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# Why Joanna Baptista Sold Herself into Slavery: Indian Women in Portuguese Amazonia, 1755-1798

## **Abstract**

In 1780, in Belem, Brazil, Joanna Baptista sold herself into slavery. This article probes Joanna's motives and situates her actions not only in the milieu of slaveholding Brazil, but also in the more specific context of Portuguese Amazonia during the Directorate (1758–1798). Indians, especially former slaves and their descendants, faced forced resettlement and increased labor demands. Joanna's case and contemporary petitions demonstrate how women of Indian and mixed descent, especially single women, widows and orphans, used legal means to defend their autonomy.

## **Disciplines**

History | Latin American History | Social History

# Why Joanna Baptista Sold Herself into Slavery: Indian Women in Portuguese Amazonia, 1755–1798

Barbara A. Sommer

*In 1780, in Belém, Brazil, Joanna Baptista sold herself into slavery. This article probes Joanna's motives and situates her actions not only in the milieu of slaveholding Brazil, but also in the more specific context of Portuguese Amazonia during the Directorate (1758–1798). Indians, especially former slaves and their descendants, faced forced resettlement and increased labor demands. Joanna's case and contemporary petitions demonstrate how women of Indian and mixed descent, especially single women, widows and orphans, used legal means to defend their autonomy.*

The discipline of history is, above all, the discipline of context; each fact can be given meaning only within an ensemble of other meanings. (E.P. Thompson)

After the 1780 Amazonian rainy season in Belém, Brazil, Joanna Baptista sold herself into slavery.<sup>1</sup> Her compelling story confounds all expectations. Why would anyone have chosen enslavement over freedom? The new Portuguese governor and captain-general of the State of Pará and Rio Negro, José de Nápoles Telo de Menezes, called Joanna's sale 'one of the strangest, most extraordinary proceedings [...] in a century illuminated by such humanity, in which the royal grandeur of our august monarchs has labored so much in favor of the liberty of its people.'<sup>2</sup> Menezes viewed the case as a subversion of his ambitious plans to concentrate independent Indians in strategic settlements and put them to work, despite the august monarchs' labors.

Joanna's sale contract is well known to Brazilian scholars, although, as Manuela Carneiro da Cunha noted, early historians cited it merely for its 'picturesque quality'.<sup>3</sup> Since then, scholars have explored the legal basis for her sale and have mentioned her in the context of African slave women in eighteenth-century Brazil.<sup>4</sup> New evidence allows us to probe Joanna's motives and situate her actions, not just in the

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milieu of slaveholding Brazil, but also in the more specific context of late-eighteenth-century Pará during the 40-year period known as the *Directorio*, named for 1757 legislation *The Directorate that must be Observed in the Indian Settlements of Pará and Maranhão*. This evidence reveals new challenges faced by Indians, especially former slaves and their descendants, during Menezes' term in office (1780–1783). Joanna's case and contemporary petitions demonstrate how women of Indian and mixed descent, especially single women, widows and orphans, used legal means to defend their autonomy, their status and their domestic arrangements.<sup>5</sup> These Indian women, crucial to the labor force, particularly as agricultural workers, but also as domestics, petitioned Queen Maria I (r. 1777–1816) to enforce the 6 June 1755 law that guaranteed their freedom.<sup>6</sup>

Governor Menezes denounced Joanna's actions to his superiors in Lisbon. He claimed to have resettled 'over 900 souls', when 'news arrived of the scandalous means by which' Joanna Baptista 'pretends to avoid that effort by effectuating a writ of enslavement and sale'.<sup>7</sup> Menezes considered former slaves and otherwise independent Indians to be 'vagrants' whose labor should be harnessed to benefit the colony and the Crown.<sup>8</sup> Previous governors had tried to curb vagrancy, but Menezes' brutal campaign uprooted hundreds, if not thousands, of Indians. Some of those displaced returned furtively to private homes or fled to isolated independent maroon communities. Joanna Baptista's seemingly perverse and paradoxical solution sought freedom through enslavement.

Nearly a century before Joanna's time, freed Indian slaves in São Paulo, Brazil, 'contributed to the expansion of a population of uncertain condition, between slavery and liberty', as John Monteiro has explained.<sup>9</sup> Although Portuguese law situated former Amazonian slaves between these two extremes, through everyday experiences they developed local identities that clashed with legal categories.<sup>10</sup> These people and their mixed descendants – individuals like Joanna – have been neglected in the historiography despite their historical significance. Their very existence highlights the limitations of prominent historiographical categories: they were individual Indians, rather than members of ethnic communities; free, rather than slave; and lived in the Portuguese colony, but outside of the Directorate.<sup>11</sup> Yet the expansion of this population prodded Governor and Captain-general of the State of Pará and Rio Negro Francisco Mauricio de Souza Coutinho to recommend abolishing the Directorate in 1797, which the Crown approved the following year.<sup>12</sup> He proposed a labor corps like those in neighboring Goiás and Mato Grosso, which, in addition to greater access to the Directorate Indians already working for the state, would allow him to draft *mestiços* (racially mixed) and freed black slaves into service. While state administrators were unable to remedy the perpetual shortage of labor in the region, individual workers used a variety of strategies to protect their own interests.

This essay is divided into three sections broadening out from Joanna Baptista to the larger regional context. In the first part, I use details gleaned from Joanna's sale contract and Menezes' report, to sketch out her identity and her limited options. Next, I analyze petitions from contemporary Indian women to the governor or Crown to provide a comparative context for Joanna's actions. Although Joanna's

self-enslavement was unique, these women were, as in other areas of colonial Latin America, using the legal system to promote their interests, a point largely unexplored in the historiography of Portuguese Amazonia.<sup>13</sup> The final section describes Menezes' campaign within the context of the Directorate to demonstrate both its failure and the resiliency of local society. Although the Directorate has been written about extensively, historians have tended to treat the 40-year period as a cohesive unit.<sup>14</sup> We are beginning to understand its chronological phases, however, and here we focus on the post-Pombaline decadence of the 1780s that foreshadowed the system's demise.

### Identity in colonial society

Joanna Baptista's identity is central to determining her limited options and understanding her seemingly drastic actions. As the daughter of an Indian named Anna Maria and Ventura, a black slave, Joanna was labeled '*cafuzo*', referring to her mestiço heritage.<sup>15</sup> Marriage between Joanna's parents, both of whom served the padre José de Mello, may have been arranged by this priest, since slaveholders used this strategy to bind otherwise free Indians to their personal service.<sup>16</sup> Another possibility is that Joanna's mother had been a slave herself or was descended from Indian slaves. Under Portuguese law, Joanna inherited her mother's legal status.<sup>17</sup> Because Menezes noted that Joanna was about 19, we can place her birth in or about 1761. With Indian slavery abolished in 1755, even if her mother had once been a slave, Joanna would have 'always been free and without captivity by birth', as her contract of sale stated.

Although free, Joanna was born into the lowest stratum of colonial society, and with the death of the padre and of her parents, she became an orphan without the means, as she put it, to 'live in her liberty'. Portuguese law placed orphans who were still minors under the protection of the probate judge (*juiz dos órfãos*, literally the 'judge of orphans'), who was responsible for their welfare.<sup>18</sup> Given Joanna's age, poverty and low status, she probably faced a life of servitude, although the law charged judges with securing for orphans the best possible salary with people who would treat them well. Without such protection, life in eighteenth-century Amazonia would have been precarious for a poor orphaned *cafuzo*, the daughter of a slave.

Joanna took her fate into her own hands, selling herself to the Catalonian Pedro da Costa, 'as if she had been born of a captive womb', a condition she would retain 'until her death'. Forsaking the privileges she enjoyed as a free person, she even recognized Pedro's right to sell her, exposing herself to the dangers of Paraense masters, who, as one of her contemporaries observed, treated their slaves 'as if they were dogs'.<sup>19</sup> The only motive offered in Joanna's contract for such a radical measure was that she could not support herself and lacked anyone to care for her. Slave owners were legally bound to clothe, feed and attend to the health of their slaves, offering an ostensible measure of security.<sup>20</sup> In Júnia Furtado's opinion, social disadvantages led Joanna Baptista to renounce her 'liberty in favor of a sheltered, secure and honorable old age'.<sup>21</sup>

The contract mentioned illnesses twice, suggesting that Joanna was already sick or worried about becoming so, but the governor characterized her 'natural constitution' as 'vigorous'.<sup>22</sup> Even in good health, illness was on her mind, perhaps because of the

death of her parents or simply because of recurrent virulent epidemics. In 1776, over 1000 people had succumbed to smallpox in the capital city of Belém alone, roughly one-tenth of the population.<sup>23</sup> Random, untimely death was a fact of life, especially for the malnourished poor.<sup>24</sup> Although Joanna had no children at the time of her sale, she considered the possibility, exempting from slavery in the contract any future offspring.

Joanna may also have decided to sell herself to accumulate a modicum of wealth to own outright or to use as *pecúlio* – items that a slave might enjoy, even if they belonged to the master.<sup>25</sup> Her sale price was listed as 80,000 *reis*, roughly the going rate in Belém, which, for Joanna, would have represented a fabulous sum.<sup>26</sup> The monthly salary for Directorate Indian women working as domestics was 600 *reis*, an amount paid in cotton cloth, not in cash.<sup>27</sup> Joanna's earning power was quite limited and the only thing of real value that she owned was her person.

In an era when personal adornment announced social status, acquiring clothing and jewelry surely entered into her consideration.<sup>28</sup> When her contract was written up, she had received a partial payment of 40,000 *reis* in cash and a gold necklace and earrings valued at 18,000 *reis*. Freed from the difficult task of feeding and clothing herself, as a slave, Joanna might stroll along Belém's newly paved streets with her gold and her dignity.<sup>29</sup> Her purchaser would pay the remainder of her price in goods, 'whenever she asked him'. Even as Pedro's slave, Joanna could make demands because she had entered into her contract as a free woman. Ironically, a poor woman could thusly attain a measure of wealth through enslavement.

Although the contract tells us nothing more about Pedro da Costa, Joanna apparently trusted him.<sup>30</sup> Joanna and Pedro lived in Campina, the new section of the city, north of the original urban nucleus. The hub of Portuguese Amazonia, Belém was, by Joanna's day, changing rapidly, as stately stone public buildings, grand homes and ornate churches replaced rustic whitewashed mud constructions. Joanna lived on the street that ran behind the Santa Casa de Misericórdia (Holy House of Mercy), a charitable lay brotherhood.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps there Joanna had found some assistance. Pedro resided on the Rua São Vicente, which ran parallel to the shore, three blocks inland. Their two streets intersected at the splendid Baroque Santa Anna church, designed by the noted Italian Antônio José Landi and built, in part, by Directorate Indians.<sup>32</sup> Why Joanna chose the Catalan is unknown, although his foreignness and familiarity with urban domestic slavery as opposed to rigorous plantation slavery may have been a factor. Although Joanna's contract defines the relationship between the two only as buyer and seller, the governor suspected collusion.

Menezes found Pedro's conduct 'highly irregular' and called the deal a 'convenient cover' for the couple's 'indecent relations and dishonesty'.<sup>33</sup> He claimed that the sale 'could only happen in this country where corruption and licentiousness run more freely than in any other'. If Joanna and Pedro were lovers, the governor's plans might have provoked her decision – marriage was probably out of the question, given their unequal social status.<sup>34</sup> Menezes also found Pedro's partial payment suspicious, perhaps because the outstanding debt might later be used to nullify the deal once the threat of her relocation had passed.

The chief intendant and magistrate (*ouvidor intendente geral*) João Francisco Ribeiro declared the case unprecedented (*'o caso he bastardo'*), but decided in Joanna's favor, citing 'Justinian institutions'.<sup>35</sup> Despite European philosophical currents against enslavement, the judge's ruling was based in Roman Law. Emperor Justinian, building on the premise that slaves were human, deemed slavery a socially invested and imposed institution, contrary to Natural Law.<sup>36</sup> The theological–juridical debate about whether one could sell one's liberty dated back centuries in Iberia. Dominican and Jesuit schools of thought both allowed for self-enslavement, although the Jesuits believed that a man was the owner of his liberty, which, like any other belonging, could be sold, while Dominicans considered self-preservation a rule of Natural Law – a person could sell himself to preserve his life. Carneiro da Cunha placed Joanna Baptista's sale within this juridical tradition, concluding that her case 'must be one of the last examples of consensual enslavement'.<sup>37</sup> Before ruling on the case, Ribeiro called the seller and the buyer before him and then determined, 'they can do as they wish, as her will decides the contract'.

The judge's decision is somewhat surprising since, although Joanna was a *cafuza*, legally, she was an 'Indian', having inherited her mother's identity. King José I (r. 1750–1777), influenced by his powerful minister Sebastião José de Carvalho Mello, known as the Marquis of Pombal, had freed Indian slaves in 1755 and reaffirmed their right to own property. The law opened the missions to trade and determined that natives could work for whomever they pleased at wages adequate to feed and dress them according to their professions, 'as is practiced in Portugal and the other countries of Europe'. Yet when Pombal sent the new law to his brother, Governor and Captain-general of the State of Maranhão and Pará Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, he recommended prohibiting anyone, Portuguese or native, from leaving the territory where they resided without the governor's permission.<sup>38</sup> Pombal reasoned that because Indians lacked ambition, authorities should ridicule vagrants and force 'incurrigibles' to work. Former Indian slaves would be assigned to work under the jurisdiction of the probate judge, making their freedom, in the words of Nádia Farage, a 'political fiction'.<sup>39</sup> Forced Indian labor had replaced outright enslavement, at least until Joanna came along.

Independent natives and their mixed descendants were not necessarily former slaves, although tracking the origins of this population poses challenges. In 1778, individuals categorized as 'Indians' headed just over 6 percent of non-Directorate free families in Pará, while *mamelucos* (mixed Indian and whites) headed over 10 percent.<sup>40</sup> Some were artisans, but most, like the rest of the free population, were small farmers. Many would be caught up in Menezes' efforts to increase the Directorate population.

Joanna's ability to sell herself legally was not related to her status as an Indian, but to the rights she enjoyed as a free person. Although under the age of 25, the default age of majority, if the judge placed her in a private home, where she would earn wages, at 20 her minority would end, provided she was able to govern herself.<sup>41</sup> Although the public scribe wrote up her contract, rather than the probate judge, which was necessary if she were still a minor, he solicited a ruling from the chief magistrate, saying

Joanna could not enter into the agreement without it. In any case, Joanna exercised her rights – the scribe drew up the proper papers, which were duly signed by witnesses. Joanna had not been born into slavery, but would enter into it under conditions spelled out in her contract. She decided the terms.

As a young single woman, an orphan and an Indian, Joanna faced an uncertain, unappealing future. The probate judge might assign her to work as a servant. The governor would relocate her to an Indian settlement, perhaps no more than a frontier encampment. Two hundred years later, we can only imagine all that went through Joanna's mind as she contemplated her limited options. The experiences of some of her peers help us to reconstruct the context in which she made her decision.

### **Free Indian women as 'vagrants'**

While Joanna's self-enslavement particularly disturbed her contemporaries, other Indian women at about the same time also used legal channels to try to preserve their liberty. Legal status as an Indian was of particular significance in the broader context of Governor Menezes' campaign to congregate the 'multitude of idle and useless people' into Directorate towns to work for the community, for settlers and, most importantly, for the state.<sup>42</sup> Menezes sought to increase the Directorate labor pool, even as Indians were drawn away by the military or married out of their communities.<sup>43</sup> Independent natives did little to benefit the Crown and those living near the Directorate towns often provided refuge for runaways.<sup>44</sup>

Portuguese authorities had been trying to control those they deemed 'vagrants' since the Middle Ages and, during the eighteenth century, regularly exiled them to Amazonia.<sup>45</sup> In the mid-1750s, Governor Mendonça Furtado had tried to control former Indian slaves who did not serve the 'public good'.<sup>46</sup> He assigned them to work for colonists, but many fled. The constant demand for labor was such that some settlers harbored Indians, while their neighbors tried to lure workers away, resulting in 'nearly a civil war'. Mendonça Furtado issued a proclamation to enforce a system of labor permits that obliged residents to pay a standard wage. The document stated clearly that it did not apply to 'those civilized Indians living on their own farms, [...] or to those practicing trades who worked for and served the public'.<sup>47</sup> Some 25 years later, Menezes ignored these exemptions when he launched his campaign.

A shortage of workers eligible for the ever-increasing demands of state service had impelled Menezes' predecessor to order all dispersed Indians back to their settlements, threatening them with imprisonment in chains.<sup>48</sup> Menezes, who arrived in Belém in March of 1780, realized that he would need even more workers to man and provision the expeditions to demarcate Portuguese and Spanish boundaries deep in the interior.<sup>49</sup> In June, he issued strict orders to the directors and reinstated stiff penalties for taking Indians without proper permits or for keeping them beyond a stipulated period. Menezes pushed the directors to attract new people from the forests and took unprecedented steps to round up independent Indians.<sup>50</sup> Joanna was unwillingly swept up in this venture.



Another victim, the widow Maria Silvana, complained that Captain Manuel Leite Pacheco with an armed escort took Indians from their homes and fields and hauled them off to the navy yard in Belém, 'in violation of the laws and orders of Her Majesty'.<sup>51</sup> He then forced Maria Silvana, who stated that she was of 'an advanced age', into service at the royal salt works on the Atlantic coast.<sup>52</sup> As Maria argued, she, like Joanna, had never belonged to an Indian community because she had been 'born and raised in a house of whites'. Although probably once a slave, as a free resident of the Cintra district, along with her five children and two grandchildren, she had been a tenant farmer and had paid the tithe.<sup>53</sup> Now, she bewailed the suffering and shame of being a 'vile slave', while her sons were forced into royal service in Belém. In the city, Joanna would have heard about this harsh treatment and may have seen unfortunate Indians transported in chains like common criminals.

The chief magistrate investigated Maria's case thoroughly, seeking information from local sources. The Cintra director stated, 'there is absolutely no doubt that the petitioner and her family do not belong here'; another man declared that while her husband had been alive, her family had been treated 'as whites', and the municipal judge, the Indian Theodosio de Souza, gathered further testimony that attested to her independent status. The magistrate noted nonetheless that the judge had misrepresented Maria's productivity and recommended that 'the supplicant should remain at the salt works where she is useful to the public'. His decision was fundamentally an economic one: independent Indians might be capable subsistence farmers, but their production did little to increase Crown revenues.

The widow Josefa Martinha, a native of Belém, complained in 1779, just before Menezes' arrival, that she and her two sons had been consigned against their will to work for a sugar mill owner named Hilário de Moraes Bitancourt, where she had been harshly treated.<sup>54</sup> The prosperous Bitancourt, a married white captain in the militia, owned a house in Belém and a plantation with over 100 servants and slaves.<sup>55</sup> After Josefa's husband had died, she stated that she had tried to have her older son trained as a carpenter so that he could sustain her 'in her old age', but her 'so-called Patron' would not allow it. So the family fled and, 'as if they had committed horrible crimes, were hiding out . . .' in the forest, while the determined Bitancourt 'with an escort of slaves' stalked them. The Overseas Council in Lisbon instructed the governor to restore the family to freedom and reminded him to 'take care to obey the laws'. While Maria and Josefa Martinha fought to live and work where they wished, authorities sought to control their labor.

As widows, Maria and Josefa Martinha could become household heads, but Portuguese law limited their authority.<sup>56</sup> Although the law protected their ownership of family property, they did not necessarily become the guardians of their own children because of laws safeguarding the children. Because women were viewed as endowed with 'frailty of reason', and because they might fall under the influence of unscrupulous men, the probate judge was responsible for the orphans, overseeing the family property they had inherited from their fathers.<sup>57</sup> Maria and Josefa Martinha might thus have been perceived as lacking the capacity to act in the best interests of their children. Besides, as Indians, they and their children could be made to serve the Crown.

Like Maria and Josefa Martinha, Joanna was a poor Indian woman living outside of the Directorate system and, although her welfare was uncertain, she was free from the obligations of heavy work in the cane fields or salt pans. Selling herself to Pedro might assure a more refined future in the city, even if she lost her free status. A preference for domestic work in urban households is highlighted in the remarkably similar 1779 petitions of two Directorate Indian women.<sup>58</sup> Petronilha and Madalena implored the queen to allow them to stay in Belém and the neighboring town of Vigia, where they had learned to sew and to starch and iron clothing for well-to-do settlers. Although work permits were generally limited to six months, these women did not wish to return to their villages because, as Petronilha's petition stated, 'there is nothing to sew or starch for it is a settlement composed only of Indians'.<sup>59</sup> Both petitioners insisted that they were neither 'vagrants nor lived in idleness' and complained that the directors would assign them to work for which 'they were not suited'. As skilled seamstresses, agricultural work and the like were beneath them.

The Overseas Council upheld the rights of these women, although they instructed the governor to investigate. Lacking oversight, employers frequently kept workers beyond their permits, despite possible fines.<sup>60</sup> The overseas counselors worried that the employers, wishing to keep the women, might have forged the petitions.<sup>61</sup> The women might have been 'stolen by those who have them in their homes', as one cautioned, and 'it is they who oppress the liberty they appear to wish to defend'.<sup>62</sup>

In 1790, Bonifácia da Silva, a native of the Directorate town of Monsarás on Marajó Island, petitioned the queen to allow her to remain in Belém with her godmother D. Mônica de Moraes Aguiar e Castro, who had treated her kindly.<sup>63</sup> Like Joanna, Bonifácia's status had changed when her parents died, some 20 years earlier. As an orphan of 'eight or nine years of age', she had been sent to the home of Mônica's brother, the now-deceased Captain Manoel Pourat de Moraes Aguiar e Castro, where his sisters taught her to sew and make lace.<sup>64</sup> She implored the queen not to send her elsewhere. After Mônica's brother died, she apparently became household head, although even as a wealthy '*branca*', or white woman, her status may have been in question. Bonifácia's petition was careful to emphasize Mônica's honorable reputation, thereby establishing her positive moral influence. Without a male protector, Mônica and especially Bonifácia were vulnerable. Perhaps because Bonifácia was Mônica's goddaughter, her request was approved in Lisbon without further comment.

While these women were apparently content in domestic service, some residents treated their Indian workers worse than slaves, trying to get the maximum return on the salaries they paid.<sup>65</sup> As Josefa Martinha's petition stated, 'the salaried work permits are nothing more than enslavement mollified by the name of liberty'.<sup>66</sup> Given that Joanna might have been assigned against her will to work for a cruel settler, she had, as she stated in her contract of sale, sought someone who, because 'she had cost money', would support and care for her.<sup>67</sup> As Joanna must have known first hand, a slave owner might be motivated to protect his investment, while those who got permits for Indians had no long-term interest in their workers' welfare. Joanna understood slavery well – she had witnessed her father's enslavement,

of course, and had daily contact with slaves and owners. Belém was home to nearly 10,000 people in 1783, almost half of whom were slaves. She must also have known Indian domestics and laborers in the city, as well as runaways from new Directorate towns.

Although the great majority of Directorate towns in Pará had been established as missions during the late seventeenth century, governors now created communities in strategic frontier locations by resettling former slaves. These settlements lacked the urban amenities Joanna would have known. The new residents had to clear the forest, build structures, plant crops and fish and hunt to sustain themselves. One of these settlements, Baião, was formed in 1769 by congregating the former Indian slaves of the Mercedarians and settlers along the Tocantins River.<sup>68</sup> These new residents had little invested in the success of the town. Baião's beleaguered director, João Pedro Marçal da Silva, complained that it was impossible for him to maintain a settlement of former slaves.<sup>69</sup> Upriver, a racially mixed maroon acted as refuge for 'vagrants, runaway soldiers, criminals and dispersed natives'.<sup>70</sup> Other runaways lived in family groups nearby, and one woman, Custódia Perpétua, along with her daughter, resided with a prominent merchant in Cametá, the city near the mouth of the Tocantins.<sup>71</sup> Custódia had been absent from Baião for over two years when the director arrived at José de Souza Monteiro's to retrieve her.<sup>72</sup> She spoke to José in the *língua geral* (the lingua franca based on coastal Brazilian Tupi), thinking that Silva would not understand, telling him she would go, but that he should send for her soon. Silva's efforts to retain Custódia failed – Monteiro sent for her at night and another Indian woman fled with her.

At private homes, these Indians may have found a better life.<sup>73</sup> As runaways, they could choose their employer and negotiate working conditions and salary. The persistent scarcity of labor gave them an advantage. They may also have considered these places their homes. It is doubtful that they felt any sense of community in Baião given their historical experience and quite disparate backgrounds. Baião directors dutifully listed absentees and admitted their inability to bring them back.<sup>74</sup> By 1784, very few people remained in the settlement.<sup>75</sup>

Although authorities considered all 'vagrants' a social problem – and indeed some were – they viewed independent women, living outside the patriarchal family, as both vulnerable and dangerous.<sup>76</sup> In Portugal, they condemned poor single women as thieves and prostitutes. Those labeled 'vagrants' and exiled to Pará, according to Governor Mendonça Furtado, caused 'the greatest harm one can imagine'. As he put it, they 'contaminate society'.<sup>77</sup> Even women who headed households were suspected of immorality and the potential to corrupt society.<sup>78</sup> Acting on these perceptions, the authorities promoted marriages between soldiers (some of whom may have been criminal exiles) and the so-called prostitutes. As early as 1756, the interim governor of Pará, Bishop Fr. Miguel de Bulhões, proposed drawing up 'a list of all the badly behaved women', obliging 'the single women and widows to marry' and then shipping them off to frontier settlements.<sup>79</sup> In 1782, Menezes founded Pena Cova on the site of the old Una mission near Belém with prostitutes and 'Indians and men of color of "mixed quality"'.<sup>80</sup> Not surprisingly, this new settlement fell apart rapidly.

Exactly how authorities identified women for resettlement is unclear, although parish priests, directors and local judges all supplied demographic data to the governor. Menezes may have consulted lists used for the 1778 census of families living outside of the Directorate communities in the parishes of Pará and the Rio Negro.<sup>81</sup> Of the listed families, women headed about 17 percent (only about 6 percent in sparsely populated Rio Negro), a stark contrast to the 30–45 percent recorded for some areas of early-nineteenth-century São Paulo, and even lower than the 24 percent of female household heads in Parnaíba, São Paulo, in 1775.<sup>82</sup>

The percentages in Figure 1 show that within their racial category, Indian women in Pará were the least likely to head families (at least, outside of the Directorate communities). While women accounted for just over 17 percent of ‘white’ and ‘mameluco’ family heads, they totaled only 14.4 percent of ‘Indian’ heads. In contrast, women with some African ancestry were more likely to head households within their racial categories. Yet non-white women headed only about 23 percent of all female-headed families and only 4 percent of all free, non-Directorate families. Indian women headed less than 1 percent of the total.

In Campina, Joanna’s parish in Belém, women headed 24 percent of the 532 families. Nearly 70 percent of those female family heads were white. Only seven *cafuzas* headed families and only one Indian woman, a laundress. In addition to reporting on families and their composition, the parish priest also provided an economic evaluation of each family head. He ranked only two Campina women as ‘rich’ – both were white: a single woman, whose household consisted of 115 people, including 28 slaves and 55 employees, and a widow with 69 people in her house in Belém, including 44 slaves, plus staff at a manioc farm and a cattle ranch.<sup>83</sup> With labor as key to wealth during the era, the larger the family’s workforce, the greater its economic potential. Although the priest rated nearly 80 percent of all Campina families as ‘poor’, those with numerous adults and workers would have had greater productive capabilities and, in difficult times, could offer mutual support. Economic and social factors worked against poor women living alone, like Joanna Baptista. As Carneiro da Cunha observed, ‘slavery and personal dependence were the alternatives’ imposed by the dominant society.<sup>84</sup>

Race ( <i>qualidade</i> )	Family Heads	%	Women	Women %	Men	Men %
White ( <i>branco/a</i> )	3,275	78.4	562	17.2	2713	82.8
White & Indian ( <i>mameluco/a</i> )	432	10.3	74	17.1	358	82.9
Indian ( <i>índio/a</i> )	264	6.3	38	14.4	226	85.6
Mulatto ( <i>mulato/a</i> )	110	2.6	23	20.9	87	79.1
Indian & Black ( <i>cafuzo/a</i> )	82	2.0	24	29.3	58	70.7
Black ( <i>preto/a</i> )	12	0.3	7	58.3	5	41.7
Total	4,175	99.9	728	17.4	3,447	82.6

**Figure 1.** Heads of families in the captaincy of Pará, 1778.

Source: ‘Máppas das Fam.as [...] 1778’, AHU-Rio Negro. For a similar analysis, see Roller ‘Colonial Routes’, Table 5.2, although our numbers differ slightly.

Yet Lisbon also recognized that the Indians had rights and the Portuguese legal system offered mechanisms by which they could seek redress. Exactly how illiterate women arrived at their decision to take legal action is unclear, although we have to wonder if Joanna knew any of the women who had filed petitions in Belém prior to 1780. About 50 years before Joanna's time, Francisca, an Indian slave, found support among friends in the lower social strata of Belém who testified on her behalf when she sought freedom from illegal enslavement.<sup>85</sup> Some of the petitioners might have known judges, and all were exposed to the 'juridical culture' that pervaded everyday life.<sup>86</sup>

The actual petitions would have been written up by the public scribe (*tabelião*) – Agostinho Antonio de Lira Barros in Belém had signed Joanna Baptista's papers. These men played a key role in the presentation of the appeals. The petitions from Josefa Martinha, Petronilha and Madalena clustering around 1779 may have been written by the same person – all cited the 1755 law of liberty and followed a similar format. Living in the well-integrated urban centers of Belém and Vigia, these women would have been knowledgeable about how to issue a formal appeal.

The prominence of petitions from women can be explained by a number of inter-related factors. Authorities targeted some women household heads, whether single or widowed, and judges may have taken seriously their responsibility to oversee the welfare of otherwise unprotected women. The scribe or a judge, familiar with earlier petitions and an understanding of the law, may have advised Joanna to try her radical scheme. Although none of the petitions to the Crown discovered thus far date to the three years Menezes was in office, sources show that a number of judicial appointees and other elites resented Governor Menezes' heavy hand.<sup>87</sup>

### **Menezes' scheme and the regional context**

Menezes overrode the chief magistrate's decision that Joanna could choose her fate. He informed the Overseas Council that he had ordered Joanna and Pedro apprehended, 'the Cafuza to be sent an Indian settlement' and 'her undeserving purchaser to be punished'.<sup>88</sup> He deferred to the Overseas Council to determine the validity of her sale, but no comments appear on the copy of Menezes' letter now filed in the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, and no other documents yet reveal the ultimate fate of Joanna Baptista or her owner. As for Ribeiro, the magistrate, the Crown replaced him at about the time Menezes' letter would have reached Lisbon.<sup>89</sup> Menezes ostensibly acted in the Crown's interest, boasting about the numbers of vagrants he rounded up or chased down in maroons. By one report, over 4000 Indians, including women and children, passed through the navy yard depot in Belém during Menezes' campaign.<sup>90</sup> By challenging the *status quo*, however, he alienated his subordinates who protested. Perhaps as a result, his tenure as governor was just over three years, less than half that of his predecessor and successor.

In 1781, the district magistrate who also acted as the judge of orphans in Belém (*juiz de fora e órfãos*), José Justiniano de Oliveira Peixoto, complained to the overseas secretary that the governor had usurped all judicial power, from supreme tribunals down to local magistrates.<sup>91</sup> Peixoto described the same injustices mentioned by Maria Silvana,

the widow drafted into the salt works. Menezes had inflicted the 'cruelties of Nero' on 'Indians as well as *mamelucos*, *cafuzes*, and other *mestiços* of both sexes, who in former times, as slaves, had belonged to the inhabitants of this captaincy'. Living in 'their natural liberty', some were 'established in this city with property, funds, and their own houses, exercising mechanical offices with public benefit and cultivating their own lands'. Others rented as tenant farmers, and still others were 'by their own choosing' paid employees in farming and manufacturing. Menezes had upset everything in a 'fraudulent project' to trick the Crown by manipulating the Directorate population charts. He organized convoys of thugs who raided 'in the city, and in country houses, fields, and mills'. The inhabitants saw their 'houses and goods looted, their daughters deflowered, and their wives and sisters disgraced, conducted in chains to the navy yard in this city where they were placed in labor gangs and prisons, or killed'. In this first year, according to Peixoto, over 1000 people had been affected, many of whom had run off to the forests and were now lost 'to religion and to the state [...] with nothing remaining of them but a name on the books of their settlement'.

State wards, whether orphans or former Indian slaves, fell under Peixoto's purview. As the acting probate judge, he clearly resented Menezes' usurpation of his authority. The pompous Menezes, a new arrival from Lisbon, had Peixoto arrested and sent to Portugal for abuse of office.<sup>92</sup> But Menezes lacked experience in the region, promoting Crown interests without regard to local custom. A long-term resident of the colony, José Correa de Lacerda, seconded Peixoto's claim that Menezes had sent troops to capture Indians, even those 'reputed to be whites', clapping them in irons, and imprisoning women in a corral, a 'tyranny from which many died'.<sup>93</sup>

Yet Lacerda's defense of Peixoto and his condemnation of Menezes had a measure of self-interest. When the well-born Lacerda had accompanied Mendonça Furtado to Belém in 1754, he had become a military officer and participated in Pombal's scheme to integrate the native population by marrying an Indian woman.<sup>94</sup> By 1778, he was a widower and a property owner on the island of Marajó. When Menezes embarked on his campaign in 1780, Lacerda was apparently living in concubinage with a Directorate Indian woman, along with her four children.<sup>95</sup> Her siblings, their spouses and children, and her mother all lived at Lacerdas' along with others, totaling nearly 30 people. One of these, a blacksmith from the Indian village of Conde, had lived with Lacerda for eight years and had acquired cattle and 'white' status. Menezes jailed Lacerda despite his claim that the people who lived with him stayed voluntarily because they had been well treated for years.

While some condemned Menezes, others lauded him, including the Vicar General José Monteiro de Noronha.<sup>96</sup> A native of Pará, the priest applauded Menezes for 'listing all the dispersed Indians who lived on insignificant portions of land, reducing them to corporations [Directorate communities] and making them useful to the public'.<sup>97</sup> In addition, Menezes 'had many Indians who lived in the darkness of faithlessness extracted from the interior' to bolster settlements in danger of extinction; he founded new Indian settlements in locations 'of interest to the State' and he took Indians away from residents without permits and assigned workers to others.

Although rational in the abstract, the governor's actions disrupted lives and social attachments and denied any autonomy, as petitioners made clear.

Indian men needed less judicial protection than women did – they simply fled.<sup>98</sup> Among women petitioners, only Josefa Martinha acknowledged that she had run off to the forest, perhaps because her sons were old enough to protect her. Quantitative evidence confirms a somewhat greater likelihood for men to run away than women and the instability of Baião and the other new towns. In 1783–1784, Baião had a striking rate of absenteeism (38 percent of men and 36 percent of women), compared with an overall average of slightly over 7 percent truancy for men and 5 percent for women in the Directorate towns.<sup>99</sup> Close behind Baião were Pena Cova, the reconstituted settlement of the so-called prostitutes and mixed-race men near Belém. Upriver on the Tocantins, at Alcobaça and Pederneiras, new outposts intended to prevent Cameté slaves from fleeing upriver and Goiás gold smugglers from coming downriver, the situation was similar.<sup>100</sup> Menezes boasted to Lisbon that he had not removed any Indians from the old settlements to establish these new communities, but had used runaways and recaptured absentees.<sup>101</sup> Alcobaça continued to deteriorate, and by 1792, 73 percent of the men and 69 percent of the women had deserted.<sup>102</sup> The roughly comparable percentages of absent men and women suggest that no one would be returning to these new outposts.

The only settlement to register a higher percentage of absentee women was Pena Cova, practically on the outskirts of Belém (22 percent of the men and close to 30 percent of the women). If women were challenged by the prospect of running away alone from frontier settlements far up Amazonian tributaries, they had little trouble returning to Belém from Pena Cova. We can only imagine that if Joanna had been sent there, she would have been one of them.

The many Indian women who opted for life in the city and domestic employment caught the attention of Governor and Captain-general Francisco Souza Coutinho in the early 1790s.<sup>103</sup> After looking into the decadence of Directorate communities near Belém, he recommended that Indians, and above all women (*índias*), not be assigned to domestic service.<sup>104</sup> Not only did the concession defy their liberty, the workers also never returned to their settlements, 'especially the *índias*' who, accustomed to an easier life, found heavy field work 'repugnant'.

Menezes' campaign was successful, but only temporarily. The 1783–1784 census recorded 21,944 people in the Pará Directorate towns, the highest during the 40-year period.<sup>105</sup> These numbers soon dropped, however, as Indians fled the new towns for their former places of residence, new households or forest retreats. Menezes' crusade against free Indians subverted the original intention of Mendonça Furtado's proclamation and clashed with customary practices in the region, where some natives had always lived outside the missions and enslavement. Finally, while Menezes denounced Joanna's self-enslavement in an era that celebrated liberty, in July of 1782, he conceded the labor of newly contacted forest people to private individuals, in effect resuscitating the old practice of conditional slavery.<sup>106</sup>

## Conclusion

From cross and Crown at the top to lowly slave at the bottom, everyone in the Portuguese empire ideally fit within an overarching patriarchal framework and, within that, into a particular legal category. Menezes' strict adherence to legal status disrupted social ties and clashed with local identities. Regional authorities with a working knowledge of customary practices, long-term residents like Lacerda and the Indian women themselves complained. Eventually, everyday realities overwhelmed policy, prompting Souza Coutinho to end the Directorate.

Portuguese rulers promulgated indigenous freedom, yet they assiduously tried to control Indian residence and labor, espousing patriarchal ideals. Governor Menezes labeled former Indian slaves and their descendants 'vagrants', even those with 'white' status, resettling them forcefully at new outposts and putting them to work on Crown projects. Joanna, despite her nettlesome legal efforts, became one of these. Some women fled in the company of men, and others joined households where they had previous ties. Many women preferred an urban existence, while Joanna and Custódia Perpétua apparently sought to live in the company of a man of their choosing.

Orphans, single women and widows were especially subject to the authorities' control. As orphans, Joanna and Bonifácia depended on judges for protection, but, at the same time, authorities sought to make them economically productive. In this way, the widows Maria Silvana and Josefa Martinha and their sons were drafted to benefit the state and a wealthy sugar planter. These women appealed to the queen to uphold the law that guaranteed their liberty. Unfortunately for them, legal channels were, at best, slow to respond.

New sources allow us to build historical context to form a richer, if incomplete picture of the past. Overlapping elements of identity contributed to Joanna's weak position in the colonial hierarchy. A *cafuza*, an orphan and a minor, with no means of support, her legal status as an Indian determined her destiny. Menezes apparently succeeded in forcing Joanna into a Directorate community, but she, like Custódia Perpétua and a multitude of others, may have found her way back to the place she called home. By selling herself, Joanna asserted her rights as a free person, rights the judge affirmed. The governor, perceiving a threat to his draconian plan, trumped that decision, thwarting Joanna's attempt to place herself in a legal state that paradoxically would bring her a measure of freedom. If she could not be her own master, she wanted to have a say in who would.

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## Notes

- [1] Abbreviations used in the notes are as follows: Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Documentos Avulsos da Capitania do Pará (AHU-Pará); Documentos Avulsos da Capitania do



- Rio Negro (AHU-Rio Negro); Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (ANRJ); Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon (ANTT); Arquivo Público do Estado do Pará, Belém (APEP); Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (BNRJ); and Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, Rio de Janeiro (IHGB). To shorten document citations, I have retained titles, but eliminated most proper names. The state governors and captain-generals are cited by their initials: Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado (FXMF); João Pereira Caldas (JPC); José de Nápoles Telo de Menezes (JNTM); Martinho de Souza e Albuquerque (MSA); Francisco Maurício de Souza Coutinho (FMSC); as is the long-serving Secretary of the Navy and Overseas Territories Martinho de Melo e Castro (MMC). The lengthy descriptive titles of *'mappas'* (population charts) have been shortened or omitted.
- [2] See Decree, Queen Maria, Palacio de N.S. da Ajuda [Lisbon], June 10, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 83, doc. 6786; JNTM to MMC, Pará, April 17, 1780, AHU-Pará, caixa 85, doc. 8951. Quote in JNTM to MMC, Pará, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará, caixa 86, doc. 7042. All translations are mine.
- [3] The 'Escriptura de venda, que faz a Cafuza Joanna Baptista, de si propria[...]', Aug. 19, 1780, is attached to JNTM to MMC, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará. It was first published in 1937 and republished in Vicente Salles, *O negro no Pará, sob o regime da escravidão* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas; Universidade Federal do Pará, 1971), 328–30 (with the contract date erroneously copied as 1789). See Carneiro da Cunha, 'Sobre a servidão voluntária: outro discurso', in *Antropologia do Brasil: mito, história, etnicidade*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Brasiliense; Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1987), 145–58, 157n. Carneiro da Cunha published another copy, dated 3 November 1781 and housed at the ANTT, in 'Sobre a servidão voluntária'. The two copies have minor variations in spellings and abbreviations. A third copy, at the IHGB, is cited by Heather Flynn Roller, 'Colonial Routes: Spatial Mobility and Community Formation in the Portuguese Amazon' (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2010), 250n67. Following Carneiro da Cunha's example, I have retained the archaic spelling of Joanna's name.
- [4] Carneiro da Cunha, 'Sobre a servidão voluntária'; and Júnia Ferreira Furtado, *Chica da Silva: A Brazilian Slave of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 113. For a brief summary, see Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, 'Para sobreviver, a escravidão por contrato', *Revista de História da Biblioteca Nacional* ano 5, no. 54 (March 2010): 22–3.
- [5] Mary C. Karasch brought Indians into discussions of women of African descent in 'Free Women of Color in Central Brazil, 1779–1832', in *Beyond Bondage: Free Women of Color in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 237–70. For a recent look at racial ideologies in Brazil, see Dossiê, 'Pureza, raça e hierarquias no Império colonial português', *Revista Tempo* 30 (2011), <http://www.historia.uff.br/tempo/site/?cat=782> (accessed 20 August, 2011).
- [6] The law is reproduced in Carlos de Araújo Moreira Neto, *Índios da Amazônia: de maioria a minoria (1750–1850)* (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1988), 152–63. For more on Indian and African slavery in the region, see Salles, *O negro no Pará*; David Graham Sweet, 'A Rich Realm of Nature Destroyed: The Middle Amazon Valley, 1640–1750' (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1974); Dauril Alden, 'Indian Versus Black Slavery in the State of Maranhão During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Bibliotheca Americana* 1, no. 3 (1983): 91–142; José Maia Bezerra Neto, *Escravidão negra na Amazônia (sécs. XVII–XIX)* (Belém: Paka-Tatu, 2001); Barbara A. Sommer, 'Colony of the Sertão: Amazonian Expeditions and the Indian Slave Trade', *The Americas* 61, no. 3 (2005): 401–28; and Rafael Chambouleyron, 'Escravos do Atlântico equatorial: tráfico negreiro para o Estado do Maranhão e Pará (século XVII e início do século XVIII)', *Revista Brasileira de História* 26, no. 52 (2006): 79–114.
- [7] JNTM to MMC, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [8] Similar to these former Indian slaves, well-studied, late-nineteenth-century freed African slaves were also forced, as 'vagrants', into the labor market. See, for example, Martha Knisely Huggins, *From Slavery to Vagrancy in Brazil* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1985), esp.

- chap. 3. On the free poor in slaveholding Brazil, see Laura de Mello e Souza, *Desclassificados do ouro: a pobreza mineira no século XVIII* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições Graal, 1982).
- [9] Monteiro, *Negros da terra: índios e bandeirantes nas origens de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994), 212.
- [10] See Daniel H. Calhoun, 'Strategy as Lived: Mixed Communities in the Age of New Nations', *American Indian Quarterly* 22, no. 1–2 (1998): 181–202.
- [11] On the shifting identities of colonial 'Indians', see Stuart B. Schwartz and Frank Salomon, 'New Peoples and New Kinds of Peoples: Adaptation, Readjustment, and Ethnogenesis in South American Indigenous Societies', in *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of South America*, vol. 3, pt. 2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- [12] FMSC, 'Plano para a civilização dos Índios na Capitania do Pará, ANRJ, códice 101, vol. 2, fols. 54r–81v, on labor, see 62v–68r. The Crown adopted most of his recommendations, see Principe, Palacio de Queluz, 12 May 1798, ANRJ, códice 101, vol. 2, fols. 48v–49r; and Principe, 12 May 1798, ANRJ, códice 101, vol. 2, fols. 49v–50.
- [13] In the historiographical literature, the discussion of Amazonian Indians' use of legal means for their own aims is extremely limited. Mark Harris noted only one example in *Rebellion on the Amazon: The Cabanagem, Race, and Popular Culture in the North of Brazil, 1798–1840* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 29n29. A number of the petitions cited in this article have been mentioned elsewhere, but with little analysis or attention to gender. Ângela Domingues cited the petitions as examples of Indians' right to seek justice, in *Quando os índios eram vassallos: colonização e relações de poder no Norte do Brasil na segunda metade do século XVIII* (Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 2000), 43n59. Petitions were also identified by Mauro Cezar Coelho, 'O Diretório dos índios e as chefias indígenas: uma inflexão', *Campos* 7, no. 1 (2006): 124–5. Heather Flynn Roller wrote up summaries and considered the petitions briefly within the context of Menezes' anti-vagrancy campaign in 'Colonial Routes', 234–8.
- [14] The *Diretório* is reproduced in Moreira Neto, *Índios da Amazônia*, 166–206. For more on the Directorate in Amazonia, see Colin MacLachlan, 'The Indian Labor Structure in the Portuguese Amazon, 1700–1800', in *Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil: Papers of the Newberry Library Conference*, ed. Dauril Alden (Berkeley: University of California, 1973), 199–230; Domingues, *Quando os índios eram vassallos*; Barbara A. Sommer, 'Negotiated Settlements: Native Amazonians and Portuguese Policy in Pará, Brazil, 1758–1798' (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 2000); Mauro Cezar Coelho, 'Do sertão para o mar – um estudo sobre a experiência portuguesa na América, a partir da Colônia: o caso do Diretório dos Índios (1751–1798)' (Ph.D. diss., University of São Paulo, 2005); and Roller, 'Colonial Routes'. Although this essay was already in the making, Roller commented that Menezes' campaign 'seems to be a completely neglected topic', in 'Colonial Routes', 233n52.
- [15] The information about Joanna and quotes from her contract are from the 'Escriptura de venda', Aug. 19, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [16] Carneiro da Cunha, 'Sobre a servidão voluntária', 146. On the practice of marrying free Indians to slaves, see Salles, *O negro no Pará*, 134–5; for 1688 Jesuit efforts to prohibit it, see Perdigoão Malheiro, *A escravidão no Brasil: ensaio histórico, jurídico, social*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. ([1867]; Petrópolis: Editora Vozes; Brasília: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1976), 1: 198.
- [17] Carneiro da Cunha, 'Sobre a servidão voluntária', 145.
- [18] Candido Mendes de Almeida, ed., *Código Philippino ou ordenações e leis do reino de Portugal recopiladas por mandado d'el-Rey D. Philippe I*, 5 vols., forward by Mário Júlio de Almeida Costa (1870; reprint, 5 vols. in 3, Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1985), Livro I, Título 58.
- [19] Bishop Caetano Brandão, 1786, quoted in Salles, *O negro no Pará*, 132.
- [20] These responsibilities dated to Roman times, see Malheiro, *A escravidão no Brasil*, 1: 70, 97.
- [21] Furtado, *Chica da Silva*, 113. Also see Salles, *O negro no Pará*, 153–6.

- [22] JNTM to MMC, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [23] Bishop of Pará to secretary of state of royal affairs, Pará, Sept. 15, 1777, AHU-Pará, caixa 77, doc. 6449; General Census, Jan. 1, 1779, [two copies] attached to JPC to the queen [D. Maria I], Pará, Feb. 29, 1780, AHU-Pará, caixa 85, doc. 6940.
- [24] Antonio Joseph de Araujo Braga to Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, Barcellos, Jan. 4, 1787, in 'Diario da Viagem Philosophica', *Revista Trimensal do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* 51 (1888): 132–66.
- [25] Furtado, *Chica da Silva*, 113. For laws concerning slaves and property, see Malheiro, *A escravidão no Brasil*, 1: 61–6.
- [26] In Pará, a male in good health fetched at least 100,000 reis. Prices in Bahia were comparable, although they were three times higher in the gold mining districts of Minas Gerais. See Salles, *O negro no Pará*, 42–3, 170; JPC to MMC, Pará, Aug. 11, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 83, doc. 6824; and Petition to queen [D. Maria I], pre-June 28, 1788, AHU-Pará, caixa 97, doc. 7747.
- [27] Domingues, *Quando os índios eram vassalos*, 182.
- [28] See Barbara A. Sommer, 'Wigs, Weapons, Tattoos, and Shoes: Getting Dressed in Colonial Amazonia and Brazil', in *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas*, ed. Mina Roces and Louise Edwards (Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2007), 200–14.
- [29] See Solange de Sampaio Godoy, *Círculo das contas: jóias de crioulas baianas; Band of Beads: Creole Jewelry from Bahia, Brazil* (Salvador: Museu Carlos Costa Pinto, 2006).
- [30] He may have been a Spanish soldier who deserted to Portuguese territory, see, for example, JNTM to MMC, Pará, April 17, 1780, AHU-Pará, caixa 85, doc. 6949, or perhaps was simply of Catalan descent.
- [31] Timothy J. Coates, *Convicts and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550–1755* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 12–16.
- [32] Today, this is the busy corner of Padre Prudêncio and Manuel Barata streets. See Antonio Rocha Penteado, *Belém – estudo de geografia urbana* (Belém: Universidade Federal do Pará, 1968), 106–7, fig. 8; Gaspar João Geraldo de Gronsfeld, 'Planta da Cidade do Pará', 1780, and Theodosio Constantino de Chermont, 'Plano Geral da Cidade do Pará[...]', 1791, in Nestor Goulart Reis, *Imagens de vilas e cidades do Brasil colonial* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo; Empresa Oficial do Estado, 2001), figs. 298 and 302; and Antônio Ladislau Monteiro Baena, *Compêndio das eras da província do Pará* (Belém: Universidade Federal do Pará, 1969), 174.
- [33] JNTM to MMC, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [34] See the discussion in Harris, *Rebellion on the Amazon*, chap. 3.
- [35] Ribeiro's comments were added to the 'Escriptura de venda', Aug. 19, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [36] Maleiro, *A escravidão no Brasil*, 1: 55; 2: 71–9.
- [37] Carneiro da Cunha, 'Sobre a servidão voluntária', 146, 152–6, quote on 156.
- [38] Sebastião José to [FXMF], Belém [Portugal], Aug. 4, 1755, in *A Amazônia na Era Pombalina: correspondência inédita do governador e capitão-general do estado do Grão-Pará e Maranhão Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, 1751–1757*, ed. Marcos Carneiro de Mendonça, 3 vols. (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, 1963), 2: 792–5.
- [39] Farage, *As muralhas dos sertões: os povos indígenas no Rio Branco e a colonização* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra; ANPOCS, 1991), 46–7.
- [40] 'Máppas das Fam.as do Estado do Grão Pará, Anno de 1778', attached to JPC to MMC, Barcellos, June 22, 1785, AHU-Rio Negro, caixa 8, doc. 355 (cross-referenced AHU-Pará, caixa 94, doc. 7509).
- [41] *Código Philippino*, Livro III, Título 42, and Livro I, Título 88, esp. 211n1 and 214.
- [42] JNTM to MMC, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [43] Director to JNTM, Cintra, July 21, 1780, APEP, códice 127, doc. 67.
- [44] Director to governor, S. Bento, Dec. 27, 1774, APEP, códice 268, doc. 113.

- [45] For more on vagrants and vagrancy, see Souza, *Desclassificados do ouro*, 51–74; *Código Filipino*, Livro V, Título 68; Janaina Amado, ‘Viajantes involuntarios: degredados portugueses para a Amazônia colonial’, *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* vol. VI (supplement) (Sept. 2000), 813–32; and Antonio Cesar de Almeida Santos, ‘Vadios e política de povoamento na América portuguesa, na segunda metade do século XVIII’, *Estudos ibero-americanos* 27, no. 2 (2001): 7–30. Pará and neighboring Maranhão, along with Portuguese Africa, became the preferred dumping grounds for exiles from 1755 to 1830, Coates, *Convicts and Orphans*, 49.
- [46] FXMF to overseas secretary, Pará, Feb. 14, 1754, AHU-Pará, caixa 36, doc. 3339. A copy of the 12 February 1754 proclamation is attached.
- [47] Proclamation, Feb. 12, 1754, AHU-Pará.
- [48] For labor demands, see Aluisio Fonseca de Castro, ‘Manuscritos sobre a Amazônia Colonial: repertório referente à mão-de-obra indígena do Fundo Secretaria do Governor (Colônial e Império)’, *Anais do Arquivo Público do Pará* 2, no. 1 (1996): 9–121. Proclamation, May 23, 1773, attached to JPC to MMC, Pará, July 29, 1773, AHU-Pará, caixa 71, doc. 6033. See also JPC to director of Conde, Pará, April 2, 1776, APEP, código 291, doc. 367.
- [49] Carta circular, JNTM to the directors, Belém do Grão Pará, June 9, 1780, IHGB, lata 283, pasta 5.
- [50] For forest Indians resettled by Menezes, see JNTM to MMC, Pará, Nov. 19, 1781, BNRJ, 4, 3, 13; No. 7, ‘Collecção de Cartas Originaes, [...] Almas de Tapuias Silvestres’, attached to [MMC] to Overseas Council, post-1783, AHU-Pará, caixa 91, doc. 7383; and Roller, ‘Colonial Routes’, chap. 3.
- [51] Petition, índia Maria Silvana to queen [D. Maria I], post-June 7, 1785, AHU-Pará, caixa 94, doc. 7507.
- [52] The officer in charge of the saltpans reported the arrival of 40 such Indians, some of whom were sick. Their houses were unfinished and he lacked manioc flour to feed them. See Domingos Ferr.a to governor, Lugar de N. Snr.a do Socoro do districto das Salinas, Nov. 9, 1780, in ‘Collecção de Cartas Originaes’, attached to [MMC] to Overseas Council, post-1783, AHU-Pará. For more on the new outposts, see JNTM to MMC, Pará, Nov. 27, 1780, AHU-Pará, caixa 87, doc. 7087; and Baena, *Compêndio das eras*, 197.
- [53] The 1778 census lists a Maria da Silva with household members matching the number and gender of children listed in this petition. She was ‘poor’, as were most of her neighbors, ‘Máppas das Fam.as [...] 1778’, AHU-Rio Negro, 71.
- [54] Petition, índia Josefa Martinha to queen [D. Maria I], pre-Feb. 4, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 82, doc. 6716. See also Souza, *Desclassificados de ouro*, 149–56.
- [55] ‘Máppas das Fam.as [...] 1778’, AHU-Rio Negro, 14, 96.
- [56] Alida C. Metcalf, ‘Women and Means: Women and Family Property in Colonial Brazil’, *Journal of Social History* 24, no. 2 (1990): 277–98.
- [57] Quote in Metcalf, ‘Women and Means’, 279–80.
- [58] Petition, índia Petronilha to queen [D. Maria I], pre-Jan. 6, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 81, doc. 6700; and pre-Sept. 7, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 83, doc. 6838; and petition, índia Madalena to queen [D. Maria I], pre-Sept. 15, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 83, doc. 6853.
- [59] Some permits were for two months, others longer, see the directors’ lists, for example, Melgaço, Feb. 4, 1774; Portel, Feb. 10, 1774; Espozende, Feb. 20, 1774; Arraiolos, Feb. 20, 1774; Oeiras, Feb. 26, 1774, APEP, código 272, docs. 41, 43, 56, 58 and 64.
- [60] Proclamations were published in 1754, 1764, 1774, 1780 and 1791, see Ciro Flamarion Cardoso, *Economia e sociedade em áreas coloniais periféricas: Guiana Francesa e Pará (1750–1817)* (Rio de Janeiro: Edição Graal, 1984), 122.
- [61] For a fraudulent petition filed in the name of an Indian woman, see commandant to FMSC, Santarém, Sept. 17, 1792, APEP, código 470, docs. 51, 52.
- [62] Petition, índia Petronilha, pre-Jan. 6, 1779, AHU-Pará.
- [63] Petition, índia Bonifácia da Silva to queen [D. Maria I], pre-Nov. 15, 1790, AHU-Pará, caixa 100, doc. 7936.

- [64] Paraense Indian girls were apparently placed with wealthy whites, as were orphans in north-eastern Brazil a century later. See Joan Meznar, 'Orphans and the Transition from Slave to Free Labor in Northeast Brazil: The Case of Campina Grande, 1850–1888', *Journal of Social History* 27, no. 2 (1994): 499–515. In Portugal, orphanages existed by this time, see Coates, *Convicts and Orphans*, 126–34.
- [65] Malheiro, *A escravidão no Brasil*, 220.
- [66] Petition, Josefa Martinha, pre-Feb. 4, 1779, AHU-Pará.
- [67] 'Escriptura de venda', Aug. 19, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [68] João de Palma Muniz, 'Limites Municipaes do Estado do Pará', *Annaes da Biblioteca e Archivo Publico do Pará* 9 (1916): 132.
- [69] Director to JPC, Baião, Sept. 25, 1775, APEP, código 283, doc. 113.
- [70] Director to JPC, Baião, April 2, 1776, APEP, código 298, docs. 78 and 79. For another mixed-race maroon, see judge to governor, Cameté, Apr. 10, 1777, APEP, código 276, doc. 84. For more on Indian absenteeism and migration, see Sommer, 'Negotiated Settlements', chap. 4; and Roller, 'Colonial Routes', chap. 4. On runaway African slaves, see Flávio dos Santos Gomes, 'A "Safe Haven": Runaway Slaves, *Mocambos*, and Borders in Colonial Amazonia, Brazil', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82, no. 3 (2002): 469–98.
- [71] Director to JPC, Baião, Sept. 25, 1775, APEP. See the response, JPC to director of Baião, Pará, Nov. 22, 1775, APEP, código 291, doc. 160, fol. 61r.
- [72] This 'rich' Cameté merchant had over 20 people in his household, including servants and slaves, 'Máppas das Fam.as [...] 1778', AHU-Rio Negro, 121. For Monteiro's tribulations after the schoolmaster's son seduced his servant, see Barbara A. Sommer, 'Cupid on the Amazon: Sexual Witchcraft and Society in Late-Colonial Pará, Brazil', *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 12, no. 4 (2003): 415–46.
- [73] This preference challenges the anti-settler bias in some older studies, for example, John Hemming, *Amazon Frontier: The Defeat of the Brazilian Indians* (London: MacMillan, 1987), 51. Mistreatment was common, however, see, for example, director to governor, Bragança, March 31, 1776, APEP, código 298, doc. 117.
- [74] Lists of absentees, Sept. 29, 1775, and July 23, 1778, APEP, código 283, doc. 113, and código 331, doc. 12.
- [75] Director to governor, Baião, Dec. 9, 1784, APEP, código 408, doc. 111.
- [76] One man reportedly fled his village with his wife and her sister – he killed his wife and then scuttled from town to town, stealing. Director to governor, Frágoso, March 11, 1778, APEP, código 331, doc. 29. A Mexican official noted that while vagrancy could be combated by drafting men into the military or construction, women posed a problem. See Juan Javier Pescador, 'Vanishing Woman: Female Migration and Ethnic Identity in Late-Colonial Mexico City', *Ethnohistory* 42, no. 4 (1995): 623. In Brazil, men were similarly drafted into the military, see Souza, *Desclassificados de ouro*, 84–90.
- [77] Quoted in Amado, 'Viajantes involuntarios', 824. Mendonça Furtado's comment reflects the failed hopes of authorities who envisioned the women increasing the European population in fringe areas. See Coates, *Convicts and Orphans*, 79, 83–5, 122.
- [78] Souza, *Desclassificados de ouro*, 180–4.
- [79] Bishop of Pará to FXME, Pará, Jan. 31, 1756, in *A Amazônia na Era Pombalina*, 3: 905–6.
- [80] Baena, *Compêndio das Eras*, 200.
- [81] 'Máppas das Fam.as [...] 1778', AHU-Rio Negro.
- [82] Alida C. Metcalf, *Family and Frontier in Colonial Brazil: Santana de Parnaíba, 1580–1822* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 145. Cf. Donald Ramos, 'From Minho to Minas: The Portuguese Roots of the Mineiro Family', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73, no. 4 (1993): 639–62; Donald Ramos, 'Marriage and the Family in Colonial Vila Rica', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 55, no. 2 (1975), 200–25; and Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, 'Household Composition and Headship as Related to Changes in Mode of Production: São

- Paulo 1765–1836’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, no. 1 (1980): 78–108. The census for the North did not include Directorate Indians or any detailed information about employees or slaves – these were listed as members of the patriarchal family headed by their employer or master.
- [83] ‘Máppas das Fam.as [...] 1778’, AHU-Rio Negro, 38, 39, 104, 197.
- [84] Carneiro da Cunha, ‘Sobre a servidão voluntária’, 149.
- [85] See David G. Sweet, ‘Francisca: Indian Slave’, in *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America*, ed. David G. Sweet and Gary B. Nash (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 274–91.
- [86] Sandra Lauderdale Graham coined the term ‘juridical culture’ as an alternative to ‘notarial culture’, so as to include a broader range of intermediaries, in ‘Writing from the Margins: Brazilian Slaves and Written Culture’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 3 (2007): 611–36, esp. 617.
- [87] Petitions were filed, but the governor apparently ignored them. Three sisters petitioned the Crown for Indians ‘violently’ removed from their home and shipped to the new settlements ‘from which they fled’. After Menezes’ departure, the sisters filed a second petition, which was granted in May of 1784, because the first, although approved, had been ‘lost’. Petition and list attached to MSA to queen [D. Maria I], Pará, Sept. 9, 1784, AHU-Pará, caixa 93, doc. 7444.
- [88] JNTM to MMC, Aug. 21, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [89] Decree, Queen Maria I, Palacio de Nossa Senhora de Ajuda, Nov. 3, 1780, AHU-Pará, caixa 86, doc. 7066. Ribeiro died shortly thereafter, see Antonio Gomes de Araujo, Belém do Pará, Dec. 13, 1781, attached to chief magistrate to queen [D. Maria I], Pará, March 22, 1784, AHU-Pará, caixa 92, doc. 7401, no. 9, fol. 25.
- [90] The count of 4309 Indians made by the man who issued their daily rations is likely inflated. Captain of the volunteer infantry, Pará, Nov. 6, 1782, ‘Documentos sobre a regular Administração [...]’, no. 18, attached to [MMC] to Overseas Council [post-1783], AHU-Pará.
- [91] Copy, district magistrate to [MMC], Pará, Aug. 26, 1781, attached to [MMC] to Overseas Council [post-1783], AHU-Pará.
- [92] See, for example, JNTM to MMC, Pará, Nov. 28, 1780, ANRJ, código 99, vol. 5, fols. 105r–108v. Investigations into Peixoto’s conduct are in Ribeiro to queen, Pará, March 22, 1784, AHU-Pará. The previous governor complained about Peixoto and the chief magistrate, see JPC to queen [D. Maria I], Pará, Aug. 11, 1779, AHU-Pará, caixa 83, doc. 6826.
- [93] Testimony of José Correa de Lacerda, Dec. 15, 1784, attached to Ribeiro to queen, March 22, 1784, AHU-Pará.
- [94] See Barbara A. Sommer, ‘Adquirindo e defendendo os privilégios concedidos pela Coroa no Norte do Brasil’, trans. Ana Letícia Fauri, in *Raízes do Privilégio: mobilidade social no mundo ibérico do Antigo Regime*, org. Rodrigo Bentes Monteiro et al., 617–38 (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2011).
- [95] ‘Treslado dos Autos [...] contra Jozé Correa de Lacerda [...] Pará 1781’, attached to [MMC] to Overseas Council [post-1783], AHU-Pará.
- [96] For another complaint, see designer of royal works to MMC, Pará, Nov. 23, 1782, AHU-Pará, caixa 89, doc. 7269. For more on Noronha, see Manoel Barata, *Formação Histórica do Pará* (Belém: Universidade Federal do Pará, 1973), 65–6.
- [97] Jozé Monteiro de Noronha, Pará, Nov. 23, 1782, N.º 1.º ‘Documentos Pessoaes, em abono do Comportamento [...] daquelle Governo’, no. 8, attached to [MMC] to Overseas Council [post-1783], AHU-Pará.
- [98] See, for example, Population rolls in APEP, códigos 301, and 408.
- [99] Census, Directorate Indians, 1783 and 1784, ANRJ, código 99, vol. 6, fol. 23r.
- [100] Baena, *Compêndio das Eras*, 197, 200–1.
- [101] JNTM to MMC, Pará, Nov. 27, 1780, AHU-Pará.
- [102] Census, Directorate Indians, Jan. 1, 1792, BNRJ, I-17,12,2.

- [103] See, for example, Florentino da Sylveira Frade, Salvaterra, Aug. 14, 1787, APEP, código 365, doc. 57. No significant urban gender imbalance is indicated in the 1785 census except in Vigia where free women outnumbered men 979 to 715. Not all Indian women preferred domestic employment: a young woman who had grown 'bored' working for a widow refused to work for her again. She was sent to Menezes to plead her case. See Florentino da Sylveira Frade to JNTM, Monforte, Dec. 16, 1780, APEP, código 365, doc. 23.
- [104] FMSC to queen [D. Maria I], Pará, March 22, 1791, AHU-Pará, caixa 100, doc. 7963.
- [105] Census, Directorate Indians, 1783 and 1784, ANRJ. Robin Anderson cited 21,849 in 1783 as the highest in 'Following Curupira: Colonization and Migration in Pará, 1758–1930, as a study in settlement of the humid tropics' (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Davis, 1976), 127, Table II, 128.
- [106] 'Condiçoens, com que são concedidos aos Particulares os Indios Silvestres dos Novos Descimentos', Pará, July 1, 1782, ANRJ, código 99, vol. 5, fols. 282v–85r.