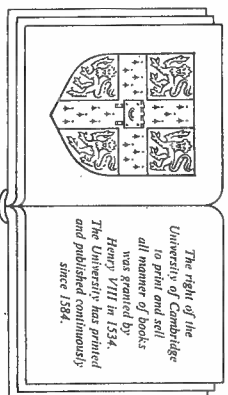


COLONIAL BRAZIL

edited by

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LATE COLONIAL BRAZIL, 1750-1808

If the years 1808-22, following the dramatic arrival of the Portuguese court at Rio de Janeiro, are considered for Brazil a period of transition from colony to independent empire, then the years 1750-1808 may be regarded as the last phase of Brazil's colonial experience. The era began as the mining boom was reaching its zenith; then, quite unexpectedly, the boom was over and an extended depression ensued. But Brazilians readjusted to the decline of the mineral sector by returning to agriculture, their traditional source of wealth. The result for coastal Brazil (but not the interior) was several decades of renewed prosperity based, in part, upon an expansion in the production of traditional staples, particularly sugar and tobacco, but also upon the development of new exports, especially cotton and rice, as well as cacao, coffee, and indigo. That recovery was accomplished without any fundamental improvements in technology or alterations in the patterns of land tenure, but through the growth of old and new markets and an intensified reliance upon slave labour. During this period Brazil accepted without protest the crown's decision to expel her most respected missionary order (the Jesuits) and to restrict the role of the remaining religious bodies. Portugal fought and lost two wars to secure Brazil's southern boundaries, but a third conflict (1801) gained Brazil rich agricultural and pastoral lands in the temperate south. Colonial Brazil had reached her territorial limits.¹ Though she virtually ignored the first American Revolution, Brazil became far more aware of the French Revolution. Not only did Europe's subsequent maritime wars open up new markets for Brazilian products but the Revolution's ideological underpinnings and its successes inspired the first serious

separatist conspiracies in several parts of the colony. Even though those movements were rigorously repressed, the call for reforms of the so-called colonial pact binding Brazil to Portugal became more insistent. The urgency for change became irresistible in 1807-8, when the Portuguese government found itself unable to withstand competing Anglo-French pressures and fled to the security offered by its richest and most populous colony.

DEMOGRAPHY

By the 1770s it becomes possible for the first time to obtain sufficient information to estimate the size and distribution of Brazil's population. In 1776 the colonial minister directed secular and ecclesiastical authorities throughout the colony to join together to provide complete counts of their inhabitants according to age and sex, but not, unfortunately, race. The crown's motives were obviously the traditional ones, those of determining the number of men capable of bearing arms and evaluating the number of potential taxpayers. In pursuance of that order, local officials (militia commanders and parish priests) compiled data from the *lista de desobrigas*, the parish register of persons receiving communion at Easter. Since that register excluded children under seven, their number was determined by actual count or (more likely) by estimate. The parish counts (*mapas particulares*) were forwarded to district officers; they sent condensed reports to their superiors, who restricted consolidated tabulations to the crown.

Such reports were supposed to be submitted to Lisbon annually, but with the exception of the captaincy of São Paulo they were seldom prepared so regularly. Many of the reports have been lost; others remain in the archives awaiting scholarly analysis. But a sufficient number have been gathered to permit estimates to be made of late colonial Brazil's population at two points in time. One clustering ranges from 1772 to 1782 and centres on 1776; the other spans the years 1797-1810, though most of the data reported for the latter year were compiled somewhat earlier, so that 1800 becomes a reasonable benchmark. The distribution of Brazil's enumerated inhabitants c. 1776 and c. 1800 is indicated in tables 1 and 2.

Several observations arise from these tables and the sources from which they are derived. First, it is evident that the census-takers substantially underestimated the number of children below the age of

¹ See D. Alden, *Royal government in colonial Brazil* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), pt. 2; also ch. 6 above.

Table 1 *Distribution of the population of Brazil, c. 1776*

Captaincy	Number of inhabitants	Percentage
Rio Negro	10,386	0.6
Pará	55,315	3.5
Maranhão	47,410	3.0
Piauí	26,410	1.7
Pernambuco	239,713	15.4
Parafba	52,468	3.4
Rio Grande do Norte	23,812	1.5
Ceará	61,408	3.9
Bahia	288,848	18.5
Rio de Janeiro	215,678	13.8
Santa Catarina	10,000	0.6
Rio Grande do Sul	20,309	1.3
São Paulo	116,975	7.5
Minas Gerais	319,769	20.5
Goiás	55,514	3.5
Mato Grosso	20,966	1.3
Totals	1,555,200	100.0

Source: D. Alden, 'The population of Brazil in the late eighteenth century: a preliminary survey', *Hispanic American Historical Review* [HAHR], 43/2 (May 1963), 173-205.

fifteen. More will be said later about the consequences of such under-enumeration. Second, many Indians (estimated by one contemporary at 250,000) who were beyond the pale of Portuguese authority, especially within the Amazon basin, Goiás, Piauí, and Mato Grosso, were not counted; nor does it seem possible to provide any reliable approximation of their numbers. Third, in spite of repeated land 'rushes' to the mineral and pastoral lands of the interior west and south, during the eighteenth century, most of the enumerated population (78.8 per cent in 1776 and 73.4 per cent c. 1800) was still concentrated around the principal ports and hinterlands of the coastal captaincies, especially in the traditional staple export centres of Parafba, Pernambuco, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro, which contained more than half (51.1 per cent) of Brazil's recorded inhabitants in 1776 and 46.8 per cent c. 1800. Fourth, with minor exceptions, the general pattern of the distribution of Brazil's population did not change significantly during the last decades of the colonial period: the rank order of the captaincies was about the same in 1800 as it had been a quarter-century earlier. Fifth, while the urban

Table 2 *Distribution of the population of Brazil, c. 1800*

Captaincy	Date of report	Number of inhabitants	% of total population	Source
Rio Negro/Pará	1801	80,000	3.8	A
Maranhão	1798	78,860	3.8	A
Piauí	1799	51,721	2.5	B
Pernambuco	1810	391,986	19.0	C
Parafba	1810	79,424	3.8	C
Rio Grande do Norte	1810	49,391	2.4	C
Ceará	1808	125,764	6.1	D
Bahia	1799	247,000	11.9	E
Rio de Janeiro	1803/1810	249,883	12.1	F
Santa Catarina	1797	23,865	1.2	G
Rio Grande do Sul	1802	38,418	1.8	H
São Paulo	1797	158,450	7.5	I
Minas Gerais	1805	407,004	19.7	J
Goiás	1804	52,076	2.5	K
Mato Grosso	1800	27,690	1.3	L
Totals		2,061,657	99.4	

Source: A: Colin M. MacLachlan, 'African slave trade and economic development in Amazonia, 1700-1800', in R. B. Toplin (ed.), *Slavery and race relations in Latin America* (Westport, 1974), 136. B: F. A. Pereira da Costa, *Chronologia histórica do estado do Piauí desde os seus primeiros tempos até...1889* (Recife), 1909, 109. C: Enclosure in Lord Strangford to Marquis of Wellesley, Rio de Janeiro, 20 May 1810, PRO, FO 63/84/ERD/225 (copy courtesy of Dr F. W. O. Morton). D: Luiz Barba Alardo de Menezes, 'Memória sobre a capitania do Ceará', [1808], *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* [RIHGB], 34 (1871), 276, table 3. E: Luiz dos Santos Vilhena, *Relação de notícias soteropolitanas e brasilienses... em XX cartas*, ed. Bráz do Amaral (3 vols., Bahia, 1921), II, 481. F: The data for the city of Rio de Janeiro is based on an 1803 census in Strangford to Wellesley, C above. Also included is the subordinate captaincy of Espírito Santo, but I have deducted data for Santa Catarina. G: João Alberto de Miranda Ribeiro, 'Dados estatísticos sobre... Santa Catarina, 1797', *Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* [BNRJ], II-35, 30, 3. The census of 1810 (C) gives 31,911. H: 'Mapa de todos os habitantes da capitania do Rio Grande de São Pedro do Sul... 1802', Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Lisbon), papéis avulsos (miscellaneous papers) [AHU/PA], Rio Grande do Sul, caixa 1. I have added to the existing total the uncounted 1,697 infants under one year. I: 'Mapa geral dos habitantes da capitania de S. Paulo no anno de 1797', Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo, *Publicação oficial de documentos interessantes para a história e costumes de São Paulo* [DJI], 31 (1901), 151-5, 157. J: A. J. R. Russell-Wood, 'Colonial Brazil', in David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene (eds.), *Neither Slave nor Free* (Baltimore, 1972), 97. K: Luis Antonio da Silva e Sousa, 'Memória... de Goiás' [1812], RIHGB, 12 (2nd edn, 1874), 482-94. L: Caetano Pinto de Miranda Monte Negro to Visconde de Anadia, 17 April 1802, RIHGB, 28/1 (1865), 125-7.

Table 3 *Estimates and counts of principal Brazilian cities, 1749-1810*

City	Date	Number of	
		inhabitants	
Belém, Pará	1749	6,574	
	1788	10,620	
São Luís, Maranhão	1801	12,500	
	1757	7,162	
Recife, Pernambuco	1810	20,500	
	1750	7,000	
Salvador, Bahia	1776	18,207	
	1782	17,934	
Rio de Janeiro	1810	25,000	
	1757	35,922	
São Paulo	1775	36,393	
	1780	39,209	
Porte Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul	1807	51,000	
	1760	30,000	
Oeiras, Piauí	1780	38,707	
	1799	43,376	
Vila Boa, Goiás	1803	46,944	
	1765	20,873	
Vila Bela, Mato Grosso	1798	21,504	
	1803	24,311	
Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais	1808	6,035	
	1762	1,120	
	1810	2,000	
	1804	9,477	
	1782	7,000	
	1740s	20,000	
	1804	7,000	

Sources: Belém: J. R. do Amaral Lapa, *Livro da visitação do santo officio da inquisição ao estado do Grão Pará* (Petrópolis, 1978), 38. São Luís: AHU/PA/Maranhão, caixa 37; RIHGB, 17 (1854), 64. Recife: *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* [ABNRL], 28 (1908), 407; José Ribeiro Júnior, 'Subsídios para o estudo da geografia e demografia histórica do nordeste brasileiro', *Anais de História* (Marília, 1970), vol. II, 156-7; ABNRL, 40 (1918), 102. Salvador: Thales de Azevedo, *Povoamento da cidade do Salvador* (2nd edn, São Paulo, 1955), 192; Vilhena, *Cartas*, II, map facing 480; Russell Wood, 'Colonial Brazil', 97. Rio de Janeiro: Eulália Maria Lahmeyer Lobo, *História do Rio de Janeiro*, I (Rio de Janeiro, 1978), 55; RIHGB, 47/1 (1884), 27; *ibid.*, 21 (1858), table facing 176; PRO, FO 63/84/ERD/2255, Strangford to Wellesley, 20 May 1810. São Paulo: Maria Luiza Marcilio, *La ville de São Paulo* (Paris, 1968), 119. Porto Alegre: RIHGB, 30/1 (1867), 69. Oeiras: Domingos Barreira de Macedo, 'Cenço das casas proprias e de aluguer q. occupa os moradores da cidade de Oeiras...', Sept. 1764, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon) [ANTT], Ministério do Reino, maço 601; RIHGB, 17 (1854), 56. Vila Boa: RIHGB, 12 (2nd edn, 1874), 482f. Vila Bela: José Roberto do Amaral Lapa, 'Ciclo vital de um polo urbano: Vila Bela (1751-1820)', *Anais do VII simpósio nacional dos professores universitários de história* (São Paulo, 1974), 315. Ouro Preto: Donald Ramos, 'Vila Rica: profile of a colonial Brazilian urban

history of late colonial Brazil remains to be written, it is evident that the processes of urbanization were much more advanced in some parts of Brazil than in others. In the captaincy of Bahia, for example, 170,489 out of an estimated 193,598 persons in 1780 lived in the capital city, its immediate suburbs, and eight towns around the Bay of All Saints. By contrast, the average size of 36 municipalities in the captaincy of Rio de Janeiro (excluding the capital) was only 1,625 in the late 1770s. One further example: the 1782 census of Pernambuco reported that there were 169,043 persons living in 25 municipalities of the district (*comarca*) that included the captaincy's capital (Olinda) and its chief port (Recife), an average of 6,761 persons per community; but in the captaincy's other *comarcas*, where there were twenty communities, the average fell by more than half, to 3,035.

Table 3 summarizes various contemporary counts and estimates of the size of Brazil's principal cities and towns during the last decades of colonial rule. All are low, in most instances excluding small children (0-7 years) and in some cases slaves as well. It is evident that throughout these years Salvador, the colonial capital until 1763, still retained a lead over its rival and successor, Rio de Janeiro, but that lead was to disappear during the years 1808-22, when Rio's population doubled. But whereas Salvador and its satellite communities claimed a large share of the captaincy of Bahia's inhabitants, that was untrue of other cities such as São Paulo. The city of São Paulo grew surprisingly little between 1765 and 1803. Moreover, while one in every four persons in the captaincy of São Paulo lived in its capital city in 1765, that proportion fell to one in eight by 1803, reflecting the growth of towns of intermediate size during the economic growth of the last colonial decades. While evidence is sparse, the seaports seem to have continued to increase more rapidly than did interior towns, the most notable of which, Ouro Preto, suffered a loss of more than half of its population after the mid-century because of the decline of the mining industry. Although colonial Brazil has generally been depicted as a distinctly rural colony, its leading cities were impressive for their size, if not for their beauty, cleanliness, or safety. By the mid 1770s Salvador was larger than every city in English colonial America save Philadelphia (pop. 40,000 in 1775) and possessed a larger population than did Bristol, Liverpool, Birmingham, or Manchester. Recife, only the fourth ranking city in Brazil, was then larger than Boston (25,000 in 1775), the third largest in English America, and very likely Rio de Janeiro was larger than

Table 4 *Racial composition of Brazil at the end of the colonial period*

Place	Percentage				Total
	Whites	Mulattos and Free	Slaves	Indians	
Pará ^a			23	20	80,000
Maranhão ^b	31	17.3	46	5	78,860
Piauí	21.8	18.4	36.2	23.6	58,962
Goias	12.5	36.2	46.2	5.2	55,422
Maro Grosso ^c	15.8			3.8	26,836
Pernambuco	28.5	42	26.2	3.2	391,986
Bahia	19.8	31.6	47	1.5	359,437
Rio de Janeiro ^d	33.6	18.4	45.9	2	229,582
Minas Gerais	23.6	33.7	40.9	1.8	494,759
São Paulo	56	25	16	3	208,807
Rio Grande do Sul ^e	40.4	21	5.5	34	66,420
Average for eight jurisdictions ^f	28.0	27.8	38.1	5.7	

Source: PRO, FO 63/84/ERD/2235, Strangford to Wellesley, 20 May 1810.

^a Not included in source. See MacLachlan, 'African slave trade', 136, where it is reported that 57% consisted of free persons. ^b Not included in source. I have substituted data derived from the census of 1801 cited in *ibid.* ^c Not included in source. I have used the census of 1800 (RIHGB, 28/1 (1865), 125-7), which gives 53.2% as *pretos* and 27.2% as mulattos, but does not distinguish between slaves and free persons. ^d Based on the 1803 census for the city and later counts for the captaincy. Espírito Santo and Santa Catarina excluded. ^e Data defective. See text. ^f Except Maro Grosso, Pará, Rio Grande do Sul.

pre-revolutionary New York (25,000 in 1775). At the turn of the century Rio was growing at the impressive rate of 9.2 per cent per year.²

When the crown began to require regular census counts in 1776, it did not stipulate that racial distinctions be included. However, some governors, especially those who administered captaincies where there were large numbers of slaves, did ask for such information themselves. Some of the resulting tabulations distinguished Brazil's four primary

² See Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in revolt. Urban life in America 1743-1776* (reprint, New York, 1964), 216 and 217 n. 4, and Jacob M. Price, 'Economic function and growth of American port towns in the eighteenth century', *Perspectives in American History*, 7 (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), 176-7. Cf. Gary B. Nash, *The urban crucible: social change, political consciousness, and the origins of the American revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), 407-9. Nash provides substantially lower estimates than Bridenbaugh or Price and makes the contrast between the largest English and Portuguese colonial cities appear even greater. For the 1799 census of the city of Rio de Janeiro, see RIHGB, 21 (1858), table facing 176; that of 1803 is cited in table 2, source C.

racial strains: whites, i.e., persons socially accepted as Caucasians; *pardos*, or mulattos; *pretos*, or blacks; and Indians within effective Portuguese control. But other reports only differentiated between freemen and slaves. Since Indian slavery was officially (though not always in practice) abolished in the 1750s, it is evident that all slaves enumerated were persons of African origin, whether or not Brazilian-born, but what proportion of the slaves were black or brown is hard to say. Though we possess one or more censuses that do identify racial elements in one or another part of Brazil during the late eighteenth century, we do not have sufficient reports with comparable classifications for any decade to be able to generalize about the racial composition of Brazil as a whole.

Fortunately, soon after the arrival of the Portuguese court, the ministry of the interior did compile a census in which racial distinctions were included for major Brazilian captaincies. The results, as reported by Lord Strangford, the British minister at Rio de Janeiro, to his government in 1810, are summarized in table 4, which also includes somewhat earlier counts for captaincies missing in the Strangford dispatch. As table 4 demonstrates, nearly two-thirds of Brazil's population at that time was of African origin (blacks and mulattos), and there appear to have been more free persons of colour than whites in the colony. Regrettably, the ministerial census did not distinguish between mulatto and black freemen, but what we know from other studies suggests that six or seven out of every ten free persons of colour were mulattos, making them probably the most rapidly growing racial element in Brazil.

It is interesting to compare the racial data reported by Strangford with that derived from some of the censuses of the 1770s. In the far north the percentage of free persons (described as 'whites, mulattos, and other mixtures as well as... blacks') in Pará increased during the last three decades of the eighteenth century from 44.8 to 57, but in neighbouring Maranhão the percentage of free persons fell slightly (from 32.4 to 31). The racial composition of two of the most important sugar captaincies, Pernambuco and Bahia, is lacking in the earlier censuses, but the ministerial report shows a striking contrast: in Pernambuco there were substantially more free persons of colour than slaves; while the reverse was true in Bahia. As for the third-ranking sugar captaincy, Rio de Janeiro, in 1780 the percentage of free persons was almost equal to that of slaves (50.7 to 49.3), but the 1799 census reveals that the percentage of free persons had grown to 65.5. São Paulo was one of two captaincies

where whites appear to have predominated numerically, though their percentage fell from 56.4 in the 1770s to 50.8 c. 1810. The racial data Strangford reported for Rio Grande do Sul does not accord with that contained in the censuses of 1798 and 1802, and the discrepancy must be due to clerical error. Those more detailed censuses indicate that whites comprised between 57.7 and 55 per cent of the population, compared with free persons of colour (5.5–6 per cent), slaves (34.5–35.5 per cent) and Indians (2.3–3.4 per cent). As might be expected, the interior captaincies were the least attractive to whites; coloured majorities predominated everywhere.

Since the censuses of the late colonial period are deficient by modern standards, it is not surprising that scholars differ as to the actual size of Brazil's population during these years. The evidence summarized here suggests that by about 1800 Brazil possessed more than two but less than three million inhabitants. Such a conclusion suggests several additional observations. First, by the turn of the nineteenth century Brazil held nearly as many people as did Portugal, whose population in 1798 stood at between three and three and a half million;³ by contrast, Spanish America's population then outnumbered that of Spain by about 50 per cent. Second, it appears that during the course of the eighteenth century Brazil's population had grown between 2.5 and four times; however, what percentage of that growth was due to natural increase as opposed to immigration from Portugal or from Africa is impossible to say, though for the late colonial decades we do have far more abundant data concerning the volume of the slave trade than for earlier periods.

Brazil received its slaves from a number of African sources. Guiné, a major supplier during the sixteenth century, was only a minor source in the eighteenth, except for the Pará and Maranhão markets, which obtained nearly 70 per cent of their slaves from the ports of Bissau and Cacheu during the years 1757–77. Both the northerners and Mineiro gold miners preferred Guiné or Mina slaves over Angolan because they were considered more capable of withstanding hard labour. Bahians also favoured slaves from the Mina coast, i.e., four ports along the Dahomey littoral. They were able to exchange Bahian tobacco, sugar brandy (*cachaça*) and — illicitly — gold for slaves. After the Mina coast trade declined in the mid 1770s, the Bahian demand shifted mainly to the Bight of Benin. Rio de Janeiro drew the bulk of its slaves from the ports of

Luanda and Benguela in Angola, which is believed to have been the source of 70 per cent of the slaves sent to eighteenth-century Brazil.

Contemporary estimates of the number of slaves entering Brazil exceed those of modern scholars. Writing in 1781, the Bahian economic thinker, José da Silva Lisboa, advised his former mentor, Dr Domingos Vandelli, head of the royal botanical gardens in Lisbon, that Brazil imported more than 25,000 slaves a year. A decade later a Spanish agent of the British government stated that 19,800 slaves annually entered the three major Brazilian ports — Recife, Salvador, and Rio de Janeiro.⁴ Neither informant provided sources to support his estimate and because of fraud, contraband, clerical errors, the frequent practice of counting several slaves as portions of a prime slave (a male in good health aged fifteen to 25), and scholarly differences over numerical proximates for slave tax records, as well as incomplete or missing documents, it is impossible to be certain how many slaves really did reach Brazilian ports during this period. Table 5 summarizes the best information that we possess concerning the volume and fluctuations in the slave trade.

Neither the figures offered here nor those of the well-known demographer of the slave trade, Philip D. Curtin, in his *The Atlantic slave trade: a census* (Madison, 1969), are complete. Curtin relies mainly on Maurício Goulart, a Brazilian scholar who ignored northern Brazil and was sketchy on Pernambuco's imports. Both Curtin and Goulart ignore shipments from Guiné and Benin. But there are lacunae in our estimates as well. No reliable data have yet been found for Belém or São Luís at the beginning of the period, nor for Bahia or Rio de Janeiro in the late 1770s, nor for Pernambuco during the last fifteen years of the eighteenth century. Except for the years 1801–5, the estimates proposed here are lower than Curtin's, though they are based upon a wider array of sources. Still, the same general trends are observable: slave imports fell during the 1760s and continued to do so during the 1770s, reflecting the economic crisis of these decades; then came a revival in the 1780s, mirroring the growth of staple exports, which continued to expand, as did the slave trade, for the rest of this period.

If our knowledge of the number of slaves brought to late colonial Brazil remains incomplete, it is even more deficient with respect to the

³ *A população de Portugal em 1798. O censo de Pina Manique* (Paris, 1970), introd. Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão.

⁴ Lisboa to Vandelli, 18 October 1781, *ABNRJ*, 32 (1914), 501; 'Copia del papel que de a Dn Josef de Siqueira y Palma en respuesta de las preguntas que me hizo...', Madrid, 12 December 1791, British Library, Add. MS 15985, fo. 248r.

Table 5 Estimates of annual slave imports into Brazil, by port of entry, 1750-1805 ('000)

Inclusive dates	Belém do Pará		São Luis do Maranhão		Recife de Pernambuco		Bahia de Todos os Santos		Rio de Janeiro		Total	Curtin's estimates
	Pará	Belém	Maranhão	São Luis	Pernambuco	Recife	Todos os Santos	Bahia de	Rio de	de Janeiro		
1750-55	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.7	1.7	9.1	5.5	16.3+	16.0		
1756-60	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.7	2.7	3.6	6.4	13.9	16.0		
1761-65	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.4	2.4	3.3	8.6	15.5	16.5		
1766-70	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.4	2.4	2.6	7.8	14.0	16.5		
1771-75	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.4	2.4	2.5	6.7?	12.6	16.1		
1776-79	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.4	2.4	4.0?	6.0?	13.5	16.1		
1780-85	0.6	0.6	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.4	9.2	14.4	17.8		
1786-90	0.6	0.6	1.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	8.9	13.7+	17.8		
1791-94	0.3	0.3	1.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.4	8.9	14.2+	22.2		
1795-1800	0.5	0.5	1.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4.4	10.0	16.6+	22.2		
1801-05	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	5.3	10.5	21.6	20.6		

Sources: Pará: 'Recapitulação dos dois mapas dos escravos introduzidos pela companhia geral do Grão Pará e Maranhão... 1757 até 1777', AHU/PA/Pará, caixa 39; MacLachlan, 'African slave trade', 137; Joseph C. Miller, 'Legal Portuguese slaving from Angola. Some preliminary indications of volume and direction, 1760-1830', *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Ombre-Mer*, 62 (1975), 171. Maranhão: 'Recapitulação dos dois mapas...'; MacLachlan, 139; Miller, 171. Pernambuco: 'Parallelo dos escravos que ficaram em Pernambuco de 10 annos antes do estabelecimento da companhia, com os 10 annos primeiros da mesma companhia...'; Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Lisbon), codex series [AHU/CU/cod.] 1821, n. 13; António Carneira, *As companhias pombeiras de navegação, commercio e tráfico de escravos entre a costa africana e o nordeste brasileiro* (Bissau, 1969), 261; Miller, 171. Bahia: 'Relação dos escravos vindos da costa da Mina, desde o 1.º de janeiro de 1750 até o último de dezembro de 1755', Arquivo Público da Bahia, ordens régias (royal dispatches) [APB/OR], 54/83; P. Verger, *Flux et reflux de la traite des nègres entre le golfe de Bénin et Bahía de Todos os Santos du XVIII^e au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 1968), 664; K. David Patterson, 'A note on slave exports from the costa da Mina, 1760-1770', *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire*, 33/2 (1971), 252; Carneira, 280-1; Biblioteca Nacional, Lisbon [BNL], cod. 6936; Miller, 170; Maurício Goulart, *Escravidão africana no Brasil* (3rd edn, São Paulo, 1975), 212-15. Rio de Janeiro: Cordeiro Medeiros dos Santos, 'Relações de Angola com o Rio de Janeiro (1756-1808)', *Estudos Históricos*, 12 (Marília, 1973), 19-20; Herbert S. Klein, *The Middle Passage: comparative studies in the Atlantic slave trade* (Princeton, 1978), 28 and 55; Miller, 169.

internal slave trade, i.e. the numbers of slaves admitted to one port and later transhipped to destinations elsewhere. During the first half of the eighteenth century the *câmaras* (municipal councils) of the north-eastern sugar captaincies constantly complained of shortages of slaves because of the re-export of new arrivals to the mining zones. Such complaints

continued during the later decades. In 1754, for example, the *câmara* of Salvador protested that dealers in Rio de Janeiro and Salvador sold the best slaves to the premium markets of the interior, leaving only the refuse for local buyers. During the years 1750-9, 61.2 per cent (13,385) of the slaves brought to Pernambuco were subsequently forwarded to Rio de Janeiro for sale in the mines. But of the 21,299 slaves landed at Pernambuco between 1761 and 1770, only 1,653 (7.7 per cent) were reshipped to Rio, reflecting an upswing in the plantation economy of Pernambuco as well as a decline in the mining districts. Rio de Janeiro was the entrepot not only for slaves sold to buyers in that captaincy but also for those sent to São Paulo, Mato Grosso, and especially Minas Gerais. In 1756, for example, 3,456 slaves (37.5 per cent of those arriving at Rio that year) passed the Paraíba checkpoint en route to Minas Gerais; in 1780 a well-informed magistrate reported that about 4,000 slaves a year, presumably including those smuggled, entered Minas from Rio. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Rio Grande do Sul, by then a prosperous agricultural and stock-raising captaincy, received 452 slaves from Rio de Janeiro and another 66 from Bahia; a few years later it took 515 from Rio de Janeiro, 28 from Bahia, and two from Pernambuco.⁵ Though there is much more to be learned about slavery and the slave trade in colonial Brazil, it seems unlikely that the upswing in the trade at the end of our period significantly altered the magnitude of the population estimates offered here.

THE EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS

The expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759 constituted the first serious crisis to beset Brazil during the late colonial period. Since the first members of the Society of Jesus had entered Brazil with the founders of royal government in 1549, the Jesuits had become the premier missionary order in the colony. Their missions extended from Paraná in the south to the upper Amazon in the north, from the Atlantic coast to the Goiás plateau, though, along with other orders, they were excluded from Minas Gerais. Every major city and some interior towns like Belém de Cachoeira (Bahia) boasted Jesuit facilities: schools, seminaries, distinct-

⁵ Câmara to viceroy, 6 February 1754, Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, ordens régias (royal dispatches) [APB/OR], 49/1051; 'Parallelo dos escravos que ficaram em Pernambuco...'; (see table 5, Pernambuco); 'Lista dos escravos e cargoes que passaram neste registro da Paraíba no anno de 1756 para o continente das minas', AHU/PA/Rio de Janeiro, 1.º catalogo, caixa 40, no. 19,818; AHU/PA/Rio Grande do Sul, caixas 2-3.

tive, often sumptuous churches, religious retreats. In support of these facilities the Jesuits had become Brazil's largest landowner and greatest slave-master. Every sugar-producing captaincy possessed one or more Jesuit plantation; Bahia alone had five. From the Amazonian island of Marajó to the backlands of Piauí the Jesuits possessed extensive cattle and horse ranches. In the Amazon their annual canoe flotillas brought to Belém envied quantities of cacao, cloves, cinnamon, and sarsaparilla, harvested along the great river's major tributaries. Besides flotillas of small craft that linked producing centres with operational headquarters, the Society maintained its own frigate to facilitate communications within its far-flung network. The Jesuits were renowned as courageous pathfinders and evangelists, as pre-eminent scholars, sterling orators, as confessors of the high and mighty, and as tenacious defenders of their rights and privileges, which included licences from the crown to possess vast holdings of both urban and rural property and complete exemption of their goods from all customs duties in Portugal and in Brazil.

The Jesuits were also Brazil's most controversial religious body. From the outset they posed as champions of Indian freedom, untroubled by the fact that they themselves held thousands of blacks in slavery. They served as contentious intermediaries between Indian free workers and colonial planters and farmers. They were accused of providing asylum for legitimately ransomed Indians who had fled from merciless masters. Their economic competitors resented their special privileges and accused the Jesuits (and other religious orders) of monopolizing the spice trade of the Amazon, of engrossing lands belonging to their neighbours and tenants, and of engaging in forbidden commercial activities by means of retail sales conducted within their colleges. Such criticism was voiced by angry câmaras, which on several occasions expelled the Fathers from their captaincies during the seventeenth century, by court lobbyists, by rival churchmen, and by hostile royal officials. But the Jesuits always successfully defended themselves and, despite minor reverses, appeared to be as firmly rooted in mid-eighteenth-century Brazil as they had ever been.

The downfall of the Jesuits may be traced back to 1750, for that was the year of the ratification of the Treaty of Madrid, establishing a new boundary between Brazil and Spanish America, and of the appointment of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (best known by his later title as the marquis of Pombal), a one-time Jesuit protégé, as one of the king's three ministers. He soon came to dominate the other ministers, as well

as the sovereign himself (José I, 1750-77). Viewed by some writers as one of the most progressive, enlightened statesmen of the century and by others as a nepotistic, merciless, over-rated paranoiac, he was undoubtedly a proud, dynamic figure who found in the dogma of regalism the opportunities to modernize Portugal by means that had eluded his predecessors. Though Pombal became the arch-opponent of the Jesuits for two decades, the origins of his intense, uncompromising hatred for them remains unknown. The first indication that he was preparing for a fight came in 1751 in the instructions that he prepared in the king's name for his brother, Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, newly designated governor of the state of Grão-Pará and Maranhão and chief Portuguese boundary commissioner in the north. One of the instruction's secret articles warned that if the Jesuits offered opposition to the crown's policies in the Amazon, they should be informed that José I expected them to be the first to obey his orders, particularly 'because the estates which they possess are [held] entirely or for the most part contrary to the laws of the realm...'

Throughout the 1750s Mendonça Furtado, hard-driving, violent-tempered, gullible and suspicious, and the bishop of Pará, Dom Miguel de Bulhões e Sousa, a greedy, self-serving Dominican long known for his hostility towards the Jesuits and a zealous collaborator of Pombal and his brother, filled their dispatches to Lisbon with an endless stream of supposed Jesuit misdeeds. They repeated long-standing, unverified and, in fact, often discredited settlers' allegations concerning the Fathers' tyrannical mistreatment of the Indians, their monopoly of the spice trade, their reputedly enormous wealth, including that supposedly derived from hidden mines, and, on the basis of the discovery of a single cannon which the crown had authorized a generation earlier so that an exposed Jesuit mission could frighten off hostile Indian raiders, contended that the Jesuits had become an armed menace against the state and were even engaging in treasonable relations with Spaniards. (It was the Spanish Jesuits, of course, who were at the time organizing Guarani resistance to the implementation of the Treaty of Madrid in southern Brazil.)

The voluminous dispatches that the governor and the bishop filed, those sent by Gomes Freire de Andrada, governor of Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro and southern Brazil, and a barrage of reports from remote Piauí concerning a bitter land dispute between the Jesuits and other

landowners and a reforming royal magistrate, convinced Pombal that the Jesuits were the hidden hand behind every adversity that Portugal sustained. True, he did not blame them for the Lisbon earthquake of 1 November 1755, but he was incensed when a Jesuit orator dared to suggest that that calamity was a manifestation of God's judgement against the king's impious subjects. And he was even more indignant when another padre ill-advisedly warned that those who invested in one of Pombal's pet schemes – the Companhia do Grão-Pará e Maranhão – 'would not be members of the Company of Christ'.

Both Jesuit statements led to the arrest, imprisonment or exile of individual padres who joined others, notably foreign-born Jesuits, whom Mendonça Furtado had expelled for various alleged offences. In 1757, following a popular uprising in Oporto known as the Taverneiros Revolt, the Jesuits were accused of fomenting the tumult, though no proof of their involvement was ever found. Nevertheless, the charge served as the pretext for the banishment of the Jesuits from the royal palace and for the government's refusal to permit the Jesuits to continue preaching in Lisbon's cathedral. In his explanation of these measures to the papal nuncio, Pombal assured him that he possessed irrefutable proof that the Jesuits were guilty of the most heinous crimes and that if they were not immediately disciplined, within a decade they would become so powerful that all the armies of Europe would be unable to oust them from the heartland of South America, where they kept hundreds of thousands of Indians as slaves working on fortifications prepared by European engineers disguised as Jesuits. Such charges were further elaborated in a white paper prepared under Pombal's personal direction. Entitled 'Brief Account of the Republic founded by the Jesuits in the Overseas Territories of Spain and Portugal', it cited evidence purporting to demonstrate that the Jesuits constituted a state within a state, threatening Brazil's very security. Then, under Pombal's relentless prodding, the pope reluctantly designated a cardinal, a kinsman of Pombal and much beholden to him for past favours, to verify the government's charges, especially those concerning the Society's illicit commercial activities. Though he submitted no evidence and persistently refused to discuss the case with the papal nuncio, with whom he was obliged to consult, the cardinal quickly announced that all the charges were true, that every Jesuit facility was guilty of engaging in forbidden commercial and banking ventures. Two days after that

report was issued, the patriarch of Lisbon, the highest ranking ecclesiastical dignitary of the realm, suspended all Jesuits within Portugal from preaching or hearing confessions.

Further humiliations followed. After an unsuccessful attack on José I in September 1758 (which may have been staged) several Jesuits were formally charged with being instigators of the regicide attempt, and in January 1759 the king ordered the arrest of all Jesuits in Portugal and the seizure of the Society's properties in the kingdom. On 3 September 1759, José I became the first European monarch to expel the Jesuits from all his domains and confiscate their properties.

When the top-secret instructions to arrest the Fathers and occupy their holdings were received in Brazil in late 1759, high magistrates accompanied by well-armed troops swiftly surrounded every Jesuit facility, arresting the occupants and ransacking their domiciles in the expectation of finding bullion and jewels – which, in fact, were not discovered. Closely guarded, the Fathers – approximately 670 of them – were returned to Portugal on the first available warships several months later. Although the crown had feared the possibility of popular uprisings in support of the Jesuits, none occurred, in part because of the military precision with which the detentions were accomplished and in part because the public response was conditioned by government-dictated anti-Jesuit pastoral letters distributed by co-operating bishops. As soon as former Jesuit properties were inventoried, those of a perishable nature, including crops, barnyard animals, and some (but not all) slaves, were auctioned off; in at least one captaincy, Rio Grande do Norte, they were actually distributed gratis to local inhabitants, particularly militia officers. Most of the urban properties, including blocks of rented shops, houses, and wharves, were quickly sold, but for a time the crown considered maintaining the large agricultural and stock-raising estates for their income; however, after it became obvious that such properties were constantly losing value because of mismanagement and looting, they, too, were put on the auction block. Though the crown possessed a unique opportunity to diversify ownership of developed Jesuit lands by dividing them among small-holders, it refrained from doing so and sold the bulk of them to syndicates of wealthy landowners and merchants. Not all estates immediately found buyers. Some of the largest remained royal properties for as long as two decades; others, including more than 30 former Jesuit cattle ranches in Piauí and the great polycultural estate of Santa Cruz

in Rio de Janeiro, remained state properties well into the twentieth century. The major Jesuit churches passed to the eager bishops and became their cathedrals, while most of the colleges were transformed into governors' palaces or military hospitals. The once impressive Jesuit libraries were pillaged and allowed to deteriorate until they became worthless.

It would, of course, be simplistic to conclude that the removal of the Jesuits and the dispersal of their assets were merely consequences of the paranoia of Pombal and his clique. The end of the Jesuits came about because of various other factors as well. Though not one of the criticisms uttered against them during the 1750s was fundamentally new, the uncompromising response of the Pombaline regime certainly did break with the tradition of church-state relationships in Portugal. The Pombaline regalisists insisted that every element of society, particularly the religious, must be wholly subservient to the dictates of the king as interpreted by his ministers. The medieval concept of the king (and equal) swords was replaced by that of a single weapon ruthlessly and enthusiastically wielded by the king's ministers and their minions. Resistance, passive or active, could be interpreted only as a sign of disloyalty or treason. Certainly the reputedly enormous wealth of the Jesuits was tempting to a traditionally impecunious government, especially after it was beset by the hugely destructive Lisbon disaster. And for some years the windfall derived from the disposal of Jesuit properties lightened the crown's financial burdens, even if it failed to contribute to the development of the Brazilian infrastructure. Then, too, the physiocratic notion of the useful man was very much on the minds of the Portuguese elite, both at home and abroad. They were inclined to ridicule reclusive, contemplative monks or dedicated but impractical missionaries and to extol the virtues of the truly productive members of society, i.e., tax-paying heads of families who produced agricultural or industrial goods and who fathered sons. To men like the well-travelled diplomat Dom Luis da Cunha, Ribeiro Sanchez, the peripatetic physician and self-proclaimed Jew, or the duke of Silva-Tarouca, long-time adviser to Maria Theresa of Austria, as well as Pombal himself and those who served under him, the day of the religious had passed. The modernizing state required other partners in its quest for advancement. Since the Jesuits were the largest, most influential, and most outspoken of the religious orders in the Portuguese dominions, they must be the first to be struck down.

The expulsion of the Jesuits had important but often overlooked consequences. One, especially noticeable in the 1760s, was a government campaign against former Jesuits, ex-Jesuit students and friends of Jesuits, many of whom were carefully watched and arrested on the slightest pretext and confined to gaols in Brazil or Portugal. That campaign was inspired by fears that ousted Jesuits were conspiring with the enemies of Portugal to infiltrate Brazil for seditious purposes, but it was also the product of a determined government policy to enforce religious orthodoxy in Brazil, and the episcopate of Brazil was expected to play a decisive role in the implementation of that policy through appropriate pastoral letters and close surveillance of the priesthood.

The most bizarre manifestation of that campaign was the dispatch of Giraldo José de Abranches, archdeacon of Mariana, Minas Gerais, to Belém do Pará in 1763. Abranches' mission was to conduct a special investigation for the Holy Office. Brazilians have taken pride in the fact that, unlike Spanish America or Portuguese India, colonial Brazil never had a branch of the Inquisition established there. While that is true, on several occasions during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries special teams of inquisitors travelled from Portugal to Brazil to conduct lengthy inquiries. But the Abranches inquiry of 1763-9 was the first in a century and a half. Precisely why the commissioner was sent to Pará at that time remains obscure.⁶

Although the Visitor's authority extended throughout northern Brazil, he conducted hearings only in the ex-Jesuit college in Belém, and most of the 485 persons who appeared before him as confessants or denunciantes seem to have come from that city and its environs. In spite of the tribunal's protracted duration, only 45 persons were identified as having committed serious offences, ranging from sorcery (21), blasphemy (6), and quackery (9) to sodomy (4), bigamy (5), heresy (2), and excessive corporal punishment of slaves (1). Nearly all were members of the lowest strata of society - Indians, black slaves, or free persons of colour - and only one was a (presumably white) sugar-mill proprietor.

The Abranches inquiry was an exceptional exercise of ecclesiastical authority in Brazil at this time, for it was more common for the bishops to be charged with responsibility for the suppression of deviance and

⁶ The very existence of this mission remained unknown until 1963, when the manuscript of the tribunal was discovered in the National Library in Lisbon. See J. R. do Amaral Lapa, *Livro da instrução do santo ofício da inquirição do estado do Grão Pará* (Petropolis, 1978), which included the text of the official findings and a lengthy introduction.

the maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline. During the Pombaline era prelates were selected on the basis of evidence of severe piety, militant anti-Jesuitism, and abject subservency to ranking secular authorities. Some of them conducted lengthy investigations during the early 1760s into alleged Jesuit misdeeds, enquiries which produced lurid if dubious testimony. After the expulsion, the episcopate was given complete authority over the religious orders and, once the Jesuits were no longer around to organize their defence, the others were powerless to resist. For a time the orders were prohibited from admitting any novices, and even after that right was restored special licences were required from the crown before new members could be admitted. Such consent was grudgingly given and by the end of the century many monasteries were half empty and most of their inmates advanced in years.⁷

Well might the heads of other orders shudder when the Jesuits were rounded up, for they knew that their turn would come. And it did! In the mid-1760s the most affluent of the remaining orders in the lower Amazon, the Mercedarians, were peremptorily recalled to the kingdom and their properties, consisting of vast cattle ranches on the island of Marajó, were seized by the crown. At the end of the same decade the crown imposed forced loans upon the wealthier religious orders which declined to surrender their properties voluntarily in exchange for government bonds. As a result of these and other measures, the religious orders in Brazil were weakened to such an extent that they never fully recovered. But the diocesan branch of the church was not much better off, and throughout the late colonial period its leaders were constantly appealing for funds to establish seminaries and augment the number of priests in non-urban areas. With rare exceptions, the crown turned a deaf ear to such requests. The enfeeblement of the Catholic church in Brazil in the nineteenth century can be traced back to the Pombaline era and to the generation that followed.⁸

⁷ King to archbishop elect of Bahia, 30 June 1764, AHU/PA/Bahia, 1^o catálogo, annex to no. 6534; *alvará* of 30 July 1792, Antonio Delgado da Silva (ed.), *Collecção da legislação portuguesa de 1770 a [1820]*, (9 vols., Lisbon, 1830-47), 1791-1801, 152-3; colonial ministers, circular to archbishop of Bahia, bishops of Rio de Janeiro, Funchal, and Angra, 30 January 1764, AHU/CU/cod. 603, no. 222; same to and to bishop of Pernambuco, 19 August 1768, *ibid.*, cod. 604, no. 154; D. Antonio de Salles e Noronha, governor, to Martinho de Melo e Castro, 21 May 1781, AHU/PA/Maranhão, caixa 48; Fr Manoel de Santa Rosa Henriques to queen, c. 1793, AHU/PA/Pará, maço 3.

⁸ George C. A. Boehrer, 'The Church in the second reign, 1840-1889', in Henry H. Keith and S. F. Edwards (eds.), *Conflict and continuity in Brazilian society* (Columbia, S.C., 1969), 114. The foregoing relies upon Manoel Barata, *Formação histórica do Pará* (Belém, 1973), 44, 78, 92-3; AHU/PA/Bahia, 1^o catálogo, nos. 19,765-6, 19,687-9, and 22,826; for contemporary

ECONOMIC CRISIS AND REMEDIES

The prolonged economic malaise that afflicted Portugal and Brazil during the 1760s and 1770s constituted a deeper and more enduring crisis than that presented by the conflict between the state and the Jesuits, and remedies were less easily found. The economic crisis was preceded by the destruction of Lisbon, the imperial city and one of the leading cities of Europe, larger than Rome or Vienna, by earthquake and fire on Sunday morning, 1 November 1755 and the enormous cost of rebuilding it.⁹ The crisis coincided with, and was partly caused by, two exceedingly expensive wars with Spain for control of the vast borderlands extending from São Paulo to the north bank of the Rio de la Plata. The main cause of the crisis, however, was the precipitous fall in income, both public and private, from Brazil beginning in the early 1760s. There had, in fact, been warnings that the Brazilian milch cow was running dry even before the earthquake, particularly the repeated postponements in the departures of the great fleets from both peninsular and Brazilian ports during the early fifties, but such delays had occurred so often in the past that no one seemed unduly alarmed. The principal cause of the severe curtailment of the crown's income from Brazil was the declining yield of the gold and diamond mines of the interior. While the three leading bullion-producing captaincies reached peak levels of production at slightly different times, the maximum yield from the

comments on the decline of the Orders, see [Luiz Antonio Oliveira Mendes], 'Discurso preliminar... da Bahia' (c. 1789), *ABNRJ*, 27 (1905), 286, and Villena, *Cartas*, II, 464-5.

⁹ The loss of life in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 has been conservatively estimated at 10,000, but other guesses run much higher. The physical destruction, especially along the Tagus and in the eastern quarter of the city, was enormous. The great wooden royal palace that had graced the city's principal maritime square since the late sixteenth century, 33 noble palaces, 34 convents, all six of the city's hospitals, the newly finished patriarchal residence, the opera house, several foreign embassies, and most of the port's warehouses, filled with the cargoes of fleets recently arrived from Brazil, with shipments intended for the next outbound fleets, and with the year's wine harvest, all were gone. Out of 20,000 homes, 17,000 were in ruins. Additional damage occurred in other cities, especially Sitra, Santarém and even Coimbra. Estimates of total damage to property range up to 20,000 contos, three or four times more than the annual public revenues. The conto (1,000 milreis or 2,500 cruzados) was quoted on the London market at about £280 (1760-5 average); John J. McCusker, *Money and exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775*. A *handbook* (Chapel Hill, 1978), 114. Inevitably Portugal's most important colony was expected to come to her rescue, and Brazilian cities responded generously. Salvador alone pledged to contribute 1,200 contos over the next three decades towards the rebuilding of Lisbon. Conde D. Marcos de Noronha, viceroy, to crown, 20 July 1759, C. R. Boxer, manuscript collection; see also Ignácio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, *Memoórias históricas e políticas da província da Bahia*, ed. Braz do Amaral [MHB] (6 vols., Bahia, 1919-40), II, 182-90. The most useful accounts of the earthquake are T. D. Kendrick, *The Lisbon earthquake* (London, 1956) and José-Augusto França, *Lisboa pombalina e o iluminismo* (Lisbon, 1976).

mining sector occurred during the latter half of the 1750s and between 1755-9 and 1775-9 there was a drop in output of 51.5 per cent. It was also during the late 1750s that the diamond mines of Minas Gerais began to give out, resulting in bankruptcy for several contractors and in an eventual royal takeover (1771), which, however, failed to reverse the steady fall in productivity of the mines. At the same time, the two major agricultural export crops of Brazil, cane sugar and tobacco, from Pernambuco, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro, were in something of a slump, the former because of low European prices, the latter owing to difficulties with Mina coast slave suppliers. And exports of cacao from the Amazon had become irregular because of a scarcity of Indian collectors, a shortage of shipping, and a decline in prices.

One of the crown's leading sources of revenue had long been the fifths or *quintos* from Minas Gerais. During the years 1752-62 they generated an average of 108 arrobas (32 lb or 14.5 kg each) of gold a year, but that yield fell to 83.2 arrobas in the course of the next decade and to 70.8 between 1772 and 1777. Similarly, the fifths in Goiás declined by 33.6 per cent from 1752-62 to 1762-72, and by the years 1782-92 were only 29.5 per cent of the 1752-62 level.¹⁰ One of the most lucrative customs houses in Brazil during the Age of Gold had been that of Rio de Janeiro, but between the mid-1760s and the mid-1770s its yield fell by 25 per cent. While the total value of public and private remittances sent from Rio de Janeiro to Lisbon dropped by 39 per cent between 1749 and the mid-1770s, the crown's share shrank even more alarmingly, diminishing by 73.8 per cent. Because the Rio de Janeiro branch of the royal exchequer was unable to pay its bills, its debt load increased to over 1,272 contos by 1780. But what concerned the colonial minister even more was that by that date the crown was owed over 4,000 contos from insolvent tax contractors and tax payers in ten Brazilian captaincies. Between 1752-6 and 1769 emissions by the royal mint in Lisbon declined by more than 38 per cent.¹¹

Obviously this extended crisis affected many different interest groups - Brazilian planters, merchant factors, tax contractors, royal officials; Portuguese merchants, shippers, and government officials. For the

¹⁰ 'Goiases, Rendim^{to} dos q^{tos}...', BNRJ, II-39, 34, 21, no. 1.

¹¹ Jorge Borges de Madeco, *A situação econômica no tempo de Pombal...* (Lisbon, 1951), ch. 4; Antônio de Sousa Pedroso Camaxide, *O Brasil na administração pombalina...* (Rio de Janeiro, 1940), 76-82; Alden, *Royal government*, 317-18, 328, 330 n. 68, 349-50, and 507-8; Corcino Medeiros dos Santos, *Relações comerciais do Rio de Janeiro com Lisboa (1763-1808)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1980), 60-2.

Portuguese government which had come to rely on the gold and diamonds of Brazil to finance the deficit in Portugal's balance of trade with the rest of the world, especially England, it was urgently necessary to find effective solutions to the problems besetting the Brazilian economy. Steps were taken to halt the decline in gold and diamond production - and to reduce smuggling - but without success. In order to improve the competitiveness of Brazilian sugars and tobaccos, the government, with rather more success, strengthened the powers of local boards of inspection (*mesas de inspeção*) previously established (1751) in major colonial ports. Presided over by high magistrates assisted by locally chosen deputies, the boards were responsible for setting quality standards for the export of both commodities, and later also of cotton; the determination of a just price between sellers and buyers; and the resolution of disputes between colonial shippers and European importers. More dramatic was the creation of two monopoly trading companies to promote the economic development of the backward north and the stagnant north-east.

The marquis of Pombal had become convinced that what Brazil and Portugal needed was a series of well-financed monopoly trading companies. Accordingly, in 1755 he persuaded a group of wealthy government officials and Lisbon merchants to invest in the Companhia de Grão-Pará e Maranhão. Its initial mission was to supply black slaves to the north, to offer attractive prices for colonial staples, existing (cinnamon, cloves, sarsaparilla, and especially cacao) and new (cotton and rice), and to transport these commodities to Portugal via its own armed convoys. By the early 1770s, however, the company began to perform other functions too. It served as a conduit through which the government conveyed large sums to maintain an expanded military presence and an augmented bureaucracy in the Amazon. It was also expected to cultivate a lucrative illicit trade with Spanish Quito via the Amazon and Mato Grosso,¹² and it was asked to develop a colonial market for the products of newly established factories in Portugal. Four years after the creation of the first company, its sister, the Companhia Geral de Pernambuco e Paraíba, was created to revive the faltering agrarian economy of the north-east. Each company was initially chartered for twenty years, the Maranhão company being nominally capitalized at 480 contos, that of Pernambuco at 1,360 contos. Shares were available to both domestic and foreign subscribers. Prominent

¹² 'Instrução secretíssima... para João Pereira Caldas', 2 September 1772, AHU/CU/cod. 599.

government officials, led by Pombal himself, were expected to invest heavily, and many did. Pressure was applied to other members of the nobility, lesser government functionaries, convents and other religious bodies, and affluent colonial merchants and planters to subscribe too. Those who purchased a minimum of ten shares were promised habits in the Order of Christ, a prestigious order of chivalry in Portugal, and exemption from certain taxes and from military call-ups. Much as they coveted those privileges and honours, colonial magnates did not rush to contribute: 90 per cent of the capital that financed the Maranhão company came from investors in the kingdom, as did 85 per cent of that behind the Pernambuco company. Of the two, the Maranhão company proved to be the better investment, yielding dividends averaging 8.4 per cent (1768–74) compared with under 6 per cent for the Pernambuco company (1760–79).

Neither company long survived the fall of the marquis of Pombal in March 1777, following the death of José I. Although Manuel Nunes Dias, the most indefatigable analyst of the Maranhão company (1755–78) confidently concludes that it was 'a great achievement (*êxito*) of enlightened Pombaline mercantilism', his own student and the author of a complementary study of the Pernambuco company (1759–79) regards that company mainly as a successful vehicle for exploitative European, especially British, capital. While both authors may be correct, it is not easy to determine how much the companies achieved for Brazil. Both obviously increased the levels of slave imports so essential for agricultural development (see table 5 above). Both provided a more dependable shipping service than had existed in the past; however, the Maranhão company did not lessen the Amazon's dependence upon cacao nor increase the volume of its exports, but it contributed to the beginnings of two new exports that would play important roles in the regional economy of the north in later decades – cotton and rice, discussed below. During the years 1760–80 the volume of both sugar and hide exports from the north-east increased significantly, though the Pernambuco company was unsuccessful in stimulating exports of new commodities in appreciable volumes. Both companies distributed to colonial markets impressive quantities of goods ranging from cotton and woollen cloth to hats, ribbons, china, silks, and hardwares manufactured in newly founded Portuguese factories, most of them opened since 1770. Lastly, both companies surrendered their monopolies but continued for many years to try to

collect large sums owed them by colonial debtors, a source of continuing irritation to such planters and merchants.

Although there had been proposals to extend the system of monopoly companies to Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, they had proved stillborn, apparently because of a lack of available investment capital as well as strong British opposition. Instead, the government had moved in the opposite direction by terminating the convoyed fleet (*frotas*) system that had been in effect since 1649. In spite of repeated efforts by the crown and the great Lisbon merchants to establish satisfactory shipping schedules at both ends of the vital Luso-Brazilian trade and to prohibit contraband, delays in Lisbon and in the colonial ports had become both costly and endemic and contraband rampant. After the Lisbon earthquake the number of sailings to Brazil had declined precipitously, from 262 departures in 1754–8 to only 191 in 1758–63. The Junta do Comércio (the board of trade) tried without success to reform the fleet system in order to safeguard the interests of Portuguese merchants and speed up payments to both the crown and merchants. In the end the crown decided in 1765 that the best way to accomplish that was to abolish the fleet system.¹³

The last fleets sailed together in 1766. Thereafter, with exception of wartime periods in the 1770s and in the late 1790s, properly licensed ships were free to sail whenever they pleased to Salvador and Rio de Janeiro and, after the termination of the monopoly companies, to other Brazilian ports as well. In addition, the crown also encouraged intra-Brazilian trade (*cabotagem*). Though some merchants attributed the declining volume of trade in the 1760s and 1770s to the cessation of the *frotas*, Jacome Raton, a well-informed French businessman in Pombaline and post-Pombaline Portugal, was convinced that the establishment of free trade greatly accelerated Luso-Brazilian commerce, shortening the length of time peninsular merchants had to await their payments from the colony and making it possible for ships to make two voyages to Brazil in less than a year, whereas in the past they could expect to complete only two round trips in three years.¹⁴

Several other economic measures intended to stimulate trade may be briefly noted. The first was the creation of a centralized royal treasury in Portugal in 1761. One of the responsibilities of its colonial branches

¹³ On the *frotas* system and the monopoly trading companies, see also Mansury-Diniz Silva, *CHL* 4, ch. 13.

¹⁴ *Relatório sobre as ocorrências do seu tempo em Portugal, ... 1747 a ... 1810* (London, 1813), 96–7.

was to offer subsidies and price guarantees to colonial producers of crops in which the crown was particularly interested (e.g., dyestuffs and fibres). Second, it was also in 1761 that the crown abolished the slave trade to Portugal, a measure undertaken not for humanitarian reasons, as some writers have contended, but to ensure an adequate supply of slaves for Brazil, where the Pombaline ministers believed they were most needed. Thirdly, in order to lessen Portugal's dependence upon foreign, especially English, manufactured goods, the government, for the first time since the reign of Pedro II (1683-1706), actively fostered the industrial sector of the kingdom. Brazil became a prime market for the output of the new factories, the source of 40 per cent or more of their earnings. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the mid-1780s, when the superintendent of contraband and thefts in Lisbon learned of the existence of small weaving shops capable of producing luxury cloths in Brazil, especially in Minas Gerais, he became seriously concerned. As a result, in 1785 the colonial minister ordered that all such shops be closed, their looms dismantled and shipped back to Portugal. Only coarse cottons intended for slaves were exempted from the well-known draconian decree of 1785, which symbolized Portugal's determination to keep Brazil exclusively an agricultural, ranching, extractive colony and to restrict most manufacturing activities to the mother country.¹⁵

But the crown did adopt other measures that were, in part, designed to benefit the Brazil trade. In 1797-8 it belatedly instituted a system of semi-monthly packets between the kingdom and major colonial ports to carry priority freight and mail, an innovation introduced long before in the British and Spanish empires. Then, in 1801, came a reform that had been under discussion for some years and one that must have been greeted in Brazil as a mixed blessing. The salt monopoly, in existence since 1631 and long viewed as oppressive to ranching, agricultural, and urban interests, was abolished. However, it was replaced by a system of taxes on salt extracted along the Brazilian littoral and at some points in the interior, by a new stamp tax, and by government monopolies on saltpetre and gunpowder.

Conspicuously missing from these efforts to stimulate trade was any step by the crown to facilitate transportation within Brazil, even though a programme of internal improvements might have paid large dividends in expediting the movement of goods from the interior to seaports. Not

¹⁵ For further discussion of Portuguese economic policy in the late eighteenth century, see ch. 6 above.

untypical of the attitude of the government was the case of a proposed canal in Maranhão. In 1742 the câmara of São Luís called attention to the need for a canal between the Cachorro and Bocanga rivers to facilitate canoe traffic from the sertão. Submitting a plan drafted by a military engineer, it argued that such a project would also benefit the commerce on the larger Itapicuru and Meirim rivers, especially during winter months. In 1750 the crown directed the governor to contact important people in the captaincy to determine the proposal's fiscal feasibility, but they concluded that Maranhão was too poor to pay for such an undertaking. Again in 1756 the governor was directed to get the canal started and to find ways of raising local revenues to pay for it, but nothing came of that order either, because the level of exports, the only perceived taxable possibility, seemed too low.¹⁶ From time to time during the next two decades the câmara expressed the need for the canal, but nothing came of its appeals until 1776, when a special impost was levied upon cotton exports. Work then began on the canal but, for reasons not evident, was soon stopped. The cotton impost was still being collected in the early 1790s, even though no progress had been made on the canal for more than a decade.¹⁶

Land transportation remained extremely backward in late colonial Brazil. One must agree with Caio Prado Júnior that 'colonial roads were...almost without exception beneath criticism; they were no more passable even by travellers on foot and animals in the dry season, and in the wet season they became muddy quagmires, often defeating all hope of passage'.¹⁷ What progress was made in this period came as a result of the efforts of energetic colonial governors and the co-operation, often coerced, of local communities. The most noteworthy example is the reconstruction of the *caminho do mar* between the plateau city of São Paulo and its chief port, Santos. Long in disuse because of the lack of maintenance, it was reconstructed between 1780 and 1792, thanks to the efforts of determined governors, the financial contributions of municipalities, merchants, mule-team owners, and exporters, and the labour of militia companies. The result was one of colonial Brazil's rare paved roads, one sufficiently wide so that 'two mule-teams meeting... could pass each other without stopping', and a vital avenue for opening up the agricultural possibilities of the rich plateau lands.¹⁸ Another road

¹⁶ Martinho de Melo e Castro, 'Instrução para o governador... do Maranhão, D. Fernando Antonio de Noronha', 14 July 1792, AHU/CU/cod. 598, fols. 107r-110r.

¹⁷ *The colonial background of modern Brazil*, trans. Suzette Macedo (Berkeley, 1967), 298.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Anne Kuznessof, 'The role of merchants in the economic development of São Paulo 1765-1850', *HAHR*, 60 (November, 1980), 571-92.

that was improved in the late eighteenth century was the famed mule trail between Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo. Further north, modest roads were built at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the manioc-producing regions of southern Bahia, and what was probably no more than a trail was opened up connecting the sertão with Paraíba, Maranhão.¹⁹ But there is not much progress to report elsewhere. It is significant that the first among the proposals suggested by a memorialist advocating the alleviation of the stagnant condition of Minas Gerais was the opening up of river routes from the coast to the interior and the construction of a series of internal highways.²⁰

THE AGRICULTURAL RENAISSANCE

In the midst of the general Luso-Brazilian depression coastal Brazil began to make an economic recovery, but the depression lingered on in the interior. Given the imperfect quality of the statistics we possess, it is not possible to date the recovery precisely, but it could be said to have occurred by the early 1780s, when the agricultural renaissance of the coastal captaincies was already well established. Despite occasional downturns, that revival persisted for the remainder of the colonial period. In varying degrees the upsurge in the agrarian sector was a response to several factors: the measures adopted by the government of Pombal and his successors; the development of new industrial technology, principally in England and France (for example, in the cotton industry); the virtual disappearance of a major sugar supplier, the formerly flourishing French colony of Saint-Domingue, largely destroyed by a series of bloody upheavals beginning in 1791; and the deteriorating international situation, especially the resumption of Anglo-French hostilities beginning in 1793.

Sugar

Brazil's two leading agricultural exports, sugar and tobacco, both recovered and achieved new export levels during the late colonial

period. The sugar industry, the mainstay of Brazil's exports during the seventeenth century but depressed for much of the eighteenth because of low market prices and high costs, especially of slaves, emerged from its slump. Spurred by more favourable prices, particularly at the end of the 1770s and in the 1790s, it significantly increased the volume and value of its exports. Although sugar was grown in many captaincies, the major export centres remained Pernambuco (plus Paraíba), Bahia (and the subordinate captaincy of Sergipe), and Rio de Janeiro; but at the end of the period sugar was also becoming a major crop in São Paulo. The industry had remained stagnant for decades prior to the establishment of the north-eastern monopoly company. In 1761 there were 268 engenhos in Pernambuco and Paraíba, not many more than had existed 40 years earlier. Furthermore, 40 of those mills were inoperative (*fogos mortos*) because of soil exhaustion, the disappearance of fuel supplies, the dispersal of slave gangs, and lack of maintenance. By the end of 1777, however, the number of mills in both captaincies had increased to 390 and exports had doubled.²¹ We cannot trace the development of the industry in the north-east after 1777 until further research has been done.

From the data presented in table 6 below, it would appear that during the 1760s and 1770s Pernambuco regained the lead it had lost to Bahia in the middle of the seventeenth century as Brazil's principal producer, but that advantage may have been only temporary, for the industry also underwent expansion in Bahia. From 1759 until the late 1790s the number of mills in Bahia increased from just over 170 to 260, and by the latter date the sugar zone extended some 50 miles (sixteen leagues) north and north-west of the port of Salvador. By the end of the century there were also 140 engenhos in neighbouring Sergipe. Between the late 1750s and the late 1790s the level of exports, despite numerous fluctuations, increased from about 10,000 to about 11,500 crates (*caixas*); however, that figure is not as meaningful as it might seem, since the weight of the *caixa* tended to increase over time. In 1759 one contemporary wrote of crates varying from 26 to 45 arrobas while in 1781 another writer, also living in Bahia, spoke of crates of 40–60

¹⁹ For the Ilhéus road see Eulália Maria Lahmeyer Lobo, *História político-administrativa da agricultura brasileira 1808-1889* (Brasília, 1980), 26; the opening of the 'new road' beyond Parraba by João Paulo Diniz is mentioned by an anonymous writer in his 'Roteiro de Maranhão e Goiaz pela capitania do Piauí', *RHICB*, 62/1 (1900), 64.

²⁰ Jozé Elói Ottoni, 'Memória sobre o estado actual da capitania de Minas Gerais' (1798), *ABNIN*, 30 (1912), 307.

²¹ 'Relação do nº de engenhos moentes e de fogo morto que ha nas capñias de Pernambuco e Parahyba...', 1 February 1761, AHU/PA/Pernambuco, caixa 30; 'Mapa dos engenhos que existem nas capitanias de Pernambuco e Parahyba... até 31 de dezembro de 1777', AHU/CU/cod. 1821, no. 9.

arrobas. Still, the conversions generally employed in the tables of exports periodically reported to Lisbon are of crates of 40 arrobas, and that is the basis of the calculations summarized in this table. Between 1757 and 1798 the level of exports of Bahian sugars rose by 54.6 per cent and advanced another 9.3 per cent during the next decade. Since about 10 per cent of the sugar produced in Bahia was locally consumed, it appears that yearly production rose from nearly 360,000 arrobas in 1759 to about 880,000 *c.* 1807, or a gain of 69 per cent.

Dramatic changes in sugar production in this period also occurred in the captaincies of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The most rapid growth in Rio de Janeiro was in the six northern parishes around the town of São Salvador dos Campos, the famous Campos de Goitacazes district, still an important source of cane sugar today. There, between 1769 and 1778, the number of engenhos nearly doubled (from 56 to 104) and production went up by 235 per cent. By 1798-9 there were 378 mills in the Goitacazes, more than half of the 616 engenhos in the captaincy.²² Table 6 provides some idea of export levels in Rio de Janeiro from the 1770s until the end of the period. Most of the data is based on a carefully researched, recently published dissertation whose author probably understates the actual figures; at least his estimates are at considerable variance with those derived from other coeval sources.

Attractive prices and the construction of the *caminho do mar* stimulated the beginnings of an important sugar industry in São Paulo in the 1780s and 1790s. The two major areas of cultivation were along the coast north of Santos and the so-called quadrilateral defined by the townships of Sorocaba, Piracicaba, Mogi Guaçú, and Jundiá, all situated within ten leagues of the city of São Paulo. By 1797 the plateau plantations were milling 83,435 arrobas for export. Sugar was destined to remain São Paulo's principal export crop until it was overtaken by coffee in 1850-1. Considering the amount of scholarly attention devoted in recent decades to the Brazilian sugar industry, it seems surprising that the statistical base we possess for the late colonial period remains so incomplete. As is evident from table 6, we have estimates for the major growing areas — Pernambuco, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro — for only two

Table 6 Estimated sugar exports from principal Brazilian regions, 1757-1807 (arrobas)

Year	Pernambuco	Bahia	Rio de Janeiro	Totals
1757		407,824		
1758				
1759	8,000	321,584		
1760	200,000			
1761	69,720	226,000		
1762	359,080	226,000		
1763	165,320	226,000		
1764	495,640	200,000		
1765	178,400	160,000		
1766	282,160	160,000		
1767	263,120			
1768	284,160			
1769	332,160			
1770	278,160			
1771				
1772			131,515	
1773	377,760		80,184	
1774	405,480		156,515	
1775	404,640		23,779	
1776	313,200		106,773	
1777	271,000		103,926	
1778		480,000	634,349	
1779		480,000	127,741	
1780		480,000	154,944	
1781		480,000	146,082	
1782		480,000	144,200	
1783		480,000	91,750	
1784		480,000	180,141	
1785		480,000	101,141	
1786		480,000	84,053	
1787		480,000	117,140	
1788		480,000	104,646	
1789		480,000	110,027	
1790	275,000	400,000	115,615	790,643-875,000
1791			144,045	232,184
1792			221,765	
1793			140,916	378,410
1794			222,032	
1795			102,165	
1796			384,077	
1797		468,220	174,425	
1798		746,643	257,885	714,783

²² Santos, 49-51, 174; 'Mapa da população, fábricas e escrituras do que se compoem as... freguezias da villa de... Campos... no anno de mil setecentos noventa e nove', RHGCR, 65/1 (1902), 291. Albergro Lamago, 'Os engenhos de açúcar nos recôncavos do Rio de Janeiro, em fins do século xviii[]', *Brasil Açucareiro* (March 1965), 18-25.

Table 6 (cont.)

Year	Pernambuco	Bahia	Rio de Janeiro	Totals
1799			400,282	
1800			487,225	
1801			535,209	
1802			329,247	
1803			178,697	
1804			171,263	
1805			226,095	
1806			312,372	
1807	560,000	800,000	250,201-360,000	1,610,201-1,720,000

Sources: Pernambuco: 1760-77, Ribeiro Júnior, *Colônia açaçá*, 137; 1790, British Library, Add. MS 13,985, fol. 248v; 1807, Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, *História geral do Brasil*, v (5th edn, São Paulo, 1956), 61. Bahia: 1757 and 1759, João Antonio Caldas, 'Notícia geral de toda esta capitania de Bahia... desde o seu descobrimento até... 1759' (fasc. ed., Salvador, 1951), fols. 438 and 442; 1760-6 and 1778-89, Luiz Antonio Oliveira Mendes, 'Discurso preliminar... da Bahia' [c. 1789], *ABNRJ*, 27 (1903), 306, 315; 1790 and 1807, as for Pernambuco; 1797 and 1798, *MHB*, III, table facing 160 and 204-5. Rio de Janeiro: 1772-1807, Santos, *Relações comerciais*, 165; 1790 and 1807, as for Pernambuco; 1791 and 1793, 'Almanaque[s] da cidade do Rio de Janeiro... 1792... 1794', *ABNRJ*, 59 (1937), 284 and 350 (from which 10% has been deducted for local consumption); 1798, Antonio Duarte Nunes, 'Almanac historico... do Rio de Janeiro' [1799], *RIHGB*, 21 (1858), 172.

years, 1790 and c. 1807. The former was provided by an apparently knowledgeable Spanish informant of the British government, the latter appears in the standard history of colonial Brazil and seems to be derived from contemporary sources. Those estimates suggest that Brazil's sugar exports in 1790 were about 11,500-12,700 metric tons and that by 1807 they had doubled to somewhere between 23,400 and 25,000 metric tons.

Tobacco

While several captaincies shared in the export of sugar, Bahia continued to be the dominant producer and supplier of tobacco in this period, as it had been since the inception of the industry. It was, of course, cultivated elsewhere - in Maranhão, Pernambuco, and Alagoas, for example. One of the tasks assigned to the boards of inspection in 1751 was the promotion of tobacco cultivation in areas where it did not exist or languished, but those efforts, for instance in Rio de Janeiro, were

Table 7 Tobacco exports from Bahia to Portugal and the Mina coast, 1750-1800, and re-exports from Portugal to foreign markets, 1764-1803 (arrobas)

Year	Shipments from Bahia			Re-exports by Portugal
	Portugal	Mina Coast	Total	
1750	161,423	150,094	311,517	
1751	(197,454)	179,367	(376,821)	
1752	254,089	(239,813)	(484,902)	
1753				
1754	201,148	(182,722)	(383,870)	
1755	199,339	97,674	297,073	
1756	186,866	75,922	262,788	
1757	247,832	124,377	372,209	
1758	80,765	139,165	219,930	
1759	173,237	146,094	319,331	
1760	125,341	118,884	244,225	
1761	151,638	127,208	278,846	
1762	56,547	179,364	235,911	
1763	292,560	(265,760)	(558,320)	
1764	33,460	(30,595)	(63,855)	
1765	69,914	237,448	307,362	102,267
1766	184,942	(168,001)	(352,943)	86,121
1767				54,452
1768				191,121
1769				100,873
1770				112,432
1771				123,850
1772				83,888
1773				97,711
1774				109,971
1775				97,161
1776				110,950
1777				175,641
1778				232,330
1779				266,410
1780				196,827
1781				122,944
1782	272,296	(247,353)	(519,649)	168,451
1783	332,416	(401,976)	(634,382)	195,406
1784	374,676	(340,354)	(715,030)	197,467
1785	362,783	(329,551)	(692,334)	286,205
1786	265,328	(241,023)	(506,351)	233,165?
1787				196,830
1788				180,175
1789				242,037
1790				224,048
				136,611

Table 7 (cont.)

Year	Shipments from Bahia			Re-exports by Portugal
	Portugal	Mina Coast	Total	
1791				174,799
1792				215,499
1793				187,996
1794				137,557
1795				171,947
1796				122,048?
1797	265,065	153,457	418,522	130,381
1798	371,607	(127,874)	499,481	130,168
1799	(253,155)	(229,965)	483,120	155,598
1800	209,734	190,403	401,859	176,178?
1801				177,535
1802				220,001
1803				233,539

Sources: Shipments from Bahia: 1750-66, Junta do Tabaco, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon) [ANTT], maços 96-106, courtesy of Prof. J. H. Galloway, Department of Geography, University of Toronto; 1782-6, 1799-1800, C. Lugar, 'The Portuguese tobacco trade and tobacco growers of Bahia in the late colonial period', in D. Alden and Warren Dean, *Essays concerning the socioeconomic history of Brazil and Portuguese India* (Gainesville, 1977), 48-9; 1797, annex to report of 1798, *MHB*, III, 204-5; 1798, 'Mapa da exportação dos produtos da capitanía da Bahia para o reino e outros portos do Brazil e Africa... 1798', APB, letters sent to the king, 139, no. 334. Re-exports: Lugar, 47.

Note: Blanks have been left when data for that year are missing. Data in parentheses have been reconstructed, based on assumption that on the average 52.4% of Bahian tobacco went to Portugal and that 47.6% went to Mina, the average for the complete years.

unsuccessful. Bahia remained the source of upwards of 90 per cent of the Brazilian tobacco that entered commerce. Though tobacco was grown in several parts of the periphery of the Bay of All Saints and in the Sergipe district, the prime centre of its cultivation, in terms of both the quantity and quality produced, was around the town of Cachoeira fourteen leagues north-west of Salvador, still a source of good cigars. Contemporaries reckoned that there were more than 1,500 tobacco farms in the Bahian region in this period and rated their annual production at about 35,000 rolls. During the eighteenth century the weight of rolls sent to Europe, as with that of cases of sugar, steadily increased from eight arrobas at the beginning of the century to between

fifteen and twenty at its end, though tobacco rolls sent to Africa seem to have remained constant at about three arrobas. About a third of the annual Bahian crop was consumed within Brazil. Slightly more than half of the exports, the better qualities, were reserved for the European market (Portugal and her chief customers, the Italian ports, northern Germany, Spain, and sometimes France), while the rest, the so-called refuse, was dispatched along with sugar brandy and gold to Africa to purchase slaves.

Table 7 summarizes what is known about the volume of Bahian tobacco trade in this period and exposes several problems. First, there are the obvious lacunae which, where possible, I have tried to remedy (see note to table 7). Second, there was a market not included in the table, Angola. We know that Bahian tobacco was an important article of the slave trade there, as well as along the Mina coast. Between 1762 and 1775, for example, the Pernambuco company purchased 11,500 arrobas a year of Bahian tobacco to facilitate its Angolan slave purchases. Slaves sent to Rio de Janeiro from Angola were also procured by means of tobacco, but how much came from Bahia we do not know.

These lacunae make the generalizations that follow tentative at best. Yearly exports of Bahian tobacco appear to have averaged about 320,000 arrobas during 1750-66 and to have nearly doubled by the 1780s to almost 615,000. It has been suggested that the peak of eighteenth-century Bahian production came in the 1790s, but evidence is contradictory. Certainly prices were higher then than at any other time during the period, averaging nearly twice the level officially set in the early 1750s, and the number of ships that passed from Bahia to the Mina coast during the 1790s increased from about eleven a year (the average of the 1750s through the 1780s) to fifteen, though the number would nearly double during the first years of the nineteenth century.²⁸ But the known or estimated level of exports in the late 90s was markedly lower (averaging 452,000 arrobas) than during the 1780s. Furthermore, re-exports of Brazilian (mainly Bahian) tobacco by Portugal, which had increased from 108,000 arrobas a year during the 1760s to nearly 150,000 in the 70s, seem to have peaked at just under 205,000 in the 1780s, and then to have fallen to about 177,000 in the 1790s, before reaching a new plateau of close to 200,000 in the early 1800s. There is much that we still need to learn about the tobacco industry, but three conclusions seem

²⁸ Verges, *Fluxo et refluxo*, 654.

firm. First, the industry was vitally important to Bahia not only because of its European earnings but especially because of the slave trade. Secondly, the industry was still expanding at the end of the colonial era, but that phase would abruptly stop in 1815, when Great Britain moved to restrict the slave trade. Thirdly, by the late eighteenth century tobacco was vastly overshadowed as a Brazilian export not only by sugar but also by an entirely new commodity, cotton.

Cotton

Though native to Brazil, cotton was not grown for commercial purposes until 1760, when the Maranhão company began making modest purchases. Its cultivation, initially confined to the delta formed by the Meirim and Itapicuru rivers, spread rapidly throughout the length of the Itapicuru until, by the 1790s, production came to centre around the town of Caxias, 184 miles south-east of São Luis.²⁴ Long before, cotton raising had leapt beyond the confines of Maranhão, to Pará by the early 1770s and to the littoral extending from Ceará to Pernambuco by the latter part of that decade. By the 1780s the cotton frontier was moving from the coastlands to the drier interior, where rains were less severe and the soils were sandy (e.g., the intermediate *agreste* zone of Pernambuco) and advancing into the hinterlands of Bahia, Piauí, Goiás, and Minas Gerais. Effectively those were the limits of successful cotton cultivation in this period, for efforts to spur production in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo were unfruitful.

As table 8 indicates, Maranhão remained the leading cotton-producing caprancy for four decades. Cotton was then to Maranhão what cacao was to Pará and sugar to Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo, a dominant staple that justified dispatching considerable numbers of ships on a regular basis to colonial ports to load such staples and less important commodities. As Ralph Davis has reminded us, 'what really mattered to the shipowner [in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries] was weight and volume, not value. What created demand for shipping was mass, not price.'²⁵ But by the early 1800s mass was shifting to the north-east — to Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, and especially

Table 8 Brazilian cotton exports to Portugal, 1760-1807 (arrobas)

Year	Pará	Maranhão	Ceará	Pernambuco	Paraíba	Bahia	Rio de Janeiro	São Paulo
1760		6,510						
1761		5,197						
1762		3,396						
1763		3,659						
1764		6,476						
1765		7,521						
1766		11,217						
1767		12,705						
1768		23,810						
1769		25,470						
1770		15,542						
1771		12,015						
1773		37,236						115
1774	60	40,813						176
1775	12	25,886						
1776	879	25,521						
1777	2,053	40,553				89		245
1778	3,386	38,051	80			54		
1779	5,155	40,386	241					
1780	4,912	42,159						635
1781	8,572	54,421						2,975
1782	7,315	57,697						1,780
1783	7,188	49,756						255
1784	6,608	54,090						1,515
1785	4,908	46,724						2,330
1786	3,795	66,750						1,380
1787	4,212	73,496						330
1788	5,718	63,510			451			620
1789	4,743	68,016			5,529			70
1790		62,756			7,292			155
1791		63,675			3,163			895
1792		74,365			8,883			1,110
1793		67,565	50,937		15,879			2,795
1794	7,832	99,600			100,905			800
1795		105,935			100,905			5,583
1796	12,666	123,400			100,905			1,050
1797	7,974	94,410			15,320			590
1798	8,341	91,215						72
1799	11,569	152,485						13,831
1800	15,930	203,256						10,013
1801	10,931	145,410						880
1802	14,040	216,595						1,630
1803		226,560						2,000
								183,114
								5,552
								13
								160
								4,686

²⁴ A sense of how rapidly cotton developed in Maranhão is given by Joaquim de Melo e Porras, governor, to Mendonça Furtado, colonial secretary, 17 June 1767, ANTT, Ministerio do Reino, mago 601 (orig.).

²⁵ Ralph Davis, *The rise of the English shipping industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (London, 1962), 176.

Table 8 (cont.)

Year	Pará	Maranhão	Ceará	Pernambuco	Parabá	Bahia	Rio de Janeiro	São Paulo
1804	15,236	228,412	3,047	164,934		55,533	4,529	10
1805	14,710	168,693	6,248	278,329		73,935	2,608	44
1806	11,098	177,009		245,254			3,449	20
1807		206,449		334,914			1,792	

Source: Pará: Except for 1804-6, Manoel Barata, *A antiga produção e exportação do Pará...* (Belém, 1913), 3-7; the remaining years from 'Balanças gerais do comércio' series, cited in Alden, 'The significance of cacao production in the Amazon in the late colonial period', American Philosophical Society, *Proceedings* (April 1976), 120/2, 134-5. Maranhão: 1760-78, Dias, *Companhia geral*, 353; 1783, 1788 and 1805-7, Gaioso, *Compêndio*, tables 2-3, facing 210; 1782-90 from AHU/CU/cod. 198, fols. 127 and 119; 1791-7, 1799, and 1801-3, Luiz Amaral, *História geral da agricultura brasileira* (1940 edn), II, 210-11, as quoted in Santos, *Relações comerciais*, 172-3. Amaral's figures are substantially lower than other sources used here. Ceará: Amaral (1956 edn), II, 30 and 'Balanças gerais' series. Paraíba: von Spix and von Martius, *Voyagem*, II, 439. Pernambuco: 1788 and 1802, Frédéric Mauro, *Le Brésil du xv^e à la fin du xviii^e siècle* (Paris, 1977), 171; 1792-99, derived from data in source in n. 27; the remainder from the 'Balanças gerais' series. Bahia: MHB, III, 204-5, and 'Balanças gerais' series. Rio de Janeiro: Except for 1798, 1802, 1804-6, which are taken from the 'Balanças gerais' series, based on Santos, 172-3. São Paulo: von Spix and von Martius, I, 226-7, and 'Balanças gerais' series.

Pernambuco - whose product was esteemed as finer and cleaner than that of Maranhão.²⁶ The importance of cotton to Pernambuco amazed the bishop of Olinda, who wrote that its rapid progress had been so 'extraordinary' that by the turn of the century it 'almost equals [in value] sugar and all other products combined'.²⁷

Several factors account for the rapid growth of Brazilian cotton. One was the ease of its cultivation and processing and another was the prospect of handsome earnings. Cotton was a far less complicated crop

²⁶ For near-contemporary assessments, see Henry Koster, *Travels in Brazil*, ed. C. Harvey Gardiner (Carbondale, Ill., 1966), 80, 170; L. F. de Tollenare, *Notas dominicais tomadas durante uma viagem em Portugal e no Brasil em 1816, 1817 e 1818* (Bahia, 1956), 113f; and J. B. von Spix and C. F. P. von Martius, *Voyagem pelo Brasil*, translated from the German by Lucia Furquim Lahmeyer (3 vols., Rio de Janeiro, 1938), II, 453-7. The classic description and defence of the superiority of Maranhense cotton is Raimundo José de Sousa Gaioso, *Compêndio histórico-político das plantações da lanouza do Maranhão* (1818; reprinted Rio de Janeiro, c. 1970); see especially pp. 178-81, 263-5.

²⁷ D. José Joaquim Nabuco de Araújo to D. Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho, colonial secretary, Recife, 16 November 1799, AHU/PA/Pernambuco, maio 21.

to produce than sugar and required no expensive equipment. The ground was prepared by the immemorial practice of slash-and-burn, which in Maranhão began after the first rains in January. A dozen seeds were then dropped into small holes three to four inches deep and spaced at intervals of five to six feet. In the north-east a variable number of seeds, depending on whether the land was situated in a humid or a dry zone, were carefully placed in furrows and covered over. Corn, beans, or manioc were sometimes interplanted with cotton, although one contemporary complained that, as with sugar cultivation, planters too often neglected to grow food crops. In Maranhão harvests began in October and November, while they started in May in Pernambuco. The processing consisted of picking the balls from the bushes and, as Whitney's gin was unknown, separating out the lint by primitive techniques. This was then baled and sacked. The sacks (weighing up to 200 lb in Maranhão and about 140 in Pernambuco) were transported to seaport warehouses by mules or river boats.

It was reckoned that a single slave could produce only 20 arrobas of cotton lint a year, half the amount expected of a slave in the sugar industry,²⁸ but the cotton-grower's potential profits were higher. Apart from the purchase of slaves, the owner's major expenses included the maintenance and clothing, the cost of sacking, freight, and the tithe. Even when warehouse charges, commissions, and insurance fees were added, one informant, Raimundo Gaioso, calculated that a planter's profits might come close to 50 per cent of his costs. Significantly, he had in mind a typical Maranhão planter who possessed about 50 slaves, a large and expensive gang, larger, in fact, than the slave force of many sugar planters elsewhere in Brazil. It should not be forgotten that there were risks, some peculiar to cotton-growing. Epidemics might wipe out the workforce, who were becoming increasingly expensive to replace throughout this period. And the crop might be ravaged by a plague of caterpillars, grubs, or other vermin, or rotted by excessive rains.

What made the risk worth taking was favourable prices and a constantly rising demand. In 1772 the Maranhão company was offering twice as much for an arroba of cotton as the Pernambuco company was paying for sugar. And prices continued to soar - from 3,200 réis an arroba in the 1770s to 4,500 réis in the early 1790s and to 5,900 réis by the late 1790s and early 1800s.²⁹ The principal reasons why prices

²⁸ See ch. 3 above, table 3.

²⁹ Melo e Castro, 'Instrução para... Noronha', fol. 96r; von Spix and von Martius, II, 502 n. 1.

continued to rise were the rapid expansion of the cotton textile industry, especially in England and France, made possible by a technological revolution, and the demand for high quality fibres for the manufacture of fine fabrics. Though much Brazilian cotton ran to coarser grades, some of that produced in Pernambuco and Paraíba was considered by Portugal's major customers as among the best available from any world source.³⁰

For twelve of the years between 1776 and 1807—1776, 1777, 1789, 1796, and 1800—7—we have adequate data to measure Brazilian cotton exports to Portugal and re-exports from it. During those years 5,433,087 arrobas were shipped to the kingdom, of which more than three-quarters (76.1 per cent) was sent to foreign markets, chiefly England (55.4 per cent) and France (31.2 per cent). Between 1781 and 1792 Brazil's share of the English market for raw cotton increased from 5.8 to over 30 per cent. By 1800 cotton represented 28 per cent by value of Portugal's re-exports from Brazil, compared with 57 per cent for sugar and only 4 per cent for tobacco.³¹

For another two decades cotton was to flourish in Brazil, then wither away in the face of competition from the more technologically advanced United States. Why Brazilian cotton could not successfully match that competition, who its leading producers and brokers had been, and whether, as seems likely, life on a Brazilian cotton plantation was even less bearable for slaves than it was on a sugar plantation, are among the important questions that scholars need to explore.

Rice

During the late colonial period Brazil also became a source of two important cereals, rice and wheat. Rice had long been an article of general consumption in Portugal, but it was dependent upon foreign sources of supply, especially northern Italy down to the beginning of the 1730s and from that decade onwards the new English colony of South Carolina. Carolina rice was also exported to Brazil, though a less attractive type, called *arroz da terra* or *arroz vermelha*, was apparently indigenous to Brazil. The processing of this rice was handicapped by

Table 9 Brazilian rice exports to Portugal, 1767-1807 (arrobas)

Year	Pará	Maranhão	Rio de Janeiro	São Paulo
1767		225		
1768		273		
1769		555		
1770		627		
1771		8,133		
1772		30,217	1,782	
1773	935	57,465	68	
1774	7,163	50,920	3,550	
1775	19,480	109,599	1,418	
1776	27,872	75,154	725	
1777	40,346	144,845	5,161	
1778	29,473	129,032	4,130	
1779	89,236	96,748	79,000	
1780	107,252	194,930	37,350	
1781	96,791	171,564	56,475	
1782	114,895		21,573	
1783	73,116	164,520	21,276	
1784	118,604		23,841	
1785	84,681		36,792	
1786	83,849		27,324	
1787	136,022		28,575	
1788	85,521	313,434	7,425	
1789			9,014	
1790		199,699	18,684	
1791			64,620	
1792			12,816	
1793			24,854	
1794	103,503		3,600	
1795			25,065	
1796	46,880		176,000	
1797	90,171		14,994	
1798	59,618		97,096	
1799	46,417			
1800	90,836	294,950	19,940	
1801	39,172		15,363	135
1802	65,467		9,310	891
1803			38,534	265
1804			11,088	
1805			33,961	
1806			29,889	
1807		321,595	133,078	21,472
				52,695
				62,525

Sources: Pará: Barata, *Antiga produção*, 3-7. Maranhão: 1767-78, Dias, *Companhia geral*, 353; 1779-81, 'Mapa dos efeitos exportados da cidade do Maranhão para Lisboa no anno de 1779...1780...1781', BNL, no. 7194; 1783, 1788, 1805-7, Gaioso, *Compendio*,

³⁰ Edward Baines, *History of cotton manufacture in Great Britain* (2nd edn, New York, 1966), 304-6; Michael M. Edwards, *The growth of the British cotton trade, 1780-1815* (New York, 1967), 83-4, 103.

³¹ Jorge Borges de Macedo, *O biquénio continental. Economia e guerra juniores* (Lisbon, 1962), 44, table 5; Lugart, 'Portuguese tobacco trade', 46.

the absence of husking and polishing mills. The first rice mill was built two leagues from the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1756, its owner being given the customary monopoly on the polishing of all rice produced in the captaincy. The initial rice shipments from Rio de Janeiro to the kingdom began about 1760, but the enterprise did not prosper.

That venture, however, alerted Lisbon authorities to the possibility of stimulating rice culture elsewhere. In 1766 the local administrator of the Maranhão company was directed to distribute Carolina rice seed to farmers in Maranhão. Though exports from that captaincy began by the latter part of the decade (see table 9), their level was disappointingly low, partly because growers preferred to cultivate local rice, which was heavier and larger grained, and also because of a shortage of processing mills. The governor and company officials exerted pressure upon growers to switch to Carolina rice, and new mills, modelled in part after one built by a wealthy local planter and slaver, an Irishman known as Lourenço Belfort, were constructed. Rice culture became firmly established in Maranhão by the early 1770s. Its success there prompted the crown to instruct the governor of neighbouring Pará to introduce Carolina rice there too, and with the aid of a French-born engineer, Theodosio Constantino Chermont, rice cultivation began in Pará in 1772. By 1781 Portugal was receiving sufficient rice from Brazil to be able to bar further entry of all foreign rice.

The sketchy statistics available concerning the levels of Brazilian rice exports in this period are summarized in table 9. It is evident that Maranhão, where rice was cultivated primarily in the lower Itapicuru river and where it became the second most important crop after cotton, continued to be the major source of supply. In Pará, where the rice bowl was around the town of Macapá, north-west of Belém, rice followed cacao as the captaincy's leading export, but after the 1780s exports became increasingly irregular, for reasons that remain to be determined. In Rio de Janeiro rice continued to be grown in low-lying areas north of the capital, but much of that captaincy's harvest was locally

tables 2-3, facing 210. 'Resumo da exportação... 1805 a 1812', 220. **Rio de Janeiro:** Except for 1779, 1796, and 1807, based on Santos, *Relações comerciais*, 165 (where the data is expressed in sacks, which I have assumed corresponded to the legal definition of 2.25 arrobas, though I suspect that they may have weighed more); for the sources for 1779 and 1796, see Alden, 'Manoel Luis Vieira: an entrepreneur in Rio de Janeiro during Brazil's... agricultural renaissance', *HAHR*, 39 (Nov. 1959), 536-7; 1807, 'Balança geral... 1807', BNL, no. 9198. São Paulo: von Spix and von Martius, I, 224.

consumed. There were occasional shipments from Bahia and shortly after 1800 São Paulo, a dominant supplier in modern times, began to export rice, apparently from plantations north of the port of Santos.³²

Wheat

The south, specifically Rio Grande do Sul, also became a wheat exporter of consequence in this period — an especially welcome development from the crown's point of view, since Portugal had long suffered from chronic wheat deficits, the yields of peninsular crops being supplemented in the eighteenth century by imports from northern Italy, the Low Countries, England, and the Azores. During the Pombaline years 15-18 per cent of the grains consumed in the kingdom came from abroad. Wheat, together with codfish, olive oil, and wine, was one of the principal cargoes brought to Brazilian ports by the annual fleets, and when supplies were short governors and câmaras strove frantically to control supplies of the major alternative, manioc flour, which, though widely produced throughout tropical Brazil, was commonly disdained by the elites as fit only for slaves and other common folk.

Wheat growing in Rio Grande do Sul began about 1770 but, as with the cultivation of rice, its production was initially restricted by the absence of grist mills or of a knowledge of how to make them. In 1773 the crown dispatched a master carpenter and a master miller from Lisbon to remedy that problem, and three years later they returned from Rio Grande do Sul having apparently accomplished their mission. By 1780 wheat was being sown at the northern and southern extremities of the Lagoa dos Patos, around the towns of Porto Alegre and Rio Grande, the first centres of wheat farming in the captaincy, and in exceptional years yields as high as 70:1 were attained. Grain shipments to other parts of Brazil began in the early 1790s, averaging nearly 94,000 *alqueires* (75,200 bushels)³³ a year, and by the turn of the century the annual harvest reached nearly 160,000 bushels. Half of the crop was sent to Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, and Pernambuco, and wheat joined processed beef and hides as one of Rio Grande do Sul's most conspicuous exports. The availability of a local grain source within Brazil meant that Portugal was able to reduce wheat shipments to Brazil and apparently to lessen her dependence on foreign sources.

³² D. Alden, 'Manoel Luis Vieira', 321-37.

³³ The local *alqueire* was approximately twice the volume of that of the kingdom.

Cacao

One Brazilian export for which Portugal had only limited use was cacao. The Maranhão company had been set up in part to stimulate and stabilize cacao exports from the Amazon, which had been irregular since the 1740s. By the time the company's charter lapsed, cacao was also being produced in two other captaincies, Maranhão and Bahia; by 1800 Rio de Janeiro would also become an exporter. But Pará remained the dominant supplier. Between 1777 and 1807 its share of Brazilian cacao exports never fell below 87 per cent and was usually much higher. Pará's export levels (ranging from 1.6 to 1.9 million lb a year) remained about the same throughout the late 1770s and 1780s, at a time when European prices were generally low. Although prices rose rapidly during the 1790s, when the long cycle of maritime wars began, Pará did not immediately respond by increasing its exports, perhaps because insufficient shipping was available. However, the continued shortage of cacao derived from other New World sources, especially from Venezuela, during the first years of the nineteenth century did stimulate a spectacular increase in shipments from the Amazon which averaged 5.5 million lb (171,875 arrobas) a year (1800-7), much the highest level attained in colonial times. By then Brazil had become the second- or third-ranking New World supplier. One-half to two-thirds of Brazilian cacao was re-exported by Portugal to seven European lands, led by France and the north Italian ports.³⁴

Coffee

Cacao was to remain the dominant export of the Amazon for another half-century. Long before then, however, it was to be superseded as Brazil's most important beverage source by its rival, coffee. The origins and early development of Brazilian coffee are still curiously murky. It seems surprising that coffee aroused so little interest in either Brazil or Portugal during the eighteenth century. It was the subject of few *memórias* or royal directives, and contemporaries who wrote about the state of the economy of Brazil rarely mentioned coffee, nor was it commented on by foreign visitors to Brazil. And while the archives are full of petitions framed by other interest groups, especially sugar

Table 10 Coffee exports from Brazil, 1710-1807 (arrobas)

Year	Pará	Maranhão	Pernam- buco		Bahia	Rio de Janeiro		São Paulo
1750	4,944							
1751	5,483							
1752	1,429							
1753	9,944							
1754	236							
1755	7,214							
1756	3,590							
1757	3,641							
1758	852							740
1759	4,344							4,035
1760	8,470							2,293
1761	5,919							7,440
1762	3,833							6,775
1763	2,639							1,693
1764	4,292							2,390
1765	6,270							4,735
1766	5,104							5,300
1767	6,422							5,418
1768	4,052							6,017
1769	189							4,639
1770	3,088							2,021
1771	7,393							4,284
1772	4,815							5,202
1773	4,273							2,646
1774	141							2,347
1775	4,468							4,005
1776	5,792							7,000
1777	3,542							3,600
1778	6,579							
1779	4,513							101
1780	3,122							68
1781	2,838							81
1782								14
1783								810
1784	1,796							120
1785	1,683							70
1786	1,282							25
1787								445
1788								345
1789								560
1790								625
1791								470
1792								609
1793								2,752
								180

³⁴ Alden, 'Cacao production', 103-35.

Table 10 (cont.)

Year	Pernam- buco					Rio de Janeiro	São Paulo
	Pará	Maranhão	Bahia	Janeiro	São Paulo		
1794	2,811				3,171		
1795	5,150				235		
1796	4,042	165	1,983		8,454		13
1797	3,576	23	758		5,231		107
1798	5,019	155	2,020		14,642		528
1799	3,224	97	20		17,147		
1800	4,903	304	137		5,193		132
1801	2,562	208	4,872		20,678		116
1802	4,793		6,433		31,836		675
1803	6,255		6,927	584	53,191		243
1803	2,623		4,267		61,868		954
1806	2,656	132	553	393	70,574		1,060
1807		257	4,979		103,102		2,184

Sources: Pará: 1750-5, 'Mapa dos diferentes generos que... da cidade do Pará consta se exportarao do seu porto... 1730... 1755...', AHU/PA/Pará, caixa 38; 1755-72, Dias, *Companhia geral*, 291-2; 1773-1802, Barata, *Antiga produção*, 3-7; 1803, 1805-6, 'Balanças gerais do comércio' series, in Alden, 'Cacao production', Maranhão: 1758-77, Dias, 293; 1779-81, BNL, no. 7194; 1782 and 1788, Gaioso, *Compendio*, tables 2-3; 1796-9 and 1806-7, 'Balanças gerais' series. Pernambuco and Bahia: 'Balanças gerais' series. Rio de Janeiro: 1776-95, Santos, *Relações comerciais*, 165; remaining years from 'Balanças gerais' series. São Paulo: 1796-8, 'Balanças gerais' series; 1801-7, Afonso de Escrignolle Taunay, *História do café no Brasil*, II (Rio de Janeiro, 1939), 281.

planters and tobacco growers, coffee planters were as strangely silent as manioc farmers were.

Coffee has been so long identified with São Paulo that it may seem surprising to recall that its first Brazilian home was the Amazon. Seed, brought apparently from Cayenne, was planted in farms around Belém in the 1720s, and the first trial shipments to Lisbon were made in the early 1730s. In 1731 the crown, primarily interested in the development of Amazonian stocks of cinnamon, offered producers of cinnamon or coffee exemption from all customs duties for a dozen years. Thirteen years later, in response to a plea from the câmara of Belém, the crown prohibited foreign imports of coffee, even though between 1736 and 1741 only 1,354 arrobas had reached Lisbon from Pará, compared with 564 from India and 1,494 from other foreign sources.³⁵ By 1749, according to a regional historian, there were 17,000 coffee trees in Pará,

³⁵ Overseas council to king, 26 June 1742, AHU/PA/Pará, caixa 10.

yet exports remained below 2,500 arrobas, compared with nearly 58,000 for cacao. In fact, coffee never really flourished in Pará. At no time in the late colonial period did exports of it exceed 8,500 arrobas and the same was true of Maranhão, where coffee was first grown in the 1750s (see table 10).

Between the 1760s and 1790s coffee-growing spread from the north of Brazil to Pernambuco, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and São Paulo. In Rio de Janeiro, where the crop first attained significance, it was cultivated near the capital in such now fashionable sections as Lagoa de Rodrigo de Freitas, Gávea, and Tijuca. By the nineties, if not earlier, coffee-houses — prototypes of the ubiquitous *cafeginho* bars so characteristic of modern Brazilian cities — made their appearance in Rio de Janeiro, increasing from 26 to 40 during the last lustrium of the century.

By the 1790s, 70 years after its introduction, coffee was finally becoming a significant Brazilian export, at least from Rio de Janeiro. Between 1798 and 1807 its coffee exports grew sevenfold, attaining nearly 1.5 million kg by the latter year. By the early 1800s, in spite of its reputation for tasting bitter because of improper drying procedures, Brazilian coffee was to be found in markets all the way from Moscow to Venice, in Hamburg, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon, and the ports of the Barbary coast.

Both traditional and new commodities thus contributed to the economic revival of late colonial Brazil. The dramatic increase in the volume of Brazilian exports in just over a decade at the very end of the period is depicted in table 11.³⁶ The table clearly indicates the declining importance of gold, now less than half the value of hides, for example, and the rise of Rio de Janeiro and its chief dependency, Rio Grande do Sul. Because of sugar, coffee, indigo, hides, and gold, Rio de Janeiro had become the economic centre of Brazil in this period and, like Pernambuco, had surpassed Bahia, long the economic mainstay of the colony. In spite of persistent high expectations and very considerable crown investment, Maranhão and, more particularly, Pará lagged far behind the rest of coastal Brazil.

It should be remembered that the economic gains registered during this period were achieved using backward forms and techniques. Despite the elimination of the Jesuits and the harassment of other

³⁶ See also ch. 6 above, table 7.

Table 11 *Principal Brazilian exports to Portugal, 1796 and 1806 (contos de réis)*

Place	Foodstuffs ^a		Chiefly tobacco ^b		Drugs ^c		Cotton		Hides		Gold		Totals	
	1796	1808	1796	1806	1796	1806	1796	1806	1796	1806	1796	1806	1796	1806
Rio de Janeiro ^c	1,457	2,109.6	53	97.7	139.4	189.7	28.5	26.9	233.5	1,393	1,790.5	853	3,702	4,670
Bahia	2,721	1,794.8	575.8	446.7	24.8	27.4	345.8	399.7	242.3	570	50	46	3,961	3,284.7
Pernambuco ^d	1,207	1,697	2.5	1.5	4.4	20.8	827	1,844.3	199.4	227	0.3	26	2,250	3,817.8
Paraíba	65				0.1		82.4		4.9				153	
Maranhão	171	316.6	7.3	19.4	1.1		845.9	1,148	28.6	32.5	0.8	8.8	1,055	1,527.7
Pará	186	614	0.8	0.6	8.8	78.1	71	71	22.6	16.4	8	5.6	297	785.9
São Paulo ^c	41.8				0.2		0.5		7.0		5.9		55	
Ceará		1.7				1.5		54		9.5	0.5			67.4
Totals	5,858.8	6,533.7	639.4	565.9	178.8	319.9	1,592.9	2,398.2	732	2,248.4	1,995.3	939.4	11,473	14,153.5

^a Incl. rice, sugar, cacao, coffee. ^b Incl. wax (from Africa), snuff, etc. ^c Incl. indigo, quinine, sarsaparilla, brazilwood and hardwoods. ^d In 1796 included Ceará, Alagoas, and Rio Grande do Norte. In 1806 included Paraíba. ^e Incl. Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul and (in 1806) São Paulo.

Source: Balbi, *Essai statistique sur le royaume de Portugal et d'Algarve...*, I (Paris, 1822), tables I and III, facing 430.

land-owning religious orders, no fundamental changes occurred in land tenure. The rise of cotton, the expansion of sugar, and the growth of livestock ranching, particularly in Rio Grande do Sul, merely accentuated existing patterns of latifundia. And the backbone of the plantation and ranch labour force remained, as it had been since the sixteenth century, black slaves. If the figures presented above in table 5 are reasonably accurate, it appears that slave imports increased by 66 per cent between 1780-5 and 1801-5, a direct consequence of the agrarian revival. But slave labour still meant hoe culture, for the plough was virtually unknown in Brazil at this time and, with the exception of tobacco growers, Brazilian planters still resisted the use of any form of fertilizer save wood ash.³⁷ Slash-and-burn practices, borrowed from the Indians, remained the customary method of land clearance and soil 'preparation'. Sugar planters continued with reckless abandon to destroy the forests to fuel their processing plants, further depleting an already scarce resource in many areas. Neither bagasse, the residue of crushed cane, nor the Jamaican train, both developed in the Caribbean sugar industry to economize on fuel, were extensively employed in Brazil. Though the need for agricultural innovations was certainly recognized, basic changes did not occur, and the agricultural improvement manuals that the government sent to Brazil, beginning in the 1790s, were expensive and, not surprisingly, often rotted in warehouses.³⁸

Moreover, the benefits of the economic surge were largely confined to the littoral of Brazil, while the interior, which in minor ways contributed to the seaports' volume of exports, languished in decadence. Except for Minas Gerais, where gold mining continued on a reduced scale, and enlightened methods of stock raising accompanied subsistence agriculture, the interior became a largely barren land. Such was the case, for example, with Piauí, a region of extensive, mostly absentee-owned cattle ranches and little else. Once a major supplier of cattle to the gold

³⁷ The frustrating efforts of one enlightened governor to bring about agricultural improvements, including the use of fertilizer, may be seen in the correspondence of Dom Francisco Inocêncio de Sousa Coutinho, the governor of Pará, with his brother, Dom Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, the colonial minister, in *Biblioteca e Arquivo Público do Pará*. Belém [BAPP], cod. 683, nos. 5 and 99; cod. 683, no. 42 and annex; cod. 689, no. 200; and cod. 703, no. 34.

³⁸ For contemporary criticism of Brazilian agriculture, see Vilhena, *Cartas*, I, 174-7, and Diogo Pereira Ribeiro de Vasconcelos, 'Breve descrição geographica, physica e politica da capitania de Minas Gerais', (1806), *Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro*, 6 (1901), especially 837-8. On the failure to protect forests, F. W. O. Morton, 'The royal timber in late colonial Bahia', *HAHR*, 58 (February 1978), 41-61.

campus of Minas and the urban market of Salvador, it saw the Mineiro market decline in the 1760s with the falling off in gold production and the development of a more efficient kind of pastoralism in Minas itself. By about 1770 the number of *boiadas* (drives) sent annually from Piauí ranches via the banks of the São Francisco river to Minas had declined to 50 per cent of their 1750s level, and soon they disappeared altogether. Twenty years later the most devastating of a series of eighteenth-century droughts (*secas*) destroyed half the Piauí herd, a blow from which the economy did not recover for decades. The inability of Piauí to supply its other major market, Salvador, after the onset of the 'Great Drought' enabled a distant economic rival, Rio Grande do Sul, to capture the Bahian market for processed (salted or sun-dried) beef.

The 'Great Drought' also devastated parts of the interior of Maranhão and Ceará, but it was probably most seriously felt in Goiás. There the rapid exhaustion of gold placers in the 1760s left no money-making alternative, such as cotton or rice, to stock raising, since agriculture had never developed at a more than rudimentary level and the difficulties of transport made it impossible to dispose of surpluses to the more populous littoral. The *seca* of the 1790s was thus a serious blow to the local economy. Little wonder that while royal expenses were kept at an average of 62 contos a year (1762-1802), income fell steadily from 87 contos in 1765 to less than 33 in 1802.³⁹

But Portugal had long operated marginal parts of the empire at a deficit: for example, her remaining enclaves along the west coast of India, which were sustained throughout most of the eighteenth century by subsidies from Lisbon; Mozambique; and (in the late colonial period) Maro Grosso and the upper Amazon, the sub-captaincy of São José do Rio Negro. It had long been Portuguese practice to compensate for fiscal losses produced in some parts of its empire with surpluses gathered elsewhere. In the sixteenth century India produced a large share of imperial income, but it is doubtful in spite of the royal monopoly on brazilwood, whether the crown netted much income from Brazil at all.⁴⁰ One of the earliest estimates of imperial income for the seventeenth century is that of a career fiscal officer, Luiz de Figueiredo Falcão, who indicates that at the opening of the century the state (*estado*) of India provided 45 per cent of crown income (760 out of 1,672 contos),

³⁹ Santos, *Relações comerciais*, 72-5.

⁴⁰ On this point see ch. 1 above.

compared with a mere 2.5 per cent (42 contos) from Brazil, scarcely more than the yield of the Azores.⁴¹ If we may believe Fr Niccolao d'Oliveira, who published his *Livro das grandezas de Lisboa* in 1620, income from India fell precipitously during the intervening years (to 412.5 contos, or 23.6 per cent of total crown revenue), while that of Brazil increased to 54 contos (3 per cent of the total), but he notes that the entire yield from Brazil was spent within the colony.⁴²

Without question Brazil's share of total royal income increased steadily during the seventeenth century and markedly during the eighteenth century, but by how much is hard to say. A calculation for 1716 indicates that out of a total royal income of 3,942 contos, 545 (13.8 per cent) came from Brazil. In 1777 the treasurer general reported to the queen that the crown's ordinary income amounted to 4,400 contos. But he showed only 636 contos as originating within the empire, of which 245 came from India and the rest from Brazil. However, 1777 was a singularly bad year for income from Portugal's leading colony because of the borderlands' conflict with Spain. Not recorded is a remittance of 297 contos from Rio de Janeiro and an additional 131.8 contos from various other captaincies, diverted to Rio de Janeiro to defray extraordinary expenditures of the viceregal exchequer. If we add both sums to the reported remittances, total royal income from Brazil would have been 1,195 contos, or 27.15 per cent of the crown's ordinary income that year.⁴³

Unfortunately, from 1777 until 1805 we lack details concerning the levels of crown income. Balbi, the French geographer, reports that it peaked in 1805 at 11,200 contos, almost three times greater than receipts in 1777. Brazil's share of that total must have been very large, but it is not ascertainable since Balbi never received the promised income breakdown, nor has it subsequently come to light.⁴⁴

There are, however, statistics that demonstrate the extent of Brazil's contribution to Portugal's foreign trade during the last years of this era. According to the Portuguese historian Jorge Borges de Macedo, between 1789 and 1807 the volume of that trade quadrupled. Table 12

⁴¹ *Livro em que se contém toda a fazenda, e real patrimonio das reynos de Portugal, India, ilhas adjacentes... e outras muitas particularidades* (1607) (Lisbon, 1839), 7f.

⁴² Fr Niccolao d'Oliveira, *Livro das grandezas de Lisboa* (Lisbon, 1620), 173-183v.

⁴³ João Lúcio de Azevedo, *Épocas de Portugal económico...* (2nd edn, Lisbon, 1947), 463;

⁴⁴ Reflexões ao resumo da receita e despesa do exército regio do anno de 1777, Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon, 51-x-11, no. 57; Aiden, *Royal government*, 328, 339, and 344.

⁴⁵ *Essai statistique*, 1, 304.

Table 12. Origins of exports from Portugal to Europe, Barbary, and the United States of America, 1789, 1796, 1806 (contos de réis)

Year	Place of origin				Total	Percentage Brazilian
	Atlantic	Brazil	Asia	Other		
1789	3,251.1	0.6	3,965	702	20	7,534.5
1796	3,911.8	11.4	9,833	277	1,928	16,013
1806	6,080.2	34.0	14,506	624	2,010	23,215

Source: 'Alfabeto das importações e exportações do reino de Portugal com as nações estrangeiras em... 1789', Ministério das Obras Públicas, Arquivo Geral, vols. 31V-32I; Balbi, *Essai statistique*, I, 442.

demonstrates that during three of those years for which we have sufficient data Brazil supplied between one-half and two-thirds of the products that contributed to the expansion of the mother country's commerce. Thanks to Brazil's non-mineral exports, the balance of trade between Portugal and her principal trading partner, England, was completely altered at the end of the late colonial period. From the beginning of the century until 1791 that balance had always heavily favoured England, but from 1791 until 1810 it shifted substantially in Portugal's favour.⁴⁵ Of the products that Portugal sent to Britain during those two decades 35.7 per cent were of Brazilian origin. Similarly, the terms of trade between the kingdom and another important customer, France, also shifted in Portugal's favour in the early 1800s, mainly because of heavy purchases of Brazilian cacao, coffee, cotton, indigo, and sugar.⁴⁶

Such statistics were naturally pleasing to Portuguese merchants and to high authorities, but there were others that caused concern. In spite of Portugal's favourable trade balances with her European markets, the value of Portuguese-made manufactured goods sent to the empire declined by 69 per cent between 1801 and 1807. Such a decline, which very likely began a decade earlier, was particularly alarming since nearly

⁴⁵ Excepting only 1797 and 1799. Balbi, I, 441. The Anglo-Portuguese trade balance from 1698 to 1775 is given in H. E. S. Fisher, *The Portuguese trade 1700-1770* (London, 1971), 16; from 1776 to 1800 in Elizabeth Boody Schumpper, *English overseas trade statistics 1697-1808* (Oxford, 1960), 17-18, tables 5-6; and from 1801 to 1810 in Macedo, *O bloqueio*, 41, where the data is expressed in contos, convertible at $\frac{1}{2}$ stig = 3,555.5 reis. See also ch. 6 above, tables 4, 6, and 7.

⁴⁶ Macedo, *O bloqueio*, 38, 42, 201-3.

Table 13. Balance of trade between Portugal and leading Brazilian capitancies, 1796-1806 (contos de réis)

Year	Rio de Janeiro ^a		Bahia		Pernambuco		Maranhão		Pará	
	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.
1796	3,702	2,474	3,960	2,070	2,250	1,384	1,055	635	297	330
1797	916	3,721	1,661	2,734	850	1,270	352	462	256	226
1798										
1799	4,526	6,575	4,002	3,818	2,647	3,369	836	1,372	448	565
1800	4,840	4,080	2,640	2,306	2,270	1,733	1,956	1,819	628	418
1801	6,290	5,332	3,503	2,985	3,335	1,377	1,354	778	295	194
1802	3,643	3,579	2,620	2,506	2,295	2,362	1,378	1,143	417	338
1803	3,295	3,493	2,914	3,042	2,504	1,779	1,892	1,187	717	410
1804	3,245	3,959	2,700	2,858	2,914	2,880	1,807	978	512	645
1805	3,960	3,150	3,736	2,340	3,975	2,614	1,584	754	647	626
1806	4,670	3,056	3,385	2,110	3,818	1,789	1,528	832	786	653

^a Includes São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul.

Source: 'Balanças gerais', series, in Alden, 'Cacao production', 134-5.

four-fifths of such goods were supposed to find markets in Brazil, whose economy for the most part was flourishing.

The explanation for the lessening demand for Portuguese goods in Brazil is not hard to find. It lay in the growth of foreign, especially British, smuggling — 'a scandalous scourge', as the colonial minister bitterly declared, 'which extends to almost all the Brazilian capitancies'. If that minister's sources are to be trusted, by the mid-1780s a dozen English ships a year were boldly sailing direct from England to Brazilian ports in defiance of Portuguese laws to the contrary, and exchanging British manufactures for Brazilian raw materials.⁴⁷

Smuggling had always been prevalent in Brazil, and to combat it the crown devised elaborate procedures to discourage unauthorized foreign ships from seeking admission to Brazilian ports under the pretext of being in distress but actually in order to engage in clandestine trade. Those procedures were often so rigorously enforced in the past that sea captains like James Cook charged zealous colonial officers with being despotic and inhumane. Nevertheless, they served to discourage all but three or four distressed vessels (*arribadas*) a year from entering, for

⁴⁷ Melo e Castro, 'Instrução', vols. 92V-98V.

example, Rio de Janeiro. But it is patent that by the 1780s and 1790s foreign ships were frequenting Brazilian ports in ever growing numbers, especially the premier port of Rio de Janeiro, where the number of British *arríbadas* increased from eight to 30 a year between 1791 and 1800.⁴⁸

As a consequence of the growth of the contraband trade in imported foreign manufactured goods and the increasing value of colonial exports because of an exceptionally strong European market, Portugal found herself in the undesirable — and from the perspective of crown officials absurd — position of having an adverse balance of payments with important parts of Brazil. The results are summarized in table 13.⁴⁹ Well might the colonial minister conclude that if the situation did not improve, 'within a few years this kingdom will be drained of money'. And, he might have added, the Brazilians might as well declare their independence.

SIGNS OF POLITICAL UNREST

The two decades before the transfer of the Portuguese court to Rio de Janeiro (1807–8) in fact witnessed several abortive conspiracies intended to free parts of Brazil from Portuguese rule. The first is the much-studied Mineiro conspiracy of 1788–9, organized in the city of Ouro Preto by a small group of Mineiro and Paulista intellectuals, some of whom were poets and admirers of the achievements of the first American revolution. Though Minas had obviously been in economic recession since the early 1760s, the immediate precipitant of the plot was the determination of the colonial secretary, Martinho de Melo e Castro, to collect large sums that he considered were due the crown. Melo e Castro (1716–95), an experienced diplomat and secretary of state for the navy and overseas territories since 1770, when he succeeded Pombal's late brother, Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, was the only person of his rank to survive in office after Pombal's dismissal. He shaped (or mis-shaped) Portugal's colonial policies for two and a half decades. Ignoring evidence to the contrary, he became convinced that the persistent shortfall in revenues from Minas was a consequence not of the exhaustion of the placers, but of the wilful negligence of public

authorities in the captaincy and of the wholesale frauds perpetrated by mining entrepreneurs, tax contractors, and others. Brushing aside proposals to ameliorate the depression in Minas, he directed the newly designated governor, the Visconde de Barbacena, to undertake prompt efforts to collect the arrears, which in 1788 totalled 5,455 contos. Melo e Castro's 'root and branch' reform was bound to be painful to mine operators, tax contractors, ranchers, ecclesiastics, merchants, and even royal officials in the captaincy, yet, strangely, he saw no need to send troops from Rio de Janeiro to accompany the new (and untried) governor in enforcing such a draconian programme.

The conspirators, consisting of several ecclesiastics, a prominent landowner, two dragoon officers, one of whom was popularly called 'Tiradentes' (the tooth-puller), planned their uprising in December 1788. Associated with them was a larger, shadowy group including a local magistrate, several heavily indebted tax contractors, other landowners, and troop commanders. Their intent was to establish a Mineiro republic, where existing restrictions on diamond extraction, coinage, and manufacturing would no longer exist, and all debts to the Portuguese crown would be excused. They planned to establish a university (none existed in colonial Brazil) and various social services. The republic was to be democratically governed by municipal assemblies, a national parliament, and an annually elected head, whose title and functions remained undefined. Instead of a standing army, the republic would be defended by a citizen militia in which, presumably, Brazilian-born blacks and mulattos, to whom the revolutionaries promised freedom (without offering compensation to their former owners), would figure prominently. Precisely how such a republic might survive in the interior, surrounded by royalist-controlled captaincies, seems never to have been worked out, though it was apparently hoped that the Mineiro example would inspire similar uprisings in adjacent São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

There were about twenty conspirators. They intended to launch their revolt in mid-February 1789. That was when the governor was expected to announce his intention to collect an unpopular head-tax, the *derrama*, which was certain to provoke popular unrest. The rebels planned to fan that discontent until it became a full-fledged riot in the capital, Ouro Preto. During the tumult Tiradentes was to decapitate the governor and proclaim the establishment of the republic. However, the governor took the wind out of the conspirators' sails by suspending the *derrama*, and

⁴⁸ Santos, *Relações comerciais*, 119. Between 1791 and 1798, thirty-nine foreign ships were admitted to the port of Salvador under similar circumstances. Luis Henrique Dias Tavares, *História da selvaça tentada na Bahia em 1798* ('A conspiração das algaratas') (São Paulo, 1975), 88.

⁴⁹ See also ch. 6 above, tables 5 and 8.

a few weeks later the plot was exposed. Following the arrest of the principal conspirators, three separate judicial inquiries were conducted, and in April 1792 sentences were handed down. Five of the conspirators were banished to Angola, but the sixth, Tiradentes, was sentenced to be hanged in a symbolic gesture of warning to others harbouring treasonable ideas. Shortly afterwards the sentences were carried out.

Rather more has been claimed for the significance of the Mineiro conspiracy than the evidence will support. According to its most recent interpreter, it represented a 'confrontation between a society growing in self-awareness and self-confidence within an economic environment that encouraged and stressed self-sufficiency, and a metropolis bent on the retention of dependent markets and the safeguarding of a vital producer of precious stones, gold, and revenue'.⁵⁰ Perhaps so, but it is not clear whether other towns and their elites in Minas, not to say the slaves, would have supported the revolutionaries, nor how many Mineiros were at the time really prepared to surrender their lives and their property – including their most important investment, their slaves – in an effort to secure their freedom by means of such an ill-conceived scheme.

Some of the participants in the Mineiro conspiracy possessed copies of books by some of the well-known French *philosophes*, but how much they were influenced by such works is hard to say. Familiarity with reformist French literature did inspire other plots or alleged plots in late colonial Brazil. One example of the latter is the so-called *conjuracao* of Rio de Janeiro of 1794. There the viceroy, the Conde de Resende, prohibited all gatherings by intellectuals because of fear of revolutionary talk. When he was informed that nocturnal meetings were being held in the home of a regius professor of rhetoric, he immediately ordered the participants' arrest. Among those detailed were a woodcarver, a cabinetmaker, a shoemaker, a physician, a surgeon, a jeweller, and several businessmen. Though one of them possessed copies of works by Rousseau, Raynal, and the author of a religious treatise listed on the index of prohibited books, the 60 witnesses called before the enquiry panel had nothing more incriminating to report than the fact that the group discussed the current political situation in Europe, the incompetence of certain clerics, particularly Franciscans, and the probability that the Portuguese army could not stand up to French forces. No

conspiracy having been proven, the twelve were quietly released in 1797, after two and a half years' confinement in the dungeons of a local fortress.

A very different fate befell those who participated in the most fascinating conspiracy in Brazil during this period, the so-called 'Tailors' Conspiracy' of 1798 in Bahia. On 12 August of that year, handwritten manifestos were affixed to church walls and other prominent places throughout Salvador, addressed to the 'Republican Bahian people'. In the name of the 'supreme tribunal of Bahian democracy', the inhabitants were urged to support an armed movement claiming to include 676 persons – soldiers, ecclesiastics, merchants, even agents (*familiares*) of the Holy Office – whose purpose was to overthrow 'the detestable metropolitan yoke of Portugal' and to install a French-style republic. Although designating a shoeless Carmelite to head an independent church, the rebels issued dire warnings to clergymen who opposed the republic, in which 'all citizens, especially mulattos and blacks', would be equal, a regime based on 'freedom, equality and fraternity'. Slaves were promised freedom and soldiers pay rises; merchants, free trade with all nations, especially France; consumers, a rollback in prices, especially of manioc and beef, both of which had advanced 25 per cent in recent years.

The authorities, residing in a city where two out of three persons were black or brown and in a captaincy where whites were outnumbered five to one (see table 4 above), moved with alacrity to apprehend the culprits. Forty-nine suspects, including five women, were arrested. Most were free mulattos, including their leader, João de Deus do Nascimento, a penniless 27-year-old tailor, but eleven were slaves. In a society in which an estimated nine out of ten persons were illiterate, a surprisingly large number of the conspirators were able to read and, indeed, many possessed translations of incriminating French writings of the period. They ranged in age from sixteen to 38 but averaged just over 26. Although some historians insist in labelling the movement a mulatto plot to do away with whites, ten of the conspirators, including a schoolmaster whose greatest sin appears to have been his ability to read French, were white.

In spite of the apprehension of all but two of the suspects and the discovery of many suspicious documents, no revolutionary plan was ever discovered. Nor had any weapons been fired, although many of the conspirators were troops of the line or militiamen. Yet, upon the

⁵⁰ Kenneth R. Maxwell, *Conflicts and conspiracies: Brazil and Portugal 1710-1808* (Cambridge, 1973).

conclusion of a lengthy investigation, in November, 1799, João de Deus and three others were publicly hanged, their bodies being quartered and exhibited about the city; seven others were whipped and banished to other parts of the empire; others were confined for additional months in local dungeons; five were sent to Africa and abandoned in places not under Portuguese control.

This severe punishment of the Bahian 33 was carried out upon express orders from Lisbon. The clear objective was to convince persons of African origin of the futility of seeking to alter their status by radical means and to reassure the dominant white colonials that as long as they supported the existing regime, Brazil would not become another Saint-Domingue. Yet not all blacks were intimidated, nor were all whites reassured. In 1807 still another plot was uncovered in Bahia, this time involving plantation and urban slaves of Hausa origin. Though the plotters, armed with bows and arrows, pistols, and muskets, do not seem to have devised any political programme, their social goal was unmistakable: the massacre of all whites in the captaincy. Once again there were executions and whippings, but Bahian and other Brazilian whites must have wondered how long such measures would suffice.

Little wonder that few whites in Brazil favoured either an end to the slave trade or the elimination of slavery, both of which were so vital to their way of life and so intimately tied to the prosperity that coastal Brazil was then enjoying. It may be true that plots such as the Tailors' Conspiracy and the Hausa movement disposed the elites to accept compromises short of independence, but it is clear that while their spokesmen refrained from expressing the need for political reforms, they felt no reluctance about urging the crown to concede greater economic liberties that would benefit Brazil, or at least her dominant elites. One of the most influential of those spokesmen was José Joaquim da Cunha de Azeredo Coutinho (1742-1821). A member of the new rich sugar aristocracy of the Campos dos Goitacazes in Rio de Janeiro, Azeredo held many important ecclesiastical posts in Brazil and in Portugal and repeatedly prodded the government to undertake reforms that would benefit the economies of both the kingdom and her most vital colony. Thus, in 1791, he strongly opposed new price restrictions on sugar, arguing that higher prices would allow Brazilians to buy more goods from Portugal. Three years later he published a series of reform proposals in 'An economic essay on the commerce of Portugal and her colonies', in which he revived the century-old argument that the 'true

mines' of Brazil were her agricultural resources, not the gold placers which had produced illusory gains. He urged the abolition of the salt monopoly (accomplished, as noted, in 1801), the elimination of restrictions upon the exploitation of Brazilian forests in order to promote the always disappointing shipbuilding industry, the development of a fishing industry based on Indian know-how; and the removal of restrictions on the manufacture of essentials. In a third essay on the state of the Brazilian mining sector (1804), the sometime bishop of Pernambuco reiterated a Mineiro appeal of a generation earlier, calling for a revival of gold mining through the introduction of the latest European knowledge and equipment.⁵¹

Although the bishop indicated general remedies that he believed would promote harmony between Portugal and Brazil, a group of Bahian critics were far more specific. In 1807 the governor of Bahia wrote to the câmara of Salvador to inquire whether it felt that there were particular circumstances that inhibited the development of agriculture and commerce in the captaincy. The câmara, in turn, consulted leading figures throughout Bahia, several of whom responded at length. Judge João Rodrigues de Brito, a member of the high court of Salvador, clearly spoke for many proprietors when he candidly wrote,

In order for the farmers to achieve full liberty which the wellbeing of agriculture demands, it is necessary for them to have (1) the liberty to grow whatever crops they deem best; (2) the liberty to construct whatever works and factories they judge necessary to utilize fully their resources; (3) the liberty to sell in any place, by any means and through whatever agent they wish to choose, free of special fees or formalities; and (5) the liberty to sell their products at any time when it best suits their convenience. Unfortunately, the farmers of this captaincy enjoy none of these liberties at present.

The judge and several other respondents particularized many specific grievances of the agricultural interests of Bahia, including many restrictions imposed by the very câmaras controlled by the proprietary interests. But they also criticized the shortcomings of the religious, especially those living in monasteries, and the board of inspection, which they felt inhibited rather than facilitated sales of sugar, tobacco, cotton, and other crops; and they stressed the need for educational reforms and for freedom of the press.⁵²

⁵¹ Sergio Buarque de Holanda (ed.), *Obras económicas de J. J. da Cunha de Azeredo Coutinho* (1794-1804) (São Paulo, 1966).

⁵² João Rodrigues de Brito et al., *Cartas económicas-políticas sobre a agricultura e comércio da Bahia* (Lisbon, 1821; reprinted Salvador, 1924 and 1940). The quotation appears on p. 28 of the 1821 edition.

The articulation of such complaints, so similar to those voiced in Spanish America at that time, as well as the appearance of the first revolutionary plots in Brazil, testify to the extent of dissatisfaction that existed in late colonial Brazil. Not only sansculottes but men of substance and eminence, Portuguese- as well as Brazilian-born men, focused the crown's attention upon the need for fundamental improvements, without which revolutionary sentiment was bound to grow. And Portugal depended on Brazil far more than the colony needed the mother country.

At the conclusion of his 'Economic essay', Bishop Azeredo Coutinho had predicted:

If Portugal...preserves an adequate navy and merchant marine; if, satisfied with her vast dominions in the four quarters of the globe, she renounces further conquests; if she promotes by every [possible] means the development of the riches which her possessions have the capacity to produce; if she maintains her vassals in peace and tranquillity and assures their right to enjoy the fruits of their estates; if she establishes manufactures only of the most indispensable necessities, and abandons those of luxury to foreigners, in order to allow them an opportunity to purchase her superfluities...no enemy will molest her, or disturb her quiet...⁵³

Unfortunately for the bishop and for the kingdom, the enemies of Portugal did molest her and profoundly upset her tranquillity. Portugal, which for years had profited from the succession of European conflicts, was finally a victim of those conflicts herself. In August 1807 Napoleon had demanded that Portugal close her ports to British ships and seize British subjects and their property. For a time the government sought to comply with those demands, but on 16 November a British fleet appeared off the Tagus and threatened to destroy elements of the Portuguese merchant marine and navy and possibly to bombard Lisbon as well. In addition, the British foreign secretary spoke darkly about the necessity of taking Brazil if Portugal failed to accept the assistance the British had proffered to facilitate the government's escape. While the lion was waving its tail angrily, the French tricolour appeared on Portuguese soil at the head of Marshal Junot's army of occupation (19 November). Squeezed by the Anglo-French nutcracker, the government implemented an emergency plan whose origins went back to 1640, and sought safety in its most important colony. On 29 November 1807 the

government of the regent prince Dom João, *de facto* ruler of Portugal and the empire since his mother, Maria I, had become mentally incompetent in 1792, fled from Lisbon and sailed for Brazil under British naval escort, accompanied by thousands of courtiers, bureaucrats, soldiers, servants, and others. He arrived in Salvador in January 1808 and two months later was safely installed in Rio de Janeiro.

For Portugal, the economic euphoria of the past two decades, stemming in large part from profits earned on the resale of Brazilian agricultural and pastoral products, was over. It remained to be seen whether the regime of the prince regent (the future João VI) could accommodate the Brazilians by means that would satisfy their demands for change without at the same time seriously alienating the people whom it had just abandoned.⁵⁴

⁵³ On the period from the arrival of the Portuguese court in Rio de Janeiro in March 1808 to the return of Dom João VI to Lisbon in April 1821, and on the background to Brazil's declaration of its independence from Portugal in September 1822, see Bethell, *CHL*, 4, III, ch. 4.