1720 that several years before the King had granted him 80 "slave pieces" to be brought in at his cost by the tropas de resgates for use in his sugar mill. The tropas had then been discontinued, and all Brito had gotten was one woman. He was asking for permission to send after these slaves on his own account. Another supplicant wanted 200 indios resgatados and another 200 forros from the aldeias for his *engenho*. He had planted a lot of cane but was unable to grind it "*por lhe terem morrido e fugido muitos escravos*." Gov. Berredo was of the opinion that although the slaves in question might well be obtainable, the indios de repartição Brito was requesting were simply not available.

²¹Freire, Alvarás (Belém, 15 oct - 5 dec 1728), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 45v-69v. Several additional authorizations of the same sort were issued by the King during the same year (see for example, Livro Grosso 67, pp. 222-23 & Anais BAPP 2, pp. 228-229, for another 200 people to two individuals). King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 29 oct 1727) had at the same time authorized the Carmelite Vice-Provincial and the Mercedarian Comissário to obtain 400 slaves apiece by the resgate process or by descimento for the estates of their convents in Pará and Maranhão. Anais BAPP 2, pp. 198-99. Alternatively, (and perhaps more commonly, although only one document confirming the practice has so far come to light), a settler might be granted "preference" in the purchase [from the Royal Treasury] of either African or Indian slaves, [if and when they came on the market]. King-Gov. Gama (Lx, 14 jul 1727), in Anais BAPP 2, pp. 185-86.

²²King-Gov. Serra (Lx, 16 feb 1734), in Anais BAPP 6, pp. 228-29. Not long before, in response to a petition from two nuns resident in a convent in Lisbon, the King had authorized the transportation of fifty Indians to their sugar estate in Pará as replacements for those who had been killed during a recent smallpox epidemic. Barata, "Apontamentos," citing royal letter of 11 mar 1733.

²³King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 23 jan 1712), in Livro Grosso 67, pp. 116-17). The trade goods required for either tropas de resgate or descimentos were supplied out of the Thezouraria dos Resgates; and official willingness to disburse from this fund was always conditioned by the prospects for increasing loyal revenues with the new manpower; Fonseca-King (Belem, 22 may 1720), ms. AHU Para Cx 4. Of the 94 "peças" corralled in 1713, five had been given to a private individual in Cameté for having advanced supplies to the tropa; four had gone as gratification to the Treasurer of the Resgates. The remaining 85 had then to be sold by the Treasury at the unusually high price of 17\$285 a head simply to cover costs. The royal government had, moreover, been denied the 3\$000 per slave in taxes that were supposed to accrue from such sales, because the slaves in question had lacked the certificate

of legitimate enslavement which was supposed to be provided by the Jesuit chaplain of the tropa!

²⁴King-Berredo (Lx, 11 jan 1721), in *Livro Grosso* 67, p. 177 (also in *Anais BAPP* 1, pp. 176-77). Cf. King-Berredo (Lx, 13 may 1721) in *Ibid.*, p. 181; King-Pinto (Lx, 10 dec 1721), in *Ibid.*, p. 183.

²⁵Pinto-King (Pará, 21 aug 1722), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3. There is no suggestion as to where the improbable Christian slave-traders might be recruited—but neither Pinto nor the king could have been under any illusion that they were actually available in Para! King-Gov. Gama (Lx, 25 mar 1722), in *Anais BAPP* 1, pp. 198-99. The moradores accused of misbehavior in Pinto's devassa (unreassured by his earnest advocacy before the King of their economic interest and their humane concern for the welfare of the Indians who served them), concluded that the whole inquiry and the subsequent arrival of the Jesuit-loving Gov. João da Maia da Gama to succeed their man Berredo, were part of a Jesuit plot against the settlers' interest (which indeed they apparently were!). It was at this time that the most serious anti-Jesuit campaign since 1661 emerged, pressed by the Câmara of Pará under the leadership of Berredo's ex-secretary Paulo da Silva Nunes (Berredo himself having remained in Pará for many months after Gama's arrival, working in the state archives to complete his now classic history of the colony from its founding to 1718). Nunes had earlier written a lengthy treatise advocating unrestricted Indian slavery, in which he had characterized the indigenous population of the country as "bárbaros escuálidos, ferinos e abjectíssimos, a feras em tudo semelhantes, excepto na effigie humana." Gov. Gama soon had him arrested (thereby perhaps preventing an armed revolt); but Nunes ended up as the representative of the Câmara of Pará in Lisbon, where he joined Berredo in a spirited campaign against Gama and the Jesuits. Oliveira Martins, *João da Maia da Gama I*, pp. 47-68. The anti-Jesuit arguments did not fall on deaf ears. In 1728, the King informed Gov. Alexandre de Sousa Freire that he had learned from the "procurador dos povos desse Estado" [Nunes] that the reason they were so desperately poor and paid so few taxes was that they had been deprived of the manpower they needed to cultivate their estates. The Governor was to redouble his efforts to bring in these people from the sertão, and to register them in books so that the Bishop might distribute them equitably among the settlers according to need. The Indians were, of course, to be assigned to their employers for finite periods, though these were no longer specified by the King. The repartidores would decide these periods of service, "atentos as forcas, idade, prestimo e capacidade dos ditos indios, e tambem a utilidade das pessoas com quem se repartirem," and make sure that they were fed and clothed adequately, and paid the conventional wages. King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 13 apr 1728), in Nabuco *Limites I Mem Bres Ann I*, p. 49.

²⁶E.g. the above mentioned canoe under Severino de Passos which had brought 32 slaves from the "Mavua" tribe of the Japura in 1718 or 1719. Fonseca-King (Belem, 23 jul 1720), ms. AHU Para Cx 4.

²⁷King-Vigário do Carmo (Lx, 6 oct 1716), in *Livro Grosso* 67, pp. 145-46. Noronha informs us that Andrade's mission was at "Curubityba," a league above the "canal de Macoapani" near the mouth of the Juruá, and that its Juma & "Achouari" inhabitants killed the friar while he was attempting to move them to a new settlement at the mouth of Lake Cupacá. "Roteiro," p. 54. Amazonas notes that the latter site (not indicated on modern maps) was still known locally as "Cupacá-tapera" in 1852. *Dicionário*, p. 101. Cf. Leite *HCBJ* 3, p. 416n; and Prat, *Notas* I, p. 291 (which gives the date 22 dec 1720 for Andrade's death) & II, p. 31. The "Jumas" here are Fritz's "Chama" and the ferocious "Iuma" of Pimentel's account. But the second of the tribes sentenced to enslavement is more difficult to identify, since the "Achouari" of Noronha and Amazonas do not appear in the few available documents from the period of the war itself, which speak of "Maguazes," "Maguas" and "a nascão o Magua," the same people as the "Mavua" raided by Severino dos Passos on the Japurá (see note 28 above). The Omagua of the upper Solimões were usually called Cambeba in Portuguese sources; and they lived far above the mouths of the Japurá

and Juruá. These "Magua" were said to be allies of a people known as "Maragua;" and it is tempting to identify these two as Fritz's Aisuare and their friends the Yurimaguas, some remnants of whom were presumably still living in this very region in 1720. But Fritz himself confuses the issue considerably with his poignant remark that Cupacá was an *Omagua* settlement to which the people whom he calls "Chamas" were being moved against their will when they killed António de Andrade, and that a "tropa having gone there to chastize them, they drowned among others Pedro Taicorema, son of Payoreva, who was the first child that I baptized when I began to missionize the Omaguas in 1685." *Journal*, p. 130. Noronha then adds to the confusion by asserting that after the destruction of Cupacá, some of its Aisuare survivors were resettled at Tefé. "Roteiro," p. 54. The solution to this puzzle may lie in the fact that by 1720 all of the Carmelite missions on the Solimões were populated by survivors of the aboriginal várzea tribes who had been gathered into Fritz's missions (Aisuare, Ibanoma and some Omagua and Yurimagua as well), together with occasional recruits from the terra firme peoples such as the Juma.

²⁸Junta das Missões, Termos (Belém, 13 aug 1722; 3 jan 1723 and 7 mar 1723), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 168v-170, 178v-179 and 181v-182; Conselho Ultramarino, Nomeação de Pessoas (Lx, 25 apr 1722), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8 (service record of Miguel de Sequeira Chaves).

²⁹Junta das Missões, Termos (Belém, 14 jan and 7 mar 1723) ms. BAPP 907, ff. 179v-180 and 181v-82. Gaya, Certidão (Pará, 3 sep 1726), ms. AHU Para Cx 5 (annex to Gama-King, 13 sep 1726). Cf. King-Gama (Lx, 27 oct 1727), in *Anais BAPP 2*, pp. 196-198. For having carried out his slaving with so little consideration for the royal interest, the *ajudante* arriving with slaves from the Japurá was arrested and thrown in the *corpo de guarda* (hoosegow) until the matter could be investigated. Gov. Gama, Portaria (Belém, 8 aug 1724), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 88v-89. Despite the success of this *tropa de guerra*, Gaya apparently neglected to pay his Indian crewmen for their more than three years' service on the Solimoes! The men protested, and after some years the King authorized the Governor to pay them out of the Royal Treasury, because these "miserable Indians" were too poor to take Gaya to court and (perhaps more important) because the "pieces" consigned to the Treasury had been more than sufficient to cover the expenses of this *tropa de resgate* and pay the royal quinto—with some money left over even for dividing among the soldiers. Neglecting to pay the wages of the Indian crewmen of a *tropa de guerra* was apparently a common practice (they were, after all, subject to being drafted at any time and for any period in the royal service). In 1732, those of the Jesuit aldeias were still waiting for 11,000 *varas de pano* from Belchor Mendes de Moraes, who had employed them in his *tropa* fighting the Mayapenas on the Rio Negro in 1729 (see Chapter 8), and more still from other cabos who had employed them for other duty on the Solimões and Madeira. Vidigal-Carvalho (Para, 4 oct 1732), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 369-70.

³⁰Gama-King (Belem, 26 sep 1727), in Nabuco, *Limites I Mem Bres Ann I*, pp. 36-38.

³¹Azevedo, *Jesuítas*, p. 209. The decision was supported by the Governor, and later approved by the King.

³²Gama, Portaria a João Paes do Amaral (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112. The Governor's instructions allowed Amaral to buy slaves with the government's *resgates* so long as they were captives waiting to be eaten, or to be sold to foreign powers, who had not been taken only for purpose of being sold, and who did not object to being bought [!!] once it had been explained to them that this was the only way of saving their lives. Within these limits, the *tropa* might buy slaves from anyone who wanted to sell them, except for the Manao against whom they were going to be fighting the war!

³³Provedor da Fazenda Tavera-King (Belém, 10 sep 1725), ms. AHU Para 2nd ser Cx 1. Among the people enslaved by Moraes' men were the following, registered at Gurupá as early as August, 1724: twenty-eight women (here called "negras"—a term used frequently in place of "indios" or "gentio" in the documents of this period), eight girls, seven boys and four men sent by the cabo himself. In addition, twenty-five "pecas" and one "escravo de condição" sent by his assistant, Sgt. João Abate; ten regular slaves and one de condição by

soldier João da Silva; two slaves by soldier Rafael Soares; and one by the "indio *jacumauba*" (that is, by the helmsmen or most skilled and experienced Indian crew member of Moraes canoe)! Gov. Gama, Portaria (? , ? ago 1724), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 88-88v. The fact that these slaves were registered at Gurupá suggests that they were probably among those legally sold by the Treasury. In the same period, fifty-four slaves were delivered to the Treasury by cabos Antonio Barboza and Damaso Travaços, who had gone with the *tropa de resgates* under Tomas Teixeira to collect slaves on the Madeira. These were sold by the Provedor to settlers at São Luis. Pereira, Certidão & Provedor Machado-King (São Luis, 27 jun 1724), both ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser Cx 1. Illegal slaving by members of the official *tropas* was not at all uncommon. Cabo de canoa Mathias de Espíndolas from the *tropa* on the Negro was bringing in twenty-six "pieces" on the sly when he was arrested on the river by the Sgt.-Major of Pará in 1730. King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 30 apr 1731), in Anais BAPP 4 (1905), p. 81.

³⁴Gama, Portaria a J. P. Amaral (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112.

³⁵Jose Lopes, S. J.-King (Belem, 8 oct 1729), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 109-114.

³⁶Lopes-King (Belem, 16 sep 1730), ms. AHU Para Cx 6. Leite confirms that P. Lucas Xavier was with a *tropa* on the Japura in 1731—so the chaplain and the cabo were apparently soon reconciled. HCJB 3, p. 418n.

³⁷Paiva, Representação (1732), ms. AHU Pará Cx 6, and a similar but not identical text in Anais BAPP 6 (1907), pp. 134-37.

³⁸Ibid. This diatribe may be understood in the context of Gov. Freire's own bitter hostility to the Jesuit influence in Pará, and of the anti-Jesuit campaign (a forerunner of their expulsion during the administration of the Marques de Pombal), then being carried out by Paulo da Silva Nunes (see note 27 above).

³⁹King-Gov. Serra (Lx, 21 apr 1732), in Anais BAPP 6 (1907), p. 133. The King's response was to ask his new Governor, José de Serra, to look into the scandal and take the necessary steps.

⁴⁰Noronha, "Roteiro," p. 57, which places the old aldeia of the Cayuvicenas between the "riachos Maturá and Maturá-cupacá" near the mouth of the Rio Içá; Jesuit Superior Vidigal-Jacinto de Carvalho (Pará, 4 oct 1732), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 369-70. An official inquiry also concluded that the missionary had given considerable cause, "como confissão os seus mesmos religiosos." Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8. Vidigal's letter makes it clear that the Governor was given the ten thousand cruzados in advance as his *joya* or cut of the slaves to be brought back from the Solimões, in return for his authorization to authorize this *tropa* at government expense. In addition to the Governor's ten, desembargador Santos found that the aspiring slaver had paid four thousand cruzados to a servant and a friend of the Governor and a Carmelite missionary, who had served as intermediaries for this deal. The shady transaction came to naught as far as the Governor was concerned, since his successor José de Serra arrived in Pará unexpectedly not long after Fonseca had left for the sertão. Serra obliged Freire to forfeit the ten thousand cruzados; but the war against the Cayuvicenas went forward nevertheless.

⁴¹Fonseca, Petição with Freire's *despacho* (Belém, 18 may 1732), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 155v-156; José Lopes-Jacinto de Carvalho (Pará, 23 sep 1733), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 385-87v.

⁴²Serra, Portaria (Pará, 12 aug 1732, ms. BAPP 907, ff. 158-58v. The governor later maintained that the suspension of hostilities had resulted from the "intrigues" of the Carmelites, presumably concerned to protect their Upper Solimões missions from being obliterated as their stations on the Negro had recently been. Serra-King (Belém, 24 sep 1733), ms. AHU Pará, Cx 7.

⁴³Serra-Fonseca (Belem, 10 oct 1732), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 160-161.

⁴⁴Serra-King (Belém, 24 sep 1733), ms. AHU Pará Cx 7; Lopes-Carvalho (Pará, 23 sep 1733), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 385-87v. The main stream of the Solimões was by and large a benign locale in colonial times for expeditions from Perú or Pará; but as the

records of the Border Demarcation Expeditions of the 1780s reveal, the death rate from disease for canoe expeditions venturing along the Japurá or any of the southern tributaries could be extraordinarily high—particularly in the low-water season when pools were stagnating in the forest.

⁴⁵Oliveira Martins, *João da Maia da Gama* 2, pp. 49-53, Azevedo, *Jesuitas*, p. 208.

⁴⁶Gov. Gama had João Paes do Amaral keep separate accounts for the munitions and trade goods assigned

to his *tropa de guerra* and those for his *tropa de resgates* (both involving the same men living in the same *arraial*), and these supplies went up to the Negro in separate canoes for each body. Portaria (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112.

⁴⁷Cf. Fritz' observation that the mechanism worked even among Indians subject to Portuguese "sovereignty." The traders got what they wanted by "offering them iron implements or other commodities, and compelling them with threats to carry on war with other savage tribes so as to obtain slaves to give them." *Journal*, p. 49.

⁴⁸In case the principal *cabo* died or became incapacitated, the line of succession was clearly laid out in writing to avoid unseemly squabbles between subalterns in the *sertão*. Gov. Castelbranco, Ordem (Pará, 28 mar 1739), ms. BAPP 985, no. 149.

⁴⁹This general discussion of the operations of a *tropa de resgate* is based on a variety of direct and indirect references in the contemporary record, and in particular on three sets of detailed instructions to *cabos de tropa*: Gov. Gama to João Paes do Amaral (São Luis, 14 mar 1725), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 101v-112; Gov. Castelbranco to Lourenço Belfort (Belém, 3 dec 1737), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3; & Gov. Castelbranco to José Miguel Ayres (Belém, 31 dec 1738), ms. BAPP 1023, ff. 60-63v, as well as on two descriptive appraisals of the work of the *tropas*: João Daniel, S. J., *Thesouro descoberto* I (Rio, 1976), pp. 229-33 [2nda Parte cap. 8]; and FXMF-Pombal (Pará, 10 nov 1752), in Mendonça, *Amazonia* 1, pp. 290-92.

Other sources are indicated as appropriate.

⁵⁰The standard form in the instructions was that the *cabo* was to ascertain "se vivem em forma de república, e se estragão e não guardão as leis da natureza e se não fazem diferença de mãe a filha e se usão mal dellas sem diferença e se comem carne humana e se são aldeados ou do corso."

⁵¹FXMF-Pombal (Pará, 10 nov 1752) in Mendonça, *Amazonia* 1, p. 292.

⁵²For the origins of Paraguarí (Paravari), see Amazonas, *Dicionário*, p. 137. The founder was perhaps an early slaver on the Japurá named Eucherio (or Eugenio) Ribeiro. A. C. F. Reis, *Paulistas na Amazonia e outros ensaios*, p. 278; and H. do Amazonas, p. 62.

⁵³FXMF-Pombal (Pará, 8 nov 1752), in Mendonça, *Amazonia* 1, pp. 290-92. As an indication of the fraudulence of the legitimation procedure, Furtado enclosed with his letter what purported to be a blank form signed by chaplain J. M. Avogadri of the Rio Negro *tropa*, on which the *cabo* could certify the legitimacy of anyone he chose! Cf. Daniel, *Thesouro* I, p. 231.

⁵⁴Kiemen, *Indian Policy*, p. 102, refers to an ms. memorandum, "Modo de examinar os índios captivos" in Evora, which I have not seen.

⁵⁵*Thesouro* I, p. 230.

⁵⁶José Lopes-King (Pará, 16 sep 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 6; Azevedo, *Jesuits*, pp. 286-87. For the story of one such slave and her subsequent effort to have herself declared a free person through the legal process in Pará, see D. G. Sweet, "Francisca: Indian Slave," in D. G. Sweet and G. B. Nash (eds.) *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America* (Berkeley, 1981), pp. 274-91.

⁵⁷Cf. Barata, "Apontamentos," p. 207.

⁵⁸Original pub. in J. F. Lisboa, *Obras* 4, p. 729. Daniel says that the price of a slave was "um, ou dous machados, algumas facas, velorios e semelhantes coisas." Cf. the registo of Maxuaru, a 12-year old Maquiritare girl drawn up on the Negro in 1746, in Robin Wright, "Indian Slavery in the Northwest Amazon, 1745-1747," unpub. ms. 1990.

⁵⁹FXMF-King (Pará, 16 nov 1752), in Anais BAPP 2, pp. 7-9. Cf. Azevedo, Jesuítas, p. 288; Avogadri-Castelbranco (Arraial de N.S. do Carmo e Santa Anna, 30 jun 1738), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3.

⁶⁰Mendonça et al., Termo (Arraial de N.S. do Carmo, 31 may 1738), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3.

⁶¹Junta das Missões, Termo (Belém, 7 mar 1723), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 181v-182. See also Appendix F for a more representative picture of losses in transit from that same tropa.

⁶²Azevedo, pp. 193-94.

⁶³Conselho Ultramarino, Nomeação de Pessoas (Lx, 25 apr 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8.

⁶⁴Gov. Freire, Bando (Belém, 12 mar 1732), ms. BAPP 907, ff. 153-53v. Here the governor complains of "muitos descaminhos" in tax payments on the sale of slaves from the tropa dos resgates. The cabos who do this in the future will forfeit all their "pieces" and be prosecuted for defrauding the Treasury. Cf. Daniel, Thesouro I, pp. 231-32 and Azevedo, Jesuítas pp. 195-96.

⁶⁵The twenty-six Rio Negro slaves confiscated from cabo Mathias de Espíndola in 1730 (see note 33 above) were impounded at Gurupá. There four of them died before the rest could be handed over to the Procurador dos Índios in Belém. According to the Regimento das Missões, such people were to be placed in the Jesuit aldeias de repartição as índios forros; but the Governor had Captain-Major Marreiros give them to the Procurador instead; and this official placed the people in the corpo da guarda pending a decision by the Junta. But the Junta was not in session at the time, and since the Indians were dying in the calaboose, although the Jesuits had asked for them, Marreiros delivered the survivors to one Manoel de Goes who offered to "care for them" in his home until the Governor could return from Maranhão and convene the Junta. Goes gave Marreiros a receipt for the people; but when the time came to return them, he had a document drawn up which certified that since some had died and the rest had escaped, there was no one to return. The Jesuit position on this question was that "os fizerão mortos e fugidos, por estarmos em uma terra onde cada hum prova quanto quer, conforme a sua boa ou má consciencia." King-Freire (Lx, 30 abr 1731); Lopes-Freire (Pará, 17m aug 1732); Marreiros-Freire (Pará, 30 sep 1730), all in Anais BAPP 4 (1905), pp. 81-84.

⁶⁶Gov. Gama boasted that at 3\$000 a head, the some 3,700 slaves he had caused to be brought in and sold in Pará had provided the Thezouraria dos Resgates with over 11,000\$000 (eleven contos de reis). Tetemunha (Lx, 22 & 28 feb 1730), ms. Evora Cod. CXV/2-12, ff. 2212v-222. Several orders issued by Gov. Castelbranco instruct the Thezoureiro to provide this material assistance to descimentos in the new settlement area of Macapá, e.g. that of 16 nov 1744, ms. BAPP 985, no. 536. The Thezouraria was also apparently charged with paying the annual *ordinária* or royal subsidies in trade goods to the missionaries. Daniel, Thesouro I, p. 230. Cf. Lopes-King (Pará, 16 sep 1730), ms. AHU Pará Cx 6. In 1734, the King reprimanded Treasury officials for obliging the moradores to pay for slaves in cacao rather than trade goods, and then engaging in illegal profiteering in the cacao before restoring the trade goods for the Treasury. King-Gov. Serra (Lx, 30 mar 1734), in Anais BAPP 7 (1910):243-44.

⁶⁷Santos-King (Pará, 1 jun 1735), ms. AHU Pará Cx 8, which makes reference to the original alvará but does not provide its date. The joyas may have been an even more significant factor in the working of the trade than is suggested in this sketch. The Jesuit critic Vidigal pointed out that in "just wars" such as that against the Manaos, the slavers themselves made little profit because "peças de guerra vem magros, e ou morrem ou fogem ficando [the slavers] sem dinheiro e sem escravos, e só utilizados dos que tem joyas e as vendem." Vidigal-Carvalho (Pará, 4 oct 1732), ms. BNL Fundo Geral 4517, ff. 369-70.

⁶⁸Annex to Gov. Gama-King (Belém, 13 sep 1726), ms. AHU Pará Cx 5; Provedor da Fazenda Tavera-King (Belém, 10 sep 1725), ms. AHU Pará 2nd ser Cx 1.

⁶⁹King-Gov. Freire (Lx, 24 abr 1728), in Livro Grosso 67, p. 224 (also in Anais BAPP 2, pp. 230-31); King-Junta das Missões (Lx, 22 feb 1729), in Anais BAPP 3, pp. 316-17.

These registry books, of which none appear to have survived, would be an incomparable source for the demographic history of the colony.

⁷⁰Noronha, "Roteiro," p. 70. Metraux, "Tribes of the Rio Negro Basin," in HSAI 3, pp. 864-67.

⁷¹Anon., "Relação dos rios que desaguam no rio Negro" (1755), in Mendonça, Amazonia 2, pp. 683-90, relates that the Manaos, once numerous along the Rio "Arara," had been all but "extinguished" except for those residing in the missions.

⁷²Sampaio, "Auto de justificação" (Barcelos, 19 apr 1775), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, p. 107; Joyce, intro. to Caderno, p. 14; Condamine learned of this pattern of adaptation through a young girl from Santa Maria de Bararuma on the Orinoco, captured and sold by Manao raiders, whom he met in Pará in the early 1740s. Relación abreviada, pp. 77 & 81-82. That the Manaos had been begun raiding for slaves as far afield as the Orinoco long before their defeat on the Negro is suggested by Gumilla, writing in 1741, who reports having known an Indian at the mission of Guanapara on the Rio Meta, who said that as a young man he had been captured and held as a slave at the "ciudad de Manoa y Enaguas." Historia natural, civil y geográfica (Barcelona, 1791) I, pp. 349-50. In 1751, a Dutch trading factor on the upper Essequibo river reported that the "Maganout" were on the war-path once again, hunting Indians in that region, and that they had gone so far as to kill a Dutch trader there. Commander-S.I. Co. (Essequibo, 10 jun 1751), in Nabuco, Limites II Mem Bres Ann III, p. 123.

⁷³Freire [Relação rendas n.d.], ms. AHU Pará Cx 3; Anon. Cálculo [1735?], ms. Evora Cod. CXF/2-13, ff. 270-79; Souza-King (Pará, 15 nov 1751), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser. Cx 2.

⁷⁴Boaventura-Serra (Pará, 10 agug 1734), ms. AHU Pará 2nd Ser. Cx 1. In this particular case, the missionary Boaventura brought the surviving villages down to Pará as a "peaceful descimento," rather than settling them in missions on the Negro. There he was forced to defend them against the machinations of the moradores, who tried to get the new workers settled in an aldeia de repartição for the benefit of all, "visto ser um principal que ja estava situado na sua aldeia do Castanheiro sobre o Rio Negro, e lá servia aos brancos no negócio dos resgates."

⁷⁵Noronha, "Roteiro," p. 70; Casal, Chorographia II, p. 349; Amazonas, Dicionário, p. 66; A.C.F. Reis, H. do Amazonas, p. 84; ARF, "Diário," RIHGB 50,2 (1887), pp. 18-19.

⁷⁶Sampaio, Diário CCLXXV (1903 ed., p. 81), who notes explicitly the similarity between this millenarianism and the "Sebastianist" longing for the return of a gallant young king which was widespread among Portuguese country people in his day.

⁷⁷Spix & Martius, Viagem III, p. 389. In 1835 a traveler was told that the Manaos were "nearly extinct." Adam Baue, "Itineraire des excursions faites par M... pour l'exploration des Guyanes," Bulletin de la Societé Geographique de Paris ser. 7, 2 (mar 1827):129-57. In 1852, a knowledgeable observer could report that among the descendants of the Manaos (and of the Barés and Banibas) could be found "some by now very respectable families of the Rio Negro." Amazonas, Dicionário, p. 1887. Arthur Reis, a native historian of the region, wrote that the Manao survivors "deram origen aos mais antigos troncos da sociedade amazonense." H. do Amazonas, p. 77.

⁷⁸Gov. Serra-King (Belém, 24 sep 1733), ms. AHU Pará Cx 7, caps. 25-28. Not long before the governor had ordered Diogo Rodrigues Pereira (long-time captain of the Rio Negro fortress) for the second time to return to Pará "logo logo" from his labors as cabo of the "tropa de resgates do Maranhão" on the Negro, and be prepared to account for any "pieces" taken there in addition to bringing in any Portuguese deserters he had found in the sertão. Serra-Pereira (Belém, 29 oct 1732), BAPP 907, ff. 161-161v. On the successful return of Gaya's tropa, Rodrigues-Cámara (Belém, 27 may 1734), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 52-53.

⁷⁹Sampaio, "Relação geográfico-histórica," p. 48. Baena notes that late in 1736 or 1737 there appeared in Belém for the first time "varias produções naturaes do Rio Branco."

⁸⁰Belfort, Proposta (Belém, 21 oct 1737) & Junta das Missões, Termo (Belém, 26 oct 1737), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3. Belfort, an enterprising planter of Irish descent, was one of the principal figures in the economic development of 18th-century Maranhão. His remarkable career is worthy of a biographer's attention. One of the interesting questions to answer in a study of Belfort's capitalist enterprise will be the extent to which it was made possible by the large numbers of Indian slaves he was able to remove from the Rio Negro to his personal estates in Maranhão. According to A.C.F. Reis, Belfort brought more than a thousand slaves from the Rio Branco region alone to work at his estates on the Rio Mearim. *Política de Portugal*, p. 20. At one point, when the cabo was trying to sell some of his slaves in Pará, the Câmara of São Luis intervened to persuade the Governor that since he had gone to the sertão from Maranhão, all the slaves he gathered should by rights be sold there.

Castelbranco-Belfort (Pará, 13 mar 1738), ms. BNL Col. Pomb. 631, f. 3. That cabos de resgate were expected to have a private interest in the slaving they carried out (ostensibly for the King) is made clear by an order of Castelbranco's in which he explicitly deposits that interest (in the event the cabo should become incapacitated) in José Miguel Ayres' brother. Castelbranco, Ordem (Pará, 28 mar 1739, ms. BAPP 985, no. 149.

⁸¹Castelbranco, Regimento para J. M. Ayres (Belém, 31 dec 1738), ms. BAPP 1023, ff. 60-63v; Castelbranco-Thesoureiro Balthazar do Rego Barboza (Pará, 5 dec 1738), ms. BAPP 985, no. 134; cf. Condamine, who did not visit the Negro but learned in Pará in the early 1740s that the Portuguese had been frequenting that river for nearly a century and did a brisk slave trade there. There was, he wrote, a detachment from the garrison of Pará stationed permanently on its banks to keep the Indians under control and facilitate this trade within limits established by Portuguese law. Each year, the men from this "flying camp" made their way further and further into the interior. *Relación abreviada* (Madrid, 1921), pp. 76-77.

⁸²Castelbranco, Ordens (Belém, 11 & 14 nov 1740; 2 feb 1741; 27 nov 1741; 29 nov 1744), ms. BAPP 985, nos. 342, 343, 355, 403, 496 & 542. Belfort had been serving as Treasurer of the Resgates during 1743, a position that presumably of some economic benefit to him. Castelbranco, Ordens a Belfort (4 & 11 apr & 6 & 11 aug 1743), ms. BAPP 985, nos. 480-85.

⁸³Castelbranco-Carmelites (Pará, 2 jan 1739), ms. BAPP 985, no. 125; Castelbranco, Ordem (Pará, 10 sep 1738), ms. BAPP 985, no. 94. Here the Governor instructs all the "officials and white men" who are shown this order to provide every assistance to the bearer, the Comissario of the Franciscans of the Provincia da Piedade, in carrying out a descimento to Pará. Elsewhere, he grants the petition of two moradores who had requested permission to buy slaves through the tropa on the Negro, providing that they stop by the fortresses on the way back and show the appropriate registo for each slave. Castelbranco, Despachos (Pará, 2 nov 1739), ms. BAPP 985.

⁸⁴Leite, *HCB* 4, p. 351; Avogadri was missionary at Abacaxis near the mouth of the Madeira in the late 1720s, and had made his solemn profession as a Jesuit there in 1730. *Ibid.* 3, p. 388. While on assignment there, he had refused to supply farinha to the tropa on the Rio Negro or to the soldiers at the Fortaleza da Barra do Rio Negro, alleging that as missionary he was not obliged to provide supplies in the royal service; and he had threatened to flog any of his Indians who did offer such assistance. Freire [Rendas dos religiosos, n.d. 1727?], ms. AHU Pará Cx 3.

⁸⁵P. José Lopes-Avogadri (Colégio do Pará, 6 mar 1738), ms. BNL Col. Pomb. 631, f. 2. Lopes was rector of the Jesuit seminary of Pará at that time, writing at the request of the Father Provincial. The Governor, for his part, expressed his hope that Avogadri would come around and do his work in the customary way, and stop getting bound up in "escrúpulos que não tiverão os outros missionários da mesma Companhia." If he did not make the adjustment, however, Belfort was instructed to ignore him and have the certifications of legitimate enslavement drawn up by the scrivener on the basis of his own interrogation in the presence of other officers, and send the slaves with their papers down to be examined by

the Junta das Missões instead. Castelbranco-Belfort (Pará, 13 mar 1738), ms. BNL Col. Pomb. 631, f. 3.

⁸⁶Avogadri-Castelbranco (Arraial de N.S. do Carmo e Santa Ana, 30 jun 1738), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3. Cf. Mendonça Furtado's bitter remark to Pombal, years later, that Avogadri had spent a decade and a half on the Negro "com o pretexto dos descimentos, tiranizando índios." FXMF-Pombal (Pará, 26 jan 1752), in Mendonça, *Amazonas* 1, pp. 212-113. Leite, *HCJB* 3, p. 388. For examinations of 17th-century Jesuit thinking about slavery in another context, and about the character of the Amazonian Indians, see D. G. Sweet, "Black robes and 'black destiny': Jesuit views of African slavery in 17th-century Latin America," *Revista de Historia de America* 86 (1978):87-133; and "Misioneros jesuitas e índios 'recalcitrantes' en la Amazonia colonial," in Miguel Leon-Portilla et al. (eds.) *De palabra y obra en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol. I: *Imágenes interétnicas* (Madrid, 1992), pp. 265-92.

⁸⁷These expeditions are known to us in even so sketchy detail as this, only because testimonies were taken from their veterans many years later, in an effort to strengthen the Portuguese claim to territory in the Branco valley. Sampaio, "Auto de justificação" (Barcelos, 17-29 apr 1775), in Nabuco Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, p. 103-11. Monteiro suggests the figure 1,000 but provides no source for it. *Capitania do Rio Negro*, p. 37. Whatever the total, the slavers of 1740 seem to have outdone themselves, since the indications are that no tropas de resgate visited the Rio Branco valley after that year. Sampaio, "Relação geográfico-histórica do Rio Branco," p. 11. Indians brought from the Branco in smaller numbers by Francisco Ferreira and others, year by year, were sometimes settled in the Rio Negro missions (especially Carvoeiro, near the mouth of the Branco), rather than being shipped on to Pará. Sampaio, "Auto de justificação," pp. 110-11.

⁸⁸Padre Gumilla affirmed categorically in 1741, on the basis of his own and his colleagues' extensive travels on the Orinoco, that there was no such connection and that it would be necessary to cross the high range of hills south of the upper Orinoco to get from one basin to the other—something which, he asserted, no one had yet done. The map he provided made it clear that the Orinoco's course took it nowhere near the upper Negro. *Orinoco Ilustrado* I, cap. 2, pp. 59-60, and map opposite p. cxxxviii in the 1963 Caracas edition. Condamine confused the story considerably by claiming to have seen correspondence between Gumilla and the chaplain (Avogadri?) of the tropa on the Negro which had traveled over the very route Gumilla said did not exist, before making its way to Pará! *Relación abreviada*, p. 78. Cf. *Amazonas, Dicionário*, p. 67 & Moraes, *Chorographia* 3, p. 498.

⁸⁹The Provedor dos Defuntos e Auzentes was the official in charge of looking after the estates of people who died or disappeared while in the Portuguese colonial service—an important post in urban areas of the Empire, especially during wartime, but an altogether fanciful title in the Amazonian sertão.

⁹⁰Belfort-Castelbranco (Rio Negro, n.d. 1738), ms. AHU Pará Cx 3. The one-year term of duty seems to have been standard for the cabo during this period; but the tropa itself remained on permanent duty. Castelbranco, Portaria (Pará, 11 nov 1740), ms. BAPP 985, no. 342.

⁹¹Gov. Castelbranco, Ordens (Pará, 20 sep 1739; 14 nov 1740; 19 abr 1741; 14 & 21 nov 1742; 20 nov 1743; 29 nov 1744; 26 jan 1746), ms. BAPP 985, nos. 228, 343, 361, 455, 496, 543-44, 610-11. Castelbranco, Portaria (Pará, 26 jan 1746), Orden (Pará, 2 feb 1741), ms. BAPP 985, nos. 611 & 355. What is not at all clear from these documents is whether there was any regular mechanism for rotating the crewmen (or for that matter the soldiers) in a permanent tropa. New people would go up with each new cabo or supply canoe; but it is not clear that these would replace people who then returned to Pará with a load of slaves. A good many crewmen were of course recruited on Rio Negro itself.

⁹²Gov. Castelbranco, Portaria ao Cabo Estácio Roiz (Pará, 27 nov 1741), ms. BAPP 985, no. 403. There were apparently some difficulties with the accounting at the Pará end of these transactions as well. In 1744, the Governor ordered the Provedor da Fazenda to review the expenditures that had been made on the tropa since the days when it was commanded by

José Miguel Ayres (1739-40), and to divide their total by the number of slaves who had been sent down for distribution by the Câmara during Ayres' term, in order to establish the amount in taxes due from each purchaser of a slave—because the Câmara's records from these sales did not provide the necessary information. Castelbranco, Instrução (Pará, 4 jun 1744), ms. BAPP 985, no. 511.

⁹³Castelbranco, Instrução (Pará, 27 nov 1741), ms. BAPP 985, no. 396.

⁹⁴"..uma vistia [?] de baeta, huns calções de pano e huma camisa ordinaria." Castelbranco, Ordem (Pará, 17 abr 1741), ms. BAPP 985, no. 362; Gurjão, Portaria (Pará, 6 abr 1748), ms. BAPP 985, no. 754; Capt. Leytão-FXMF (Pauxis, 23 nov 1752), ms. BAPP 9, doc 17.

⁹⁵Castelbranco, Despacho (Pará, 14 nov 1740), ms. BAPP 985, nos. 344 & 345; Folk knowledge of the lower reaches of the Japurá was substantial by this time. Condamine's informants knew the Indian names of seven or eight of its different mouths which made their way through a vast swampy lowland, flooded half the year, before emptying into the Amazon. Condamine, Relación abreviada, pp. 64-65; Gusmão-Telles (Lx, 24 nov 1749), in Cortesão, Tratado Pt. IV, Tom. 1, pp. 428-31.

⁹⁶King-Gov. Gurjão (Lx, 23 jul 1748), in Nabuco, Limites I Mem Bres Ann I, pp. 53-54; cf. FXMF-Pombal (Pará, 4 may 1757), in Mendonça, Amazonia 3, pp. 1041-46, who maintains that Gov. Gurjão had done what he could to carry out the order to abolish the tropas in 1747, but had been unable to complete the job.

⁹⁷Lázaro Borges, who had lost most of his slaves in the recent epidemic, offered to go as Cabo of a new tropa. Florentino da Silveira Frade had lost most of his people as well, and was unable to replace them "por estarem os sertões fechados, e não se acharem a venda." He feared that his extensive agricultural and cattle-rearing estates would be lost for lack of manpower, and asked that the Governor grant him the use of some free Indians from the aldeias on the Island of Marajó. Borges & Frade, Petições (n.d.) ms. BNL Col. Pombn. 632, ff. 85 & 89.

⁹⁸FXMF-King (Pará, 31 jan 1754), Anais BAPP 3, pp. 180-81.