

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF OURO PRÊTO: STRESSES OF
DYNAMIC URBANIZATION IN COLONIAL BRAZIL,
1695-1726

By

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To My Father
Francisco Nascimento Ramos
In Grateful Memory

PREFACE

Ouro Prêto is today a small city of fewer than 20,000 people about 100 kilometers southeast of Belo Horizonte, the capital of the state of Minas Gerais. It is a town only beginning to recover from over a century of isolation and economic underdevelopment. While the eighteenth century was an era of economic and cultural dynamism, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw economic retardation. Fortunately for the present, past residents of Ouro Prêto lacked the wealth to destroy the monuments of the golden age in Minas Gerais. Now these monuments -- the churches, houses, works of art, and rambling streets -- attract tourists from all over Brazil and from many parts of the world.

Because of its importance during the eighteenth century, Vila Rica, as Ouro Prêto was called during the colonial era, has been examined by Brazilian historians. But almost without exception these writers have focused either upon dramatic events like the Wars of the Emboabas, the 1720 riots, and the Inconfidência Mineira of 1789, or upon the baroque art which flourished during the age of gold. Thus, writers have tended to fix their attention upon the events which took place in the town and to treat these as examples of nativism during the colonial era.

Throughout these studies the town and its residents are barely perceptible. Because the spotlight has been on the dramatic, the organization and structure of the town has remained in the shadows.

The colonial history of Vila Rica can be divided into three distinct periods. The first covers the years between 1695, when gold was discovered, and 1726, and is characterized by a rapid expansion in gold production. The second covers the years 1727 to 1744, and is marked by relative stability in the production of gold in the immediate area of Vila Rica. The third period extends from 1745 to the end of the colonial era, and is one of decreasing gold production.

This study concentrates on the epoch of economic boom. It is during this period that the seeds of the artistic and intellectual developments of the second half of the eighteenth-century were planted. This is the period when law and order was established among the turbulent miners who flocked into the mining district. My primary consideration in examining these three decades is to present a multifaceted view of a society in the process of formation. Rather than present a static situation, the emphasis is on change--on the dynamic manner in which this colonial society evolved.

To some extent, especially regarding the Wars of the Emboabas, material familiar to specialists is reexamined. Time and space are devoted to such topics in order that they

may be placed into a larger frame of reference; the emphasis is not on the events themselves, but on their effects upon the society then developing.

I have sought to concentrate upon the analysis of local political institutions, social organization, and urbanization, and to emphasize the processes by which these evolved. This approach provides an opportunity to use Vila Rica as a case study of a colonial town, and is especially illuminating because of the rapidity with which the transition was made from an uninhabited region to a major town and capital of the most populated and richest captaincy in Brazil.

In terms of political development, the case of Vila Rica reaffirms the importance of town councils in the administration of law and the maintenance of order. This study, however, goes beyond the town council to examine all components of a highly complex system of local government including the justices of the peace and the fiscal officers. The case by Vila Rica refutes the assumption that by 1700 royal government had crushed municipal power. In the mining district the Portuguese crown was willing to grant extensive powers to local interests in exchange for stability and its corollary, increased gold production. The process by which the crown sought to regain control from local interests is a major theme of this study.

My analysis of the development of Vila Rica is focused on the forces that shaped the urban pattern which

evolved. While gold was the most important factor in determining the location of the town, and the general form that the urban area would assume, other factors such as commerce, the main square, major roads, and the construction of public buildings played significant roles in this process.

The society that evolved in and immediately around Vila Rica is discussed at length in this study, which is especially concerned with the composition of each level of society and the extent of mobility between groups. Particular attention is devoted to slaves and freedmen. While there was extensive social mobility during part of this period, the process of social rigidification also began at this time, with the effects being felt most by some components of the middle group and by the slaves. Baptismal and marriage kinship relationships, lay brotherhoods, and the militia are examined as manifestations of these processes.

The sources used in the reconstruction of this colonial environment include the records of the town council of Vila Rica; the records of baptisms, marriages, and burials; lay brotherhood records; wills; and the records of the governor's office and the treasury. These sources, some of which have not been used systematically before, form a mosaic: each provides a piece to the total picture. This is particularly true in the matter of social organization.

The research for this study was conducted in Brazil under a grant from the Foreign Area Fellowship Program grant, without which it could not have been done. I would be remiss if I failed to acknowledge the assistance and friendship extended to me by the Director of the Arquivo Público Mineiro, Dr. João Gomes Teixeira; the Archbishop of Mariana, Dom Oscar de Oliveira; and the Director of the Museu da Inconfidência, Dr. Orlandino Seites Fernandes. Among many other Brazilians who aided my research, Srs. Hélio Gravatá and Manuel de Paiva Junior must be singled out; Sr Gravatá for both his friendship and bibliographical assistance and Sr. Manuel for sharing his love for Ouro Preto and his knowledge of local church history and documentation. I have received advice and assistance from many North Americans at various stages of my research, but particularly from Dr. Neill Macaulay of the University of Florida who has been unstinting of his time and knowledge. To these gentlemen and to others unnamed goes my sincerest appreciation.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

ACAM.....	Arquivo da Curia do Arcebispado de Mariana
AIMP.....	Arquivo da Irmandade das Mercês e Perdões
AISFAD.....	Arquivo da Irmandade de São Francisco de Antônio Dias
ANSRAC.....	Arquivo da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Alto da Cruz
APAD.....	Arquivo Parochial de Antônio Dias
APHANOP.....	Arquivo do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional in Ouro Preto
APM.....	Arquivo Público Mineiro
APOP.....	Arquivo Parochial de Ouro Preto
CMOP.....	Câmara Municipal de Ouro Preto Collection of the Arquivo Público Mineiro
DF.....	Delegacia Fiscal Collection of the Arquivo Público Mineiro
DFA.....	Delegacia Fiscal Avulso Collection of the Arquivo Público Mineiro
SG.....	Secretária do Gôverno Collection of the Arquivo Público Mineiro

SHORT TITLES

<u>Anais da Biblioteca Nacional...</u>	<u>Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro</u>
<u>Documentos Históricas...</u>	<u>Documentos Históricos da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro</u>

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Major gold deposits were discovered in Minas Gerais in 1695 after almost one hundred and fifty years of futile searching. This led to a gold rush of major proportions; within fifteen years there were over thirty thousand people gainfully employed in mining and ancillary industries. One consequence of this gold rush was very rapid urbanization in several areas. Foremost among these was Vila Rica which became the capital of the captaincy and later, as Ouro Prêto, the capital of the province of Minas Gerais.

While gold mining was the initial reason for the settlement, very quickly Vila Rica's location astride major roads allowed commerce to develop into the element which differentiated it from other Mineiro towns. While commerce was very important to the local economy, merchants were not able to transform this economic power directly into political power. The boom atmosphere, however, did make it easy for merchants to enter mining or

farming and thereby gain entry into the elite.

While Vila Rica exhibits many of the attributes of a traditional society, a substantial middle sector did evolve. Composed of groups with widely divergent goals and interests, this amorphous sector was united by the fact that many of its members were white and, very often, Portuguese-born. An important component of this sector was the artisan. Unlike in Portugal and some of the coastal areas of Brazil the guild organization was not a spontaneous reaction to existing conditions but the forced creation of the town council. In Vila Rica many of its social functions were assumed by lay brotherhoods. One of the avenues of social mobility into the middle sector for nonwhites and women was through ownership of shops. Vertical mobility from this group into the upper class occurred with decreasing frequency during this period.

The bottom rung of society was composed of freedmen and slaves. Similarities in status are seen as resulting from the relative personal freedom granted to domestic slaves in an urban setting compounded by the frequency of manumission. The examination of slave origins reveals the predominance of Bantu over Mina slaves. The reaction of the slave to bondage was not one of docile acquiescence. Quilombos proliferated in the immediate area of Vila Rica. While runaway slaves maintained active commerce with Vila Rica, they were able to seriously hamper communication between it and the other towns.

Lay brotherhoods, the militia, and kinship relationships are examined as aspects of this social organization. The physical organization of Vila Rica is seen as due to the location of gold deposits, major roads, the town square, and the construction of public buildings. These factors had shaped the town's urban pattern by 1720.

Parallel to the evolution of social groupings in the mining district was the campaign of the royal government to establish its jurisdiction over the disorderly miners. This process extends from the early piecemeal efforts in the 1690's through the 1720 urban riots from which the royal government emerged victorious. The Wars of the Emboabas are seen as one aspect of this process and as a key step in the structuring of society. The composition, functions, and income sources of the town council are examined in detail as are other representatives of local government such as fiscal officers and justices of the peace.

This study relies heavily on unpublished documents from the Arquivo Público Mineiro and the archives of local parishes, brotherhoods, the Archbishopric of Mariana, and the Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional.

PART I
THE EARLY YEARS: GOLD AND ROYAL INDECISION

Chapter 1
The Years of Frustration and Success

The dream of gold, silver and precious stones spurred Portuguese settlement of Brazil. From the arrival of Tomé de Sousa at Salvador, Bahia, in 1549, numerous attempts were made to find these riches--efforts which were stimulated by the success of the Spanish in Nueva Granada and especially in Upper Peru at Potosí. Pero de Magalhães de Gândavo in 1576 noted the existence of gold and, undoubtedly repeating rumors that he had heard, referred to a "large lake in the interior where [the Indians] swear that there are many settlements, whose residents (as is common knowledge) have great stores of gold and precious stones."¹ Gândavo was repeating the legend of Vupabussu, the richest place in the world, where each newly elected king was covered with gold dust and dunked into the water until all the gold dust had been washed off and left as an offering to the gods.² This legend is the same as that of El Dorado which stimulated Spanish conquerers and English adventurers alike. A second myth, which quickly became the dominant one among the Portuguese, was that of Sabarabussu, a resplendent mountain, the fabulous deposit of silver some-

where in the interior of Brazil.³ It was believed that the great silver deposits of Potosí extended into Portuguese territory.⁴ All that was needed was careful exploration in Brazil at the latitude of Potosí to find for Portugal riches equal to those of Spain.

The fact that planning for expeditions began in 1551, only two years after the arrival of Tomé de Sousa, is evidence of the interest which these legends excited. After two years of organizing and planning, Francisco Bruza de Spinosa, a Spaniard in the pay of Portugal, left Pôrto Seguro and, following the Rio Jequitinhonha, reached the area of present-day Serro and Diamantina. This attempt to find mineral wealth was foiled by the rough terrain and bad weather.⁵ Spinosa was followed in 1568 by Martins Carvalho, who penetrated almost 1300 kilometers into the interior to reach the same region. Carvalho, unlike Spinosa, did find some gold nuggets.⁶ Orville Derby, geologist and historian, bestows on Carvalho's expedition the honor of having made the first discovery of gold in Minas Gerais.⁷ After eight months of trekking through the wilderness, the Carvalho expedition arrived in Pôrto Seguro--but without the gold nuggets, which were lost when a canoe overturned.

While in practical terms the Carvalho expedition was a failure, the stories concerning the gold which was found stimulated other explorers. During the final three decades of the century four major expeditions were dispatched to

find the riches whose existence few doubted but whose precise location was unknown. The first of these left Pôrto Seguro in 1573 under the leadership of Sebastião Fernandes Tourinho. Several years later another, under Antônio Dias Adorno, began its trek into the unknown. Both expeditions probably stayed north of the Rio Doce. Tourinho, however, did reach the Serro area and returned with what he mistakenly believed to be emeralds and sapphires. During the next decade further efforts were made by João Coelho de Sousa and his brother, the chronicler Gabriel Soares de Sousa, who died while following the route previously taken by his brother.

The next major entry into Minas Gerais was made by Marcos de Azeredo who also followed basically the route of Tourinho. Azeredo reached the area which he believed to be that of the mythical Sabarabussu and returned with what appeared to be emeralds but died before revealing the location of his discovery. Thus all efforts from the captaincies of Pôrto Seguro and Bahia to find and exploit deposits of gold, silver or precious stones were futile.

Meanwhile, expeditions from the captaincy of São Vicente had achieved some success in the search for gold. Bras Cubas, after leading an unsuccessful three-hundred-league trek in 1560-1562, discovered gold on a second expedition which covered only thirty leagues, from its point of departure, Santos.⁸ Between 1570 and 1584 a bandeira (expedition), headed by the German Heliodoro Eobanus dis-

covered gold at Iguape (in southern São Paulo), Paranaguá⁹ and Curitiba (both in what is now the state of Paraná). These discoveries soon were being worked by men from the captaincy of São Vicente. Before the end of the century several minor deposits had been discovered near São Paulo, such as the one at Jaraguá.

In 1601, a bandeira under André de Leão left São Paulo¹⁰ accompanied by one Dutch and two German mining experts. This bandeira, one of the earliest to enter Minas Gerais from São Paulo, reached the area of present-day Pitanguí,¹¹ believed by Leão to be the location of Sabarabussu. After this expedition failed to uncover any mineral wealth, official interest in the search abated. This diminution of interest was due to the frustration of having searched in vain, the Spanish domination of Portugal, and the efforts of Portugal to regain her independence. Until Spain recognized Portugal's independence in 1668, Portuguese energies were turned inward. The crown was in a precarious position, and its efforts were limited to offering only incentives such as greater benefits to discoverers of precious metals or stones.

These incentives did have some effect and a number of bandeiras were sent into the hinterland by the São Paulo câmara (municipal council) in the 1670's. One of these¹² was led by Francisco de Camargo, who was instructed to look for gold, silver and precious stones. He left in 1672, but the results of his expedition are unknown. Among

the others that got underway at about the same time, one stands out because of its relation to the discovery of gold in Minas Gerais and because of the information available concerning its passage through the hinterland. This was the bandeira of Fernão Dias Pais.¹³ Accompanied by his son-in-law, Manuel de Borba Gato, his son, Garcia Rodrigues Pais, and a large number of Paulistas and Indians, Pais left São Paulo in July, 1674 on a journey which would last seven years. The bandeira proceeded slowly, planting crops in a number of places in order to have supplies for the return journey. It reached an area believed to be that of Sabarabussu but mass desertions and sickness forced it to turn back after a few stones which were believed to be emeralds were found. On the way back, Pais died at Sumidouro, one of the sites where¹⁴ crops had been planted.

While the Pais bandeira was in Minas Gerais, the crown sent a Spaniard trained at Potosí, Rodrigo de Castelo Branco, to Brazil as Administrator of Mines. After a short stay in Bahia he was ordered to the south, and he dispatched various expeditions to examine the strikes previously made in São Paulo and Paran. Then he set out to follow the trail of Pais' bandeira. Castelo Branco left São Paulo in March, 1681, and on June 26 met Garcia Rodrigues Pais, who gave him the "emeralds" that had been found. After dispatching the stones to São Paulo, Castelo Branco continued on to Sumidouro, where he met Borba Gato and

remnants of the bandeira. After a quarrel over Castelo Branco's right to appropriate supplies, Castelo Branco was killed -- whether by Borba Gato or his slaves is unknown. What is clear is that after this event Borba Gato was forced to flee.¹⁵ He was to remain in the unsettled and virtually unknown backlands of Minas Gerais from 1682 to 1699. It is believed that he spent much of this time in Roça Grande near what is now the town of Sabará.¹⁶ Apparently he maintained intermittent contact with his family in São Paulo, but his activities during these years constitute one of the mysteries surrounding the discovery of gold in Minas Gerais. That such a prominent member of an elite Paulista family found it necessary to spend seventeen years in the hinterland to avoid being arrested seems implausible. More probably they were spent in search of emeralds and silver.

By 1690 the major routes into Minas Gerais from Bahia, Espírito Santo, and São Paulo were well known. Gold already had been discovered and was being mined in several areas of the present states of São Paulo and Paraná. Of these the most significant were Paranaguá and Cananéia. All were surface deposits and, while a smelter and perhaps a mint had been established in São Paulo by 1650, the quantity of gold extracted was quite small. In the years 1672-1678, the quinto, or royal tax on mineral resources (usually considered to be twenty percent but which actually fluctuated, at times dropping to twelve percent), collected from

Paranaguá and Cananéia amounted to a mere two kilos.¹⁷

In 1690, Pedro II ordered the Governor Antônio Luís Gonçalves da Câmara Coutinho to stimulate the Paulistas' desire for gold and the honors which went with its discovery. These instructions were issued again to the new governor of Rio de Janeiro, Antônio Pais de Sande, in 1693.¹⁸ The incentives offered to adventurers were attractive and soon a number of expeditions entered Minas Gerais. Whereas most earlier expeditions had been primarily after Indian slaves and only secondarily after precious metals and stones, the priorities now were reversed.

The name of the discoverer of gold in Minas Gerais as well as the date of the discovery are still the subject of debate. There are major divergences in the versions of André João Antonil (pseudonym for the Jesuit João Antônio Andreoni); Bento Fernandes de Furtado de Mendonça, son of Colonel Salvador Furtado de Mendonça, a participant in the early discoveries; and João Rabelo Perdigão, the secretary of Governor Artur de Sá e Menezes. The opinion of Antonil, the first writer to publish a description of the discoveries, cannot be ignored because of his reliance upon eyewitnesses. According to Antonil, gold was discovered in the Ouro Preto Stream by a mulatto member of a slave-hunting expedition. This discovery was made accidentally while the mulatto was getting water. The stones, which were not identified as gold, were sold and changed hands several times until they reached Governor Menezes, who immediately realized what

they were. Antonil states that these events occurred in the last three years of the seventeenth century.¹⁹

Antonil's account is difficult to accept. The mulatto, Antonil asserts, had had experience in the gold fields of Paranaguá and Curitiba, yet he couldn't identify the stones as being gold. It is also hard to believe that unidentified stones could be sold from person to person without being recognized. Furthermore, who would buy a stone of no apparent value? It is difficult to believe that the stones would not be taken to someone acquainted with mining or goldsmithing for appraisal. Support for Antonil's version concerning the date of the discovery is provided by a Portuguese immigrant who had arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1692. In his report prepared about 1750 Ouvidor of Ouro Preto, this anonymous writer states that "5 or 6 years later [1697 or 1698] news spread that the Paulistas had discovered great quantities of gold in an area called Cataguazes but that it was hard [bravo] gold (which is called mulatto gold -- black gold)."²⁰ No details of the discovery are provided.

Another version, presented half a century after the events by Bento de Furtado de Mendonça, attributes the first major gold strike to Antônio Rodrigues de Arzão, who around 1693 left the captaincy of São Paulo on a slave-hunting expedition. Reaching an area in Minas Gerais whose topography was similar to that of the mining areas of São Paulo, with which he was familiar, Arzão, according to

Mendonça, made several panning tests and retrieved about three oitavas of gold (an oitava is 3.586 grams or little less than a dram). Before more gold could be collected, the account continues, Arzão and his followers were forced to leave the area because of the lack of supplies and increasing Indian pressure. Arzão went to Espírito Santo where he gave local officials the three oitavas and tried unsuccessfully to recruit men to form a new bandeira. Failing in this, he departed for São Paulo, arriving so ill that he died soon thereafter. But before dying, Arzão related his adventures to his brother-in-law Bartholomeu Bueno de Siqueira, who set out in 1697. Siqueira discovered gold near one of the sites where his bandeira had stopped to plant crops. A small settlement was established there and given the name Itaverava. This, Mendonça claims, was the first settlement founded in Minas Gerais. After uncovering more extensive deposits in the area, Siqueira advised his family and friends to join him. The narrator's father, Colonel Salvador Fernandes de Mendonça, accompanied by Captain Manuel Garcia Velho, supposedly headed the first group to take Siqueira's advice. Upon their arrival in Itaverava, Mendonça traded a musket for the small quantity of gold already extracted. This gold, in turn, was traded for two Indian slaves to Garcia Velho, from whom it was obtained by Carlos Pedroso de Silveira, who took it to Rio de Janeiro where he, the account concludes, was well rewarded for handing the gold over to Governor Menezes.

This version, however, is subjected to damaging criticism by Francisco de Assis Carvalho Franco. The most fascinating evidence brought to light by Franco is the fact that Siqueira rather than Arzão died in 1695. Arzão survived at least until 1720 and apparently had no part in the exploitation of the Minas gold strikes. Furthermore, Arzão received no reward for his supposed discovery.²² Siqueira's death invalidates Mendonça's dating of the Siqueira bandeira, which probably started out in 1694 as related by the anonymous writer of the "Descobrimento de Minas Gerais."²³

The most convincing of the three versions is that of José Rabelo Perdigão. Writing in 1733, Perdigão attributed the initial discovery to a Duarte Lope (Antonil's mulatto?) about 1693 along the Rio Guarapiranga. This led to the organization of a bandeira under Bartolomeu Bueno de Siqueira, accompanied by his nephew Manuel de Camargo, and the latter's son, Sebastião de Camargo. This bandeira reached the area later called Itaverava where gold was discovered. Continuing to press forward, Siqueira was killed by Indians.²⁴ Since this bandeira probably had been financed by Carlos Pedroso de Silveira, it is not surprising that part of the gold was delivered to him and that he immediately took it to the acting governor, Sebastião de Castro Caldas (who assumed this post on February 4, 1695). Caldas notified the king in a letter dated March 1, 1695 and sent some of the gold as proof.

Thus both Mendonça and Perdigão agree that the effective discovery was made by Bartolomeu Bueno de Siqueira and that it was near Itaverava. They disagree as to the date of the discovery. The documents published by Franco, substantiating his contention that Bueno died in 1695 and the fact that Caldas advised the king of the strike in March 1695, lend strong support to the Perdigão version.

While it is clear that Bueno deserves credit for making the first effective strike -- effective in the sense that it mobilized the attention of royal officials and started the first Brazilian gold rush -- it is equally clear that other bandeirantes earlier had found gold in Minas Gerais. Among these early pioneers was the parish priest of Taubaté, Padre João de Faria, who in 1693 or 1694 reported the discovery of gold in the "campos gerais."²⁵ It is also possible that Manuel de Borba Gatô found some gold deposits during his many years of living in the backlands. But neither of these discoveries had the dramatic impact of those made by Siqueira.

Notes

1. Pero Magalhães de Gândavo, História da província Sancta Cruz o que vulgarmente chamamos Brasil (1576; facsimile ed., New York: The Cortes Society, 1922), fols. 9v-10.
2. Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, Visão do paraíso, Brasileira, vol. 333, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1969), pp. 34-64.
3. The Portuguese in Angola were motivated similarly by the desire to find a "silver mountain." David Birmingham, Trade and Conflict in Angola, the Mbundu and Their Neighbors Under the Influence of the Portuguese, 1483-1790 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 29.
4. This was due to the belief that the formation of silver was the result of the sun's heat. Sebastião Cardoso da Sampaio, in a report of November, 1692 explaining the failure to discover precious metals in Brazil, asserts that Brazilians were optimistic about finding these because
The Brazilian sertão...bordered on the Kingdom of Peru and the mountains of Tabiana and Sabarabussu [being] at the same height and parallel as the celebrated mountain of Potosí which is the inexhaustible source of silver which has flooded all the four corners of the world. It is felt that since the production of all metals is the result of heat and the activity of the sun those mountains are under the same influence by the equality of height and parallel.
[Report of Sebastião Cardoso de Sampaio, 22 November, 1692 in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional 39, (1917): p. 201.]
5. Orville A. Derby, "Os primeiros descobrimentos de ouro em Minas Gerais," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo 5 (1899-1900): 240-241.
6. Ibid., pp. 242-248.
7. Ibid., p. 248.

8. Basilio de Magalhães, Expansão geográfica do Brasil colonial, Brasiliana, vol. 45 (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1935), pp. 78-80.
9. Ibid., pp. 80-82.
10. Magalhães, Expansão geográfica, p. 87, maintains that there were two Dutchmen and one German.
11. Derby, "Os primeiros descobrimentos," pp. 258-259.
12. Magalhães, Expansão geográfica, p. 100, refers to Fernando de Camargo.
13. Manoel S. Cardozo, "The Last Adventure of Fernão Dias Pais (1674-1681)," Hispanic American Historical Review 4 (November, 1946): 467-479, provides a detailed examination of this expedition.
14. Edelweiss Teixeira, "Roça Grande e o povoamento do Rio das Velhas," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Minas Gerais 2 (1946): 116. Teixeira locates Sumidouro north of Lagoa Santa.
15. [Bento Fernandes Furtado de Mendonça] Notícias dos primeiros descobridores das primeiras minas de ouro pertencentes a estas Minas Gerais—pessoas mais assinaladas neste empregos e dos mais memoráveis acontecidos desde seus principios, Colasam das notícias dos pr. os descobrimen.os das Minas na America, que fes o Dr. Caetano da Costa Matoso sendo ouvidor g.al do Ouro Preto, de q. tomou posse em Fevr.o de 1749, Biblioteca Municipal de São Paulo, fols. 21v-22v.
16. Teixeira, "Roça Grande," pp. 114-117.
17. Afonso de E. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 11 vols. (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial do Estado, 1948), 9:20.
18. Ibid., pp. 20-21.
19. André João Antonil (pseud.of João Antônio Andreoni), Cultura e opulência do Brasil, Roteiros do Brasil, vol. 2 (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1967), pp. 258-260. This work was originally published in 1711.
20. Protesto que no que nesta escrita falar não he minha vontade, Códice Costa Matoso, fol. 64.
21. Mendonça, "Notícias dos primeiros descobridores," fols. 7-9.

22. Francisco de Assis Carvalho Franco, Dicionário de bandeirantes e sertanistas do Brasil: séculos XVI-XVII-XVIII (São Paulo: Comissão do IV Centenário da Cidade de São Paulo, 1954), pp. 36-38 and 384-385.
23. "Descobrimento de Minas Gerais [1807]," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro 29 (1866): 6.
24. José Rabelo Perdigão, "Notícia terceira prática que dá ao R. Pe. Diogo Soares o mestre do campo José Rabelo Perdigão. Sobre os primeiros descobrimentos das Minas Gerais do Ouro." Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro 69 (1908): 278.
25. Bento Correa de Sousa Coutinho to João de Lencastre, 29 July 1694, Documentos Históricos 9 (1929): 274.

Chapter 2
The Years of Euphoria and Distress

News of the first strikes spread quickly. Called the "Mines of Taubaté" by some people and the "General Mines of Cataguazes" by others, the area soon attracted a large number of adventurers. The strikes initiated a ten-year period in which discovery of new gold fields followed discovery in a seemingly endless procession. The euphoria generated by these strikes was hardly dampened by two tragic famines that occurred during this period.

Siqueira's bandeira had been joined by another under the leadership of Miguel Garcia de Almeida e Cunha. After reaching Itaverava, the latter expedition separated from that of Siqueira and went its own way. Garcia found gold in a stream later called the Gualacho do Sul, north of the Morro de Itatiaia. There the rivalry which existed barely beneath the surface between the residents of the town of São Paulo and those of Taubaté erupted into open hostility as the residents of São Paulo in Cunha's bandeira refused to allow those of Taubaté to work the strike around the mountain. The Taubatinos thus rebuffed, formed a bandeira under the leadership of Manuel Garcia Velho "and with such good fortune that shortly they discovered the celebrated and rich [gold fields of] Ouro Prêto." This event, like

so many others of this early period, cannot be dated precisely, but probably occurred in 1695 or early 1696.²

The rivalries between the bandeirantes of São Paulo town and those from other towns of the captaincy of São Vicente were important during the early years of the mining district. The use and abuse of the word "Paulista" has led some to confuse the residents of the town of São Paulo with those of other towns and has led others to assume the predominance of the former in the discovery of gold and in the early settlement of Minas Gerais. The roles of men from such towns as Taubaté, Mogi das Cruzes, São Sebastião, Guaratinguetá, and Sorocaba have too often been overlooked. Next to São Paulo the most important contributor to the discovery and settlement of Minas Gerais was Taubaté. Lumped together as "Paulistas" by contemporaries from other captaincies, the residents of these towns of São Vicente feuded among themselves. These feuds stimulated the discovery of new gold deposits.

Garcia Velho's discovery brought an influx of adventurers to the area of the Ouro Preto stream. The strike was divided into claims of three braças (one braça is 2.2 meters) each along the stream bed. A settlement quickly formed near the strike in a heavily wooded area nestled in a narrow valley surrounded on three sides by formidable mountains cut by streams and, often, deep gorges. Because of the relatively large number of people attracted to the area, and the conflicts which arose over claims, a

bandeira under Antônio Dias de Oliveira, a taubatino, was organized to find a new mining site. Crossing the Morro de Santa Quitéria (one of those at whose base the original strike was made) Oliveira found gold either along the Sobreira Stream or, less probably, the Rio Funil.³ The settlement which sprang up at the site of this strike was named Antônio Dias in honor of the leader of the bandeira.

The situation within these mining camps and the resulting spin-off of new bandeiras is aptly described by Perdigão: "as those who had more arms and more followers always received the best claims in these settlements, the dissatisfied would form new bandeiras."⁴ Besides the atmosphere of injustice created by the total absence of royal officials, an important factor in this process, unmentioned by Perdigão, was the incentives for new discoveries embodied in the mining code. The code then in effect, which had been enacted in 1603 and amended in 1618, provided that the discoverer would receive two claims (datas): the first eighty by forty varas (a vara was equal to 1.10 meters), and the second sixty by thirty.⁵ But to be a "new" strike, it had to be at least half a league from any established one.

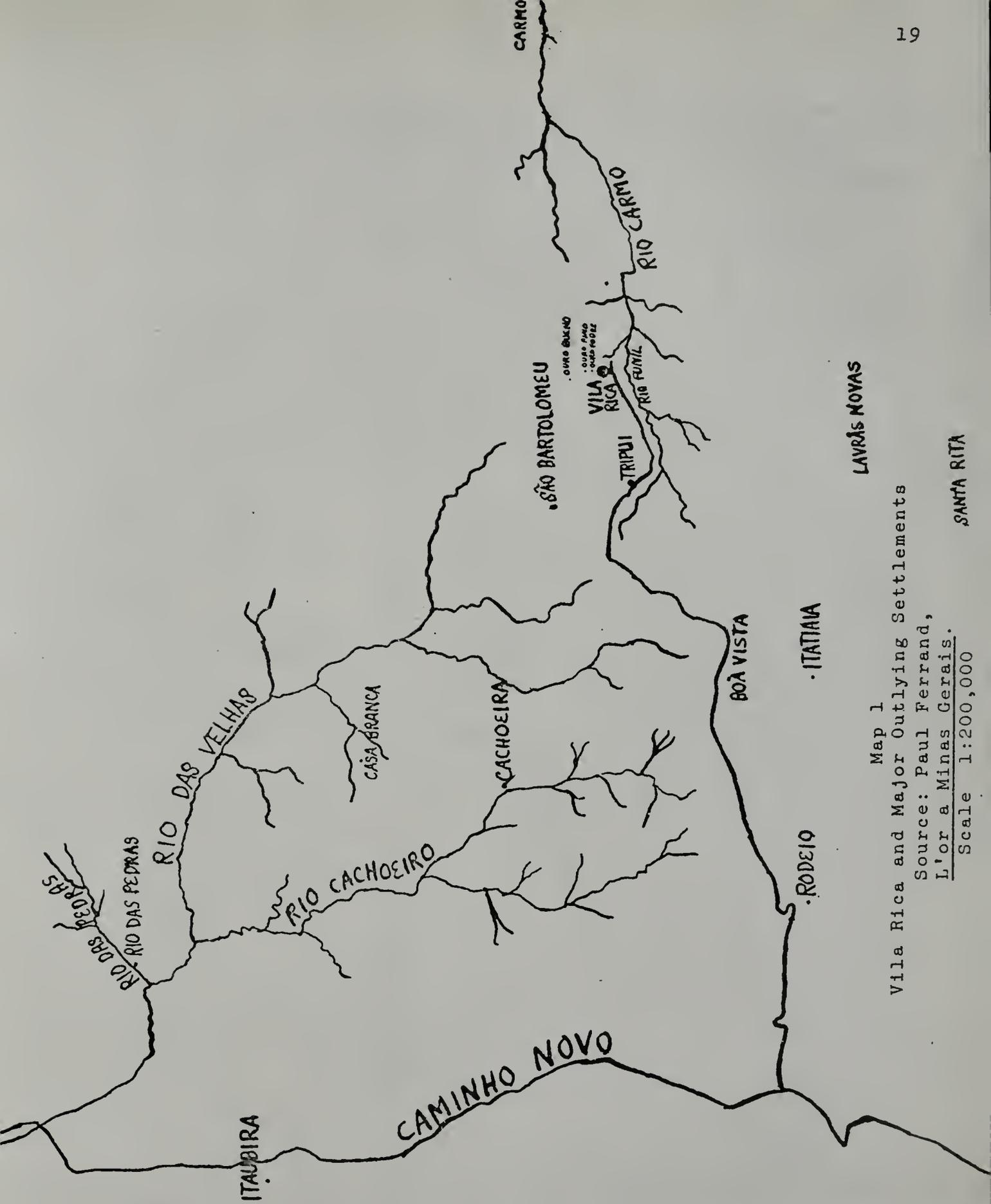
Manuel Garcia Velho had acted under these various pressures as had Antônio Dias. A third was Padre João de Faria Fialho, a native of the town of São Sebastião. Padre Faria had come to the Mines of Taubaté as chaplain of one of the taubatino bandeiras. It is uncertain whether Padre

Faria departed from Antônio Dias or from Ouro Preto, but, in any case, he discovered gold east of the settlement of Antônio Dias, just beyond the Morro de Santa Efigenia (also called Alto da Cruz). The settlement which was founded there was called Padre Faria.

A fourth strike was made at approximately the same time, in the area of Tripui, by Antônio Rodrigues de Medeiros, a native of São Paulo town. The name "Tripui" is derived from Medeiros' nickname which in the Tupi language used by the bandeirantes meant "agile."⁶ This settlement was never as large as any of the other three and it is probable that the gold there was only alluvial and quickly exhausted. This area soon was given over to pasturage for the cattle brought in to feed the residents of the mining camps.

By 1696 there existed four settlements each separated from the others by dense woods and each located along a gold-laden stream. Thus the geographical limits of what would become the town of Vila Rica until the 1740's were established: Tripui to the west and Padre Faria to the east, connected by a trail which ran through Ouro Preto and Antônio Dias.

Other gold strikes soon were made in areas near these four settlements. Francisco Bueno da Silva, cousin of Bartolomeu Bueno de Siqueira, probably during 1698 "climb[ed] the mountain, called today the Morro de Vila Rica..., mother and source from which flows these rich



Vila Rica and Major Outlying Settlements
 Map 1
 Source: Paul Ferrand,
 L'or a Minas Gerais.

• CONGONHAS

LAVRAS NOVAS

SANTA RITA

Scale 1:200,000

streams already discovered, and turning westward...discovered the stream called Ouro Bueno and [then] that of Rio das Pedras [both] with gold of extremely good quality. Inviting his paulista friends and family they worked the little that they could, leaving the richest [part]."⁷

Bento Fernandes describes an event which, if exaggerated, still conveys an idea of the fabulous wealth being uncovered and the atmosphere of euphoria of those fortunate enough to have "arms" and "followers" to ensure their obtaining the best claims. According to Fernandes, while Silva and José de Camargo Pimentel, his partner, were working their joint claim, they were approached by a woman beggar with her child. Pimentel, whose turn it was to watch the gold collected by slaves, gave the woman a handful of gold. Reproached by Silva that half of the gold was his, Pimentel reached back into the pouch and withdrew another handful of gold. This, representing Silva's equal contribution, was given to the woman.⁸ Stories such as this spread through Brazil and then Europe. Imaginations were fired with images of mountains of gold, and the rush was on.

Silva, on his way to Ouro Bueno and Rio das Pedras, unknowingly had crossed the richest gold bearing area in the region -- and perhaps the richest of all Minas Gerais. This was the Morro de Vila Rica, or as it was later variously called, the Morro de Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, the Morro de Antônio Dias, and the Morro da Queimada (Burnt-

over Mountain).⁹ Gold finally was found on the mountain in 1700 by Tomás Lopes de Camargo, a relative of José de Camargo Pimentel.¹⁰

The following year, 1701, Bento Fernandes was sent by his father in search of gold. His bandeira found gold along the Funil River, below its junctures with the various gold-laden streams mentioned above. The settlement which he founded there blossomed and faded in the course of a few years; it was called Nossa Senhora do Bom Sucesso (Our Lady of Good Fortune).

There were a number of other settlements which would come within the municipal jurisdiction of Vila Rica and would play important roles in the history of the municipality. If reliable data is scanty for the early years of Ouro Preto, it is even more so for these satellite settlements. Two, Itatiaia and Ouro Branco (the names in Tupi and Portuguese, both refer to the light color of the gold mined there), probably were founded very early. Manuel Garcia Velho and his bandeira crossed this area in skirting the Morro de Itatiaia in 1695. Sebastião da Rocha Pita gives 1698 as the date of the founding of Itatiaia without giving the name of the discoverer.¹¹ While Rocha Pita is not completely reliable in his treatment of Minas Gerais, the date he gives can be taken as an indication that Itatiaia was known relatively early. It is located about thirteen kilometers to the southwest of Ouro Preto. Ouro Branco, like Itatiaia, was along the path of the early

bandeirantes who approached Ouro Prêto, Antônio Dias, and Padre Faria, from Itaverava. In referring to the general area of Itatiaia and Ouro Branco, Antonil states: "I do not speak of the Morro de Itatiaia..., eight days of easy travel until lunch [this was the normal Paulista travelling day: from sun-up to lunch, after which pasture was found for the animals, camp set up and food obtained and prepared for supper and breakfast for the following morning.], because the paulistas do not pay attention to it because they have others of purer gold and of much more value."¹² Ouro Branco is eighteen kilometers southwest of Ouro Prêto.

Congonhas, twenty-three kilometers to the southwest, was the westernmost settlement within the future municipal jurisdiction of Vila Rica. The absence of reliable information prevents any definite dating, but indications are that Congonhas was founded quite early. The earliest documented date is found in a sesmaria (land grant) made to Captain Domingos Martins Pacheco in 1711 which gives Congonhas as his residence since 1704.¹³ One contemporary reported that Congonhas was the site of one of the very first gold strikes in Minas.¹⁴ This settlement was built around a major gold strike and was fortunate in having good pasture and farm land in the vicinity. Late in the eighteenth century it became a religious center of great importance.

Northwest of Ouro Prêto, three settlements were founded which played significant roles in the history of

the municipality of Vila Rica. São Bartolomeu, about eight kilometers north-northwest of Ouro Prêto, was founded by Dionisio da Costa, a native of Santos, São Vicente. Five kilometers west of São Bartolomeu, another settlement, Santo Antônio do Campo (later Casa Branca) was founded. No documentation can be found concerning the identity of its founder or the approximate date of its founding. The parish records for this settlement begin in 1716, so the event probably occurred long before this date. Three kilometers southwest of Casa Branca and twelve kilometers from Ouro Prêto lay the settlement of Nossa Senhora de Nazareth dos Campos de Minas, or Cachoeira do Campo as it came to be called. The fact that by 1709 it had been raised to parish level indicates an early and intense settlement. From a death certificate dated November 22, 1714, it is clear that one of Cachoeira's first settlers, if not the first, was Manuel de Melo.

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These three settlements, due to their similar locations, evolved in an analagous fashion. While the area had some gold deposits, these soon were exhausted and the São Bartolomeu-Casa Branca-Cachoeira region was transformed into an agricultural and pastoral producer of great importance to the urban marketplace created in the settlements of Ouro Prêto, Antônio Dias, and Padre Faria.

Itaubira do Campo (present-day Itabirito), the most distant from Ouro Prêto of the early settlements which would come within the jurisdiction of Vila Rica, probably

was established during the closing years of the seven-
teenth century. ¹⁶ Located about thirty kilometers north-
west of Ouro Preto, Itaubira was to become a major settle-
ment and continue to produce gold after many other areas
had ceased production. The gold mine of Cata Branca, near
Itaubira, was worked on a large scale until a mining disaster
in the nineteenth century stopped production.

These are the major settlements which would be under
the jurisdiction of the town council of Vila Rica during
the eighteenth century. Besides being politically subor-
dinated to Vila Rica, all were involved to varying degrees
in a symbiotic relationship with the urban core. Congonhas,
perhaps due to its proximity to the settlements in the Rio
das Mortes region, was least involved; São Bartolomeu and
Cachoeira were the most because of their role as food
producers. There were, in addition, many hamlets which
will be discussed only when they take an active part in
this story.

While this settlement process was under way, other,
highly significant discoveries were being made. One of
the most significant was that of the gold-laden Ribeirão do
Carmo by Captain João Lopes de Lima, a native of São Paulo
town. Because of the rivalry between the mining towns of
Carmo (now Mariana) and Vila Rica, and the confusion over
which was founded first, the exact date of neither is beyond
dispute. But there exist two documents which can establish
the order of discovery. The first is a letter, written

anonymously and included in the Códice Costa Matoso, which states that the discovery of gold at Carmo occurred during the period when the area of Padre Faris was being worked.¹⁷

Perdigão, after discussing Lima's bandeira states that "the gold of that new stream [the Riberão do Carmo] was considered better than that of Ouro Prêto, which was brittle and splintered when hit by a hammer, so much so that it was judged useless, to the point of being sold in São Paulo at the rate to twelve vinténs (one vintém is worth 20 réis] per oitava, causing that settlement [Ouro Prêto] to be abandoned three times as I witnessed."¹⁸

What today is a fifteen minute automobile ride between Ouro Prêto and Mariana, then required three days of difficult travel.¹⁹ This difficulty is evident in the name of a mountain which had to be traversed in the vicinity of Carmo--Mata Cavalos or Horse Killer. Besides the problems created by the mountains, travel was impeded by the very dense forest which separated the two settlements.²⁰

Other important discoveries soon were made in the vicinity of Carmo. The Paulista Bento Rodrigues, crossing the Morro de Vila Rica, found an exceptionally rich area which was named after him. Antonil notes that this strike yielded "in little more than five braças of land, five arrôbas [one arrôba is equal to 14.75 kilos] of gold."²¹

José de Camargo Pimentel, who had accompanied Francisco da Silva Bueno in the founding of Ouro Bueno, in 1701 made a strike which soon evolved into a sizable settlement

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called Camargos. Captain Salvador de Faria Albernaz, pushing beyond the strikes of Rodrigues and Pimentel, made a major gold strike around which the settlement of Inficionado quickly grew.²³ This was followed in 1702 by Domingos Borges' discovery of gold in the area called Catas Atlas.²⁴ In the same year, Antônio Bueno, continuing in a north-westerly direction, found gold where the settlements of Brumado and Santa Bárbara would be established.²⁵ Antônio Pereira Dias, about the same time, made a rich strike just to the north of Carmo, which soon became known by this adventurer's name.²⁶ All of these settlements would fall within the jurisdiction of the town of Carmo.

The process of settlement around Carmo was very similar to that of the region of Ouro Preto. With the exception of Antônio Pereira, these settlements were founded in the same leap-frogging manner and, undoubtedly, for the same reasons: conflicts and claim jumping within the new settlements forced out some and left others dissatisfied to move, while the mining code provided incentives to go elsewhere. Each group of settlements was composed of an administrative, relatively highly urbanized center, and a number of satellite settlements whose political dependence upon the center was complete, but whose socio-economic dependence varied with size and distance, and the proximity of larger settlements or towns within the political sphere of other jurisdictions.

Prior to 1708 there were four other strikes in Minas Gerais that resulted in the establishment of major settle-

ments. The first of these is Sabará. Contrary to legend, it does not appear that the gold of Sabará was discovered by Borba Gato during his seventeen year exile. While he became one of Sabara's leading citizens, there is no evidence that he claimed credit for the discovery of its rich gold fields. Instead these honors were claimed by the Paulista Garcia Rodrigues Pais in a letter dated May 1, 1697.²⁷

The discovery of the nearby gold fields of Caeté is likewise disputed. Bento Fernandes gives the credit to Sargento-mor Leonardo Nardes, a paulista, while Antonil²⁸ credits a Bahian, Captain Luís do Couto. Given the extent of Bahian penetration into this part of Minas Gerais prior to 1690, Antonil's account is more likely to be correct. While the Paulista made many forays into Minas, their expeditions, searching for slaves or precious metals and stones, were constantly on the move. No permanent settlements were made until gold had been discovered. Penetration from Bahia was less spectacular but more systematic. The primary interest of the Bahians was the use of the land along the Rio São Francisco for grazing cattle. By 1663, in fact, Bahian penetration in the form of the landholdings of Antônio Guedes de Brito covered 160 leagues along the Rio São Francisco as far as its juncture with the Rio das Velhas.²⁹ Anyone proceeding up the Rio das Velhas to its source would pass through the immediate vicinity of Caeté and Sabará. This strike was a magnificent one. As

early as 1697 it was reported that there were 4,000 people
³⁰
 in the Caeté area.

The last two major gold fields to be discovered were on the fringe of the central mining district composed of Sabará, Caeté, Vila Rica, and Carmo. Antônio Soares discovered gold to the north of Sabará and the settlement which grew around this strike was called Sêrro do Frio. The exact date of this strike is not known.
³¹ The last area is far to the south of the core mining district. Known as the Rio das Mortes, this area was traversed by all the bandeiras on their way into Minas, as well as by the later migrants from Rio de Janeiro. One of those who took advantage of this traffic was Tomé Portes del-Rei. Portes operated an inn and catered to this traffic for several years until he discovered that he was living near one of the richest gold deposits in Minas Gerais--that of São
³²
 João del Rei.

These settlements and their satellites were to provide most of the gold extracted from Minas Gerais. But they were not established without difficulty. Their residents suffered severe hardships in the early period, particularly in regard to the provisioning of foodstuffs. The number of adventurers in the mining district at this time must have been relatively small, as indicated by Perdigão's statement that Ouro Prêto was abandoned three times. Certainly this is easy to understand, since the population that provided the impetus for the discovery phase was

itself very small. On the eve of the gold cycle a report of Portugal's Overseas Council (Conselho Ultramarino), reported that "the town of São Paulo itself and, seven more towns surrounding it have twenty thousand householders [vizinhos]." ³³ São Paulo's first census in 1765 gave the population of the parish as 3,838 with 1,515 of these residing in the urban core. ³⁴ More vague information comes from a traveler who passed through São Paulo in 1717; he reported the existence of only four hundred houses in the town itself, as many people lived in the rural areas. ³⁵ With such a small population base, São Paulo and the other towns of the captaincy of São Vicente could explore, uncover gold, and exploit alluvial deposits, but could not populate all the mining region. This could be done only by outside elements, the so-called forasteiros: Bahians, Pernambucans, natives of Rio de Janeiro, and, above all, the reinóis (those born in Portugal). When the news spread that gold had been found, the rush began. The crops planted by "Paulistas", the term the forasteiros applied indiscriminately to the men from São Vicente, and the available game which had satisfied their needs were inadequate to meet those of the forasteiros who quickly outnumbered the Paulistas. The result was famine.

The first major famine occurred in 1698-1699. While gold had been found in 1695-1696, the rush apparently did not begin until several years later, perhaps because too often in the past rumors of major deposits of emeralds,

diamonds, silver, and gold had proven to be false. One man, who states that the news reached Rio de Janeiro in 1698 or 1699, wanted to set out for the Mines of Cataguazes immediately but did not because of the shortage of food along the way. Others were not so prudent. The journey was long: forty difficult days from Rio de Janeiro and about sixty from São Paulo. "Many died of hunger without recourse, and there were those who killed their companions in order to take a grain of corn from them." ³⁶ This food shortage caused prices to soar. The cautious adventurer arrived in Carmo in time to suffer the effects of the ³⁷ famine; he notes some of the prices paid at that time.

1 alqueire (about 14 quarts) of corn grain...	20 oitavas
1 alqueire of beans.....	30 oitavas
1 small plate of salt.....	8 oitavas
1 chicken.....	12 oitavas
1 little dog or cat.....	32 oitavas

This anonymous adventurer thus provides not only an indication of the cost of living but some hints of the dietary preferences of the early settlers.

Carmo, where initially most of the gold came from the stream, was almost completely abandoned at this time.

This was due to a combination of circumstances: the difficulty of mining operations because of the depth of the water, its low temperature, and its rapid current, as well as the shortage of food. Of those who left, some returned to São Paulo with their gold, but many others went to areas which had more game on which to subsist while they awaited the harvest. In this process of abandoning estab-

lished diggings new discoveries were made.

The harvest in 1699 of crops planted the previous year saved many from death. In the meantime mining operations had been stopped. According to Governor Menezes:

"without doubt a great quantity [of gold] would have been produced if the mines had been worked this year, which was not possible because of the famine which they suffered. Necessity reached such a point that they ate the most unclean animals and lacking [even] these to sustain life, they ran into the woods with their slaves to live on the fruits of the forest which they found. ³⁸

This famine, the effects of which appear to have been felt strongest around Carmo, was followed in 1700-1701 by another which endangered the settlements of Ouro Prêto, Antônio Dias, and Padre Faria. Viceroy João de Lencastre in September, 1700 noted "that because of the lack of foodstuffs many miners had left for areas where game abounded to have something to feed their people, and others went home to return in March for the crop they had left planted, as well as for the cattle, that they had ordered from Bahia and Pernambuco." ³⁹ As a result of this famine many people departed from the settlements; Ouro Bueno, for example, was abandoned completely. Gold was discovered in areas where game was more plentiful; Camargos was but one of these. The historian Diogo de Vasconcelos attributes the discovery of Congonhas do Campo, São Bartolomeu, Cachoeira do Campo, and Casa Branca to this process. ⁴⁰

The famine also resulted in changes in the ownership

of mining claims. Many of those who were forced to flee lost their claims to those who stayed or to those who arrived before the original owners returned. To the normal friction which such actions created, a new dimension was added by the arrival in large numbers of non-Paulistas, who were able to take advantage of the situation while the Paulistas were away. Furthermore such claim jumping was legal since the claims were considered abandoned. It is said that Tomé de Camargo Pimentel lost his claim to a rich mining area on the Morro de Vila Rica to the Portuguese-born Pascoal da Silva Guimarães in precisely this

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way. There is no way to determine how large a turnover in ownership occurred, but if it could occur to Pimentel -- a member of an elite Paulista family who was, in addition, a royal official -- it probably happened to many others.

During the second famine prices soared even higher than in the first one. Bento Fernandes gives the price of one alqueire of corn as 30-40 oitavas and one of beans as 70 oitavas. 42 The already exorbitant prices charged for corn and beans in 1698 had doubled. It is no wonder that men were forced to abandon their mining claims. Once again only a timely harvest and the arrival of cattle from the north saved the miners from total disaster.

Notes

1. Perdigão, "Notícia terceira prática," p. 278. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 112 gives Miguel as the name of the discoverer rather than Manuel.

2. Traditionally the founding of Ouro Prêto is celebrated on June 24 on the presumption that on that date in 1696 Antônio Dias de Oliveira and Padre João de Faria Fialho first sighted the area where Ouro Prêto would be established. This presumption is based on the belief that the discoverers founded a chapel in honor of the occasion and that the chapel was named Saint John the Baptist. Since the birth of Saint John is celebrated on June 24, the traditional view continues, that must have been the date of the discovery.

Repeated by authors such as Augusto de Lima Junior A capitania das Minas Gerais, 2nd ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Zelio Valverde, 1943), p. 62, this legend has become so accepted that recently a plaque commemorating the founding was placed near the chapel of Saint John. This certainty is not justified. Apparently no documents concerning this chapel exist. It cannot be shown that the chapel was built in 1696, that it was built in commemoration of the discovery of the region where Ouro Prêto would be established, or even that it was the first chapel built in the region. Even the use of the chapel itself as a document by examining its architecture and manner of construction is foiled since it was rebuilt around the middle of the eighteenth century. We are left with a story which may be true but for which no substantiating evidence can be found.

3. Perdigão, "Notícia terceira prática," p. 278 and Mendonça, "Notícias dos primeiros descobridores," fol. 9v.

4. Perdigão, "Notícia terceira prática," p. 279.

5. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História antiga de Minas Gerais (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1948), 1, pp. 193-194.

6. Taunay, Historia geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 88.

7. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fols. 10-10v and Antonil, Cultura e opulência, p. 259.

8. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol. 10v.
9. These names refer to the same mountain.
10. Mendonça, "Notícias dos primeiros descobridores," fols. 12v-13.
11. Sebastião da Rocha Pita, História da América Portuguesa, 3rd ed. (Bahia: Imprensa Oficial da Bahia, 1950), p. 307.
12. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, p. 260.
13. Sesmaria of Domingos Martins Pacheco, Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro, 10 (1904): 973.
14. Relação do principio descoberto das Minas gerais, e os sucessos de algumas couzas Mais memoraveis que sucederão de seu principio te o tempo que as veyo Governar o Exmo. S. Dom Braz da Silveira, Códice Costa Matoso, fol. 30.
15. Vasconcelos, História antiga, 2, p. 66 and Padre Henriques de Figueiredo Lemos, "Mongographia da freguezia da Cachoeira do Campo," Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 13 (1908): 84.
16. Rocha Pita, História da América Portuguesa, p. 307.
17. Esta Ribeirão do Carmo hoje Cide M(aria)na, Códice Costa Matoso, fol. 67v.
18. Perdigão, "Notícia terceira prática," p. 279.
19. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, p. 259.
20. Esta Ribeirão do Carmo, fol. 68.
21. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, p. 261.
22. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol. 11v.
23. Ibid., fol. 13.
24. Ibid. Also Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 117 refers to Domingos Borges da Silva.
25. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol. 14.
26. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 363.

27. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, pp. 84 & 146. Edelweiss Teixeira, "Roça Grande e o povoamento do Rio das Velhas," pp. 114-121 deals with Borba Gato's residence during his years in the hinterland.
28. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 126 and Antonil, Cultura e opulência, pp. 260-261.
29. Salomão de Vasconcellos, "Divagações em torno da descoberta do ouro nas Minas Gerais," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Minas Gerais 9 (1962): 153.
30. Artur de Sá e Menezes to Pedro II, 12 June, 1697 in Manuel Cardozo, "The Guerra dos Emboabas, Civil War in Minas Gerais, 1708-1709," Hispanic American Historical Review 13, no. 3 (August, 1942): 472.
31. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 126.
32. Ibid., p. 125.
33. Report of Overseas Council, 6 June, 1674 in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional 39 (1921): 132-133.
34. Gilberto Leite de Barros, A cidade e o planalto, 2 vols. (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1967), p. 164 .
35. "Diario da jornada, que fes o Ex.mo Senhor Dom Pedro desde o Rio de Janeiro até a Cid.e de São Paulo, e desta até as Minas anno de 1717," Revista do Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional 3 (1939): 304.
36. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol. 11.
37. Protesto que no, fol. 64.
38. Menezes to Pedro II, 20 May, 1698 in Mafalda P. Zemella, O abastecimento da capitania das Minas Gerais no século XVIII, University of São Paulo, Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras. Bull. 118 (São Paulo: University of São Paulo, 1951): 219.
39. João de Lencastre to Menezes, May 14, 1701 in Documentos Históricos 11 (1929): 283.
40. Vasconcellos, História antiga, 1, pp. 214-215.
41. Ibid., p. 216.
42. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol. 11.

Chapter 3 The Gold Rush

After 1696 news of the gold strikes spread rapidly through Brazil, Portugal, and the rest of Europe. Gold began to flow out of Minas Gerais in quantities that, while limited, were sufficient to prove that the strikes were real. Soon thousands of people were flooding into the mining district to make their fortunes. A contemporary of this gold rush reported:

Each year many Portuguese and foreigners come in the fleets to go to the mines. From the cities, towns, suburbs, and backlands of Brazil go whites, pardos, blacks, and Indians whom the Paulistas employ. The mixture includes people from all walks of life: men and women, young and old, poor and rich, nobles and plebeians, laymen and clerics, and religious of all institutions, many of whom do not have monasteries or houses in Brazil.¹

Antonil calculates that by 1710 thirty thousand people² were actively employed in Minas. Since this estimate included only those actively engaged in mining, Antonil's figure is only a partial one. This is confirmed by other observers. One put the population of the mining district³ at fifty thousand in 1705. The exact size of the population during the early years cannot be determined, but these estimates give a general notion of the dimensions of the gold rush.

The highest concentration of people was in the area around Ouro Prêto and Carmo. This is the region which, during these early years, was called General Mines (Minas Gerais) in recognition of the many mining operations in the area. The entire mining district was called, interchangeably, Mines of São Paulo, Mines of Taubaté, Mines of Cataguazes, or Mines of Gold (Minas de Ouro). The last gradually predominated over the other names and became the official name for the mining district in 1709. Minas Gerais did not become the official name of the entire district until 1720 when it became a separate captaincy.

In the region of Minas Gerais lies a geological fault which runs from Santa Bárbara to Carmo and then to Ouro Prêto and Velozo (two kilometers northwest of the parish church of Ouro Prêto). Along this crescent-shaped fault, which opened the ground at a number of places allowing easier access to the subsurface gold deposits, were many of the settlements of the early period. This crescent was to be the major gold-producing and population center of the mining district throughout the eighteenth century.

Despite the disastrous famines of 1698-1699 and 1700-1701, the settlements of the region were increasing so rapidly that residents believed that all the land between Ouro Prêto and Carmo was occupied. Frei Agostinho de Santa Maria, writing around 1723, felt that the two centers soon would join to form a single urbanized area -- at a time when it still took many hours of arduous travel to reach

4

Carmo from Ouro Prêto.

The gold rush was spurred by tales of the fabulous wealth of this area -- tales which come from too many sources to be disbelieved entirely. Pedro Taques mentions one stream from which three arrobas were removed in one month and another which yielded one arroba.⁵ Antonil refers to a single gold nugget weighing over 150 oitavas (almost one and a half pounds troy) and another of 95 (almost one pound troy). The Paulistas defined a "good" stream as one which yielded two oitavas of gold in each panning.⁶ Two oitavas was the daily wage of a skilled artisan.

The early adventurers, who streamed into the mining district in quest of this gold, came by three routes. The first began in São Paulo and passed through the following places: Nossa Senhora da Penha, Mogi, Laranjeira, Jacarei, Taubaté, Pindamonhangaba, Guiratinguetá, Morro de Mantigueira, Rio Verde, Boa Vista, Ubai, Ingai, Rio Grande, Rio das Mortes, the farms of Garcia Rodrigues Pais, and the Morro de Itatiaia. At this last point, about ten kilometers southwest of Ouro Prêto, the route forked: one branch went to Sabará and the other to Ouro Prêto, both of which could be reached after about two months of travel.⁷ The journey from Rio de Janeiro was more hazardous, as it necessitated sailing from Rio to Parati -- a short voyage made perilous by the periodic appearance of corsairs and pirates. From Parati, the travelers went overland to

Taubaté, where he took the São Paulo road. In an emergency the trip from Rio to Ouro Preto could be made in thirty days, but the average traveler took at least ⁸ forty.

The third route was, in many ways, the most important and, to the crown, the most troublesome. Free of the difficult mountains and numerous streams which made the other two routes so difficult, the Bahia road was the easiest of the three. Leaving Salvador, the traveler went by Cachoeira, Santo Antônio, and then Tranqueira. At Tranqueira the road split, one branch going through Mathias Cardoso, Barra do Rio das Velhas and then Borba, near Sabará, and the other passing near the source of the Rio Guararutibe. The second branch was about fifty leagues ⁹ shorter than the first. Along this route came the cattle which saved the miners from starvation during the early famines and which, for many years, provided them with much of their sustenance.

The same characteristics which made this road so attractive to travelers created problems for the crown. The road led from the older established sugar-producing areas of Brazil -- areas which were in a state of decadence brought on by a decline in sugar prices and sales despite a temporary improvement in the sugar market in the 1690's. Some royal officials felt that the gold rush threatened the agricultural sector which they considered more important for the long-range interests of Portugal than the

transitory exploitation of the gold deposits. These officials were able to impose their point of view until the Wars of the Emboabas. The sugar-producing regions, chiefly Bahia and Pernambuco, had surplus population and surplus capital. Governor Menezes at first forbade the migration of people essential to the production of sugar, Brazil's major export. On March 19, 1700, he prohibited the master workmen of the sugar mills from going to the Minas de Ouro without licenses. One week later he forbade the taking of slaves from sugar or manioc producing fazendas (plantations) to the mining district. ¹⁰ These restrictions were repeated various times, without much effect, in hopes of sustaining the sugar industry of the Northeast. Complementing this policy was one of prohibiting sugar processing in the mining district. Each part of the colony was assumed to have a specific contribution to make -- the Northeast would produce sugar and Minas would provide gold.

As the terrain traversed by the Bahia road presented few major obstacles, the number of trails proliferated -- primarily benefiting smugglers. An anonymous writer informed the king in 1706 that "so much gold comes to the city of Bahia that one cannot count the arrobas except in quintais [one quintal is four arrobas] which goes to all the kingdom and the foreigners also are able to take it freely without paying the quinto." ¹¹ The threat to royal revenues posed by the Bahia road was obvious to Pedro II, who, as early as 1698 tried to stimulate cattle raising in

southern Minas.¹² Had this effort succeeded, the Bahia trails could have been closed without the fear of another famine; but they failed, and each effort to close these routes caused such repercussions that they were immediately reopened.

Each road to Minas presented a serious inconvenience. The Bahia route could easily be abused by tax evaders while the sea portion of the Rio road was hazardous. The road from São Paulo, was very difficult to use, and it began in an area which produced relatively little which could be marketed in the mining district, except for Indian slaves and some cattle and mules. These problems led some royal officials to propose the opening of a new road from Rio to the gold fields. Governor Menezes felt that the proposed road would shorten the journey and make the markets of Rio and the mining district accessible to the cattle lands of southern Minas, which, he felt, were comparable to those of Buenos Aires. Pedro II approved the project "as a means of alleviating the famine and as an aid in the discovery of Sabarabussu."¹³ Thus the decision to authorize work on the road was based on a combination of important factors.¹⁴

The work on the new route began in 1699. As was the practice the work was one not by the state but by a private party. Garcia Rodrigues Pais volunteered to open the "Caminho Novo" (New Road), as it was to be called during the eighteenth century. The Caminho Novo was diffi-

cult to build and use because of the mountains it traversed. It was constructed almost in a straight line from Rio to Minas Gerais, passing through Simão Pereira, Mathias Barboza, Juíz de Fora and Borda do Campo. At Borda do Campo, the Caminho Novo split, with one branch going to Rio das Mortes and the other to the Ouro Prêto-Carmo region by way of Congonhas and Itatiaia. Travel time from Rio to these areas was cut to ten to twelve days.¹⁵ For his services, Garcia Rodrigues Pais was rewarded with several sesmarias, (land grants) along the route and, in 1702, was granted a royal post -- probably to revitalize his flagging fortunes since the project had proved so expensive that outside help had been required to complete it.¹⁶

All of the roads to Minas were little more than trails. José Vieira Couto, later in the century, described them in the following manner:

They are made with the greatest negligence possible, or better said, nothing has been done to them other than cut the woods, remove some rocks, and here and there level the right of way. Great and superfluous bypasses can be seen at each step; it takes, sometimes, all day to cover¹⁷ three or four leagues in a straight line.

It was over these roads that the luxuries and many of the necessities of life flowed from the outside world to the booming mine district. Because of the extensive traffic on this road, it soon was lined by inns and farms catering to the needs of the travelers.

This road had great impact on the development of the

southern part of Brazil. It made Rio de Janeiro the gateway to Minas. Previously goods had to be transshipped from Rio to Parati, from whence they went overland to the mining district via Taubaté; a logical step would have been the elimination of Rio as entrepôt for Minas and the shipment of goods directly to Parati. Another possibility, about which there had been some speculation, was the designation of a port in Espírito Santo as the sole gateway to Minas. The construction of the Caminho Novo precluded these possibilities. Rio's position and future development thus owes much to the opening of this road.

The road also stimulated migration to the mining district by making the trip faster. The first place to suffer significant loss of population was Rio de Janeiro. Governor Alvaro da Silveira e Albuquerque, lamented in 1703, the year following the completion of the Caminho Novo, that: "everyday I find myself more alone, [without] soldiers as well as residents.... The excessive rate with which they flee to the mines gives us the impression that soon we shall wind up without anyone."¹⁸ News received in Rio indicated that Bahia was in much the same situation; migration from that captaincy was reported to be proceeding at such a rate "that shortly that land will be depopulated."¹⁹ Nevertheless, in much of the Northeast there was a surplus population which could be better utilized elsewhere.

While the immediate effects of the gold rush on Rio de

Janeiro and Bahia were bad, they were disastrous in São Paulo where there were no people to spare. With a largely self-sufficient economy whose only significant marketable product was slaves, São Paulo could ill afford any sizeable drain of men or wealth.²⁰

So many men went to the gold fields that the São Paulo câmara often lacked a quorum; periods of five and six months passed without sessions.²¹ Goods were diverted to the mining district where they fetched higher prices, resulting in a scarcity of goods in São Paulo. When the câmara met it usually discussed ways of controlling the spiraling cost of these goods. While some men who went to the gold fields returned, many remained there.

This migration from São Paulo also had an effect upon the Indian population. So many Indians were sent to the gold fields as mine laborers that the São Paulo labor pool quickly became depleted. In conformation with royal decrees against the enslavement of Indians, Menezes, on his first visit to São Paulo, ordered that those already in Minas be returned.²² In 1705, the São Paulo câmara prohibited the practice of renting slaves to serve as bearers for people going to Minas.²³ These efforts failed and the use of Indians in Ouro Prêto continued on a small scale throughout the century.

The influx of Bahians, Pernambucans, fluminenses (residents of Rio de Janeiro) and Portuguese aroused the ire of the Paulistas. The royal grants that the Paulistas

had received led them to believe that they had an exclusive right to exploit their discoveries. The crown initially was willing to back their claims, due to lack of knowledge of the extent of the gold fields and the desire to limit migration from sugar producing areas. But the crown's support had little effect. The effort to restrict migration by requiring passports was easily circumvented. Even the efforts to bar foreigners from the gold fields, to prevent the spread of news of the strikes, failed.²⁴

Easier to enforce, at least in theory, were the edicts of the crown prohibiting the entrance of monks into the region without specific authorization. Numerous were the decrees to this effect, and admonitions concerning their enforcement often appeared in the instructions given to the governors. The monks and clerics without positions were considered underminers of royal authority. The prominent role played by clerics in the Guerras dos Emboabas and in the 1720 uprising indicate that the fears of the crown were not unreasonable. Because they were beyond the jurisdiction of secular authorities, the monks were active smugglers. Hollow statues of saints standing today in the churches of Minas bear testimony to this illicit trade. Once in Minas, the clerics would refuse to pay taxes unless ordered to do so by ecclesiastical authorities -- a process complicated by the fact that until 1745 the seat of the bishopric was in Rio de Janeiro. There were many cases of arrest and deportation of clerics, but

this did not daunt others from coming to seek their fortunes.

The royal policy of limiting the entry of black slaves was detrimental to the rapid expansion of the early mining operations. It was felt by some royal officials that the mass entry of slaves would drain the sugar fazendas of their labor force and drive up the price of those slaves who remained in the cane-growing area. This problem did not materialize while the Paulistas relied on Indians as their prime labor source, but this supply was limited and inadequate to meet the demands of the rapidly expanding mining operations. The scarcity of these workers, combined with the inability to adapt to mining, and the strong opposition of both the São Paulo câmara and royal officials, forced the Paulistas and the other miners to turn to the African slave.²⁵

This shift also was motivated by the belief that African slaves, especially those from the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana), were acquainted with mining techniques.²⁶ Indeed, some writers have attributed the introduction of the bateia, the mining pan, to slaves from Africa.²⁷ The Portuguese, who had been purchasing gold from Africa since the fifteenth century, assumed that all slaves from the Costa da Mina (the West African coast between Capes Mount and Lopo Gonçalves) knew how to mine.²⁸

The crown resorted to the imposition of quotas on the number of slaves that could be imported into the mining

district. Initially entry was limited to two hundred slaves, a number that was inadequate to supply the demands of mine operators. In 1701 Pedro II decreed the distribution of eight thousand slaves in Brazil with priority for purchase going to the sugar producers and other agriculturalists. Miners, however, were able to circumvent the edict. In 1703 Alvaro da Silveira e Albuquerque recommended a shift in priorities so that eight percent of all slaves imported into Brazil would be sent to the mines and the remainder distributed among agriculturalists. This suggestion was disregarded by the royal advisors who were still intent on aiding the sugar producers. ²⁹ The position taken by these advisors is understandable: the true extent of the gold deposits was not known and the sugar industry had entered a period of expansion after many years of decadence. The King's counselors could not know that the sugar market shortly would again collapse and that gold production would reach unimagined proportions by 1750. The most that the crown would do was increase the quota of slaves destined for the mining district to two hundred and thirty in 1706. ³⁰

These restrictions on the importation of African slaves worked no great hardships on the miners during the early years. So long as the gold deposits were alluvial, a miner could get by without a large number of slaves. An increase in the number of slaves increased the surface area which would be panned, but the area of a claim was

restricted by the mining code. During this period there were no subsurface mines, so large concentrations of slaves were not needed. Bento Fernandes noted that the owner of twenty or thirty slaves was considered to be extremely rich.³¹ Thus there was a gold rush of major proportions in the period before 1706. At least thirty thousand people left their homes to seek their fortunes in the gold fields--despite the opposition of the royal officials who felt that this migration endangered the sugar industry. The efforts of the crown to stop this migration failed because of the shortage of royal officials in a position to act, and because of the connivance of many of those who were in such a position. The mining industry, stimulated by this influx of people, expanded rapidly.

Notes

1. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, p. 264.
2. Ibid.
3. Felipe de Barros Pereira to king, 7 September, 1705 in Cardozo, "The Guerra dos Emboabas," p. 472.
4. Frey Agostinho de Santa Maria, Santuário Mariano e histórica das imagens milagrosas de Nossa Senhora, e das milagrosamente aparecidas que se venerao em todo o Bispado do Rio de Janeiro e Mina e em todas as ilhas do oceano & das milagrosamente aparecidas, em graça dos pregadores & dos devotos da mesma Senhora, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Antônio Pedrozo Galvão, 1723), 10:233.
5. Pedro de Taques to João de Lencastre, 20 March, 1700 in Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 252.
6. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, pp. 261-262.
7. Ibid., pp. 284-287.
8. Ibid., pp. 287-288.
9. Ibid., pp. 291-292.
10. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 249.
11. Manoel Cardozo, "Alguns subsídios para a história da cobrança do quinto na capitania de Minas Gerais até 1735," Primeiro Congresso da Expansão Portuguesa no Mundo (Lisbon: Ministério das Colônias, 1937), p. 259.
12. Pedro II to Alvaro de Silveira e Albuquerque, 7 May, 1703 in Zemella, O abastecimento, p. 235.
13. Taques, Informação, pp. 146-147.
14. The crown was not content with Pais' promise to complete the road. Captain Felix Madeira e Gusmão, a knight of the royal household, was ordered to open a road through Santo Antônio (probably Santa Antônio de Guaratingueta) "to the gold mines and the plains since there was no

certainty about the road of Garcia Rodrigues." The work was to be done with the collaboration of Gusmão's son, sargento-mor Felix de Gusmão Mendonça e Bueno. It took forty men and two months to open a trail and explore the hinterland as far as the edge of the plains near the settlement called Ressaca. The father and son reported the route good, with only the Rio Paraíba being a problem. The order to begin the work of expanding the exploratory trail into a road was revoked on August 25, 1704 by Governor Albuquerque after receiving word that the Caminho Novo had been opened. Order of Governor Albuquerque, 25 August, 1704 in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional 39, p.304.

15. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, pp. 288-290.

16. Royal Edict, 19 April, 1702 in Cód. 2(SG), fol. 157.

17. José Vieira Couto, "Memória sôbre a capitania de Minas Gerais, seu território, clima e produções metalicos; sôbre a necessidade de se restabelecer e animar a mineração decadente do Brasil; sôbre o comércio e exportação dos metões e interesses regios," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro 11(1871): 322.

18. Alvaro da Silveira to Governor-General, 27 May, 1703 in Zemella, O abastecimento, pp. 39-40.

19. Ibid., p. 40.

20. In another sense, the entire population might be considered excess in the eyes of many royal officials. Producing no marketable crop and with increasing shipments of African slaves undermining the market for the less productive - and illegal - Indian slaves, the Paulistas could abandon their homes and move to the gold fields without damaging the royal interests. In fact, by their migrating to Minas these interests were furthered by the increase in gold production.

21. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 312.

22. The Indians in São Paulo were described by Governor Menezes in 1700 as living in "the status of slaves." He claimed to have acted immediately to restore them to their villages citing as an example one Indian village which through the efforts of royal officials had grown in size from ninety residents to 1,224. Menezes to Pedro II, 5 May, 1700 in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional 39, p. 269.

23. Zemella, O abastecimento, p.. 313-314.

24. Without question there were foreigners who were able to remain in the mining district despite the various orders issued from Lisbon barring their continued presence. Various examples can be cited. Dr. Luís Gomes Ferreira reported that, in 1714, he performed an autopsy with "Licenciado João da Rosa, Ungaro da Nação." Luís Gomes Ferreira, Erario mineral dividido em doze tratados (Lisbon: Por Miguel Rodrigues, Impressor do Senhor Patriarcha, 1735), 41. In 1737 the Vila Rica council registered a surgeon's commission papers for Antônio Labedrienne, a native Frenchman. Registry of Commission, 6 January, 1737 in Cód. 32 (CMOP), fols. 90-134v. Similarly, David Martins, a soldier, was also a Frenchman. Will of David Martins, 18 February, 1721 in Cód. 333, No. 7013 (ASPHANOP). Mariana Ferreira da Silva also claimed in her last testament that she was a native of France. Will of Mariana Ferreira da Silva, 14 February, 1761 in Registry of Burials, (APAD), Cód. 1, fols. 377-378.

25. The Overseas Council, however, was determined that Indians be used as a major labor source. In rejecting a plea from the São Paulo municipal council for increased slave quotas the Council recommended that any deficiency in the number of slaves be made up from the Indian population of São Paulo. Mauricio Goulart, Escravidão no Brasil: das origens á extinção do tráfico, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editôra, 1950), p. 125.

26. Edison Carneiro, "O negro em Minas Gerais," Segundo seminário de estudos mineiros (Belo Horizonte: Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 1956?): 13.

27. Paul Ferrand, L'or a Minas Gerais, 2 vols. (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1913), 1, p. 28.

28. Carneiro, "O negro em Minas Gerais," p. 13.

29. Alvaro de Silveira de Albuquerque to king, 11 May, 1703, in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro 39, p. 285. The Overseas Council responded to this letter by noting that if the law was not enforced "all the State of Brazil would be destroyed, lacking slaves for the cultivation of its fruits and the work of the sugar mills due to the certainty of the greater price which these would bring in the southern captaincies." One counsellor recommended that the quota be raised to three hundred slaves. This was approved by the king on October 11, 1704. Consulta of the Overseas Council, 10 September, 1703, in Documentos Históricos 93, pp. 157-158. The increase apparently did not go into effect as the Overseas Council on January 7, 1704 reminded the king that the matter was still unsettled. Consulta of the Overseas Council, 7 January, 1704, in Documentos Históricos 93, p. 163.

30. Goulart, Escravidão africana no Brasil, p. 125. Both Edison Carneiro and Isiais Golgher feel that the quota was raised to three hundred. The opinions rendered by the Overseas Council do not justify such a claim. Carneiro, "O negro em Minas Gerais," p. 11. Also Isiais Golgher, "O negro em Minas Gerais," Revista Brasileira de Estudos Políticos 18 (January, 1965): 335.

31. Bento Fernandes Furtado de Mendonça, "Notícias dos primeiros descobridores," in "Documentos ineditos, preciosos da Biblioteca Pública Municipal de São Paulo," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo 44, 1st Part (1948): 355.

Chapter 4
Gold: Techniques and Taxes

The techniques for extracting gold during this early period were extremely primitive. This was due to the lack of trained mining engineers and to the fact that there were numerous surface deposits which could be exploited without sophisticated methods. Machinery, when used, was rudimentary. Many of the miners apparently were content to retire after scratching the surface of the gold deposits - to settle down with instant wealth either in the mining district, on the coast, or, more commonly, in Portugal.

Much of the early gold was found in transported or sorted placer deposits. These deposits had resulted from the action of the water carrying gold-bearing rocks from veins in the mountains. The water action released the gold particles from the rocks and then mixed them with the stream gravel. Because of the peculiarities of the current the gold could be concentrated in specific places or irregularly deposited.¹

The easiest transported placer deposits to discover and mine were the creek placers where the gold particles were mixed with gravel within two or three feet of the surface of the streambed.² The processes by which gold was extracted from streams were called serviços dos veios.

The first of these processes employed in the mining district was panning. This was by far the easiest mining method and was used by the early bandeirantes who panned with gamelas (wooden plates normally used for preparing and serving food). These quickly were replaced by bateias made of either wood or tin. The technique was simple: dirt and water were placed in the conically shaped bateia, which was then rotated so that the lighter sand or soil grains were sloshed out of the bateia with the water, leaving the heavier gold particles. This technique was used by itself and was also the final step in all the methods employed during this period.

Where the stream or river was particularly deep, or the current very rapid, special techniques had to be developed for extracting the paydirt. In some places wooden walls were built in the water to provide support for the slaves who would drive to the bottom to get sand which was then brought to the surface to be panned.³ An alternative method involved collecting the gold-bearing sand from a boat using a long pole with a metal point for digging⁴ and a small bag for scooping up the sand for panning.

These techniques could be applied only to the recently-deposited gold which was within a few inches of the surface of the gravel. There were vastly larger quantities of gold to be found beneath the surface of the stream beds. One of the methods developed to exploit these deposits was to dam the stream and force the water into a run-off canal,

allowing the miners to work the bypassed stream bed. When physical conditions precluded the digging of drainage canals another method was employed. This involved building three walls jutting out from the shore and enclosing the area to be worked. The water then was removed and the remaining silt panned.⁵

Because water-tight wooden walls were difficult to construct, water had to be removed almost constantly. At first this was done using slave labor. Later, the water wheel, or rosário, was used, increasing the efficiency of the process by replacing slaves carrying buckets with a machine. Claudio Manuel da Costa, the poet and alleged participant in the 1789 Inconfidência Mineira, attributes the invention of the rosário to a priest popularly known as Bonina Suave about 1716.⁶ Some evidence points to another person as the inventor of the rosário: Manuel da Silva Rosa was granted a militia commission in 1719 for his invention of a machine "to take gold out of rivers."⁷ The development of this machine cost 1500 oitavas and four months of labor. Unfortunately, nothing further is known about the machine or the date of its development. By 1719 Rosa's invention was commonly employed in the rivers of the mining district, suggesting that it was the rosário or water wheel. The extent to which this machine was being utilized and the termination of a two-year monopoly of its use indicate that it was developed some time before 1719. The monopoly plus the award of a militia commission also

attest to the desire of the crown to encourage technological advances.

Mining by diverting streams represents a different level of mining development from the rudimentary techniques of panning or diving. Ownership of large numbers of slaves or joint operations by miners who pooled their slave and capital resources were needed. While this type of mining probably was used in Ouro Preto, Antônio Dias, and Padre Faria, there are no physical remains of the dams and walls, like those that can be seen today in Mariana. There the wooden pilings stand like skeletons, and the various streambeds which the Riberão do Carmo was forced into creating are still there.

Having worked the creek placers, it was only natural that the miners explore the stream banks. These bench placers were formed by the action of waters and actually had been creek placers before the streambed shifted. The simplest method of exploiting these deposits was surface, or open-pit, mining. The miners would probe for gold by digging a hole, either cubical or conical; a hole in which gold was found would be enlarged as the size of the strike warranted. Some of these excavations, called catas, were very large. Paul Ferrand, whose study of gold mining in Minas Gerais remains the classic in its field, mentions some which were fifteen meters deep. This method was dangerous because of the possibility of cave-ins, and could be used only during the dry season. If a cata was to be exploited

a second year, much of the initial excavating had to be repeated. This method was primitive, but it reached previously untapped deposits.

Antonil, writing in 1710, does not refer to any other mining processes. While other methods may have been employed, these were the only ones widely used. They manifest a low level of mining expertise, a deficiency aggravated by the acute shortage of trained mining technicians. To remedy this situation the crown attempted to contract Spaniards trained at the silver mines of Upper Peru or at the gold mines of Nueva Granada. One of those contracted was Castelo Branco, whose adventures have been mentioned. Governor Menezes tried to enlist others in Buenos Aires, going so far as to send agents there. After this recruiting effort failed, Menezes notified the king that "that was my only chance [as] a miner could not come from Portugal. The men of São Paulo desperately want a [trained] miner since they have no knowledge of stones [sic]."⁹ Pedro II, however, did find in Portugal a trained mining engineer, Antônio Borges de Faria, whom he sent with three apprentices in response to Menezes' appeal.¹⁰ Nothing is known of the success of this mission, although it appears that it was unable to effect any real changes in the techniques used by the miners. No effort was made to establish the one thing which could have produced significant reforms in mining-- a mining school. Such an institution would not be estab-

lished until the nineteenth century, long after the exhaustion of most of the gold deposits.

During these early years, gold mining policies were based upon three different mining codes. The first was enacted in 1603 and amended in 1618. The second code was instituted by Governor Menezes in 1700. While it was in effect for only two years, this was a crucial time for the evolution of the mining industry in Minas Gerais. The third policy was decreed by the king on April 19, 1702 and remained in effect throughout the eighteenth century.

The changes in the provisions of each are indicative of the changing needs of the mining industry at the time of enactment. Under the first code, which was intended to encourage exploration, a discoverer received one claim of forty by twenty braças and another of thirty by fifteen. The 1700 code also allowed two claims but their size was determined by the number of slaves at the disposal of the miner. The rate was two and a half square braças per slave, but there was a maximum of thirty square braças per claimant. Those so poor as to have no slaves were awarded five square braças. Thus the generosity of the first code, enacted when few gold strikes had been made, was replaced by a more realistic provision which based the size of the award upon the capacity of the person to exploit it. Also the size of the claims were reduced in order to accomodate more people. Where many miners were involved in a single strike, the diggings could be divided up and

parceled out by palmas (one palmo is roughly .22 meters). The provisions of the 1700 code were continued in the 1702 code, except for the omission of the five-braça grant to those who did not have slaves. Probably it was assumed that anyone so poor as to have no slaves could not be expected to effectively exploit the claim and, thus, would not produce enough revenue for the royal treasury.

The codes also reflect the development of the bureaucracy that was created to control the mining district. The first code provided for the posts of collector of the royal fifth (quinto), a secretary, and a treasurer to govern the mining district. Thus administrative functions were considered fiscal in nature. By 1700 it was realized that the situation required an administrative officer as well as tax officials. In that year the first guarda-mor, administrator of mining, was named for the mining district. The guarda-mor had the power to distribute claims and to exercise police powers to arrest lawbreakers. After guardas-mores were appointed for the major mining areas, it was found that the territorial jurisdiction of these officials was still too large and they were authorized to name assistants. ¹¹ One claim at each strike was the payment for the guarda-mor's services.

The 1702 code reflects a more complex administrative system. Besides the guarda-mor, provision was made for a superintendent who became the administrative head of the mining district and was responsible to the governor in Rio

de Janeiro. The superintendent was to be chosen from among "the most important and richest people" in the district. Aside from being collector of the quinto, the superintendent had extensive civil and criminal powers. His functions included those exercised in the established captaincies by the district magistrate (ouvidor), and by the royal judge who presided over some municipal councils (the juiz de fora). In addition, provision was made for a constable (meirinho) and a secretary. All these officials were strictly prohibited from being directly or indirectly involved in mining activities. They were paid a fee by the miners for their services. The codes of 1700 and, especially, that of 1702 reflect the realization that law and order had to be imposed upon the unruly miners before taxes could be collected.

All three codes contained extraordinary provisions. The first code protected any miner from arrest and exempted his property, including slaves, from confiscation for debt. This provision does not reappear in the 1700 code but was re-enacted in modified form in 1702. The 1700 code granted another form of privilege to the miners by providing protection from arrest (homiziao) for any crime except less majesty. As the mining district became an area of asylum which was highly prejudicial to the royal prerogative, this provision was not repeated in the third code.

The 1702 code was more than a simple set of rules

governing mining; it was a statute for the general government of the mining district. Its provisions were aimed at stopping smuggling and repeated several edicts limiting migration to the mines. Furthermore, all persons considered "useless" were to be expelled. No definition of "useless" was provided, that being left, presumably, to the interpretation of local officials. Similarly, all goldsmiths were to be expelled. Crown policy toward the goldsmiths was very inconsistent, as they were alternately expelled and allowed to return and practice their trade. The goldsmiths were accused both of involvement in smuggling and of transforming gold dust into objects on which the quinto was not paid. Concern over taxes and revenue is indicated in the 1702 code by the careful delineation of the way in which the quinto was to be paid. It could be remitted directly to the superintendent or paid outside the mining district. In the latter case the miner received a registration card authorizing him to transport his gold to a mint either in Brazil or in Portugal and pay the royal fifth there. A copy was maintained by the superintendent's secretary to assure that payment was made. 13

These provisions, plus those giving the superintendent civil and criminal jurisdiction, made this mining code a statute for the government of the mining district. While the later creation of a more complex administrative bureaucracy obliterated the superintendent's functions, and

imited those of the guardas-mores, most of the provisions of the code were operative throughout the eighteenth century.

The gold extracted during these early years was not a great source of revenue for the crown. This period was one of uncertainty and experimentation as indicated by the changes in the mining codes and in the organization of the bureaucracy. There were so few royal officials in the district that implementation of the tax and anti-smuggling laws was impossible. In an effort to overcome this deficiency the crown turned to the manipulation of monetary policies. By 1695 smelters, where a miner could pay his quinto, existed in four places, Taubaté (after 1704 in Paratí), São Paulo (after 1704 in Santos), Iguape, and Paranagua. Smelters transformed gold dust and nuggets into gold bars. A percentage of the gold turned in, fluctuating between twelve and twenty percent, was retained at the smelter for remittal to the royal treasury as the quinto. The rest, less a smelting fee, was melted into bars stamped with the weight, purity, and royal seal and turned over to the miner along with a certificate of payment of the quinto.

In 1703 a mint was established in Rio de Janeiro that would pay 1\$200 (1,200 réis) for an oitava of unsmelted gold while the exchange value of the same amount in the mining district was set at 1\$000. It was hoped that the difference in the value of gold would attract money to the

mint in Rio.¹³ Since gold circulated freely at a rate of \$800 and \$900 (800 and 900 réis),¹⁴ its effects should have been even greater than anticipated. The fact that the market value of gold within the mining district was lower than established by law indicates that royal decrees were ineffective against the economic reality of a large supply of gold.

The mint, however, had several drawbacks in operation. The primary one was the price of gold on the black market: 1\$300 to 1\$400 an oitava. Because it was more profitable to sell gold on the black market than to sell it to the government, trade in illicit gold drew away gold which otherwise would have found its way to the mint. The mint, in turn, siphoned off much of the gold which would have been taken to the smelters. Because the quinto was collected on unsmelted gold by the Rio mint, the crown assumed the cost of the impurities which has been estimated to be five to eight percent of the total.¹⁵ Thus the attempt to increase revenue derived from the quinto by monetary manipulation failed.

The quinto, however, was only one of the sources of income for the royal treasury. During this period the sale or leasing of mining claims allocated to the king at each strike raised considerable sums of money. That more was not raised was due to the opportunity which the guardamor or his assistants had to sell or rent the claims to friends or relatives at prices lower than their true market

value. As more adventurers arrived such chicanery became more difficult and competitive bidding raised the prices. In 1700 Menezes received an average of 26.4 oitavas for fourteen claims, but in 1701 he could expect to receive an average of 38.3 oitavas for seven.¹⁶

A major portion of the revenue for this period was obtained through the confiscation of property. Much of this came with the arrest of smugglers along the Bahia road, due, in many cases, to the efforts of Borba Gato, who was the guarda-mor for the Rio das Velhas region. A less important source was the contract for the dízimos, the tithe on non-mineral production, the collection of which was sublet by the government. The crown, after deducting its collection fee, remitted the proceeds from the tithe to the church.¹⁷

The last major source of revenue was the estates of people who died without wills. This source was particularly lucrative during this period as nomadic habits together with violence unhindered by the presence of police resulted in the deaths of many people without wills and many whose very identity could not be ascertained.

Table 1
Royal Income

Year	Quinto	Allotments	Confiscations	Dízimos	Probate
1700	940	369			
1701	6064	3320	695		
1702	28	1442	669		
1703	1648.57	684	6823		
1704	2926.50	572	4708.36	300	
1705	1637.18	447	1640	950	742
1706	4890	90	182	600	3345
1707	2151		2905.54	600	2579
1708	1163.18		7824.18		110
1709	4546		2912		1468
1710	5691.36	320	3542.11		
1711	9812.54	745	6085.18		

Based on Cód. 5(DF), fols. 7v-8 and Cód. 81(DFA), fols. 8v-13v.

Manoel Cardozo, "The Collection of the Royal Fifth", p.367.

Because of smuggling, these figures are unreliable as indicators of the total production of gold. Antonil estimates that in the ten years before 1710 over one thousand arrôbas of gold were extracted, of which the crown received only sixteen to twenty arrôbas in taxes.¹⁸ Felix Madureira e Gusmão reported that the 1703 fleet carried two hundred arrôbas and the one of 1705 carried five hundred - of which less than twenty were destined for the royal coffers.¹⁹ There are many estimates but there is no sure way to calculate even approximately the total amount of gold produced during this period. It is, however, clear that the crown was not receiving the twenty percent to which it was entitled and that the alluvial deposits

yielded great quantities of gold at a time when the population of the mining district must have been less than 50,000.

Notes

1. Charles J. Lyden, "The Gold Placers of Montana, Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Memoir No. 26 (Butte: Montana School of Mines, 1948), p. 3.
2. Ibid.
3. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol. 16v.
4. Paul Ferrand, L'or a Minas Gerais, 1, pp. 32-33.
5. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, pp. 293-294.
6. Claudio Manuel da Costa, "Villa Rica, Poema," Anuário do Museu da Inconfidência 4 (1955-1957): 164 & 168.
7. Commission of Manuel da Silva Rosa, 2? April, 1719 in Cód. 12(SG), fol. 75.
8. Ferrand, L'or a Minas Gerais, 1, p. 35.
9. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 151.
10. Ibid., p. 152.
11. Mining Code, 19 April, 1702 in Documentos Históricos 80(1949): 343. The jurisdiction of the assistant guardas-mores was defined in 1736 as being sixteen square leagues (quatro leguas em extensão). Wilhelm Ludwig von Eschwege, "Pluto Brasiliensis," ed. Rudolfo Jacob, Collectanea de scientistas estrangeiras, 2 vols. (Belo Horizonte. Imprensa Oficial, 1930), 2, p. 257.
12. Mining Code, of 1603/1618 in Robert Southey, History of Brazil, 3 vols. (London: Longman, Durst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1819), 3, pp. 40-45.
13. Cardozo, "Alguns subsídios," p. 256. In June, 1700 the municipal council of Rio de Janeiro petitioned the crown for establishment of a mint in that city. This was rejected by Pedro II who instead ordered that a smelter ("casa para se fundir e quintar o ouro") be opened there. Consulta of the Overseas Council, 3 November, 1700 in

Documentos Históricos, 93, pp. 98-99. It is unclear if a smelter was established. This appears unlikely as a mint began operations in 1703 after a period of indecision as to the best location for it, which saw it established first in Salvador then moved to Recife. On September 10, 1703, the head of the mint reported that the mint had begun accepting gold February 15, (1703), and coining one week later. The coins minted had a value of 4\$800 and 2\$400. Consulta of the Overseas Council, 19 January, 1704 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p.165.

14. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 286. Taunay's figures are based upon the personal papers of Padre Guilherme Pompeu de Almeida, "the banker of the bandeirantes."

15. Manoel Cardozo, "The Collection of the Royal Fifth in Brazil, 1695-1709," Hispanic American Historical Review 9, no. 3 (August, 1940): 370-371. Also Cardozo, "Alguns subsidios," p. 11.

16. Report of Overseas Council Session, 15 November, 1701 in Cardozo, "The Collection of the Royal Fifth," p. 367.

17. Cód.81 (DFA), fol. 45v.

18. Antonil, Cultura e opulência, pp. 262-263.

19. Cardozo, "The Collection of the Royal Fifth," p. 374.

Chapter 5
Administration: The Period of Uncertainty

The mining district in 1710, was in utter chaos. The gold strikes had been made by individuals beyond the reach of royal authority. The first royal official who had tried to enter the area, Castelo Branco, had been assassinated. If the crown was to get maximum profit from the discovery of gold, law and order had to be established and an atmosphere created in which the royal fifth could be collected.

As soon as news of the strikes was confirmed, the governor in Rio de Janeiro delegated authority to some of those involved in the discovery of gold. Carlos Pedroso da Silveira was named guarda-mor geral (chief supervisor of mining claims) and Bartolomeu Bueno de Siqueira was appointed escrivão geral (chief secretary). Pedroso, however, shortly was nominated for provedor dos quintos (collector of the royal fifth) of the smelter he was authorized to establish in Taubaté. Pedroso's replacement as guarda-mor geral was José de Camargos Pimentel. These appointments had been made by the acting governor, Caldas.

Caldas had done little to clarify the situation in the mining district for the royal officials in Lisbon. This was left to his successor, Artur de Sá e Menezes.

After returning to Rio de Janeiro from his first visit to São Paulo in 1698, Menezes wrote Pedro II and attempted to dissolve the confusion surrounding the discovery of gold. Previous information sent to Lisbon had been incomplete and the authorities in Portugal were uncertain of the extent of the discoveries, of their location, and of the actions which Caldas had taken to establish order. Menezes reported that "the account which Sebastião de Castro Caldas gave to Your Majesty of the Mines of Taubaté [actually refer to] those called Mines of Cataguazes which are more than one hundred leagues from Taubaté. New streams are continuously being discovered,...and the gold is most excellent." ¹ Menezes then went on to criticize Caldas' appointments. Pedroso, Menezes noted, had been named provedor of "a smelter without funcionarios." Furthermore, he criticized Caldas' appointment of José de Camargos Pimentel as guarda-mor geral, contending that Pimentel was unworthy of the great responsibility of this office which was charged with the collection of the money due the king from the auction of mining claims that, by law, were reserved for the king. Pimentel was unsuited for this post, continues Menezes, because of his "bad actions and tyrannies" and his penchant for "stealing everything." Pimentel ² subsequently was removed as supervisor of mining claims and was given the largely ceremonial post of alcaide-mor ✓ (high sheriff) of São Paulo. His successor as guarda-mor was the Paulista Garcia Rodrigues, appointed on January ³ 13, 1698.

In the early turbulent years of these settlements, the guarda-mor was the only royal official in an area that increasingly was realized to be the scene of a major gold discovery. The royal governor of Rio de Janeiro, who claimed jurisdiction over the gold fields, did not visit the area for four years. In the meantime the guarda-mor was the highest authority in the vicinity of the gold strikes. His primary responsibility was to ensure the fair distribution of mining claims--a responsibility he was to keep despite the actions of later governors who tried to exercise this authority. At the same time, the guarda-mor had some limited judicial powers for resolving disputes over claims, and probably over criminal actions. This expansion of the guarda-mor's powers was a stop-gap response to the crisis caused by the absence of royal officials. It was a tentative first step--a sign of the government's uncertainty before an entirely new phenomenon, a major gold strike in an area distant from established royal authority. Because one guarda-mor could not cope with all the settlements, assistants were appointed.

More, however, was needed to control the turbulent miners than the presence of the guardas-mores and the chief secretary; their judicial and administrative powers were inadequate to cope with the situation. Moreover, these officials were hardly disinterested since they themselves were adventurers in search of gold; they could not be expected to act impartially. The answer to this absence of

disinterested royal officials would seem to be the personal presence of the governor in the mining district but, since his chief responsibility was the defense of all of southern Brazil, the coastal area demanded most of his attention, as it was susceptible to seaborne attack by buccaneers and, in the event of war, by hostile European powers.

Only as the magnitude of the strikes became clearer did the governor realize the necessity of leaving the coast to journey into the interior. On October 24, 1697, Menezes set out for São Paulo, returning in February, 1698. In October, 1698, Menezes again departed for São Paulo; he returned to Rio five months later to prepare for his first visit to the Mines of Cataguazes. It is with this first visit of a royal governor to the mining fields that the administrative history of Minas Gerais really begins.

Menezes would spend all but three months of the remaining two years of his term in the mining district. While in São Paulo on his first visit, Menezes had called Manuel de Borba Gato from his self-imposed exile and offered him a pardon in exchange for information on new gold deposits. Thus Menezes' first stop in the mining district was in the region of Sabará to check on Borba Gato's success in finding new gold deposits. One unidentified chronicler called the area of Sabará the most populated in the gold fields.⁴ Borba Gato's success in fulfilling his promise can be measured in terms of the honors he received--he was appointed lieutenant general and guarda-mor

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of the Rio das Velhas area. This appointment established the first administrative division within the mining district. The mining district was divided into two parts--the Rio das Velhas area under Borba Gato and the district of Minas Gerais under Garcia Rodrigues Velho who was succeeded as guarda-mor by Manuel Lopes de Medeiros. The settlement of Sumidouro was made the point of division between the two districts.

Because of the crown's long-term interest in finding gold, the critical shortage of circulating coinage in Portugal, and the need for revenue to deal with European problems, it is not surprising that one of Menezes' major concerns was the establishment of an administrative system for the collection of taxes. In 1701, he established the posts of procurator of the royal treasury, secretary of the royal treasury, secretary of the tax house (escrivão da casa dos quintos), treasurer of the tax house, collector of the royal treasury, and procurator of the crown. This latter official was the personal agent of the king and acted as a check upon the other officials. All of these posts were filled by Paulistas, either native-born or by residence. The appointments, however, were premature, since these officers could fulfill their responsibilities only if law and order were imposed upon the miners--a task for which these posts had not been created.

Menezes also attempted to establish an efficient means of collecting taxes, other than the royal fifth. He insti-

tuted a number of toll stations (registros), to collect the royal imposts. Since smuggling already had become a major problem, Menezes attempted to close the trails that had been opened to Bahia and Pernambuco, which were the most difficult to patrol because of the topography of the land. The absence of difficult, mountainous terrain meant that new trails were opened easily. Their number made adequate surveillance impossible.

While trying to get others to pay their taxes, Menezes decided to make his own fortune. It is said that when he left the mining district he took with him more than thirty
8
arrôbas of gold. Despite Menezes' zeal in collecting the royal fifth from others, it is doubtful that he paid taxes on this gold.

Since the crown had no intention of leaving the mining camps without centralized leadership, a new administrative organ was established to fill this vacuum created by the governor's departure. By royal decree a superintendency was created and a Portuguese bureaucrat, Dr. Jose Vaz Pinto, named to fill the position. One of the reasons for the creation of this post may have been the opening of hostilities in Europe. Portugal's close ties to England meant that Portuguese entry into the war of the Spanish Succession was only a matter of time and circumstance. The governor was needed on the coast to guard against invasion. A report of the Overseas Council in 1705, approved by the Queen Regent, shows that only after serious deliberation

was the governor ordered to remain in Rio-"he [the governor] should consider more the defense and conservation of that city [Rio de Janeiro], which is of the foremost importance, than the conveniences which might accrue from the increase of the quinto."⁹ Short term considerations for once, were subordinated to long-term interests. No governor was to visit the mining district again until the 1709 visit of Fernando Martins Mascarenhas e Lencastre.

The superintendent, therefore, was named to supervise the mining district while the governor's attention was directed toward protecting the coast from external attack. While the superintendent had the responsibility for overseeing the collection of taxes, his major responsibility was to maintain order. As has been noted, this post combined criminal and civil jurisdiction with that of tax collector and adjudicator of claims disputes. Pinto held this post until 1704, when problems with a Paulista potentate forced his return to Rio de Janeiro.¹⁰

Efforts also were made to establish more local administrative posts, since royal authority existed only in the presence of the superintendent or guarda-mor and these officials could not be everywhere at the same time. One of the first steps taken in this regard had been the earlier creation of assistant guardas-mores. Under Dr. Pinto, the first militia (ordenança) officers were commissioned and the initial work of organizing the miners into militia units began. The first militia officer in the area of Ouro

Prêto appears to have Felix de Gusmão Mendonça e Buenc, a native of Rio de Janeiro, who was appointed December 1, 1703 to the post of sargento-mor da ordenança das Minas. Gusmão took his oath of office in Santos, although he then went to Ouro Prêto where he established his residence. If militia units were actually organized at that time, no reference to them has been found.

The first capitão-mor of the district around Ouro Prêto apparently was nominated in 1706. He was Francisco do Amaral Gurgel, of Rio de Janeiro, whose appointment appears to have been a reaction to the increasingly tense situation between the Paulistas and the forasteiros, which already had erupted into violence and would do so again. The following year Pedro de Morais Raposo, a Paulista, was commissioned capitão-mor of the Rio das Mortes region. The two capitães-mores were issued the same standing orders (regimentos). They were instructed to create a "militia corps" of ordenança status and were reminded of the necessity of defending Rio de Janeiro. Their powers, however, extended beyond the military realm: they were given judicial and police functions and authorized to collect the royal fifth and supervise the guardas-mores. Thus military functions were but a part of the duties of the capitão-mor. As with so many other Portuguese officials, there was no clear delineation between functions.

The ten years following the discovery of gold had been a period of uncertainty and confusion. Numerous

interests were in conflict: the sugar producers of the Northeast vied with the miners for slaves, capital and free labor; the need to protect the coast from a possible foreign attack conflicted with the crown's desire to divert resources into the mining district to reap the benefits of increased gold production; and the Paulistas were arrayed against those who threatened their monopoly of the mines. The crown had tried to favor the sugar interests, but the premises on which its decision was based were false. It had attempted to set up a bureaucracy to collect taxes in the mining district before it had established order there. Furthermore, the crown had failed to understand the dimensions of the strikes and the extent of the gold rush. Its actions were, therefore, piecemeal and largely ineffective.

While the crown was indecisive in the manner with which it dealt with the mining district, church officials in Brazil did not vacillate. The mining district was a rich territory, eagerly sought by competing ecclesiastical jurisdictions. Since there were no clear lines of territorial jurisdiction, the area was claimed by both the archdiocese of Bahia (bishopric created in 1551, raised to archbishopric in 1676) and the diocese of Rio de Janeiro (established in 1681). When the first visitor-general from Rio de Janeiro arrived in the Rio das Velhas area, he was informed that the Archbishop of Bahia had sent his own representative, who was then in Sêrro do Frio. The

bishop's representative, Baltezar de Godoi, thereupon threatened his counterpart and competitor with excommunication and carried the day.¹³ While this conflict continued for many years, the results were generally favorable to the Rio bishopric. The ecclesiastical territorial boundaries, however, were never to coincide with the political ones, as several parishes of northeastern Minas remained under the jurisdiction of the Bahia See.

Other visitations were made periodically to examine the state of the mining district. In 1701 Canon Manuel da Costa Escobar made a general visitation which apparently¹⁴ was unfinished at the time of his death. Two years after Canon Escobar set out, Canon Gaspar Ribeiro Pereira was dispatched to oversee the inauguration of new churches in the mining district and to attempt to resolve the jurisdictional dispute with the Bahian archbishopric.¹⁵ Unfortunately no record was found of the activities of these visitors, although, if later inspections are any indication, they probably raised the ire of the miners by seeming more interested in levying fines than in guiding the souls of the people of the district.

Before parishes were established in the mining district, the church established a temporary system which suited the settlement pattern characteristic of the early years. The system, showing great flexibility, was established by the Bishop of Rio de Janeiro, Frei Francisco de São Jerônimo. Governor Alvaro da Silveira e Albuquerque,

responding to a royal inquiry concerning the number of clerics in the gold fields reported that:

he [Bishop São Jerónimo] proposed to send sufficient priests so that divided among the [mining camps] an adequate distance apart, they should raise their portable altars and administer the sacraments to their [inhabitants, treating them] as Parishoners, ...and the inhabitants...[were to] contribute to the just maintenance of these priests and when some [priests] moved from one stream to another they should tear down the altars.¹⁶

Thus the transitory nature of the early mining camps led to a reaction on the part of the church which gave the local priests flexibility to deal with the nomadic nature of the miners.

The precise date that parishes were established is unknown, but by 1705 the settlement of Ouro Preto had been elevated to this status, with Father Francisco de Castro as the parish priest. The first references to the parish of Antônio Dias are from 1707 and show that the parish priest was Father Marcelo Pinto Ribeiro. Undoubtedly these two settlements were selected as the seats of their respective parishes because they were the largest and most important in their districts--districts created by geographic features, particularly the Morro de Santa Quitéria which separated the two settlements and channeled their growth outward, away from the mountain.

These two parishes met along a line which bisected the Morro de Santa Quitéria. The Ouro Preto parish included the settlements of Ouro Preto, Caquende, Cabeças,

the Arraial dos Paulistas, Passadez, and Tripuí. The parish of Antônio Dias included Antônio Dias, the Arraial dos Paulistas, Padre Faria, the settlements on the Morro de Vila Rica, and Bom Sucesso. This division was one of the factors which conditioned urban development and institutionalized the competition between the two areas, thereby fueling a conflict which has lasted to the present day.

Of the other settlements which would fall within the jurisdiction of the municipality of Ouro Prêto, only one, Cachoeira do Campo, was raised to a parish during this period.¹⁷ This elevation is indicative of the rapid growth of this area, which, despite insignificant gold deposits, was expanding due to its extensive pasture lands and fertile fields. It also perhaps foreshadows a later development when many miners with large-scale operations on the Morro de Vila Rica purchased lands in Cachoeira in order to directly supply foodstuffs for their slaves.

Thus, by 1707, three parishes in the area of Ouro Prêto had been created to minister to the religious needs of the settlers who were flocking into the region to make their fortunes. Ecclesiastical organization had proceeded further than civil organization by the outbreak of the Guerra dos Emboabas. Whereas the crown could not decide on the means by which to govern the mining district, the ecclesiastical officials showed no such indecision. Priests quickly were dispatched to the area and regular parishes established in the major settlements.

Notes

1. Menezes to Pedro II, 29 April, 1698 in Franco, Diccionario de bandeirantes, p. 297.
2. Ibid.
3. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 235.
4. Relação das antiguidades das Minas, Códice Costa Matoso, fol. 47.
5. S. Suannes, Os emboabas (São Paulo: Editôra Brasileira, 1962), p. 57.
6. Ibid.
7. Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 55.
8. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol.26.
9. Report of the Overseas Council, 27 January, 1705 in Manuel Cardozo, "The Brazilian Gold Rush," The Americas 3(October, 1946): 154.
10. Relação das antiguidades, fol. 47v.
11. Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 17.
12. Vasconcellos, História antiga, 2, p. 34 and Suannes, Os emboabas, pp. 36-37.
13. Relação das antiguidades, fol. 47v.
14. Raimundo Trindade, Arquidiocese de Mariana: subsídios para sua história, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1953), 1, pp. 56-57.
15. Ibid., p. 57.
16. Albuquerque to Pedro II, 8 February, 1702 in Silvio Gabriel Diniz, "Primeiras freguezias nas Minas Gerais," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Minas Gerais, 8(1961): 175-176.
17. Trindade, Arquidiocese de Mariana, pp. 67-69.

PART II
REBELLION AND REACTION: THE IMPOSITION
OF ROYAL CONTROL, 1706 - 1711

Chapter 6
Confrontation

The most dramatic development of the first decade of the eighteenth century was the War of the Emboabas. Often cited as an early manifestation of nationalism, a precursor of independence, it was a relatively bloodless war involving a mixture of issues, none of which can be called nationalist, either incipient or full-blown. The ramifications of this limited fighting, however, were extensive.

The major conflict was between two general concepts as to how the gold fields should be exploited--two positions which may be called "open" and "closed." The "closed" position was that taken by the Paulistas who, when faced by a common enemy, forgot their own differences and previous squabbling and united to confront the enemy. Their view was stated on April 16, 1700, by the São Paulo municipal council in the following terms:

[We] petition the Captain-General Artur de Sá e Menezes, Governor of the fortress of Rio de Janeiro and the rest of the Division that the lands of the territory of Minas Gerais das Cataguazes as well as the plains, with arable lands, by right belong to the Paulistas in that they own them by grants of His Majesty,...

since it was they who conquered the said lands and are the discoverers of the gold mines which they presently work....

They did this at the cost of their lives and fortunes, without expense to the royal treasury and it would be unjust to grant the said lands to the residents of Rio de Janeiro who never took part in the conquests nor in the discovery.¹

The Paulistas felt that the 1694 grant of concessions made by the king had given them exclusive rights to the regions recently discovered. This belief had been confirmed in various ways by royal authorities. Free access to the mining district had been curtailed by closing some roads and prohibiting the opening of new ones. Numerous were the orders issued either by the king or the governor implementing these decrees. It was felt that a proliferation of settlers would make tax evasion and smuggling easy. To control migration the passport system was employed. Laws were enacted to prevent some occupational groups and classes from entering the mining district. However, neither laws nor the understaffed royal authorities were able to stop the flow of adventurers into the area, as its population reached 30,000 to 50,000. Because of their role as discoverers and first exploiters of the gold deposits, the Paulistas were in firm control of most, if not all, of the settlements. Even Caeté which had been founded by Bahians, had fallen under Paulista control.

De facto control by the Paulistas was given royal blessing through their appointments to royal posts. Governor Menezes' appointments for the Rio das Velhas area in

April, 1701, are typical. Of the four officials named, two were Paulistas and another was a Portuguese who had lived in São Paulo for many years.² The place of birth of the fourth is unknown. The significant aspect of these nominations is that the district of Rio das Velhas was the earliest inundated by people who were not Paulistas. Thus the Forasteiros, as the Paulistas referred to everyone not from São Vicente captaincy, were excluded from political control in an area where they were numerically strongest. Moreover, with Paulistas holding the posts of guarda-mor, preference in the distribution of claims would go to their compatriots. Paulista hegemony was buttressed by the absence of disinterested high royal officials.

This power induced a haughty attitude on the part of the Paulistas, who looked down on outsiders as inferior. José Alvares de Oliveira, a Portuguese-born resident of Rio das Mortes, was a witness to many of these snubs. When gold was discovered in the Rio das Mortes region, the best claims went to the Paulistas and it was only with difficulty that the outsiders-or emboabas,³ as they were also called-were able to set up a settlement of their own. More shattering was the general attitude of the Paulistas--⁴ "valuing the life of an emboaba as much as that of a dog." Emboabas were referred to in the second person singular "vos" "as though they were slaves or inferiors."⁵

This treatment of the emboabas was one of the main causes of the fighting. Beyond its immediate effects,

it contributed to the growth of a non-mining, commercial interest. The increasing population in general, and in the more urbanized centers in particular, taxed food resources.

Even after the famines food was in such demand that the orders closing the Bahia road had to be rescinded to allow cattle to enter the region of the mines. Beyond the necessities of life, gold production created a market for luxury goods among those who had struck it rich. An idea of the nature of this trade can be gleaned from an examination of the goods carried by a single smuggler arrested in 1706 near Caeté.

2 barrels of Brazilian sugar-cane brandy	1 sack of Portuguese salt
1 barrel of gun powder	1 chest of pork
2 arrôbas of lead	3 horns of honey
1 sack of sugar	1 saddle (<u>sella da gineta</u>)
1 bolt (<u>peisa</u>) of cotton cloth	6 pairs of boots (<u>borzeguinhos</u>)
2 barrels of Portuguese salt	12 oitavas of gold dust
2 sacks of Brazilian salt	1 moleque (young slave)

The possessions of another smuggler arrested at the same time included:

2 pair damask shoes	11 woolen capes
2 pairs of trousers	4 cloth capes
5 caps from Galicia	3 capes of goatskin (<u>camelão</u>)
5 pairs of leather shoes (local)	52 pairs of socks
4 1/2 dozen knives from Flanders	3 pairs of short boots
1 iron bar (tool) from Flanders	38 pairs of shoes
3 prepared goat skins	1 horn of honey
3 bridles	1 old saddle and bridle
1 chest of Russian leather with 11 hats	3 slaves
4 used ordinary quality hats	
30 woolen coats (<u>véstia</u>)	

Of particular importance are the references to goods from Galicia, Russia, and Flanders and the vast quantities of items of clothing which indicate the absence of home industry, manifesting an early reliance on outside suppliers. This importation on a large and continuously expanding scale points to the existence of a significant commercial interest -- which was mainly in the hands of Portuguese-born immigrants.

Besides Paulista domination of the mining district, other factors helped create this differentiation of labor roles. Inexperienced in prospecting and totally lacking in frontier know-how, the Portuguese immigrant had to work secondary gold deposits or find another occupation. The average immigrant did not come directly to the mines but spent a number of years on the coast working, often in commerce or as an artisan. These became the professions they followed once in Minas. Because of this experience and even more important, the contacts established, the immigrant with the small capital he had accumulated was far better equipped to be a businessman than was the Paulista. After acquiring sufficient wealth through business, the immigrant would move into the more prestigious position of large-scale miner and fazendeiro (large-scale landowner). Although ownership of a fazenda was indispensable to the big miner, it was not the independent source of prestige it was in the Northeast. It was, at the most, a contributing factor.

There are numerous examples of this upward mobility. The two most often mentioned are Manuel Nunes Viana and Pascoal da Silva Guimarães. Born in Portugal in the cities of Viana and Guimarães, respectively, both were living in Brazil at the time of the gold strikes and both went to Minas within ten years of the discoveries. Viana had become rich by parlaying the capital acquired as a cashier and, later, merchant into a vast fortune in cattle and gold. Guimarães had moved from cashier to travelling merchant to gold miner and land-holder. A third example was Henrique Lopes de Araújo, leading citizen of Vila Rica from 1720 until his death in 1733. Araújo had gone from tavern keeper to rich mine owner.

Another example indicates the ability of some Portuguese to take advantage of good commercial situations. The construction of the Caminho Novo was completed in 1702 by a group of Paulistas under Garcia Rodrigues Pais. These men had been content to accept land along the route as payment for their work. Two Portuguese-born merchants, José da Silva Rijo and Simão Pereira da Rocha acted to exploit this shorter route by utilizing it to establish a complex trading network involving large capital investments. To these people open access to the mining district and the expansion of its population were necessities. A confrontation with the Paulistas, with their concept of exclusive control, appeared unavoidable, since both sides seemed incapable of compromising.

The emboaba position was best stated by one of their leaders, Bento do Amaral Coutinho, a native of Rio de Janeiro and a member of a noble family from Braga and Viana, Portugal. His views were presented to Governor Menezes in a letter dated January 16, 1709 from "Arraial Ouro Preto." Amaral emphasized the provocations of the Paulistas and described the actions of the forasteiros as defensive. The depth of the conflict was indicated by his use of such emotion-laden terms as "our settlements" "oppressed" and "liberty." Amaral recognized the actions of the forasteiros as rebellion, but rebellion against the tyranny of the Paulistas and not against the king -- tyranny, he implied that the king would not tolerate if he but knew the truth. The goal of the emboabas, was liberty-- not from the Crown but from the Paulistas. Amaral swore allegiance to the king but, at the same time promised to continue defending the emboaba cause.

Predictably, the crown vacillated when faced with this polarization of views. Unsure of the extent of the strikes, the crown initially tended to back the Paulistas. Certainly the royal officials in Rio de Janeiro were less concerned with the rights allegedly promised the Paulistas than they were with other considerations. Viceroy João de Lencastre expressed many of these concerns in a letter written in 1701. Lencastre felt that the size of the population had to be limited in order to avoid revolts, or to facilitate their suppression if they occurred. Furthermore, freedom

of access would increase gold production causing the disruption of the Brazilian economy. Unlimited migration, Lencastre argued would hurt the sugar and tobacco industries of the Northeast by drawing away many slaves and increasing the prices of the others. Lencastre suggested several methods to restrict access, such as using passports and limiting their issuance to "virtuous men with some capital, businessmen, merchants, or their agents." He also wanted to confine transit to a single road from Espírito Santo which would become the sole port for the mining area.¹⁰ Many of these views were shared by the Paulistas.

By 1704, the crown's position had been modified in accordance with the recommendations of Superintendent José Vaz Pinto. Pinto's main argument was that while controls should be retained on immigration, they alone were not sufficient to stop the influx of adventurers. He urged that incentives to the Paulistas be rescinded, since they encouraged new discoveries to the detriment of the full exploitation of those already found. Pinto favored more intensive working of a few sites as opposed to the Paulista practice of extracting the easiest alluvial gold and leaving the subsoil untouched. These suggestions were approved by the Overseas Council.¹¹ The adoption of these measures indicates that the fact that the Paulistas and the crown had previously held the same views was a coincidence -- they had arrived at these positions under the

pressures of different motives. Thus, while the policy of limiting migration was to continue, the Paulistas stood to lose their privileges. Had Pinto's recommendations been put into effect the 1694 concessions would have been revoked. For reasons which are unclear they were not, and Pinto himself was forced to leave Minas after a conflict with some Paulistas.

Notes

1. Minutes of São Paulo Câmara Session, 16 April, 1700 in Suannes, Os emboabas, pp. 4-5.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
3. The derivation of this word has been the subject of much debate over the years -- a debate summarized by Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, pp. 475-478 and Afonso A. de Freitas, "Emboaba," Revista do Arquivo Municipal (São Paulo) 1 (June, 1934): 35-41.
There are two main points of view. One, espoused by Ayres de Casal, J. de Sousa Azevedo Pizarro, and Francisco A. de Varnhagen, holds that the word "emboaba" comes from the Tupi-Guarani expression for a bird whose legs were covered with feathers only as far as the knee joint. It was applied to the Portuguese because of the high boots which they wore with their trousers tucked in at the knee. The second opinion held by Antônio Joaquim de Macedo Soares, Teodoro Sampaio, and others, is that the word is Tupi-Guarani for "stranger" or "foreigner." They point out that a bird fitting the above description does not exist in Minas Gerais. Freitas takes a different position, arguing that the word comes from the Angolese "camboá", meaning "dog." This view is interesting in that it shifts the emphasis from the Tupi spoken by the Paulistas to an African dialect. No matter what its derivation, the word was used during the early eighteenth century as the pejorative synonym for "forasteiros."
4. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, pp. 482, 486-487.
5. Padre Manuel da Fonseca, "Levantamento em Minas Gerais," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro 3 (1841): 262.
6. Inventory of Confiscated goods, 5 December, 1706 in "Documentos do Arquivo da Casa dos Contos (Minas Gerais)," Anais da Biblioteca Nacional 65 (1943): 45-47.
7. Augusto de Lima Junior, Vila Rica do Ouro Preto: síntese histórica e descritiva (Belo Horizonte: Private edition, 1957), p. 64.

8. It is interesting that Isaias Golgher had turned this dichotomy into a feudalism-capitalism conflict with the Paulistas representing the feudal side and the Portuguese entrepreneurs being the capitalists. Isaias Golgher, Guerra dos Emboabas: a primeira guerra civil nas Americas (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia, 1956), pp. 28-29.
9. Bento do Amaral Coutinho to Governor Mascarenhas, 16 January 1709 in Golgher, Guerra dos Emboabas, pp.121-130.
10. João de Lencastre to ? 12 January, 1701 in Virginia Rau and Maria Fernanda Gomes da Silva (eds), Os manuscritos do Arquivo da Casa de Cadaval respeitantes ao Brasil, 2 vols. (Coimbra: Coimbra University, 1958), 2,14-16.
- It must be noted that Lencastre was convinced that the mass production of gold would serve to flood the money markets of Brazil. Only the curtailment of migration could prevent this disaster, according to Lencastre. The appropriate section of the governor's communication is paraphrased by Rau and Silva:
- It is also worthy of consideration that, with free access to the mines, there will come to pass that there will be more gold in Brazil than is convenient, such that it will not be worth more than silver, which would be highly prejudicial. All this would be remedied [by] limiting entry to the mines.
11. Consulta of Overseas Counsel, 26 September, 1704 in Documentos Históricos 93 (1941): 181.

Chapter 7
The Wars of the Emboabas

While the opposing positions held by the emboabas and the Paulistas provided the ideological underpinning and created the atmosphere for the outbreak of violence during the first decade of the eighteenth century, immediate causes sparked the conflagration. One of the most important of these was the effort by some forasteiros to monopolize essential food items. Monopolies of meat were among the first to be established as royal officials auctioned contracts which entitled the contractor to be the exclusive provider of meat for a given period. There had been no Paulista objections when Francisco do Amaral Gurgel, a native of Rio de Janeiro, had held the meat contract from 1701 to 1706, but the situation became tense when a Portuguese-born monk, Friar Francisco de Menezes, moved to grab monopoly control of tobacco and then meat.

Since there was no tobacco contract, Friar Menezes had to corner the market by buying all the tobacco that entered the mining district. The bitterness which this aroused among the Paulistas is evident in Bento Fernandes' statement that the Portuguese "being more fit for business wanted to invent contracts on various commodities to more quickly and with less work gratify themselves com-

pletely...as did one clergyman [Friar Francisco de Menezes] who with his associate...invested three arrôbas [of gold] in tobacco which they purchased wholesale before the tobacco entered Minas.¹ Whereas the normal price of a vara (one vara is 1.1 meters) of tobacco was one or two oitavas, the friar was able to sell a vara of tobacco for four and five oitavas. Tobacco was an important commodity because of the great quantities used by Negro and Indian slaves.

After this successful venture, Friar Menezes shifted his attention to the supply of meat products in cooperation with two other friars and Pascoal da Silva Guimarães. Menezes' designs were foiled by the opposition of the Paulistas, on whom the frustrated friar promised to wreak vengeance.² Friar Menezes' machinations along with minor provocations probably were the spark that set off the first "War of the Emboabas." Writers such as Isaias Golgher³ have noted Antonil's passing reference to the construction of a fort in the Rio das Mortes region "during the first uprising"⁴ but have failed to find substantiating documentation of this incident. This is provided by Bento do Amaral Coutinho.

Also I am forced to tell your Honor [the governor] that during the first rebellion of this People, Domingos da Silva Monteiro, a Paulista by birth and residence, was elected Cabo e Mestre do Campo [commanding officer of a regiment sized unit] [because] it seemed safer to be under his protection. It appears that he who is not loyal to his King cannot be loyal to his People since

he was one of those who resisted the implementation of the meat contract in Minas by violent means, gathering with others of his point of view.⁵

Monteiro had been selected by the residents of Ouro Prêto in the hope of avoiding bloodshed in that region -- a vain hope since Monteiro led the Paulistas in armed opposition to Meneses.

It appears certain that where previous writers have seen but one outbreak of fighting, there actually occurred two. The first was in 1706 or 1707, and was precipitated, at least in the area of Ouro Prêto, by the efforts of Friar Menezes to win the meat contract. While less violent and less widespread than that of 1708-1709, it was real enough to force the building of a fort near present-day São João del Rei, the appointment of the first capitães-mores in Minas ⁶, and the election of a Paulista by the people of Ouro Prêto--Paulistas and emboabas alike--as mestre do campo.

The second and better-known conflict erupted in 1708 after a number of provocations by both sides. The haughty attitude of the Paulistas has already been noted. They would enter an emboaba settlement "heavily armed with their chief at the front, shoeless, white cotton drawers tied at the knee, sword drawn, bandolier fastened, pistol in belt, knife slung on chest, carbine in hand, [wearing] either a floppy-brimmed hat or a cap pulled down like a mask. To the sound of drum and bugle they would shout: 'Death to

the Emboabas."⁷ This form of harassment probably was not uncommon.

Often the incidents were more serious. One such incident occurred in Rio das Mortes during June, 1707 when two Paulistas were killed after they provoked a quarrel with some emboabas. While both sides took up arms, no further fighting took place.⁸ The following year a more serious incident occurred in Caeté. It was precipitated by a silly quarrel over a musket which an emboaba had borrowed from a Paulista and lost. The Paulista refused to accept payment of the value of the musket, demanding the return of the musket. The emboaba turned for support to Manuel Nunes Viana, who offered the Paulista any gun from his large supply. The Paulista refused and turned for support to Jeronimo Pedroso de Barros, an early settler in the region and, with his brother Valentim, one of the two most important Paulistas in the region after Manuel de Borba Gato, a royal appointee who supposedly was above petty squabbling.⁹ When the disagreement could not be resolved the emboabas fortified themselves in a house in Caeté. While these events were transpiring, an emboaba was killed by a Paulista between Caeté and Sabará. The emboabas of that area feeling threatened, left their settlement and joined Viana in Caeté. Reinforced, Viana's men sallied forth to confront the Paulistas. At this critical junction Manuel de Borba Gato intervened and prevented the two parties from joining battle. At the same

time, Borba Gato ordered Viana to return to his properties on the Rio São Francisco.

The Paulistas, however, lacked the strength to enforce this banishment order. After rumors began to spread that the Paulistas were preparing to massacre them in Caeté the emboabas acted. They captured the settlement of Caeté forcing many Paulistas to flee. Of these, many went to Sabará, which became a seemingly well-fortified Paulista stronghold. Once in control at Caeté the emboabas enacted ordinances prohibiting Paulistas from entering emboaba settlements at night and limiting the size of the bodyguard of Paulista potentates to two men.¹⁰

Having established control over the Caeté district, Viana and his troops moved against Sabará, about ten kilometers to the west. Sabará fell after a well-executed flanking maneuver, but this emboaba success brought the victors problems. A rift developed within the emboaba camp between the Portuguese-born and the Brazilians over how to treat the defeated Paulistas; the Bahians including Luís do Couto and other Brazilians abandoned the Portuguese Viana who wanted to deal leniently with the Paulistas. The two camps were further split by Viana's attempt to revive the meat contract in the district of Sabará.¹¹

In the meantime the situation around Ouro Preto had become increasingly tense as first rumors of the emboaba successes reached the area and then refugees from the dis-

trict of the Rio das Velhas appeared. Soon there were rumors of a Paulista plot to massacre the emboabas of Ouro Prêto in retaliation for Viana's actions. Those were believed by many emboabas, including Bento do Amaral Coutinho who attached importance to the feeling that the Paulistas would try to seize complete control of Ouro Prêto rather than seek to recapture the Rio das Velhas area where the forasteiros were firmly entrenched.¹²

The rumors were substantiated when some letters which referred to the plot allegedly were captured and their contents divulged. The forasteiros of Ouro Prêto, Antônio Dias, and Cachoeira, armed themselves and chose a captain to lead them in this crisis. But the state of alert did not prevent the Paulistas from burning nine storehouses (ranchos de mercadorias) belonging to Pascoal da Silva Guimarães. Among the goods lost in the fire were sixteen arrobas of gun powder. The emboabas turned to Viana for assistance.¹³

Upon receiving the appeal from the emboabas of Ouro Prêto, Viana and a sizeable force set out from Sabará. The road to Ouro Prêto ran through Cachocira do Campo, which is where the Paulistas of Ouro Prêto decided to defend themselves. The two forces met and engaged in a battle in which the emboabas were victorious.¹⁴

This victory gave the emboabas control of the vital region around Ouro Prêto. It also gave them the security necessary to take the dramatic step of selecting Manuel

Nunes Viana as "governor" of the mining district. Viana was selected by six electors chosen by the troops gathered in Cachoeira.¹⁵ The rest of the emboaba government was then named by Viana: Guimarães (Portuguese) as General Superintendent of Minas Gerais do Ouro Prêto and Mestre do Campo; Antônio Francisco da Silva (Portuguese) as brigadier; Sebastião Carlos Leite (Portuguese) and Domingos Fernandes Pinto (Portuguese) as mestres do campo; Bento do Amaral Coutinho (Rio de Janeiro) as sargento-mor; Antônio Pinto de Magalhães (Portuguese), Bras Fernandes Rôla (origin unknown), Domingos Mendes (origin unknown), Mathias Barboza da Silva (Portuguese) and Tomás Ribeiro Corso (origin unknown) as captains. These men joined the previously appointed mestres do campo, Friar Menezes (Portuguese)¹⁶ and Manuel Rodrigues Soares (Portuguese). Clearly the leadership of the movement was in the hands of the Portuguese. Besides making these appointments, Viana created two terços of militia troops, one for Ouro Prêto, Antônio Dias, and Padre Faria,¹⁷ and another for Carmo.

Viana then acted to remove possible foci of Paulista resistance. Captain Domingos da Silva Monteiro, treasurer of mining claims (tesoureiro das datas minerais) and the popularly elected leader of Ouro Prêto, and Sub-Lieutenant (Alferes) Bartolomeu Bueno Feio, assistant guarda-mor, were arrested and taken to Sabará. An eyewitness noted that their arrests had the effect of "leaving all others [Paulistas] timid and others left for S[ão] Paulo."¹⁸

Viana was now the de facto chief of the core of the mining district. The nominal authority, the royal governor in Rio de Janeiro, Fernando de Mascarenhas de Lencastre, was too far away to exercise control and the local authorities, the guardas-mores, had been neutralized or chased away and replaced by emboabas loyal to Viana.

Viana then acted to extend his authority to the Rio das Mortes district where the emboabas were more scattered and thus unable to unite against the Paulistas. Troops were dispatched to expel the Paulistas. These, on hearing of the arrival of the emboabas, split up into small guerrilla-type units called mangas. One of these units, of approximately fifty men ¹⁹ was trapped in a wooded area by a force of two hundred men under Bento do Amaral Coutinho. After a fierce battle, the Paulistas surrendered to the emboabas, receiving a promise that their lives would be spared. After the surrender, Coutinho went back on his ²⁰ word and on his orders the Paulistas were massacred.

The royal officials, in general, supported the cause of the Paulistas. As had been noted, the aims of the royal government and those of the Paulistas were similar although the motivation behind them was entirely different. Governor Mascarenhas, upon deciding to go to the scene of hostilities, sent a letter to the king describing the situation. In it Mascarenhas wholeheartedly took the side of the Paulistas. He noted the promises made to the Paulistas, the smuggling and other illicit activities of

the forasteiros and the damage they had done to the royal treasury. He then announced his intention of going to the mining district, explaining that "I am going to calm these conflicts, to insure the execution of the royal laws concerning the collection of Your Majesty's taxes, to arrest the criminals [who are] the leaders of the uprisings when possible [and] preserve the Paulistas in Minas, as they made the discoveries and only they are capable of continuing and expanding them.... I am determined to expel those who entered by the Bahian backlands against Royal orders."²¹

Yet despite Mascarenhas' stated support of the Paulistas, his actions upon arriving at the settlement of Rio das Mortes, present-day São João del Rei, were rather impartial. He asked both sides to select three representatives who, it was hoped, would meet and iron out the differences which existed between the parties in conflict. This board was established and for a short while served to maintain the peace in the Rio das Mortes district and keep its residents loyal to the governor.²² The emboaba representatives were Julião Rangel de Sousa Coutinho, José Matol, and José Álvares de Oliveira, while the Paulistas selected José Pires de Almeida and José Moreira da Silva.²³ The name of the third Paulista is not known.

In the same spirit of compromise, Mascarenhas created some militia units whose command was to be divided equally between Paulistas and emboabas. Disenchanted with the

governor who supposedly had come to support them against the usurpations of the emboabas, the Paulistas refused to accept the posts which were offered them. The stand of the Paulistas, accusing Mascarenhas of favoritism for his failure to arrest or expel the emboabas as he had promised, forced Mascarenhas to drop his impartial pose and take a pro-Paulista stance. Once his pro-Paulista proclivities were revealed, Mascarenhas made no effort to mask them. He granted a large number of sesmarias to Paulistas and nominated Paulistas to key posts in Rio das Mortes.²⁴

Mascarenhas' actions seemingly confirmed the opinion of many emboabas that not only was he sympathetic to the Paulistas, but that he was bringing chains with him to use on those emboabas involved in the uprising. The angry emboabas claimed that they were defending royal authority against the usurpations of the Paulistas who were defrauding the royal treasury by smuggling gold and not paying the royal fifth. Viana decided to oppose the entry of the governor into the territory under emboaba control.

Receiving good intelligence concerning the movements of the governor and the few companies of troops which accompanied him, Viana prepared to surprise his adversary. Arising one morning after camping near Congonhas, Mascarenhas found six thousand emboabas lined up in battle array before him -- all chanting "Long Live Our Governor, Manuel Nunes Viana! Death to Fernando Martins Mascarenhas if he does not return to Rio."²⁵ The frightened governor, after

several meetings with the emboaba leaders, agreed to return to Rio. He was given three days to prepare for his return; he needed but two.

At approximately the time that Mascarenhas was returning to Rio de Janeiro after his dismal failure, his successor was disembarking after the long voyage from Portugal. The new governor, Antônio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho was a more capable official than his predecessor. He was born in Portugal in 1655 but had spent some of his early years in Maranhão, where his father had served as governor. He himself served as governor of Grão Pará and Maranhão, posts which gave him the political experience so obviously lacking in his predecessor. Within five weeks of his arrival in Rio de Janeiro, Albuquerque was on his way to Minas. ²⁶ Journeying with a small group of soldiers--no more than a dozen--he was able to travel quickly and unobtrusively. He managed to enter Caeté without attracting notice. There he confronted Viana, who accepted exile to his fazendas on the Rio São Francisco.

Viana thus submitted to a governor accompanied by twelve soldiers, after having expelled another who had come with two entire companies. Viana submitted because the situation had changed radically. The major change had occurred in the camp of the emboabas. They had gone to war to expel the Paulistas -- a goal largely fulfilled by the time Albuquerque arrived. Furthermore, the new gover-

nor, later a Paulista supporter, was much more politic than Mascarenhas in his actions, refusing to attach himself openly to the defeated and disgraced Paulistas. With the threat of the Paulistas removed for the moment, the emboabas had occasion to enjoy the spoils of war. They had fought for and acquired the mining claims held by their adversaries. Clearly, this entailed numerous injustices. Some Paulistas, who were not involved directly in the conflict were arrested and deprived of their holdings for purely selfish reasons. Since the emboabas had won control of the claims there was no longer any reason to continue fighting or to oppose royal control. Furthermore, whereas a case in defense of the earlier actions of the emboabas could be made, albeit weakly, opposition to a governor who was prepared to pardon all but Viana and Gurgel could not be easily justified. Essentially, the emboabas had won everything they sought; there was no need to jeopardize this victory by continued opposition to a new governor.

One of the first actions taken by Albuquerque was to divide the mining district into six superintendencies, three of which were to be headed by Paulistas and three by emboabas. The six superintendencies were: Rio das Mortes under Borba Gato (São Paulo), Caeté under Sebastião Pereira de Aguiar (Bahia), Rio das Mortes under Pedro de Moraes Raposo (São Paulo), Carmo under José Rabelo Perdigão (Portugal), Sêrro do Frio under Lourenço Carlos de

Mascarenhas e Araujo (São Paulo?), and Ouro Prêto under
Pascoal da Silva Guimarães (Portugal).²⁷ Albuquerque
thus complied with his instructions which were to distri-
bute posts equally, giving the Paulistas control of the
areas where they were strongest. At the same time Al-
buquerque also confirmed many of the appointments of
emboabas to militia and civil posts which had been made by
"governor" Viana.

While Albuquerque was attempting to restore order
to the mining district, the townspeople of São Paulo were
preparing a counterattack to regain control of the mines.
Albuquerque tried, without success, to restrain the
Paulistas. An army of two thousand Paulistas moved on Rio
das Mortes where it was stopped by the entrenched emboabas,
who had been warned by Albuquerque of the imminent attack.
The Paulistas were forced to retreat by the approach of a
relief column of 1,300 dispatched from the Ouro Prêto
area.²⁸

The "war" was over. It had lasted less than one year
and few pitched battles had been fought, but the conflict
had tremendous repercussions in the development of the
mining district -- repercussions far out of proportion to
the armed struggle.²⁹

Notes

1. Mendonça, Notícias dos primeiros descobridores, fol.28.
2. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, pp. 496-497.
3. Golgher, Guerra dos emboabas, p. 64.
4. Antonil, Cultura e opulencia, p. 290.
5. Bento do Amaral Coutinho to Governor Mascarenhas, 16 January, 1709 in Golgher, Guerra dos Emboabas, pp. 128-129.
6. Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 36.
7. José Álvares de Oliveira, "História do distrito do Rio das Mortes," in Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 487.
8. Francisco de Assis Carvalho Franco, "Paulistas e Emboabas-primeiros povoadores de Minas-Manuel Nunes Viana-governo pacificador," Annais do IV Congresso de História Nacional (Rio de Janeiro: Departamento de Imprensa Nacional, 1950): 3, pps. 82-83.
9. Ibid., pp. 82-85.
10. Ibid., pp. 85-86.
11. Charles R. Boxer, The Golden Age of Brazil: 1695-1750 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p.76.
12. Amaral felt that the Paulistas would strike at Ouro Prêto because the emboabas were in the majority in the Rio das Velhas region. Amaral implied that the Paulistas were in the majority in Ouro Prêto--a view which fails to explain why they were so easily dislodged from that district.
13. Bento do Amaral Coutinho to Governor Mascarenhas, 16 January, 1709 in Golgher, Guerra dos Emboabas, p. 124.
14. Protesto que no que, fol. 65v. Also Suannes, Os emboabas, pp. 152-153. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, pp. 542-545 expresses doubt that such a battle occurred, focusing his criticism upon the romanticized description given by Diogo de Vasconcellos, História antiga. It seems

unlikely, however, that the entrenched Paulistas would have refused to give battle to the approaching emboabas.

15. Mendonça in Taunay, "Documentos inéditos, preciosos da Biblioteca Público Municipal de São Paulo," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo 44(1948): 356

16. Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 160.; Franco, Diccionário de bandeirantes e sertanistas, passim; Franco, "Guerra dos Emboabas, pp. 119-158.

17. Manuel Cardozo, "The Guerra dos Emboabas," p. 479 contends that these were the first militia units created in the mining district. As we have seen, the first units were created at least as early as 1706 and perhaps earlier.

18. Rellação do principio descuberto destas Minas Gerais, fol. 32.

19. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 552.

20. Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 180. Golgher, Guerra dos Emboabas, pp. 134-136 argues that the massacre did not occur and the legend was a later development conceived purely for propaganda purposes.

21. Mascarenhas to João V, 12 February, 1709 in Golgher, Guerra dos emboabas, pp. 107-114.

22. Petition of Miguel Rangel de Sousa Coutinho, no date but appended to a consulta of the Overseas Counsel of 30 August, 1748 in Anais da Biblioteca Nacional 50 (1938): pp. 14-15.

23. Ibid., and Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 216.

24. Rellação do principio descuberto destas Minas Gerais, fol. 32. Also Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 223.

25. Golgher, Guerra dos Emboabas, pp. 160-161.

26. Albuquerque acted before receiving orders from Lisbon. During the months of August and November, 1709, the Overseas Council met several times to discuss the situation. The consensus of the Council was that the newly appointed governor should journey to the mining district and without using force restore royal authority. This Albuquerque did before being ordered to act. [Consulta of Overseas Council, August 3 and 12, and November 23, 1709 in Documentos Históricos 93, pp. 242-243, 245-250, and 256].

27. Franco, "Guerra dos Emboabas," passim.

28. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 471.

29. The best treatments in English of the war itself are those by Manoel Cardozo, "The Guerra dos Emboabas, Civil War in Minas Gerais, 1708-1709," : Hispanic American Historical Review 22, no.3(August, 1942): 470-492, and Charles R. Boxer's chapter "Paulistas and Emboabas," in The Golden Age of Brazil, pp. 61-83. Neither provides as satisfactory a treatment of the effects of the war as they do of the war. There is no really satisfactory treatment in Portuguese; although Isaias Golgher's Guerra dos Emboabas: a primeira guerra civil nas Americas is a provocative study, it contains some errors of interpretation. Golgher takes a pro-emboaba position, seeing them as embodying capitalist concepts and outlooks. Suannes, Os emboabas, comes down hard on the Paulista side. Franco, "Guerra dos Emboabas," is a good survey of the steps leading to the war and the fighting itself. Franco's style is descriptive and he avoids taking sides.

Chapter 8

The Aftermath

The Paulistas were defeated and their efforts to dominate the mining district thwarted. Their claim to privilege had been rebuffed by the overwhelming numbers of emboabas who had entered the region. At the same time, the victory of the emboabas spelled the end of many of the exclusivist policies of the crown.

It is incorrect to attribute each step of the government's reversal of policy to the war. Some of these actions had been discussed before the crown learned of the outbreak of fighting and some had been enacted in restricted form. It is proper to state, however, that most of these steps were taken in reaction to the tensions and minor outbreaks of fighting that occurred before December 1708 and pointed to the need for a radical change in policy. The war quickened the pace of these changes and, in many cases, led to substantial reforms.

Among the modifications considered most needed, and demanded from numerous quarters, was an increase in the quota of slaves allowed to enter the mining district. The original limitation, if maintained and enforced, would have prevented the expansion of the mining industry. On March 24, 1709, before news of the outbreak of the war could

have arrived in Lisbon, João V rescinded the restrictions on the slave trade between Minas and Rio de Janeiro.¹ This edict was a response to the various petitions for open access to the mining district which had been sent to the crown by slave trading interests.² The effects of this order were limited, however, as Bahia and not Rio de Janeiro was the major source of slaves employed in Minas at this time.³

The Overseas Council met in February, 1710 to discuss the wisdom of maintaining restrictions on the shipment of slaves to Minas from areas other than Rio de Janeiro. The Council decided that "this freedom to send slaves to the mines for sale includes not only Rio de Janeiro but the other captaincies of the State of Brazil."⁴ Exception was made to slaves used on sugar plantations, who could be sent to the mines only if intractable -- and then replacements had to be purchased.⁵ This recommendation, approved on November 10, was issued as a royal order February 27, 1711,⁶ thus ending the restrictive trade policies two years after the defeat of the Paulistas.⁷

Besides the appeals of interested groups and the pressure exerted by the emboaba victory, there were other reasons for the crown's reversal in policy. The crown stood to profit directly from the taxes levied on every slave entering Minas⁸ and from the increase in the royal fifth resulting from the expansion of gold production. In 1697, the cost of a slave in Africa was 94\$ 000, with the

selling price in Brazil being 160\$000. By 1718, the selling price had climbed to 300\$000 despite the great increase in the supply of slaves. This price, it should be noted was the price on the coast -- certainly it was higher in the interior.

The aftermath of the war also witnessed the first effort to institutionalize the collection of taxes. Before 1709 the quinto had been collected, when it was, by local guardas-mores and superintendents or at the smelters and mints on the coast. Governor Albuquerque upon his arrival in São Paulo town met with agents of all the councils of the captaincy of São Paulo and the local elites and held an assembly (junta). It was decided to collect the quinto by a levy on mining pans (bateias). This was, in reality, a tax on slaves. Furthermore, taxes were imposed on goods entering the region.

Albuquerque then left for Minas where another junta was held in Carmo. All the superintendents, capitães-mores, guardas-mores, procurators of the treasury, and representatives of the people (the method of selection is not specified) were in attendance. Because of the conflict, the junta met first in the camp of the Paulistas, Carmo, and then in the camp of the emboabas, Ouro Prêto. The quinto was set at about eight oitavas per bateia and the import tax at four oitavas on each load of dry goods (fazenda seca) two on food stuffs (fazenda molhada), four on Negro slaves, six on mulatto slaves, and one on cattle. This

tax structure was approved by the king on November 11, 1711.⁹ The general tax on merchandise signaled the crown's shift from prohibition to regulation. The lifting of the limitations on trade was a victory for those commercial interests advocating an "open-access" policy.

The victory of the emboabas ended the "exclusivist" position position of the Paulistas regarding access to mining claims. Many Paulistas abandoned their claims in order to save their lives. Others were arrested or otherwise forced to vacate their diggings without real justification. The arrest, for example, of Domingos da Silva Monteiro, who had extensive claims in the area near those of Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, certainly raises questions as to the motives of the emboabas.

Isaias Golgher, the Mineiro historian argues that this shift in mine possession was a natural result of the conflict between the "feudal" Paulistas and "capitalist" emboabas during a period of stress caused by a change in the means of production from simple stream panning to the more complex subsurface exploitation.¹⁰ This approach, while enticing, fails to explain why the Paulistas could not have modified their mining techniques to fit the new requirements. In fact, they should have been in an excellent position to do so, in view of their ownership of slaves and their accumulation of capital through exploitation of the alluvial deposits. The new system involved not a change in the means but rather in the scope of pro-

duction. Only the war prevented the Paulistas from expanding their operations. With the exhaustion of the surface deposits they would have had no choice but to turn to subsurface mining. Had the Paulistas been willing to compromise their extreme position, they would have retained their control over the source of wealth--the gold deposits.

The intransigence of the Paulistas resulted in a radical shift in the ownership of the mines around Ouro Prêto. Despite the efforts of the crown to restore the Paulistas to their lost gold claims, the Paulistas preferred to seek out new gold fields far from the victorious emboabas than face the litigation which their return would have precipitated. The new owners had their positions confirmed by Governor Albuquerque in 1711. An eyewitness described the event:

To this ... place [the newly designated square] gathered the people, petitioning the governor [to grant] the neighboring mountains for the prospecting of their slaves, and this did the same governor grant, ordering the guardas-mores not to give claims on the said mountains, nor to divide the area, and whoever wanted to work the claims, got ownership through possession and it became his to mine and to sell.¹¹

The chaos reigning in the mining district before 1711 had shown the fragility of royal control. Steps were soon taken to establish this control upon firmer foundations. The first action was the creation of a magistracy (ouvidoria) for the district of Ouro Prêto in February, 1709. The first ouvidor appointed was Dr. Manuel da Costa

de Amorim, who was given both civil and criminal jurisdiction. In civil matters there was no appeal from his decision in cases involving less than 100\$000. He could exile nobles (fidalgos) from the county for two years and artisans for five. Over slaves his direct powers excluded only death. Death could be decreed without appeal by several ouvidores and the governor meeting jointly. Death sentences to free men could also be decreed but these were subject to automatic appeal to the High Court in Bahia. In addition, the ouvidor was responsible for issuing letters of security (cartas de segurança), which were something like writs of habeas corpus.

The significance of the ouvidor, however, is due not so much to his role as magistrate, but rather to the administrative functions which gradually accrued to that office. These primarily involved the ouvidores' powers to supervise the activities of the municipal council and thereby curtail independent action. While much of this expansion of powers occurred after 1720, it should be noted here that one of the few administrative powers initially granted the ouvidor was that of authorizing the special property tax, the finta. The finta was the fairest of colonial taxes, since it was based on the value of
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 property.

The creation of the ouvidoriã was one response to a desperate situation. Others were needed if effective control over the area was to be achieved, a fact that was

acknowledged in discussions within the Overseas Councils.
 Of these, the most important occurred in July, 1709,¹³
 just five months after the appointment of Amorim as
 ouvidor of Ouro Preto and even before he could assume his
 new post. The Oversea Council was, therefore assuming that
 the creation of the ouvidoria would not resolve the problems
 of governing the mining district.

Six separate opinions were presented at the Council
 session about which some general observations can be made.
 A recurring theme was the responsibility of the king for
 providing good government:

The good administration of justice and
 political government of the great number
 of people who live in Minas...[are] the
 objects of all communities [repúblicas]
 and the principal obligation of princes,
 this being the reason for which they were
 constituted by God and by the people.¹⁴

The need for a centralized government located in the
 mining district was recognized, although there was a dif-
 ference of opinion as to its structure. Two counsellors
 proposed an integrated program calling for the creation
 of a triumvirate composed of a bishop, to found parishes
 and consecrate churches; a military officer, to establish
 a militia system; and a High-Court magistrate (desembarga-
dor) to administer justice. Towns were to be founded¹⁵
 and a tax system instituted. Three counsellors favored
 the appointment of a single governor. The five counsellors
 agreed that the mining district should be an independent
 captaincy and three of the counsellors emphasized the

raising of some settlements to the level of towns and the creation of a militia system. The militia officers particularly the capitães-mores, were seen primarily as administrators of justice. They were to exercise judicial powers so that the swift administration of justice would serve as a deterrent to would-be lawbreakers.

Furthermore, considerable attention was devoted to the problem of collecting taxes. General agreement was reached on several points. A mint should be established in Salvador as most of the gold leaving Minas went to the captaincy of Bahia for shipment overseas. To facilitate collection of the royal fifth smelters were to be created in the principal settlements of Minas or on the main roads. These would accept gold dust and make gold bars which would become the circulating medium. All gold dust found outside Minas would be illegal and thus subject to confiscation. There was also agreement that the collection of the tithe should be farmed out, since "all the sources of royal income (rendas) bring in more if they are contracted".¹⁶

The opinion of counsellor José de Freitas Serrão contained a view concerning the economic role which the mining district was to play within the Portuguese empire which would be repeated often to justify royal efforts to prevent diversification of the economy of the region.

This commodity [tobacco] will not be grown to a great extent in Minas since gold mining is so profitable that it will not give way for another [economic

activity] this crop should be prohibited because it will be harmful to the Rio de Janeiro monopoly...and it is convenient that there be commodities which will extract gold from Minas.¹⁷

By 1709, there was no longer any confusion among the counsellors over the importance of the gold fields. Two counsellors dealt with the problem of coastal defense. The protection of the coast was no longer seen as contending with the exploitation of the mining district for the attention of the governor. The coastal cities were now described as "the ports of the mines" and as such their defenses were to be improved.¹⁸ The decision to improve coastal defenses was made on the assumption that "the mines are considered in Europe, and not without reason, to be the richest ever seen."¹⁹ This optimistic view was widely held despite the fact that the royal income already derived from gold production hardly covered²⁰ royal expenses in the mining district.

While these ideas, were recognized as valid, several of them unanimously by the five counsellors, no formal recommendation was made to the king, since the president of the Council felt that most of them would require large fiscal expenditures. He made only three recommendations; the creation of magistracies (comarcas), the commissioning of capitães-mores in the mining district and the establishment of a mint in Salvador.²¹

This report of the Overseas Council is important

because it shows that the royal advisors were aware of the intolerable situation existing in the mining district and were attempting to discover ways of dealing with the problems besetting that area. Furthermore various proposals made by the counsellors soon were enacted.

The arrival of news of the outbreak of the War of the Emboabas served as a catalyst to the adoption of policies previously considered inappropriate. An immediate necessity was the establishment of a royal captaincy for the mining district. It was no longer considered feasible to have the mining district governed as though it were just another part of southern Brazil.

The creation of a royal captaincy of São Paulo and Minas de Ouro was effected only after more lengthy debates in the Overseas Council and the expropriation of the donatary of São Vicente in 1709. The statement of the Marquis of Marialva indicates the consistency of the Council's response to the difficulties in Minas. Marialva wanted the creation of a separate captaincy for the mining district with a governor named for an unlimited period of service. The governor would be accompanied by three magistrates, one to act as juiz de fora while the others provided quick summary justice with appeals strictly forbidden. Furthermore, Marialva felt, an infantry regiment with Paulista officers was needed to provide security and to bind the quick-to-revolt Paulistas to the crown. As a further buttress of order, the marquis recommended the

creation of a bishopric in the new royal captaincy and he suggested that smelters be established and all gold except in bars be prohibited from circulation.²²

This advice was accepted by the king. On November 3, 1709 the removal from the jurisdiction of the Captain General of Rio de Janeiro of São Paulo and Minas do Ouro, as the Mines of Cataguazes would be called from 1709 to 1720, was effected. Six days later, instructions were issued to Albuquerque who had been transferred to the post of governor of the new captaincy. He was ordered to "found some settlements so the people who live in Minas [can] live under law and order." Moreover he was to expel all superfluous clerics, collect the quinto, establish a smelter, create an infantry regiment of four to five hundred troops "naming all the officers but the colonel." He was ordered to "nominate equally Paulistas and Portuguese according to their merits for the said posts, as also for the government of the settlements which you establish."²³ The crown for the first time was acting to put the administration of the gold-bearing region on a sound footing.

While Albuquerque was not able to carry out all these instructions immediately due to the tensions left by the war, he was able to take several vital steps toward the establishment of royal authority. Certainly the most important of these was the incorporation of towns. According to Portuguese tradition, the town was the basis of local government and rights. A settlement could be elevated

to town status only by a governor's decree followed by royal approval. While the latter was usually perfunctory in Brazil, occasions did occur when a governor was criticized by the king for establishing a town without express instructions to do so. The incorporation of a town was an important matter because in many ways it was an infringement of royal prerogative and brought into play an array of rights and prerogatives dating from the medieval past. Albuquerque established three towns at this time: Nossa Senhora do Carmo de Albuquerque (April 8, 1711), Vila Rica do Nossa Senhora do Pillar e Albuquerque (July 8, 1711) and Vila Real de Nossa Senhora da Conceição do Sabará (July 17, 1711). It was anticipated that these municipalities would strengthen royal control, but a conflict over authority between the town council and the king's officials soon erupted and was not resolved until 1720 and, in some ways, continued until the mid-1730's.

The militia system was established for the first time on a large scale in the mining district after 1711. As an institution, the militia was a very effective means of binding people to the crown, serving as a visible form of allegiance. While potentially a threat to the regular army, which it outnumbered almost everywhere in Brazil, this threat never materialized. Although occasionally individual officers conspired against the government, the full weight of the militia never followed these officers in a stand against the king. The years immediately after

1711 saw the precipitous creation of a very large number of militia units and the even more precipitous commissioning of officers. The Wars of the Emboabas had radically altered the social structure. Before 1709 effective political control had been in the hands of the Paulistas, although there were a few exceptions. Some of these were extremely wealthy men who transferred their economic and social status into political power. A good example of this is Francisco do Amaral Gurgel, who had parlayed gold mining, meat monopolies, and fazendas into a fortune reported by Antonil as fifty arrôbas of gold. The son of Colonel José Nunes do Amaral, he served as sargento-mor and then capitão-mor of the Ouro Preto militia prior to 1709. In other cases, authority was wielded by natives of Portugal, but these men had immigrated early and were, to all intents, Brazilians. In any event, these were exceptions: most of the power in Minas prior to 1709 was in the hands of Paulistas.²⁴

Indications are that of the Paulistas who had founded the settlements around Ouro Preto and then had gone to Cachoeira do Campo to defend themselves against the emboabas, few were able to return to their homes. The number of Paulistas who appear in the parish records of Vila Rica during the course of the century are few indeed. It appears that many of these Paulistas went to the region of Congonhas do Campo. This shift in population occurred despite the royal order of May 30, 1711, restoring all

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property taken from the Paulistas during the war. To circumvent the mining code, which abrogated all claims abandoned for over forty days, this royal order declared void all seizures of mines abandoned under duress.²⁶

Rather than accept this offer which would almost certainly have resulted in protracted litigation, the Paulistas generally preferred to explore virgin regions. As a result of this centrifugal action, the area around Pitanguí was settled and quickly became a Paulista stronghold. This process was noted by Governor Albuquerque in September, 1713:

The residents of [São Paulo] seeing that the Portuguese in the recent uprisings had thrown them [Paulistas] violently from Minas, and stolen the property which they had there, reached the decision to look for other sertões to continue their discoveries and, reaching the place called Pitanguí or Pará, they began to find some gold there.²⁷

With the abandonment of the settlements by Paulistas in large numbers, control fell to the emboabas. While the leadership of the emboabas was largely Portuguese, it must be reiterated that among the emboabas were some Brazilians. While some of these became disenchanted with Viana, none switched sides and joined the Paulistas. An idea of the composition of the emboaba leadership can be gleaned from Francisco de Assis Carvalho Franco's compilation of biographies of key people involved in the war.²⁸ Of the twenty-eight emboabas listed whose place of birth is known, fifteen were born in Portugal. Of the others, six were

from Rio de Janeiro, six from Bahia and one was a turncoat Paulista. The Portuguese dominated the emboaba camp and were the major beneficiaries of the war. It is from the ranks of the emboabas that the new elite was drawn.

The war also served as a catalyst for urbanization, although it is impossible to determine whether this was solely a short-term effect or if its influence continued after the termination of the war. Because of the fear of reprisals, people on both sides tended to move from the outlying areas into the more heavily urbanized settlements which afforded more protection. New arrivals remained in the urban areas for the same reasons. This process, helped by the frequent availability of gold within or very near the urban center, must have lasted at least from 1706 to 1711. Besides increasing the size of the urban population this process must have been a boon to service industries, such as those provided by the artisans, and thereby probably accelerated the urbanization process.

The war thus had a number of effects which make it a watershed in the history of Minas Gerais in general and Vila Rica in particular. On the whole, these effects were favorable to an increase in the control over the gold-producing areas by the crown. For the first time, a complex Portuguese bureaucracy was installed to govern a region which hitherto had been tenuously controlled by a governor based in Rio de Janeiro and a very limited number of officials chosen mostly from among the local elite.

The victory of the emboabas also effected a complete change in the social structure of some areas, notably Ouro Preto and Antônio Dias. The war, therefore, was far more important in the history of Minas Gerais than has been assumed by writers who concentrate on its alleged "nationalistic" overtones. These, it should be noted, have been overemphasized by writers looking for the progenitors of Brazilian independence. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Paulistas were fighting to maintain their hold upon the gold fields, their socio-economic positions, and for nothing more. Furthermore, as often as not they were fighting Bahians and Pernambucans and Fluminenses (residents of Rio de Janeiro) rather than Portuguese. The stand of the Paulistas can better be understood as a regionalist manifestation.

Notes

1. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 299.
2. Among these was one from the Junta dos Homens de Negocio de Lisboa which was composed of brothers of the Holy Spirit Brotherhood. The Junta can best be described as a chamber of commerce. This example serves to illustrate one of the roles played by the lay brotherhoods in the Portuguese-speaking world, serving as a focus for individuals who shared socio-economic and racial affinities. Interestingly, an organization similar to the Junta was established in Salvador in 1720. Pierre Verger, Bahia and the West Coast Trade (1548-1851) (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1964), p.1 p. 11. There was no comparable organization in Vila Rica.
3. Goulart, Escravidão africana no Brasil, p.149. While reliable figures are not available for a comparison, the dimension of the Bahia trade can be seen from the fact that 276 ships left Bahia with tobacco for Africa in the years from 1697 to 1710. In the previous sixteen years ninety-two ships set sail for Africa from Bahia. Verger, Bahia and the West Coast Trade, p.11.
4. Consulta of the Overseas Council, 6 February, 1710 in Documentos Históricos 93, p. 263.
5. Ibid., p. 264.
6. Royal Order, 27 February, 1711 in Isaias Golgher, "O negro e a mineração em Minas Gerais," Revista Brasileira de Estudos Políticos 18(January, 1965: 150.
7. Both Afonso de E. Taunay, "Subsídios para a história do tráfico africano no Brasil colonial," Anais do Terceiro Congresso de História Nacional (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1941) 3:622-623 and Golgher, "O negro," pp.149-150 accept this order as the key one officially opening the slave trade of the mining district.
8. The taxes levied upon slaves varied as new taxes were added periodically. Goulart, Escravidão africana no Brasil, pp. 194-197 provides a good description of the tax structure. The following taxes were levied on Angolese slaves:

direitos velhos ...	dependent on quality and destination of slave
direitos novos	3\$100 (created 1694 or 1651)
preferencias.....	2\$000 (created 1684)
imposto novo.....	1\$200 (created 1721)

Slaves from the Costa da Mina had other costs to bear, such as a levy for the maintenance of the fort of Ajuda.

These taxes were imposed upon the slaves prior to their arrival in Brazil. Once in Brazil there were other levies to pay. These included:

1709...	12 vinténs for a license to enter Minas
1710...	4\$800 on entering Minas
1714...	4\$800 paid on slaves entering Minas from Bahia
1720...	1\$000 on slaves entering Rio de Janeiro to defray costs of providing naval protection
1725...	9\$000 on slaves leaving Bahia for Minas by sea 4\$500 on slaves leaving Bahia for Minas by land

Situations necessitating extraordinary expenditures by the crown affected the cost of slaves. Thus the collection of a dowry for the Portuguese princess in the 1720's forced the levying of a special tax of 2\$000 on slaves. In reaction to the earthquake of 1755 which devastated Lisbon, a tax of 4\$800 was imposed on each slave entering Minas Gerais, and in 1757 one of 2\$500 was added to slaves entering Bahia.

The imposition of these taxes piecemeal created a legislative jumble. To eliminate the confusion, a royal edict created a single tax of 8\$700 on slaves arriving in Brazil.

9. José João Teixeira Coelho, "Instrução para o governo da capitania de Minas Gerais (1780)," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileira, 15 (1852): 323-327 and Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, p. 613.

10. Golgher, Guerra dos emboabas, pp. 62-63.

11. Relação das antiguidades, fol. 49v.

12. Regimento do Ouvidor de São Paulo, 1700, in Código Costa Matoso, fols. 135-139.

13. It is unclear whether the Council already had received news of the outbreak of fighting. The eight months which had elapsed since December, 1708 was ample for news to have reached Lisbon, yet the Council on August 3, 1709, acting on a letter from a resident of Rio de Janeiro which contained news of the conflict, recommended that the governor be chastised for failing to report the news. If the Council did not know of the actual outbreak until August,

it certainly was well informed as to the tensions which led to the fighting. This can be seen in the statement of the Counsellor Antônio Rodrigues da Costa:

It cannot be expected that the prince can obtain taxes or any advantage from a confused multitude of people without law, without order, without obedience, without fear of magistrates, without dread of punishment and without hope of reward but rather disobedience and insanity. [Consulta of Overseas Council. 17 July, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p. 221.]

14. Consulta of Antônio Rodrigues da Costa, 17 July, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p. 221.

15. Antônio Rodrigues da Costa went into detail concerning the location of the towns:

Every effort should be made to found these towns and settlements in healthy locations near rivers and good water, fertile lands and a short distance from the principal gold-bearing streams because these should be precisely the factors which should determine the location of the towns. [Ibid., p. 223.]

16. Consulta of José de Freitas Serrão, 17 July, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p. 237.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., p.235.

19. Consulta of Antônio Rodrigues da Costa, 17 July, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p. 219.

20. Consulta of João Telles da Silva, 17 July, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p. 229.

21. Consulta of the President of the Overseas Council, 17 July, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, p. 241.

22. Consulta of the Marquis of Marialva, 3 November, 1709 in Rau and Silva, eds., Os manuscritos do Arquivo da Casa de Cadaval respectantes ao Brasil, 2, pp. 62-63.

23. Instructions, 9 November, 1709 in Cód. 2(SG), fols. 1-4 and José Pedro Xavier da Veiga, Ephemerides mineiras, 1664-1897, 4 vols. (Ouro Preto: Imprensa Official do Estado de Minas Gerais, 1897) 4: p. 171.

24. Unfortunately, the parish records are of little help in showing that power switched hands as a result of the war since only two baptisms were registered for the pre-war period. This is insufficient evidence upon which to compare the pre-war and post war periods. Interestingly enough, however, both baptisms resulted from the illicit relations of Ventura Ferreira Vivas, a very rich and influential person, and Joanna Thereza. The padrinhos, or godparents, selected for the first baptism were Sargento-Mor Domingos da Silva Monteiro and Captain Bartolômeu Bueno Feio both of whom were arrested and deposed from their posts by the emboabas. The second baptism on July 30, 1709 introduces a new cast--Captain Manuel de Almeida Costa and Captain Bras Fernandes Rosa or Rola. The birthplace of the former is unknown, the latter, however, was an emboaba who served as Viana's representative to Albuquerque. Vivas apparently knew how to use the godparent relationship to his advantage. The implication that the emboabas had replaced the Paulistas as the influential men in the community is clear.

It is also interesting to note that despite canon law, two male godparents were utilized in both cases. In the following year, 1710, five baptisms were registered. Of the seven males involved as godfathers, four were identified as Portuguese-born. More demonstrative of the flight of Paulistas from the region is the fact that of the thirty-three registered deaths of nonslaves for the period to 1720 in Antônio Dias, twenty-two were Portuguese-born, seven were Brazilian (but not Paulista) and nine were unidentified.

Registry of Baptism of João, son of Ventura Fernandes Vivas, 3 July, 1707 in Registry of Baptisms (APAD), fol. 1 and of José, son of same, 30 July, 1709, Ibid., fol. 2. Taunay, História geral das bandeiras, 9, pp. 557 & 560, lists Bras Fernandes Rosa's name as Bras Fernandes Rola. It appears that they are one and the same man.

25. Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 349.

26. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História antiga, 2, p. 116.

27. Antônio de Albuquerque, 1 September, 1713 in Silvio Gabriel Diniz, Pesquisando a história de Pitangui (Belo Horizonte: n.p., 1965), p.11.

28. Franco, "Guerra dos Emboabas," pp. 119-158.

PART III
THE VESSEL AND ITS CONTENTS

Chapter 9
The Incorporation of Vila Rica

To the royal officials in Lisbon, the Wars of the Emboabas clearly demonstrated the lack of royal control over the mining area. Governor Albuquerque was ordered to establish royal authority over the district. The incorporation as a town of the settlements around Ouro Preto was to be an important step toward accomplishing this. The municipal system was the keystone of Portuguese administration and from it emanated the first level of judicial, executive and legislative organization. But more important, for the residents of Minas do Ouro and for the crown, was the role of the municipal council as a bulwark against disorders. Both the discussions within the Overseas Council and the instructions issued to Albuquerque on November 3, 1709, reflect the emphasis placed on this function. Even before the outbreak of fighting in 1708, Garcia Rodrigues Pais had advised the king that without the creation of both câmaras and ouvidores to administer the area and provide justice there would be neither peace nor development.¹

The sequence of incorporation was Carmo, Vila Rica, and then Sabará. The documents provide no explanation for

this particular sequence. Some indication as to the relative size of the new municipalities can be obtained from slave lists prepared for tax purposes. The first of those available is for the year 1716 and shows that the municipality of Carmo had 6384 slaves while that of Vila Rica had 6271.² The disparity between the two increased thereafter. The figures for the entire mining district are as follows:³

	1716	1717	1718	1719
Carmo	6,834	10,974	10,937	9,812
Vila Rica	6,271	7,110	7,708	7,653
Sabar	4,905	5,712	5,771	4,902
So Joo del Rei	3,051	2,282	2,216	1,868
So Jos del Rei	--	1,393	1,324	1,184
Caet	3,848	4,347	4,478	4,051
Sero	3,000	2,096	2,090	1,671
Fitangu	--	283	415	359
Total	27,090	34,197	34,939	31,500

This disparity between Carmo and Vila Rica was not a temporary situation as is evident from the tax rolls of 1735 which show that Carmo had 26,892 slaves while Vila Rica had only 20,863.⁴ But included within each total were all the slaves of the entire municipality and not simply those of the central urban area. The areas of the municipalities of Vila Rica and Carmo were of uneven size. That of Vila Rica included the outlying settlements of Itaubira, Cachoeira, Congonhas, Ouro Branco, Casa Branca, Itatiaia, So Bartolomeu and Catas Altas de Noruega. The municipal limits of Carmo included Antnio Pereira, Bento Rodrigues, Camargos, Inficcionado, Catas Altas, Passagem, Furquim, So Caetano, So Sebastião, Barra Longa, Brumado, Sumidouro,

and Guararpiranga, in an area at least three times larger than that of Vila Rica. Because of the number and importance of these settlements it seems very probable that the town or urban core of Carmo had a smaller population than that of Vila Rica.⁵ Why then begin with Carmo? An anonymous writer provided a fanciful explanation of this problem.

[Albuquerque] resided first in São Ant[ônio] de Casa Branca in the plains [after leaving Sabará] and then entered the settlement of Ouro Preto and he elevated it to Vila Rica and then [he did the same] to the town of Ribeirão [do Carmo]. But the municipal councilmen of Vila Rica failed to raise a Pelourinho and those of Ribeirão put theirs up first and for that reason it became the oldest town.⁶

This explanation, while picturesque, is improbable. The pelourinho was the column decorated with symbols which was erected in the main square as a symbol of incorporation as a town. It was not a precondition for this status but a visible proof of its having been conferred. The writer was presenting an explanation often offered by inhabitants of Vila Rica, as to why the smaller Carmo had precedence at formal processions and juntas.

A more plausible explanation takes into account the situation existing after the Wars of the Emboabas. Vila Rica and Sabará had both been dominated by emboabas while Carmo had remained a Paulista stronghold. The royal officials generally had supported the Paulistas and condemned the emboabas, who were considered lawbreakers, as can be seen by the emboabas' need for a royal pardon, which was

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 issued in 1709. Carmo, as the major settlement in Paulista hands, was the logical place to begin establishing an equilibrium between the victorious emboabas and the defeated Paulistas. This view is supported by the convening in Carmo of the first junta held on Mineiro soil. As the first incorporated town Carmo gained prestige and was the de facto capital of the captaincy until 1720.

One month after the incorporation of Carmo, the settlements of Ouro Preto and Antônio Dias were joined in a municipality. In the proclamation of July 8, 1711 Governor Albuquerque declared his decision "to create from this settlement [Minas Gerais do Ouro Preto] a town so that its residents and those of all the district can live regulated by and subject to the laws of Justice." 8 He acknowledged the poor geographical location of the settlement but noted the large quantities of gold which had been obtained already from the region and the promise of continued riches. He then went on to acknowledge Vila Rica as "the principal part of Minas, through which [passed] the commerce and merchandise which are sent to many other places." 9 The principal men of the region who witnessed this act agreed "that from this said Settlement [Ouro Preto] together with that of Ant[ônio] Dias should be founded a town since it was the most convenient site found by the People for Commerce." 10 It is significant that commerce rather than gold was emphasized by the local elite.

The newly incorporated town was given the name "Vila Rica de Nossa Senhora do Pilar e Albuquerque." Besides the governor, twenty-three of the principal men of the region signed the proclamation. King João V ratified the incorporation but deleted the immodest reference to the governor in the name.

The twenty-three signatories immediately turned to the selection of a municipal council. The voting, in accordance with Portuguese custom, was indirect. First, voters chose six men as electors: Colonel Antônio Francisco da Silva, Mestre do Campo Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, Felix de Gusmão Mendonça e Bueno, Fernando da Fonseca e Sá, Manuel de Figueire do Magalhães, and Manuel de Almeida Costa. These men, in turn, selected the first council. The two municipal judges (júizes ordinários) were Colonel José Gomes de Mello and Fernando da Fonseca e Sá, the three councilmen (vereadores) were Manuel de Figueiredo Magalhães, Felix de Gusmão Mendonça e Bueno, and Antônio de Faria Pimentel; the procurator or solicitor (procurador)¹¹ was Manuel de Almeida Costa. Thus the six electors chose four of their number to occupy council posts. The following day, July 9, they were sworn in.

With the creation of the câmaras, effective political divisions within the captaincy were created for the first time. Previous divisions had been created to facilitate the adjudication of mining claims by the guarda-mor, but little was effected in the way of establishing law and

order. The appointment of the first ouvidores in 1709 implied the division of the mining district into administrative judicial districts (comarcas), but it does not appear that the ouvidores took their posts until 1710 or 1711. The municipalities thus provided the first effective jurisdictional division of Minas do Ouro.

The council was established in the largest settlement in the municipality. The area under its jurisdiction was known as the têrmo. Within the têrmo land grants were made by the governor, after seeking the opinion of the câmara and local officials.¹² An area of one square league centered on the pelourinho in the main square was set aside as the land grant (sesmaria) of the câmara. Parts of this land were parcelled out by the council to individuals and then taxed to provide municipal income. The grant of the sesmaria was the basis of the authority of the town council to give or sell plots of land and to establish a building code. The sesmaria was inalienable and theoretically only the use of the land could be "sold": land upon which no improvements had been made or which was abandoned reverted to the direct control of the council. Owners of plots had to pay a fixed annual property tax: only houses built before the incorporation and government and religious properties were exempt from taxation. There was within the câmara's sesmaria an area called the rocio, land open to all -- the equivalent of the common land of England and parts of the United States. In Vila Rica this

was land on which anyone could cut wood or pasture his animals. Gold strikes could be worked here, but such use of rocio land was temporary and contingent upon the miner's power to hold the land.

Thus within the sesmaria of the town there were three categories of property: that owned by the church, the lay brotherhoods, and the government; land common to all; and land whose use had been granted to individuals. Only the latter paid taxes. The entire pattern of small landholding was contingent upon the incorporation of towns. Land outside the municipal sesmaria was granted, by the governor, only to individuals.

The incorporation of Vila Rica sixteen years after the discovery of gold in the Ouro Prêto Stream brought to an end the early, chaotic period of the history of the region and opened a new phase. This new period was characterized by the effort to establish order out of chaos through the imposition of a governmental bureaucracy and by the development of Vila Rica into an urban center with a complex social organization.

Notes

1. Garcia Rodrigues Pais to João V, 18 January, 1708 in Suannes, Os emboabas, p. 38.
2. Cód. 11(SG), fols. 275v.
3. Ibid., fols. 275v, 280v and 288.
4. Mappa dos Negros, Códice Costa Matoso, fols. 181-187.
5. An anonymous writer, in the late eighteenth century reported that Carmo's precedence was due to the fact that it was "the most populated place." No sources or population figures are cited and it is probable that this writer was referring to the municipality or repeating some of the notions of the day to explain why Vila Rica had not been the first town incorporated in the mining district. "Descrição geographica, histórica e política da capitania das Minas Gerais: Seu descobrimento, estado civil, político e das rendas reaes, (1781)," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Brasil vol. 71, Part 1(1908): 133.
6. Relação do principio, fol. 32v.
7. An exception to this was counsellor Antônio Rodrigues da Costa who, when faced with conflicting claims over responsibility for the fighting, decided that probably the Paulistas were at fault. He based his opinion on the experience of the past which showed that the Paulistas were high-handed and exhibited little respect for royal justice and were "everyday committing atrocious violences and killing with impunity." This, Costa felt, was not true of the Portuguese-born emboabas "accustomed to living under the influence of laws and judges and many having plans to return...which they cannot do if deeply involved in altercations." Consulta of Antônio Rodrigues da Costa, 12 August, 1709 in Documentos Históricos, 93, pp. 248-249.
8. Proclamation, 8 July, 1711 in Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 2, Part 1(January-March, 1897): 84.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.

11. Report of Election, 8 July, 1711 in Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 2, Part 1 (January-March, 1897): 85.

12. Sesmarias were granted with the provision that they not infringe upon the rights of third parties and since each council automatically was granted a one-square league sesmaria, the governor obviously could not make grants within this region. Less clear is the position of the peripheral settlements which were in the t^êrmo but not, as a rule within the sesmaria of the câmara. Individual sesmarias could not be granted in places which were already settled. The problem of land tenure in colonial and imperial Minas Gerais is so confused as to merit a detailed study. Were the settlements founded after 1711, such as Santa Rita and Lavras Novas, established in places where no sesmaria had been granted, or where no effective control was held by the sesmeiro, or could the land be expropriated to establish a settlement? The answer could help explain the settlement pattern of the mining district.

Minutes of Council Session, 23 April, 1732 in Cód. 28 (CMOP), fol. 26. The penalty recommended by the procurator for the takeover of common land was put at one thousand oitavas and three months in jail. This was an extraordinarily stiff penalty indicating the seriousness with which the council viewed the danger of infringement upon common land by powerful individuals.

Chapter 10
The Urban Development of Vila Rica

The impression which Vila Rica made on newcomers attracted by the promise of quick riches is reflected in the words of Francisco Tavares de Brito, who visited the town before 1720.

Among mountains of immense heights which limit the view in all directions, a town was founded...prouder and more opulent than all [the other] towns both because of the coming and going of merchants and by the richness of its mines, chiefly [those] of the Morro de Tapanhuacanga [Vila Rica] along whose base the town stretches and rests. This Mountain is a Potosí of gold but because of the lack of rain in the summer it does not enrich all who mine.¹

While Tavares de Brito does not provide a detailed description of the town, an idea of much of what he must have seen can be derived from other sources.² Almost certainly he entered Vila Rica along the main road through the settlement of Tripui and along the stream of the same name--a route flanked by fields filled with grazing cattle and hills whose lower slopes were cultivated.

As the traveler neared the town the valley floor between the mountains became increasingly narrower and, finally, disappeared. The traveler then began a long, but not too strenuous, climb through a thinly populated area. The houses were built of daub and wattle with thatched

roofs and surrounded by land, partly cultivated and partially turned over to the rummaging of pigs and chickens. These farms were called ranchos. The settlements were known as Passadez and Cabeças. At a highpoint, called the Alto das Cabeças, the visitor was rewarded with a view of the parish of Ouro Prêto and, beyond it, the Morro de Santa Quitéria, which served as both a backdrop for the parish church and a screen blocking from view the parish of Antônio Dias.

The way from the Alto das Cabeças was downhill -- gentle at first and then steeper. Just outside the more extensively built-up core of Ouro Prêto the road forked. The left branch led past the simple church dedicated to Nossa Senhora do Rosário and then by the site where the church of São José would soon be built. The two church sites were in a small settlement called Caquende, which had grown only slightly between 1711 and 1720.

To the north of Caquenda was a very rich mining area. To reach it, the traveler first descended the gentle hill to the gold-laden Caquende Stream, which was fed by two brooks flowing from the mountains, and which paralleled the road from the settlement of Tripui. Called Tripui outside of Vila Rica, this stream was given the name Caquende as it neared the settlement of that name. Beyond the stream were the mountains which were to be the major source of gold in the region. This gold-rich area was known by various names. During the eighteenth century the most

common were Agua Limpa for the region now known as Velloso and the Morro de Ramos, or the Morro De Agrellos, for the area more recently known as the Córrego de Xavier.³ The mining camps which developed around these gold strikes were never very large, as powerful men, most notably Antônio Ramos dos Reis, were able to control major portions of the gold field and keep other miners out.

The easiest way to reach the more densely populated part of Vila Rica was to return to the fork in the road. The traveler then descended--keeping in mind the oft-repeated Portuguese saying that "downhill all the saints help"--into the region known as the "bottom of Ouro Prêto (fundo do Ouro Prêto). Aptly named, there was no lower area in the parish; to leave in any direction meant to climb.

The settlement of Ouro Prêto was fan-shaped with all its main streets meeting at the parish church. Dedicated to Nossa Senhora do Pilar, this church predated the incorporation of the town. It was built facing Tripui; therefore it looked toward the most heavily populated part of the parish. The road a traveler would be expected to follow formed one extremity of the fan. Its center was the street now called Rua Rodrigo Bretas. It seems clear that this area was already heavily populated by 1711. Few land grants were made for new construction in this area in the years 1711-1720, and those that were issued note the existence of adjoining proper-

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ties. The other extremity was the street called Rua Direita. Now officially divided into three parts, Ruas Pilar, Paraná, and Count of Bobadela, the traditional name is still employed by older residents. This street probably existed prior to 1711 as a trail, but it seems that not until after the incorporation of Vila Rica did people begin to build houses along it. There are numerous references to "the new road which goes from Ouro Prêto to the pelhourinho"⁵ or "the new road which goes from Ouro Prêto to Antônio Dias"⁶ or "the new street which goes from Ouro Prêto to the city hall."⁷ From 1712 to 1716 thirty land grants were made along this street. That this was an unsettled area in the second decade of the eighteenth century is confirmed by the documented fact that only two of these grants note previously bestowed property. Listing the owners of adjoining properties was a routine practice and failure to do so is an indication that no grants had been made in the area.

While the settlement of Ouro Prêto as a whole was large and rapidly expanding, it must have presented a strange scene to the visitor. The streets tended to follow a straight line between points with apparent disregard for the difficult terrain. Thus, for example, the main road between Ouro Prêto and Antônio Dias went directly over the mountain instead of skirting it. The size of land grants, from 1 1/2 to three braças as a rule, indicate that building was contiguous at least in the more

heavily settled area. At the same time, the whole area was given a rural flavor by the use of thatched roofs and the presence of the ranchos.⁸

There was another settlement in the parish of Ouro Prêto. Called the Arraial dos Paulistas, its precise location has not been determined and its existence is seldom noted. By 1713, this small but apparently densely populated settlement had reached its maximum size. It was absorbed very early by the rapidly expanding settlement of Ouro Prêto. Several land grants refer to it as "the aroyal [sic] known as dos Paulistas in the ward (bairro) of Ouro Prêto."⁹ It is possible that this small settlement was located above the parish church and included the area from the church of São José to the Ouro Prêto Stream.¹⁰

The traveler wishing to see the rest of Vila Rica was faced with the arduous task of climbing the Morro de Santa Quitêria, then heavily wooded. The traveler on his way to Antônio Dias crossed the town square and descended-- a task almost as difficult as the ascent due to the steep incline of the street. Half way down, the road parted, with one branch going to the lightly settled area called, then as now, the Barra, and the other leading to the parish church of Antônio Dias. Following the latter route the traveler was confronted with another decision as the road forked again with the left branch almost immediately being joined by another street. The first two of these streets

led to the parish church. The third branched off to the left and led to the settlement of the Arraial dos Paulistas of Antônio Dias. This street was originally called the Rua da Fonte but gradually became known as the Rua dos Paulistas. Beginning below the town square, the Arraial dos Paulistas was strung out along the mountainside, terminating above the square. This was a relatively densely populated area with at least sixty houses in 1720.

Returning to the parish church of Antônio Dias, the traveler would find himself in the heart of an urbanized area. As in Ouro Preto, the parish church was a stone's throw from the reason for the settlement's existence -- a gold-laden stream. The church faced this stream variously known as the Rio dos Paulistas, Rio Antônio Dias, or Rio Funil. While aesthetic considerations perhaps determined that the church would be constructed facing downhill, its position serves as a reminder that urbanistically Antônio Dias was connected not to Ouro Preto, but to those areas located further east.

The configuration of this settlement was essentially linear. It was composed of four major streets: Ruas Direita (also called a Rua de Cima), Cadeia, Ponte (also called Rua de Baixo), and Paz. Land grants for the road leading from the square to the first fork in the road were not made until 1714, indicating that the area nearest the square was unsettled. The two streets beginning at the second fork, Direita and Ponte Streets, ran parallel to

each other for a short distance before joining once again. The parish church, dedicated to Nossa Senhora da Conceição, was located in the area between these two streets. ¹¹ This area was well populated although the presence of ranchos must have given it a rustic appearance.

The Antônio Dias Stream was a bountiful source of alluvial gold and many houses could be found along its banks. This watercourse was fed by a number of brooks which had their origin in the mountain which rose from its northern bank. The base of the mountain already was settled by a number of people, the most prominent of whom was Antônio Lopes de Araújo. On the banks of this stream Araújo had built and donated to the government a luxurious home presently called the Old Palace (Palacio Velho), which served as the residence of the governors for a short time.

After crossing to the eastern bank of this stream via the Antônio Dias Bridge, the traveler would proceed along one of the steepest streets in Vila Rica. This street, linking the settlements of Antônio Dias and Padre Faria, crossed the hill known as Alto da Cruz and later Santa Efigenia. After 1718 many houses were built along this road, quite a few of which were located at the top of the hill. Their development was due to a unique situation in Vila Rica. Most of the other settlements had evolved in response to the existence of gold nearby. This one developed because a church was built at the top of the hill. The exact date of the construction of this church,

Nossa Senhora do Rosário, cannot be determined from the few surviving records of its lay brotherhood. The indications are that construction began before 1720. A residential area sprang up first around the church and then along the road..

Continuing east along this road down the Ladeira de Santa Efigenia the traveler would soon arrive at the settlement of Padre Faria. This was one of the first settlements in the region and the church of Padre Faria was one of the earliest built -- although no documentation has yet been found concerning this church and its brotherhood. The date of its construction is usually set at 1701-1703. Of the settlements in the municipality, Padre Faria was the third largest, rivalling at times Antônio Dias in population and importance. For reasons as yet unexplained, but probably linked to new gold strikes, Padre Faria was once again expanding in 1719-1720 after a period of relative stagnation lasting from 1712 to 1717.

The settlement of Padre Faria had evolved chaotically around various gold-bearing streams which converged within its confines and then flowed into the Rio Funil near the settlement of Bom Sucesso. More so than in the other settlements, the houses were built along the streams and the base of the mountain in a haphazard fashion. From here the traveler could continue along the partially paved and certainly well-marked road, passing through the area where the settlement of Taquaral would be founded in the 1730's

and, after a trip of about eleven kilometers, arrive in Ribeirão do Carmo.

The square of Vila Rica, briefly mentioned above, is worthy of more attention because of its influence in creating the urban pattern of that town. The square played a very important role as the hub of the town and its unifying agent. Because of its importance and the paucity of documentation, it has been the subject of much debate. The date it was laid out, its precise location, and that of the town hall are the major questions around which the debate revolves.

Silvio de Vasconcellos, the only author who has examined systematically the urban growth of colonial Mineiro towns, de-emphasizes the role of the square in Vila Rica, assuming that its creation, with the massive governor's palace and town hall, was dictated by an already existing urban pattern.¹³ This view cannot be substantiated from the documents and is based on a misunderstanding as to the location of several key public buildings. While the existence in 1716 of the square itself is documented by Vasconcellos,¹⁴ he feels that its role in the urbanization process was negligible because the urban pattern was already set.¹⁵

The early councils met in a private dwelling in Ouro Prêto, probably in one of the few houses in Vila Rica with a tiled roof. The decision to construct a building especially for the council was made in June, 1712 and the contract

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approved on June 22. The location for the town hall was chosen by the governor. A witness to this event later wrote that "where the praca is today there was [then] dense woods. By trails which had been made through it, the governor with the council went to order the location of the pelourinho, marking the place where the Chapel of Santa Rita is today [1750] for the town hall, whose construction was to begin immediately." ¹⁷ This ceremony must

have occurred late in June or during July, as the first reference to the pelourinho in municipal deed records was made on August 4, 1712. ¹⁸ Thus, in 1712 the decision already had been made to erect the town hall in a wooded area on Morro de Santa Quitéria. The urban land grants made during 1712 and 1713 refer to the trails which connected the two parish churches as the "new road which goes to the pelourinho" or as "the new road which goes from Ouro Prêto to Antônio Dias." ¹⁹

While some houses probably could be found along these trails, the construction of the town hall on the Morro de Santa Quitéria served as a magnet drawing people toward it. This process was particularly evident on the Ouro Prêto side of the square where the number of land grants issued jumped from four in 1712 to eleven in 1713 and thirteen in 1714. The records for 1715-1717 are incomplete, but those for 1718 show that eleven grants were made. On the average, perhaps eleven grants were made annually from 1713 to 1719. The fact that the number of grants jumped

dramatically with the beginning of work on the town hall illustrates the importance of the square which traditionally faced that public building. It is probable that that astute official, Governor Albuquerque, selected the location because it was a "neutral" position, equidistant from both settlements and also symbolic of their relatively equal size in terms of population and wealth.²⁰

The municipal book of deeds soon noted the presence of the town hall. Of the thirteen grants issued for property along this road in 1714, eight referred to "the new street which goes from Ouro Preto to the town hall."²¹

It is during this year that the first direct reference to the square is made.²² Two years later the council decided to erect a fountain in the square. João Pinto Rebelo was selected as the contractor for the project. The sum allocated for this fountain -- one thousand oitavas--is indicative of its projected grand scale.²³

The establishment of the town hall in an area of virgin woods, crossed only by trails connecting the two major settlements, was, therefore, not determined by the urban growth pattern of Vila Rica; it was rather a brilliant move by Governor Albuquerque which fostered growth toward the center. It also served to tie together the two urban centers which were developing away from each other. This is a particularly important consideration in regard to Antônio Dias. The initial settlement pattern of that place can best be described as polar. To the west

of the Ladeira de Santa Efigenia was the settlement of Antônio Dias; to the east that of Padre Faria. Initially they were roughly equal in size. It appears that Antônio Dias was gradually growing eastward toward Padre Faria, a process that was accelerated by the building of the church of Nossa Senhora do Rosário on the Ladeira de Santa Efigenia. Establishing the town square on the Morro de Santa Quitéria served to counterbalance this eastward expansion.

Polar development is not evident in the parish of Ouro Preto, where none of the secondary settlements were able to develop into competing centers. Caquende and Arraial dos Paulistas both were absorbed quickly by the expanding core of Ouro Preto. Passadez, Cabeças, and Tripuí were an even smaller threat because of the lack of gold in these areas and their distance from Ouro Preto. In the absence of another center to attract growth, some building already had begun on the Morro de Santa Quitéria behind the church of Nossa Senhora do Pilar. The square accelerated this process.

The urbanization process in Vila Rica was fostered by five interrelated elements. The first was gold. The settlements of Padre Faria, both Arraiais dos Paulistas, Ouro Preto, Antônio Dias, and Caquende were located near the reason for their existence--the major gold sources. The second element was the church. Of the settlements which maintained a separate identity during the eighteenth

century, each was located around a church. Those which
²⁴
 were absorbed quickly did not have churches: the urban
 expansion on the Ladeira de Santa Efigenia following the
 construction of Nossa Senhora do Rosário church offers a
 good example of this process. The third element was the
 town square and its impact on urban development. These
 three reasons have been discussed already and need no
 further comment. But there are two other elements which
 deserve more attention. One of these was especially im-
 portant in the settlements of Cabeças and Passadez. This
 was the road connecting Vila Rica with Sabará and the
 other towns of Minas Gerais. Both settlements were small
 due to the lack of significant gold deposits and both
 evolved in linear fashion, with two rows of houses on
²⁵
 either side of the road.

The role of commerce in the development of Vila Rica,
 the fifth element, already has been noted in passing: of
 the early town charters, only that of Vila Rica emphasizes
 the extent and importance of commerce as a reason for in-
 corporation. This is confirmed by the early tax records
 which if they err do so on the side of understatement.
 The tax lists of 1715 show that the parish of Ouro Prêto
 had forty-two stores and shops and that of Antônio Dias had
²⁶
 sixty-one. Clearly these represented an important factor
 in the growth of Vila Rica. Vila Rica's development as a
 commercial center was due both to its vast gold deposits,
 which sustained a substantial internal market, and to its

location on the main trade routes of Minas Gerais.

The settlements on the Morro de Vila Rica provide a good example of the urbanizing effects of commerce. Of these mining camps, Ouro Podre was one of the largest, with twenty-five commercial establishments catering to rowdy miners.²⁷ On the opposite side of the mountain stood the mining camp of Ouro Bueno, with its twenty-one establishments,²⁸ and just beyond it was Rio das Pedras with nine.²⁹ An undefined area called the Morro de Antônio Dias, probably the area near Ouro Podre later called Ouro Fino, had three stores.³⁰ Of these mountain settlements at least two, Ouro Podre and Ouro Bueno, had reached sizeable proportions. These mining camps could have continued to grow and form urban centers, drawing men and capital away from the valley settlements where gold was mainly alluvial and quickly exhausted. Because of this possibility these camps constituted a threat to the urban growth of Vila Rica.

As early as 1713 the council had taken steps to meet this threat. Stores and shops had been prohibited in these mining camps. The 1713 council had been frank in recognizing that its motivation was to prevent the diminution of the importance of the valley settlements and its business community.³¹ Later councils were not so candid, contending that their actions were due to the fact that these shops sold large quantities of aguardente (sugar-cane brandy) to slaves who used stolen gold or their daily

earnings to purchase this liquid escape from the harsh realities of their existence.

This prohibition was not enforced as licenses were being issued within two years; the problem of these commercial establishments doing business continued to plague Vila Rica. It served as the pretext for the draconian council decision of January, 1718 ordering "that the stores located in Ouro Fino, Córrego Seco, Ouro Podre, Rio das Pedras, and Ouro Bueno close and come establish themselves in this town." ³² Popular outrage prevented the enforcement of this order. Even the governor's support of the council was to no avail and it was not until after the riots of 1720 had been suppressed that the ordinance was enforced.

This ordinance ended the possibility of the development of a new pole of urban growth and it reaffirmed the position of the valley settlements as suppliers of the food and other articles needed by the residents of the mountain. Thus, the mining camps were prevented from becoming true urban centers. Forced to remain mere mining camps, these areas collapsed when the gold played out. Furthermore, the ordinance re-inforced the centripetal pattern of the valley settlements. In so doing the goals of the 1713 council were achieved.

The tax records also provide some information about several of the other settlements within the county of Vila Rica. By far the most prominent of these was São Bartolo-

meu. Nestled in a beautiful valley with fertile lands and adequate water, it became the breadbasket of Vila Rica. It is interesting that there were more taxpayers listed for São Bartolomeu than for either Ouro Prêto or Antônio Dias. But there was no urban core here; this was a rural area whose economy was being exploited by the miners and businessmen of Vila Rica. The rural nature of São Bartolomeu is confirmed by the relatively few wage earners and artisans and the large number of farmers who appear on its tax rolls. Whereas Ouro Prêto had twenty-four licensed artisans and Antônio Dias twenty, São Bartolomeu had but five. Furthermore, only five stores were listed for São Bartolomeu. While it was primarily a farming area, the existence of minor gold deposits is indicated by the listing of seven tax paying miners; there were probably other miners among the large number of people whose incomes were listed as deriving from slaves (twenty-eight) or whose income sources were unlisted (fifty-five).³³

São Bartolomeu was not the only area which supplied Vila Rica with foodstuffs. Others were Capão da Forna, Cachoeira do Campo, and Campo da Fazenda de Olanna, all west of Vila Rica. There were, in addition, many farms scattered to the west and northwest of Vila Rica, where the mountains become less rugged. The entire region was dotted with small villages.

Thus the municipality of Vila Rica was composed of an urban core divided into three poles of growth: Ouro Prêto,

Antônio Dias, and Padre Faria. Immediately beyond this area were the mining camps on the Morro de Vila Rica and the partially rural settlements along the main road. Still further beyond these were the rural areas which, despite the presence of some gold deposits, were primarily devoted to supplying the urban core and the mining camps with foodstuffs. Despite the extensive area devoted to agriculture and ranching, it does not appear that these areas produced adequate quantities to fully satisfy the local demand. Many of the goods necessary for life had to be transported to Vila Rica from Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pernambuco, or even from Portugal.

Notes

1. Francisco Tavares de Brito, "Itinerário geográfico de Rio de Janeiro até as Minas do Ouro," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro 230 (March-June, 1956): 438. This work was originally published in Seville, Spain in 1732. Orville Derby feels that the Itinerário Geográfico was written between 1715 and 1718. Derby published this work, without identifying its author, in the Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo 2(1896-1897): 197-219.
2. The most important of these is the Livro de Foros, Cód. 1 (CMOP) containing the record of land grants issued from 1711 to 1720. The list of foros (land grants) was published in abbreviated form by Salomão de Vasconcellos, "Os primeiros aforamentos e os primeiros ranchos de Ouro Preto," Revista do Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional. 5 (1941): 240-257. Because of its abbreviated form the list omits valuable information.
3. When the highway from Belo Horizonte to Ouro Preto was constructed a number of years ago, the córrego was filled and the iron bridge that spanned it was removed and sold. The gorge, which old-timers still remember, apparently was quite deep, having been the scene of suicides more than once. Among the present generation of Ouro-pretanos the area has no distinctive name nor is there any general realization that there had ever been a gorge there.
4. Cód. 1 (CMOP).
5. Land grant of Tomé Ferreira da Cruz, 22 November, 1712 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 30v.
6. Land Grant of Bento Cabral de Sá, 10 October, 1713 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 37v.
7. Land grant of João Thome, 19 June, 1714 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 45.
8. An anonymous contemporary noted: "Beyond the bridge of Ouro Preto where today there is a metal working (cal-deireiro) shop there was the only house with a tiled roof which existed in this town." Relação das antiguidades, fol. 49.

9. Land Grant to Estevão da Cunha Fontes, 15 October, 1712 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 29v.
10. See especially the land grants made to Francisco Barreto Lima and Marianna do Rosário, 7 July and 4 May, 1712 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fols. 17v and 9v.
11. This urban configuration is repeated in the village of Lavras Novas in the município of Ouro Preto. This village still retains this configuration and its rural appearance with small houses, some linked with others and some standing alone, is probably similar to that of Antônio Dias in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.
12. This is evident by the number of land grants issued for building in this area.
13. Silvio de Vasconcellos, Mineiridade: ensaio de caracterização (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1968), pp. 111-112.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
15. Council Proceedings, 22 June, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara Municipal de Vila Rica," Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro 49 (1936): 237. "The council members resolved to make a city hall for which they ordered the announcement be made in the praça." There is some ambiguity involved here since the same phrase could refer to the act of bringing the contract up for bidding. The phraseology used seems to indicate that this interpretation is unwarranted.
16. Council Proceedings, 22 June, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 237.
17. Relação das antiguidades, fol. 49.
18. Land Grant to Hieronimo de Barros, 4 August, 1712 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 20.
19. Land Grant to Manuel Ribeiro, 29 October, 1712 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 30; and to Bento Cabral de Sá, 10 October 1713 in *Ibid.*, fol. 29.
20. This may also have been a manifestation of the local rivalry (bairrismo) which would torment the town during the eighteenth century and which has not yet entirely disappeared. In a very perceptive article, Lourival Gomes Machado attempts to show how this bairrismo was reflected in the artistic characteristics of the two parish churches.

Lourival Gomes Machado, Barroco Mineiro (São Paulo: Editora Perspective, 1969): pp. 118-119.

21. For a good example see the land grant given to João Thome, 19 June, 1714 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 44v.
22. Land Grant to Nazario Carvalho de Azevedo, ? September, 1714 in Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 49v.
23. Council Proceedings, 29 February, 1716 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 170v.
24. This is not to establish the causal relationship of "no church therefore no growth," but rather to state the reverse. The absence of a church showed the frailty of the settlement and therefore its susceptibility to absorption by more dynamic urban areas. However, as the case of Alto da Cruz shows, the presence of a church could encourage urban growth.
25. Thus the presence of this well-travelled road served as a stimulus and conditioner of urban growth in this outlying area.
26. Licenses issued in 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 24-33v, 2v-12v, and 20-22v.
27. Licenses issued in 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 41-45.
28. Licenses issued in 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 14v-18v.
29. Licenses issued in 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 40-41.
30. Licenses issued in 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 13-14v.
31. Council Proceedings, 1 April, 1713 in "Atas da Camara," p. 266.
32. Council Proceedings, 4 May, 1718 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 51.
33. Licenses issued in 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 46-59v.

Chapter 11
Social Organization Before 1726:
The Potentates

The society which evolved in the mining district was distinctive from that of São Paulo or of the Northeast. It was essentially an urban society in which upward mobility was relatively easy during the period prior to 1720. Social status was largely a factor of wealth--a rich man soon obtained the trappings of status, such as a militia commission, appointment by the king to one of the military orders, and a sesmaria. But wealth was a precondition and not the sole factor. Men like Pascoal da Silva Guimarães have been cited as examples of people who despite humble beginnings were able to achieve positions of wealth and high social status. The Wars of the Emboabas played an extremely important role in the formation of this elite. The removal of the ruling Paulistas created a vacuum to be filled by others.

Wealth was the crucial element of status. During the years of economic expansion, not only was wealth important for moving into the upper strata of society it was essential to remaining in those lofty social levels. This relationship between wealth and social standing is indicated in the tax rolls. For the period prior to 1720 the

only source of data on relative economic status is the rolls prepared for the royal fifth in 1715-1716.

The tax rates are very difficult to determine since 1715 was a year of political turmoil over methods of taxation. The royal officials wanted a fixed ten-*oitava* tax on *bateias*, really a head tax on slaves, while the miners wanted to continue contributing to a fixed sum, thirty *arrôbas*, collected for the entire mining region. From the instructions which the Vila Rica council issued to its tax assessors it is clear that the council proceeded on the assumption that it was responsible for collecting a fixed sum - six *arrôbas*, 2⁴ pounds, and seventy-two ²*oitavas*. Unfortunately, the details of the individual assessments are not available. The significant thing, however, is that the levies were based on capital. This is apparent from the report of a junta held in 1714 to divide the thirty *arrôbas* among the *comarcas*. The *comarcas* were to collect from their inhabitants "according to the capital (*cabedal*) which each possesses," ³ with the exception of shops and stores which were to be taxed equally.

It was up to the tax assessors to determine the wealth of the residents of his district. The assessers were to be the most prominent men in each district; it was assumed that such men would have no need to lie about their or anyone else's economic status. This may be debated, but what is most pertinent to the utilization of this data for the purpose at hand is the fact that the tax was on

wealth measured in terms of money, stores, shops and slaves. Taxes were not levied directly on income as such.

Thus this tax roll gives an indicator of the relative economic standing of individuals and as such is very valuable. The relationship can be studied best by examining the members of the town council and the fiscal officers--the representatives of the ruling elite. The first council about which relatively complete information was found was that of 1719. Of the six members, information on five was obtained from the tax rolls. The judges were Lieutenant-Colonel Antônio Antunes Collaço, about whom no information is available, and Mestre do Campo Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, who is well known. The most prominent resident of Vila Rica, Guimarães in 1715, paid royal fifth taxes of ninety oitavas on his mines on the Morro de of Vila Rica and thirty-four more on his farm in São Bartolomeu.⁴ The councillors were Sargento-mor Manuel de Sousa Cerqueira, Captain Antônio Ramos dos Reis, and Sargento-mor Bento Felix da Cunha. Residing in Antônio Dias, Cerqueira was a miner who paid eighty oitavas in taxes in 1715.⁵ Ramos, on his way to becoming the most powerful man in Vila Rica, paid seventy-three for his mines.⁶ Cunha paid fourteen for his mines in Rio das Pedras⁷ and was a very prominent resident of that area. The procurator was Captain Antônio da Costa Gouveia, who was also a miner and lived in Ouro Podre. Gouveia paid forty-three oitavas in 1715.⁸ Thus of these five men, four

paid taxes far exceeding the average of eighteen oitavas paid by all taxpayers in the parish of Antônio Dias, and the fifth, who may have had other properties which do not appear on this roll, paid slightly less than the average. It is significant that all five of these men were mine owners. While one also owned a considerable amount of land, this property seems to have been used to support his mining operations--to raise food for his labor force of three hundred slaves.

But while wealth was important in determining status, it served merely as a prerequisite: to join the elite one had to be rich, but being rich was not enough. Examples of wealthy men who failed to gain access to the upper strata of society are plentiful. When the average taxpayer in Antônio Dias was paying eighteen oitavas, people such as Francisco de Rodrigues paid forty-five, Manuel⁹ Rebello, fifty-seven,¹⁰ and Manuel Lopes eighty-eight.¹¹ In Ouro Preto, men such as Manuel Goncalves, forty six¹² oitavas, Manuel Tavares Ferreira, forty-three,¹³ Domingos¹⁴ Carvalho, fifty,¹⁵ Mathias Barbosa da Silva, seventy,¹⁶ and João Abares or Alvares, ninety, all paid taxes far above the parish average of eighteen. The taxes paid by these men indicate substantial wealth but yet none was able to join the homens da governança--the pinnacle of society.

The situation of Henrique Lopes do Araújo aptly demonstrates this phenomenon. Araújo was one of the richest men in Vila Rica and rose to become the capitão-mor of the

district. But Araújo apparently never made it into the governança--never did he serve as an fiscal officer or sit on the council.¹⁷ While his high militia position might have excused him, he should have served in these posts before being appointed capitão-mor. Furthermore other capitães-mores, such as Domingos Correa Gomes in 1729, served on the council and as capitão-mor concurrently.

Thus Araújo presents the strange spectacle of being an extremely rich man serving in the highest milita post in the region but never serving on the governing body of Vila Rica.¹⁸ There are several possible explanations for this. First, his background was a negative factor. Besides having the surmountable handicap of being of the same humble Portuguese ancestry as Guimarães, he had the additional misfortune of being an exposto -- a child abandoned by his parents and raised by others. This may have left the purity of his blood in doubt. Yet it does appear that mulattoes served on the council.¹⁹ Furthermore, he probably was married while in Portugal and it is interesting that the death register of his wife Ana Maria does not accord her the honorific title "dona" due the lady of the capitão-mor.²⁰ This omission could be accidental, but this is unlikely. It seems that, for reasons that are unclear, she was not regarded as a member of the upper class. Then there is the fact that Araújo built a house especially for Governor Pedro de Almeida, the Count of Assumar, to spend a few days upon his arrival in Minas Gerais. This

extravagant gesture apparently was made in order to gain favor with the official. Indications are that Araujo's wealth could carry him to the highest militia post but not into the governança. The homens da governança constituted a pinnacle of colonial society. They were few, since only those who served on the council or as fiscal officers could be considered homens da governança. Theoretically eighteen men a year could gain access to this inner circle. But in practice the number was much smaller, as those who had served as fiscal officers afterwards went on to serve on the council, and after 1730 the members of the council were required to serve as fiscal officers after their term of office was completed.

Below the homens da governança stood a larger group: the homens bons. These men normally formed the body from which the homens da governança were chosen, although entry into the latter could be effected by direct appointment to a council or fiscal officer post. Election to one of these posts made the person a homem da governança and automatically an homem bom. Put another way, all homens da governança were homens bons but not all homens bons were homens da governança. Illustrative of this is a dramatic meeting held in 1721 to discuss the ramifications of the 1720 riots. So important was this meeting that the "nobility" (nobreza) as well as "the greater part of the...People" were called by the town council to attend. The minutes of the meeting were signed by the "principal people" who were

present. Forty-four homens bons signed the document. Of these, twenty-four, or more than half, were homens da governança. Theoretically the membership of both groups could coincide exactly, but in practice this probably never occurred, although after 1730, when the social lines became increasingly rigid, the tendency was for the two groups to be almost identical.

The homens bons comprised a body whose composition was well defined and well known. Council edicts for a meeting of all homens bons resulted in the gathering of certain people -- the elite. How the homens bons were selected is unclear. It may be that the council itself was responsible for choosing new members of this group, since it acted only upon the call of the council and, the council could, and did, eject people from it for failure to fulfill their responsibilities.

The upper strata of society was not composed solely of the membership of these two groups, which included only the elite, the ruling class of Vila Rica. Many others had the prerequisites to enter this body. This larger group included such people as the sons of the elite, rich fazendeiros, large-scale miners, militia captains of white units and members of the unit of nobles. These formed the pool from which the homens bons and, in some cases, the homens da governança were chosen. Here again the criteria for entrance were wealth, Portuguese family background, and local social status, most often evidenced by a militia commission and a land grant.

One of the major criteria for exclusion from entry into the upper level of society seems to have been racial. Blacks were excluded. The captain of the militia unit composed of freed blacks, Gaspar Dias, was not, for example, a member of the upper class; despite his wealth and militia commission he can not be considered a member of the upper strata. Mulattoes, on the other hand, were not excluded, although those accepted may have been lighter in color than those left outside. The presence of mulattoes in the upper levels of colonial society can be shown only by indirect means.²² The assumption of the presence of non-whites among the *homens da governança* rests upon a 1726 royal edict forbidding mulattoes from sitting on the council any longer since there were enough whites to fulfill this responsibility. Mulattoes to the fourth degree were excluded from holding council posts as was anyone who was neither the husband of a white woman nor the widower of one.²³ Clearly mulattoes had served on councils in Minas Gerais, the captaincy to which the order specifically pertains, and in sufficient numbers to force the crown to act. It is probable that they served on the Vila Rica council. If so, the upper strata was not solely white, as it has been generally assumed, but mostly white with some mulattoes.

While the presence of mulattoes among the *homens da governança* can only be presumed, it is clear that some mulattoes had risen to the position of justice of the peace

(juiz de vintena). Because of the difficulty of communication between the seat of the municipality and the peripheral areas within the jurisdiction of the town council, justices of the peace were elected by the council to administer these peripheral areas. The functions of the juiz de vintena will be discussed in detail below. They were prominent men in their parishes, presumed able to enforce the law within their jurisdictions.

In 1748, the ouvidor, José Antônio de Oliveira Machado reported that the council had been selecting mulattoes for this post contrary to the law. It is not known how long the council had been naming mulattoes as justices of the peace. It is possible that Machado acted when they began being appointed in such numbers that this violation of the law could no longer be ignored. It is also possible that Machado was a zealous royal official who was offended by even a few such appointments. In any case, Machado immediately ordered the council to select white men for this judicial position when these were qualified whites in the parish. The ouvidor further threatened to nullify all future unwarranted appointments
²⁴
of mulattoes.

Besides mulattoes, others who later would have been excluded from the upper levels of society were able to gain entry. Manuel Vicente Neves, for example, was a scribe and also a militia captain ²⁵ --a combination not found after 1720. An even more remarkable case is that

of Antônio Coresma, a tailor and also a militia sub-lieutenant (alferes).²⁶ Coresma's is the only documented case of an artisan who made even junior officer status, although there may have been others. These two cases point to the fluidity of the system; it is probable that there are numerous cases of a similar nature.

An examination of the sources of income claimed by the elite for tax purposes is illuminating. Of the men who served either on the council or as fiscal officers prior to 1721, fifty appear in the tax records of 1716-1719. Of these representatives of the *homens da governança*, twenty-one were owners of roças and sítios. While the terms conjure images of small farms, in reality the *roças* and *sítios* could be more properly termed *fazendas*, since they often were measured in square leagues. Of this group of men seventeen were listed as owners of slaves. These seventeen paid an average tax of almost fifty-eight *oitavas*, on both their slaves and land. They were levied three times the average of eighteen paid by all the taxpayers in 1716 as their share of the royal fifth tax. Two of these landowners also possessed mines. The four who were listed as landowners but not slave-owners appear to be exceptional cases. Three were merely mentioned with no elaboration and the fourth, Captain of Cavalry Leonel da Gama Belles, was taxed only a minimum of four *oitavas* for his *roça*.²⁷

In thirteen cases, the tax rolls list only the owner-

ship of slaves as the basis of taxation. It is probable that these were employed in gold mining, although this is not mentioned in the public records. Since the records do not indicate the ownership of land in these cases, it is likely that the slaves were employed in the common gold fields. The average tax paid by the men in this category, about thirty-nine oitavas, far exceeded the average for the region. The lowest tax paid was a mere eight oitavas, while the largest was one hundred and fourteen.

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In only seven cases was mining mentioned. This figure is surprisingly low. The average tax paid by these men was sixty-nine oitavas--a figure almost four times the average.

Of the remaining nine men, information is lacking for six, except for the amount of tax they paid, which was above average in each case. The remaining three represent deviant cases. One, Miguel de Andrade Ferreira, served as council secretary prior to being accepted among the homens da governança. The second, Lieutenant General Felix Gusmão de Mendonça e Bueno, was taxed for owning and operating a tile-making establishment (olaria) as well as for owning an undisclosed number of slaves. João Teixeira de Sousa, the third man, is the only one of the fifty whose ownership of a store can be documented. Furthermore, Sousa almost certainly was a mulatto.

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Thus forty-one of the forty-four men for whom detailed tax information is available derived their income either

from farming or mining. Only two men were directly involved in manufacturing or commerce. Contrary to what might have been anticipated, businessmen played an insignificant role in the administration of local government prior to 1720.

The *homens da governança* shared a number of characteristics, status symbols and that are important in analyzing this stratum. Among these was the acquisition of large land holdings. An examination of the land grants issued in 1711 reveals that many were awarded to men who would later enter the ranks of the ruling elite. Ten such cases were encountered. For the most part the grants were made in the region of São Bartolomeu, Cachoeira, and Itaú³⁴bira. While some were small, measured in *braças*, most were substantial. The largest, which was issued to Captain of Cavalry Leonel da Goma Belles, covered more than six Portuguese square leagues.³⁵ That the elite quickly obtained *sesmarias* is not surprising. For some, agricultural and pasture lands were used to raise food for their slaves who labored in the gold fields.

Thus Captain Pedro da Rocha Gandavo was awarded a land grant "because he had a great many slaves" who presumably were employed in mining.³⁶ Others probably saw land as a sound commercial investment of their money and slaves. Because the soil in Vila Rica was very poor and incapable of supporting the town's urban population, and

many miners were not inclined to grow their own crops, these fazendas could be profitable.

It seems clear that holding a sesmaria was an attractive goal for members of the elite who had made their fortunes in gold mining, whether they wanted to retire to the land to live as country gentlemen or to try to harness the farm land to their various economic interests. What is significant is that, according to the tax rolls of 1716-1719, more homens da governança had their income sources listed as "roças" or "sitios" than mining. This remains true even when those men who earned money from the direct exploitation of slaves are included among the miners.

The fifty homens da governança also typify another characteristic of the elite--the importance they gave to militia commissions. At least twenty-seven of them, probably more, held militia or regular army commissions prior to 1720, while others certainly received commissions after that date. The essential point is that the militia commission served as a means of externalizing status and of institutionalizing the informal authority and power which this status conferred upon any member of the elite.

These men played an important role in the life of Vila Rica. They were accorded places of distinction during all public functions. They had the prestigious responsibility of carrying the insiginia of the town and the torches during religious processions. So important were

these functions and so much significance was attached to participating in them that normally four or five shifts were selected to ensure that most of the homens bons had an opportunity to bask in the admiration of their fellow townspeople.

Besides ceremonial functions, the homens bons had very real power. They served as electors. From their ranks, and from that of the upper strata in general, came the men chosen as judges, councillors, procurators, and fiscal officers. When the town council confronted a difficult decision or situation and needed assistance or support, the homens bons were called to an open session. This had the function of spreading the responsibility for the decision among a wider group of people. Effective political control of Vila Rica rested in the hands of these men.

Notes

1. An example of what could happen to someone who lost his fortune is provided by Frutuoso Barbosa Barreiros. Barreiros lost his post as company commander after losing his fortune and going deeply into debt. Commission of Luís Teixeira de Figueiredo, 20 January, 1730 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fol. 84v.
2. Council Session, 23 November, 1715 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 385.
3. Report of Junta, 6 January, 1714 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 293-294.
4. Tax entry for Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 13 and 55v.
5. Tax entry for Manuel de Sousa Serqueira, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 12v.
6. Tax entry for Antônio Ramos dos Reis, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 14.
7. Tax entry for Bento Felix da Cunha, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 41.
8. Tax entry for Antônio da Costa Gouveia, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 44.
9. Tax entry for Francisco de Rodrigues, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 8.
10. Tax entry for Manuel Rebello, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 10v.
11. Tax entry for Manuel Lopes, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 5v. It is possible that Manuel Lopes and Manuel Martins Lopes, who served as almotacel in 1712 and procurator in 1715, are one and the same person, but this seems improbable. Normally when a name appearing in colonial documents is incomplete it is the last name which is missing.
12. Tax entry for Manuel Gonsalves, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 32v. Gonsalves was a carpenter by trade.
13. Tax entry for Manuel Tavares Pereira, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 25.

14. Tax entry for Domingos Carvalho, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 32. Domingos owned a store as well as slaves.
15. Tax entry for Matias Barbosa (da Silva), Cód. 2 (CMOP), 26v. This may be the founder of the town of the same name located along the road from Rio de Janeiro to Vila Rica.
16. Tax entry for João Abares, Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 27v.
17. The council minutes for 1728-1729 are missing, but from the codices of council letters and commissions a list of the council members and fiscal officers can be compiled. Araújo's name does not appear on these lists.
18. It is possible that election as capitão-mor provided automatic entry into the governança and that, for personal reasons, Araújo did not wish to serve on the council. It does appear, however, that someone with Araújo's ambition would have wanted to serve on the most powerful organ of local government.
19. Infra., pp. 165-166.
20. Registry of Death of Ana Maria, 26 November, 1728 in Registry of Burial, No. 1, Parish Archive of Antônio Dias, fol. IV.
21. Council Proceedings, 16 August, 1721 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fols. 125-125v.
22. Documents do not relate the color of the skin of their writers and seldom do they refer to the color of important people, perhaps indicating the tendency to identify color with class: if it is assumed that important people could only be white, anyone who became successful also became white in the process. The birth records which provide irrefutable evidence for later years are of no help for this early period, as the oldest anyone born in Vila Rica could in 1720 was twenty-five.
23. Royal order, 27 January, 1726 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 29v.
24. Report of Inspection, 7 December, 1748 in Cód. 22 (CMOP), fol. 104.
25. Tax entry for Manuel Vicente Neves in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 30.
26. Tax entry for Antônio Coresma in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 3v.
27. Tax entry for Leonel da Gama Belles in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 36.

28. Tax entry for Francisco de Almeida Brito and Captain Manuel da Silva Martins in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 28v and 39.
29. Included among these seven is Sargento-major Arcangelo da Silva Vieira "que pesse couro." Since Vieira's place of residence is the gold mining district on the Mountain of Vila Rica--a area where cattle were not raised--I have assumed that the scribe made an error in writing "ouro." Tax entry for Vieira in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 14v.
30. Thome de Andrade Freire, resident of São Bartolomeu, 86 oitavas; Mestre do Campo Ventura Ferreira Vivas, resident of Antônio Dias, 36 oitavas; Manuel Ferreira Agrellos, resident of Ouro Podre, 23 oitavas; Captain Luís de Almeida, resident of Padre Faria, 7 oitavas; Captain Belchior Nogueira, resident of Antônio Dias, 14 oitavas; and Antônio Alvares Machado, resident of Ouro Podre, 18 oitavas. Tax entries in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 50v, 7, 44v, 22v, 7v, and 45.
31. Tax entry for Miguel de Andrade Ferreira in Ibid., fol. 12.
32. Tax entry for Lieutenant General Felix Gusmão de Mendonça e Bueno in Ibid., fol. 36v.
33. Tax entry for João Teixeira de Sousa in Ibid., 15. There is some uncertainty surrounding Sousa's race. Sousa's brother resided with him and the brother is listed as a "pardo." Since the reference is to his "brother," not "half-brother," and they were close enough to each other to live together, it must be assumed that they were, in fact, brothers and that Sousa was also a pardo.
34. That of Domingos Rodrigues Raposo measured five hundred braças in width. Land grant issued 16 April, 1711 in Cód. 7 (SG), fol. 90v.
35. Land grant made to Captain of Cavallry Leonel da Gama Belles, 19 March, 1711 in Ibid., fol. 80v.
36. Land grant made to Captain Pedro da Rocha Gandavo, 23 May, 1711 in Ibid., fol. 103.

Chapter 12
Social Organization: The Middle Sector

Prior to 1720 the middle elements of the society comprised the most fluid of the social groupings. It was relatively easy to enter this group, which was composed, for the most part, of miners, store owners, a virtual army of local office holders, and artisans. Others, such as paid employees, like cashiers and free-born mine foremen, and real estate developers, also could be included in this group, although during this period they comprised only a miniscule part of colonial society.

So long as wealth was the prerequisite for upward mobility and wealth was a matter of a lucky gold strike, mobility upward was relatively easy for a person who was white, or nearly so. As it became increasingly difficult to make major strikes, as alluvial deposits were exhausted and more extensive capital investment in slaves and equipment was required to extract gold, then mobility became more difficult.

The middle stratum of society was largely an urban phenomenon--only in urbanized areas do these people appear in such numbers as to constitute an influential segment of the population.

This stratum is particularly difficult to study be-

cause of the fluid nature of the social structure. Ironically the easiest component to define--the local office holder, such as the sheriff, doorman, meirinho, scribe, or secretary--is also the least mobile. These office-holders constituted a second-echelon from which mobility was lateral or downward. Movement from these positions into the ruling elite was rare. A scribe was a scribe and seldom moved up the ladder of power. Even the council secretary, who worked closely with the council members, was essentially of another world. Although many were named by the King from among his Portuguese-born subjects, only once during this period did a secretary gain entry into the governança.¹

A large part of this stratum was made up of artisans, or ofícios mecanicos. While artisans could be found in rural settings, artisans in large numbers could be found only in urban centers. More importantly, guild organization was impossible outside the urban center.² The guild system existed in the towns of Minas, although not with the same intricate organization and power as in Portugal.³

Not until 1713 did the council begin to organize the guilds. The decision, it seems, was made when it became apparent that there were enough artisans residing in Vila Rica to justify such action. The council "decided that it was convenient to name judges of the trades which existed in this town [and] that they prepare regulations which must be given to all the artisans with the prices

that they must charge for the work they perform." ⁴ Judges were selected for the guilds of blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, and shoemakers. These judges were not only responsible for preparing the regulations but also for ensuring compliance by the artisans. Equally important, the judges of the craft guilds were responsible for examining all who wished to exercise their craft within the jurisdiction of the council. Persons who had been examined elsewhere and retained their certificates were exempted from this examination if the council accepted the documents as valid. The judges also were required to protect the monopoly exercise of their crafts by insuring that no one outside of the guilds performed these occupations.

There was opposition on the part of the artisans to the standardization of prices, as the prevalent philosophy of the day favored setting maximum and not minimum price limits. Thus any standardization would impose a ceiling on prices and limit profits since the economic boom during this period allowed the artisan to benefit more if no maximum prices were established. The craft judges as the representatives of their guilds prepared regulations in February, 1713 only under great pressure by the town council. In requiring this, the council showed its determination to regulate prices, citing the "great damage to the residents [done by] the very high prices which the artisans of all the crafts charge for the work they do." ⁵

All the artisans were required to abide by the codes and have them in full view of the customers. At least some of the artisans refused to obey the council; in April the council ordered the metalworkers, cobblers, and tailors to pick up their codes within eight days.⁶ Thus after pressuring the artisans to prepare the regulations, the council had difficulty ensuring that individual artisans complied with them.

The following year, 1714, the council continued having trouble with the artisans. Because the judges served terms of one year, the initial difficulties involved the election of craft judges. On January 27, the council called for a meeting of all artisans "to elect Judges of the various occupations by majority vote according to the statutes."⁷ The council was particularly concerned about the need for the judges to re-examine the regulations and make whatever changes were needed. Moreover, the licenses of the artisans and their regulations had to be re-certified semi-annually.

The elections were scheduled for the twenty-ninth, with those who failed to attend being subject to arrest and payment of a fine. The elections, however, were not held until February 3 after the release of "many artisans from jail." This indicates the resistance by the artisans to the creation of the guilds and the imposition of the price and quality controls implicit in these craft organizations. It is probable that the artisans objected to

controls which would keep prices below the rates they could command on the open market. Their opposition was unsuccessful as the council was able to force the selection of judges for the same four crafts.⁸ But the elections did not go smoothly as is attested by the arrest of a blacksmith, Lucas Fernandes, for arrogant behavior.⁹ With the election of the judges the craft labor codes once again could be certified.

Difficulties with the guilds were not limited to the first few years after the incorporation of Vila Rica. Even after the council's constant pressure had forced the craftsmen to select judges and accept regimentation in the form of price regulations, there was continued opposition to the full implementation of the guild system. As late as 1725, the council had to report that many people were working as stonemasons and carpenters without having been examined by judges of those guilds. The judges did not act to stop these violations of guild monopoly control; they had in fact, willingly allowed this to happen because of friendship for the unapproved artisans. The council had to act to maintain the monopolies of the stonemason¹⁰ and carpenter guilds.

Little is known about the men who served as judges of craft guilds during these formative years before 1720. No judge served two consecutive terms. One man, Domingos Gonçalves, served three terms as judge of the blacksmiths,¹¹ in 1714, 1716 and 1718. Four other men served two terms:

Manuel Ferreira da Fonseca, judge of carpenters in 1716 and 1718; Manuel Gonçalves (Gomes) of the tailors in 1716 and 1719; and Antônio Coresma of the blacksmiths in 1713 and 1715.¹² Inexplicably, the blacksmiths showed a greater tendency to re-elect their judges.

Of those judges for whom tax information is available, all paid higher taxes than the average for their craft. In some cases, their royal fifth payments were comparable to those paid by miners. Thus Manuel Gonçalves Beça, judge of carpenters in 1714, paid thirty-four oitavas; Manuel de Freitas paid thirty-two, as did Manuel Gonçalves, judge of tailors, in 1716 and 1719; and José Rodrigues de Souza,¹³ judge of shoemakers, in 1715 paid thirty. While these were sums comparable to those paid by some members of the upper strata, these men were not able to bridge the chasm between the artisan class and the elite. One man, Antônio Coresma, did move upward, to the post of alferes, but his case is exceptional. There is no evidence that any other person at this time was able to do likewise.

The compadresco, or godparent relationship, does not seem to have been an important factor among the artisans at this time; this may be due to the social situation in which the number of white women must have been small and the men not always ready to acknowledge responsibility for children resulting from illicit sexual relations with their slaves. While several of the judges were selected as godfathers, very few were directly linked with other artisans.

There is not enough evidence available to generalize concerning the racial composition of the artisans. Only two certificates of examination exist for the period prior to 1720. The more interesting of the two was issued in Lisbon to a man born in Obidos. This leather craftsman (seleiro) had his certificate issued in 1714 and "registered in our brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da Conceição." ¹⁴ This is an example of a brotherhood whose membership was composed of artisans. This Portuguese system of social differentiation through the lay brotherhoods was used widely in Minas Gerais. While some artisans were slaves, freedmen, or mulattoes, it is unlikely that many were accepted for membership in the guilds, if later developments are any indication of pre-1720 conditions. The tax rolls for 1715-1716 contain only seven artisans who fit this description. In all seven cases the artisans were freedmen of which three each were blacks and mulattoes. The race of the seventh was not listed. Five of these freedmen ¹⁵ were tailors and two carpenters. It would seem that the remaining artisans were viewed by the tax assessers as being free-born whites. It is highly probable that the vast majority of the master craftsmen were born in Portugal. It is probable, also, that rich fazendeiros or mine owners trained a few slaves in the crafts for their own use. Under these conditions there would be no problems with the guild members.

The merchants were perhaps the most mobile group

within the middle sector. If few artisans or office-holders can be pointed out as examples of upward mobility, many can be chosen from among the commercial community. By 1720 this community was large and still expanding to supply the growing economy. In 1715 there were one hundred and three stores and shops in Vila Rica itself. Four years later, there were two hundred and forty-four in the termo of Vila Rica. This economic boom continued -- by 1733 there were two hundred and seventy-three business establishments in Vila Rica and well over three hundred and fifty in the municipality. The type of establishments included in these totals varied and not all the owners belong in the middle spectrum. Store owners, almost without exception, should be placed into this category. The store, (loja), was a large establishment normally selling durable merchandise (fazenda seca) such as cloth, candles, and tools. Such an enterprise often required a large capital investment. Fifty-four establishments in 1715 were in this category. Because the richest of these store owners also had slaves or other forms of capital, it is impossible to determine how much of their income was derived solely from the stores. This category includes men such as Manuel de Sousa Freitas who paid seventy-two oitavas for his stores and slaves and Domingos Carvalho who paid fifty oitavas. As the average tax paid by the sixteen men whose only income was derived from their stores was 11.5 oitavas, it seems probable that the mining

activities of these two men accounted for a large portion of their taxes.

As in the case of Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, it is probable that commerce provided the springboard for these men to enter mining. At least three men were identified as having achieved elite status by this route: Alferes José Pires Viana, owner of a cloth store and slaves, who became almotacel in 1722,¹⁹ Alferes José da Silva, owner of a store and slaves, who was chosen almotacel in 1732²⁰ and João Teixeira de Sousa, also the owner of a store, almotacel in 1720 and vereador in 1725.²¹ Other men, such as Captain João Ferreira who paid eighty oitavas in taxes, were probably members of the upper strata, but for unknown reasons were unable to move into the homens da governança.

The shop (venda) was another kind of business. Amply stocked with foodstuffs and aguardente, it normally also carried some durable goods. Vila Rica had forty-four establishments of this type in 1716.²² Less capital investment was required to open a shop than to open a store. Many of these catered to slaves.

Probably because the capital investment required was limited, this was the path upward used by many ex-slaves and blacks. By 1715 the process had begun. While no store-owner was listed as a black or freedmen, five shopowners were. Another shop was owned by a mulatto. One freedman, Pedro Nunes, was comparatively well-off, paying thirty-six oitavas on his shop, pottery and tile making establishment, and slaves.²³

From the same tax rolls it is apparent that the shops offered a means of livelihood for still another group: women. Five women were listed as shopowners and three as co-owners, there were no female storeowners. Thus the small capital outlay needed to open a liquor shop, for example, made it possible for members of the lower strata to move up a level in the social hierarchy.

This process becomes more pronounced after 1720. For example, in 1734 two hundred and fifty-three licenses for shops were issued. Of these one hundred and forty-nine were issued to women and eighty-two to slaves. At the same time not a single license for a store was granted to a woman or slave.²⁴ It is possible that the capital for the shops came from whites who did not wish to be associated with business enterprises. This is perhaps truer for those licenses who were slaves since, as a rule, the bondsmen (required for all businesses) were the owners of the slaves. There is, unfortunately, no way to substantiate the suggestion that some licensees, perhaps because of a social stigma related to selling to slaves and mulattoes, were fronting for others--except to note the difficulty for a woman or slave to accumulate even the small capital needed to open a shop.

It is significant that the average tax paid by those shopkeepers and store owners who were taxed solely on their businesses was almost identical--9.8 oitavas for shopowners and 10.2 for storeowners. All indications are that the

taxes were based on capital investment despite the law which set a fixed and equal rate on both shops and stores. But whereas the typical shopowner was taxed nn little beyond his shop, the average storeowner was generally wealthier and had more extensive outside interests. Thus the average shopowner paid 13.6 oitavas and the storeowner 20.6 and over 37^o/_o of the shopowners paid less than ten oitavas, compared to only 20^o/_o of the shopowners.

An interesting phenomenon was the appearance of urban land speculators and developers. These men would obtain a larger than average land grant from the council, build houses and then sell these properties separately. As early as 1718, João do Couto Correia had obtained a grant of land with a frontage of fifty braças. Within six months he sold three two-and-a-half-braça lots, each with
25
a house. The price that was charged, two hundred and eighty oitavas, was not much more than that paid for a top quality slave. Lourenço Mendes Coelho was involved in similar activities. Coelho obtained six braças along the Rua dos Paulistas in Antônio Dias and soon had sold three plots of two braças each. It is, however, unclear whether he built houses on the plots or merely sold them
26
as unimproved urban lots. These early real estate developers were, during this period, clearly exceptional, but their appearance is indicative of the urban nature of Vila Rica.

Thus the middle sector, during the period before 1720, was a rather amorphous grouping into which entry was gained by anyone having the requisite economic status. Movement from this level to the elite occurred after 1711, but to such a limited extent that it is necessary to conclude that those who made the transformation were exceptions. It is unfortunate that so few records exist for the pre-1711 period. It seems plausible that among those emboabas who quickly filled the socio-political vacuum left by the defeated and exiled Paulistas were many men, like Pascoal da Silva Guimarães and Henrique de Araújo Lopes, from this stratum of society. Store owners, tavern keepers, and artisans were thus given a chance to form the basis of a new elite, but after this, vertical mobility became increasingly more difficult.

Notes

1. This exception was Miguel de Andrade Ferreira as noted on page 168.
2. Two studies of guilds have been published in the Revista do Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional: Raimundo Trindade, "Ourives de Minas Gerais nos séculos XVIII e XIX," 12 (1953): 109-149 and Salomão de Vasconcellos, "Ofícios mecânicos em Vila Rica durante o século XVIII," 4 (1940): 331-360. While Vasconcellos includes a very brief introduction, both studies are primarily lists of craftsmen.
3. For an examination of the political activities of the guilds in Portugal see Harry Bernstein. "The Lisbon Juiz do Povo and the Independence of Brazil, 1750-1822: An Essay on Luso-Brazilian Populism," in Henry H. Keith and S.F. Edwards, (eds.), Conflict & Continuity in Brazilian Society, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), pp. 191-226 and the "Commentary" of George E. Carl, *Ibid.*, pp. 227-230.
4. Council Proceedings, 14 January, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 258.
5. Council Proceedings, 13 February, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 261.
6. Council Proceedings, 1 April, 1713 in *Ibid.*, p. 266.
7. Council Proceedings, 27 January, 1714 in *Ibid.*, p. 302.
8. Council Proceedings, 3 February, 1714 in *Ibid.*, p. 306.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 307.
10. Council Ordinance, 20 January, 1725 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fol. 52v.
11. Election of Judges, 6 February, 1714 in *Ibid.*, p. 306;
12 January, 1716 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 12; and 22 January, 1718 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 40v.

12. Election of Judges, 22 January, 1718 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 40v; 11 January, 1719 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 72v; 14 January, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 285; and 26 January, 1715 and 25 February, 1715 in Ibid., pp. 361 and 365.
13. Tax entries for Manuel Gonçalves Beça, Manuel de Freitas, Manuel de Gonçalves, and José Rodrigues de Sousa in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols.
14. Certificate of Examination issued to Manuel da Costa, 14 December, 1714 in Cód. 17 (CMOP), fol. 5v.
15. Tax data obtained from Cód. 2 (CMOP), fols. 14v, 16v, and 24v.
16. Proclamation of Governor, August 2, 1718 [1719] in Diogo de Vasconcellos, História Antiga, 2, p. 240. Vasconcellos' dating of this document is incorrect since it contains data for 1719. Data for 1733 obtained from Cód. 33 (CMOP), passim.
17. Tax entry of Manuel de Sousa Freitas in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 4v.
18. Tax entry of Domingos Carvalho in Ibid., fol. 32.
19. Council Proceedings, 3 October (?), 1722 in Cód. 13, fol. 56v and Tax entry in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 56v.
20. Council Proceedings, 7 March, 1732 in Cód. 28 (CMOP), fol. 21v. and tax entry, in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 29.
21. Tax entry for João Teixeira de Sousa in Ibid., fol. 15.
22. The remaining five men were engaged in unspecified activities, perhaps acting as commercial agents for firms in Rio or Salvador.
23. Tax entry for Pedro Nunes in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 7.
24. Cód. 31 (CMOP), passim.
25. Registry of Land Grants, Cód. 1 (CMOP), fol. 8.
26. Ibid., fol. 98.

Chapter 13
The Slave: Distribution and Origins

The bottom rung of society was composed largely of the masses of slaves brought to work in the gold fields. By 1716 the termo of Vila Rica had 6,721 slaves, the majority of whom were concentrated in the immediate area of Vila Rica. In the same year, Minas Gerais as a whole had approximately 28,000 slaves:¹ It was these black slaves who performed the manual work so despised by the Portuguese. Royal officials often commented on this attitude. Viceroy Luís Vahia Monteiro reported, for example, that

it is certain that the mines can not be worked without Negroes, both because they work harder and because the whites and Portuguese even if raised with a hoe in their hands, once putting their feet on Brazilian soil, do not want work.²

A conservative estimate of the total population of the termo of Vila Rica in 1716 would be approximately ten thousand. This should be viewed as a minimum figure. It is possible that there were that many people in the urban center of Vila Rica alone.³

After 1716, the slave population began to grow more quickly as seen by the figures presented by Mauricio Goulart, which indicate that an average of 2,240 slaves left Rio de Janeiro for Minas Gerais annually between 1715 and 1721,⁴ with the average increasing to 2,316 from 1721 to 1727.

The slave population of the urban area of Vila Rica in 1721 was 3315. The average number of slaves per slaveowner was 5.22.⁵ The three major components of Vila Rica, Antônio Dias, Padre Faria, and Ouro Prêto, exhibit significant differences in the average number of slaves per slave holder. Padre Faria had the highest absolute number of slaves, 1251, and the highest average, 6.45. This confirms the conclusion reached above that this area was undergoing a resurgence in mining. The fewest number of slaves, both absolutely and proportionally, was to be found in Ouro Prêto. That parish had 1001 slaves divided among 235 owners for an average of 4.41. Of the 235 slave holders, 221 owned ten or fewer slaves and only three owned more than twenty-six. This can be seen as confirmation that most of the alluvial deposits in the area had been exhausted and that those areas being exploited were on the Morro de Ramos and these were in the hands of a few men.

The bairro of Antônio Dias occupied an intermediary position between Ouro Prêto and Padre Faria. Slightly more slaves, 1063 to 1001, were reported for this bairro than for Ouro Prêto, and the average number of slaves was also slightly larger, 5.11 to 4.41. This would indicate that, like Ouro Prêto, mining was no longer a significant factor in the economic life of Antônio Dias, although probably more major operations were still functioning there than in Ouro Prêto.

It is understandable that the major mining camps had a significantly higher average, 8.64, than did the more urban bairros in the valley. Of the three camps, Ouro Bueno was the smallest, reporting only 187 slaves with an average of 6.45 per slave holder. This mining camp had passed its hour of glory. However, the other two, Ouro Podre and Ouro Fino, were still booming as is illustrated by the high averages, 8.66 for Ouro Fino and 9.54 for Ouro Podre. With 849 slaves being reported for Ouro Fino and 658 for Ouro Podre, these mining camps had a combined slave population which exceeded that of any single bairro of Vila Rica.

These data suggest that the number of slaves per slave holder is a means of determining the state of mining in specific regions. A low average occurs when the majority of people own no slaves and most of those who own slaves have only a few. These are probably employed as laborers, artisans' helpers, prospectors, porters, or for more specialized tasks. A higher average probably means that there is significant mining. There was no use for large numbers of slaves other than in mining. The farms which existed in the region of Vila Rica were newly established and were adjuncts to mining in that they were used to supply food for the slaves. Often the same slaves served both in the mines and, in the dry season or during holidays, in the fields.

This interpretation of the significance of the average of slaves per slaves holder is borne out by analysis of the slaveowning class. In those areas known to be producing gold in significant quantities the number of slave-owners with more than ten slaves was much greater than that in regions known to be agricultural. Thus 27% of the slave owners of Ouro Fino owned more than ten slaves; the figure for Ouro Podre was 25% , Ouro Bueno, 57% , Itatiaia, 20% , and Itaubira 29% . On the other hand, in the cattle and farming areas of Cachoeira, Congonhas, Casa Branca (some mining), and São Bartolomeu, those owners who had more than ten slaves comprised, respectively, 12%, 13%, 18%, and 16% of the total number of owners. In this respect, the three bairros of Vila Rica conform more closely with the nonmining areas. This would seem to be due to their urban nature which utilized large numbers of slaves as domestic workers, porters, and artisans' helpers.

The total slave population of the termo of Vila Rica in 1722 was 12,648 of which only 26% was to be found within the urban limits of Vila Rica. This population represents 61% of the slave population of the termo in 1725 and 68% of 1749.⁶ This very rapid expansion of the slave population within two decades of the first major waves of migrants serves to illustrate the dramatic nature of the gold rush.

The slave population of Vila Rica before 1720 may be examined more closely through the records compiled for collecting the royal fifth. As these records were main-

tained by the council and used to levy taxes on a per capita basis, it must be assumed that some slaves were hidden from the tax appraisers. These records show the great imbalance in the sexes which resulted from the headlong dash into the gold fields during the twenty-five years after 1695. Of the 512 slaves owned by 111 individuals listed in the earliest records available (1716), ninety-five percent, 488, were males.⁷ This shortage of slave women illustrates what must have been the normal situation during the period of rapid economic expansion, when mine labor was needed immediately. The gap between the sexes would begin to close only after 1720 with the evolution of a more stable society.

This development is confirmed by the first complete census taken in Vila Rica, that of 1804. This census lists 1640 slaves as residing within the urban confines of Vila Rica or owned by residents of that town temporarily living outside of it. Of these, 901, (54.9%), were males and 739, (45.1%), were female.⁸ Census figures available for 1815 and encompassing the entire termo of Vila Rica show an even finer balance. In that year, 1831 slaves were reported, of which 929 (50.7%), were listed as males and 912 (49.3%), as females.⁹

The slaves imported into Vila Rica during the period before 1720 came principally from two areas, the Bight of Benin and the region of Congo-Angola. The difficulty of tracing some of the names used by the Portuguese and the

habit of referring not to the slave's place of birth but rather to the point from which he was shipped complicate the task of determining precise origins and necessitates the use of broader geographical areas.

Analysis of the 1716 slave sample of 512 yields some intriguing results. Foremost among these is the very small number of slaves born in Brazil, 3.7%.¹⁰ The scarcity of Brazilian-born slaves can be partially explained by the absence of female slaves and by the short time span between the year the tax roll was prepared and the beginning of the influx of miners and slaves into the region. Equally important, however, were the factors which prevented the sugar planters and tobacco growers of the Northeast from sending their native-born slaves to the mining district. Among these was the viceregal ban on dispatching crioulo (native born black) slaves to Minas unless they¹¹ were intractable.

Table 2
Origin of Slaves in Vila Rica

	1716-1718		1804
Bight of Benin			
Mina.....	176	.....	31
Nago.....	1	.....	1
Arda.....	1	.....
West Central Africa			
Benguela.....	97	.....	44
Angola.....	41	.....	171
Congo.....	57	.....	10
Luango.....	17	-	
Mongolho.....	21	.....	1
Quiçama.....	1		
Bamba.....	2		
Southeastern Africa			
Mozambique.....	34	-	
Eastern Africa			
Coirana.....	2	-	
Senegambia			
Cabo Verde.....	13	.....	1
Brazilian			
Crioulo.....	13	.....	225
Mulatto.....	5	.....	46
Cabrinho.....	1	.....	34
Unidentified			
Moleque.....	6	.....	1
Chara.....	4	-	
São Thome.....	2	-	
Gongella.....	4	-	
Sera.....	1	-	
Costa Pimentura.....	1	-	
Cobraná.....	1	-	
Monsaosio.....	1	-	
Lodaro.....	1	-	
Camba.....	1	.....	1
Cattabrain.....	1	-	
Gabarir.....	1	-	Rebola ....3
Nogoma.....	1	-	Casssange..2
None Listed.....	5	-	Cabundá....6
		None Listed.....	3

This edict would have had little effect unless it had been to the advantage of the planters. Clearly, native-born slaves were more valuable and therefore among the last to be sold. They would have been acclimatized and already would have absorbed Portuguese language and culture.

12

Despite the reputation enjoyed by Mina slaves, slaves from the Bight of Benin accounted for only 35% of the total in the 1716 sample. Bantu slaves from the Congo-Angola region were more numerous, representing about 40% of the total. This is remarkable since the miners believed that Mina slaves had a knack for finding gold and Mina women were considered to be very attractive physically.

13

It is not probable that the percentage of Mina slaves found in Vila Rica or even in Minas Gerais increased after 1716. Two events conspired to prevent this increase. The first was a change in the tribal balance of power in the area of present-day Dahomey. The first three decades of the eighteenth century witnessed the expansion of the state of Dahomey culminating in the seizure of the coastal areas during the 1720's. Having conquered the points of contact between slave buyers and sellers, the king of Dahomey acted to stop the export of slaves. While the order could not be enforced completely, it appears that there was a sharp decline in slave exports from this region.

14

15

The second factor was the decision of the Portuguese government to encourage the importation of Angola slaves into the mining region "since it is clear that they

are more trustful, more subservient and obedient than the Mina slaves whose courage could lead them to enter into
¹⁶
 some plan to oppose the whites.

These actions had an effect upon the slave trade which can be noted in two ways. In 1738 the Overseas Council in its discussions of the slave trade, and particularly the draining of slaves from Bahia to Minas Gerais, reported that slaves ships sailing from the Costa de Mina represented less than half of earlier numbers and
¹⁷
 that the commerce itself was in a state of confusion. By 1804 the Mina slave represented only 5.3% of all the slaves found in Antônio Dias and 12% of these who were
¹⁸
 born in Africa.

One may speculate on the possibilities that the attraction of the Portuguese for the Mina had an effect in determining who would be freed from servitude. Of the twenty-six freedmen and freedwomen whose wills were examined, twenty-one identified themselves as being from the Costa da Mina. Of the others, one each was Angolese, Fão, and Coura; another was born in Portugal, and the last one
¹⁹
 in Rio de Janeiro. Clearly this is a small sample, but the results indicate that Mina slaves were freed in a proportion much larger than their presence in the slave population would seem to warrant.

The Congo-Angola slaves comprised a much larger group than the Mina slaves. The percentage of Congo-Angola born slaves declined somewhat during the eighteenth century,

from 39% in 1804 to 46% in 1716. But among foreign-born slaves the proportion of Bantu slaves rose to 83%.²⁰

It appears that as the century progressed the Portuguese tended to make fewer differentiations among the origins of the slaves. In 1716, thirty-one types of slaves were identified, of which twenty-seven represented African groups. In 1804 sixteen differentiations were made with only eleven African groups being named.

The most dramatic change which occurred after 1716 in the composition of the slave population was the increase in the number of native-born slaves, crioulos. From a mere 3.7% in 1716, the percentage of native-born slaves had risen to 53% by 1804.²¹ It is impossible to date precisely the beginning of the upswing in the number of Brazilian-born slaves but it seems probable that this was a phenomenon of the second half of the eighteenth century. As late as 1736 the Governor of Minas Gerais complained that there were too few births of crioulos.²² This increase was due probably to the more settled atmosphere existing in Vila Rica by the end of the eighteenth century which encouraged the importation of relatively more female slaves and made family life more conducive. Furthermore the economic boom in the North and Northeast drained away male slaves and helped establish a greater balance between males and females.

Besides those places of origin already noted, two others deserve some mention. In the tax records for 1718

are found two surprises -- Cosme of India and Ignacio

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China. Thus among the numerous African and Indian slaves, were two Asian slaves. It is probable that these men were taken off ships sailing from the Far East to Portugal at Salvador and then sold in the mining district.

Despite royal edicts to the contrary, it seems certain that Indians were used as slaves although in progressively smaller numbers during the eighteenth century. The initial attraction for the Paulista bandeiras, the Indians of Minas Gerais, were quickly decimated or forced further into the backlands where they stoutly resisted the efforts of the Portuguese to defeat them. In some cases, they even cooperated with runaway slaves to prevent the recapture of the latter.

Notes

1. Order of Count of Assumar, 2 August, 1718 in Vasconcellos, História antiga, 2, p. 240.
2. Luís Vahia Monteiro to João V, 5 July, 1726 in Documentos Históricos 94, p.29.
3. This estimate is based on the figures contained in Ibid.
4. Mauricio Goulart, Escravidão africana no Brasil: Das origens à extinção do tráfico (2nd ed. São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1950).
5. Cód. 11 (CMOP), passim. This codice is the tax roll prepared for the collection of the royal fifth during the year ending July 22, 1722. The 3315 slaves were owned by 635 people. This tax roll is the source of the data presented in the following pages and summarized below.

Summary of 1721-1722 Royal Fifth Tax Roll

district	total slaves	total stores	distribution of slaves				ave.
			0-10	11-25	26-50	50-	
Ouro Prêto	1001	108	221	11	3	0	4.41
Antônio Dias	1063	99	184	17	4	1	5.11
Padre Faria	1251	72	161	25	8	0	6.45
N.S. da Soledade							
dos Congonhas	227	3	25	9	0	0	6.68
Cargolizo	150	0	10	5	1	0	9.38
Ouro Bueno	187	0	23	29	1	0	6.45
Ouro Fino	849	0	72	23	3	0	8.66
Itaubira	902	6	70	17	9	1	9.29
Rio das Pedras/							
Ouro Podre	658	0	52	13	2	2	9.54
Ouro Branco	433	5	56	8	2	0	6.56
São Bartolomeu	1295	19	159	20	10	0	6.80
Cachoeira	1003	6	167	21	1	0	5.31
Itatiaia	906	12	102	23	3	0	7.08
Cerça	85	0	7	4	0	0	7.73
S. Antônio do							
Campo	751	4	104	20	4	0	5.87
Bocaina	468	12	94	5	1	0	4.68
Congonhas	422	4	70	9	1	0	5.28

This does not include the 250 slaves owned by an unspecified number of clerics.

6. Boxer, The Golden Age of Brazil, 341-346 and Mappa dos Negros, Codice Costa Matoso, 181-187.
7. Cód. 8 (CMOP), passim.
8. Herculano Gomes Mathias (ed.), Un recenseamento na capitania de Minas Geris: Vila Rica-1804 (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 1969), passim.
9. Mappa da população do termo de Villa Rica, 1815 in Maços de Mappas, Arquivo Público Mineiro.
10. Nineteen slaves listed as crioulo, mulatto and cabrinho. Cód. 8 (CMOP), passim.
11. Order of 27 March, 1714 cited in Viceregal Order, 17 August, 1715 in Documentos Históricos, 70, pp. 228-231.
12. This is attested to by Zemella, O Abastecimento, p. 203.
13. Luís Vahia Monteiro to João V, 5 July, 1726 in Documentos Históricos, 94, pp. 29-30. This is particularly interesting in light of Piere Verger's study of the slave trade to Bahia in which he concludes that the seventeenth century was the heyday of the Angola trade and the first three decades of the eighteenth that of the Mina slave. Verger, Bahia and the West Coast Trade, p. 3. This is not confirmed in the Vila Rica samples which show the opposite of what could be expected.
14. Basil Davidson and F.K. Buah, The Growth of African Civilisation: A History of West Africa, 1000-1800, 2nd ed. rev. (London, Longmans, 1969), p. 227.
15. Basil Davidson, Black Mother: The Years of the African Slave Trade (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961), p. 240. Mauricio Goulart, Escravidão no Brasil, p. 212 presents evidence substantiating the decline in annual imports of Mina slaves into Salvador between 1741 and 1765.
16. Consulta of the Overseas Council, 18 September, 1728 in Documentos Históricos, 94, pp. 28-29.
17. Consulta of Wenceslau Pereira da Silva, 12 February, 1738 in Taunay, Trafico africano, p. 605.
18. Mathias, Um recenseamento na capitania de Minas Gerais, pp. 3-62.
19. These wills were found in two sources: the Arquivo do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional located in the Casa da Baroneza, Ouro Preto, and Registry of Deaths (APAD), Vols. 1-3.

20. Aires da Mata Machado Filho, preserves some folk songs from a small town near Diamantina which he contends is populated by descendents of calhambolas (runaway slaves). These songs, vissungos, contain traces of Nago and Bantu words and traditions. Aires da Mata Machado Filho, O negro e o garimpo em Minas Gerais, 2nd ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1964), pp. 64-86.
21. Based on 305 slaves of a sample of 577.
22. Gomes Freire de Andrade to Acting Governor, 6 June, 1736 in Cód. 55 (SG), fol. 324.
23. Slave List prepared for tax purposes, 1718 in Cód. 22 (DF), fols. 70v and 101v.

Chapter 14
The Slave: His Threat to Society

The threat posed by the increasingly large black population was never far from the minds of the local officials: slave labor exacted a price in terms of vigilance and the loss of peace of mind. Racial harmony did not exist in colonial Minas Gerais.

What did exist was a multilevel form of conflict. On one level the conflict was in the open and active, taking the form of mocambos or quilombos¹ (communities of runaway slaves), or slave insurrections. On another level it was active but less visible, taking the form of thefts of gold, tools, and other things to trade for aguardente, or to be hoarded to purchase freedom. Slave resistance included not only these essentially aggressive actions, but also the more passive forms of suicide or intentional maiming. Institutionally it took the form of black brotherhoods and their efforts to establish their equality with their white counterparts. If before 1727 the conflict was muted and less open than after that date, this was due to the mentality formed by a booming economy and the relatively low slave to master ratio of the early years, which tended to make the master-slave relationship more personal.

Problems with the slaves began early. In 1699 Pedro II warned Governor Menezes of the dangers posed by runaway slaves "who look for convenient sites on some mountain where they gather and leave to commit [their] sad excesses."² By 1711, capitães do mato (bush captains), were being named "to search for and arrest the many slaves who in [Minas Gerais] have escaped to mocambos that they form in the sertão."³

By 1718-1719 the activities of the runaways had become more significant; rather than withdrawing from the populated areas the calhambolas, as the runaways were called, went on the offensive. The Governor, Count of Assumar, reported that the "gangs of twenty and thirty and forty armed slaves" who were attacking farms on the outskirts of towns were having such an effect "that upon immediate and firm action depended the conservation or ruination of this land."⁴

Apparently the major threat posed by the slaves during this period was the projected uprising of 1719. Assumar found evidence of this plot in Ouro Preto, São Bartolomeu, Forquim (térmo of Carmo) and Rio das Mortes. The coordinated uprising allegedly was set for a religious holiday when the whites would be congregated in churches. Internal conflict among the slaves over leadership apparently led to disaffection and betrayal. Despite evidence to the contrary, the ouvidor of Rio das Mortes refused to believe that an insurrection was being planned and attribu-

ted the unrest in his jurisdiction to the harsh treatment of the slaves by some individuals and to personal conflicts among the masters. Assumar reiterated the danger signals noting "it is only Your Honor [who is] of such difficult faith that seeing in Ouro Preto such clear indications of the uprising of the Negroes and even greater ones in Forquim, wish to persuade yourself that it can not happen in Rio das Mortes where the number of Negroes is greater [in proportion to] whites than in other parts and where they live with more license because they are permitted to carry arms against my orders."⁵

Whether or not an insurrection was planned is impossible to determine, as all the documentation emanates from the white officialdom. It appears, however, that this was more than the normal jitters of a slave-holding society. The reaction was particularly violent: widespread arrests and some executions occurred. After being warned, local officials called out the militia and arrested some of the alleged leaders. Some of these, sent under arrest to Vila Rica, were called "Kings and Princes" in the correspondence of the period. Perhaps an indication that the slaves were conspiring with their brethren in quilombos can be found in Assumar's order that a quilombo in São Bartolomeu be destroyed. Assumar felt that a dangerous situation had developed because the masters had been too lenient on their slaves, noting that "even in peace and in calm if they are not treated with rigor, we will end up in these labyrinths."⁶

The response of the Portuguese officials to the dangers inherent in the increasing slave population varied in accordance with the multiple nature of the threat. The town council attempted to institute a policy of controlling weapons. Storeowners were forbidden to sell any weapons to mulattoes, Negroes, or Carijós (Indians), slave or freed.⁷ Despite repeated orders to the same effect, this ordinance was not enforced. As late as 1756, this failure was cited in a royal order which imposed the harsh sentence of ten years as a galley slave and one hundred lashes or ten consecutive days for anyone found guilty of this offense.⁸ The bar to enforcing these orders was that maintaining slave bodyguards was considered to be a status symbol.

Action was also taken to prevent slaves from gathering together. In 1721, for example, the council ordered the destruction of a number of ranchos on the Rua Paz which were reported to serve as meeting places for slaves.⁹ As the slave population increased so did the problem. By 1735 the situation had reached such proportions that the residents of Antônio Dias and Padre Faria complained bitterly of the large number of slaves who frequented the Rua Direita and the newly opened Rua Argel (Algiers Street) "so called because of the robberies and insults which are committed on it."¹⁰ The danger had become so great, complained the petitioners, that over one hundred shops had been forced to close, communication to the Morro de Vila Rica

had been interdicted, and the noise kept the area's
 11
 decent folk awake.

Despite these efforts, the problem escalated dramatically after 1721. In 1735, a junta of homens bons proposed a wide ranging program to deal with the threat. All slaves outside the company of their masters were to be given a note by the latter, valid for periods not exceeding thirty days. The note would serve as a pass and any unaccompanied slave without one was subject to arrest. Second, each parish was to select and maintain a bush captain and soldiers. Third, runaways caught in quilombos of seven or more people were to be punished by having a hand cut off and being required to report all future activities to local officials. Finally, the sale of arms
 12
 was again forbidden to "Negro, mulatto or mestiço." Provision was made to allow the use of the finta among the
 13
 residents of each parish to support the bush captain.

The slaveowner was responsible for treating his slaves humanely. Clearly this was unenforceable in a society where political power was in the hands of slaveowners. What is surprising is that anything at all was done to protect the slaves. Both the civil and ecclesiastical sectors of government were involved in this work. The municipal judge was often called upon to investigate crimes committed by or to slaves.

The church also took an active role in trying to protect the slave in temporal as well as spiritual matters as

can be seen from the records of the visitations made into the parishes by clerics commissioned by the Bishop of Rio de Janeiro. This, however, should be viewed as an aspect of the church's policy of protecting the morality of the community rather than simply as an effort to improve the lot of slaves as an oppressed class. The church intervened because of its position as the watchdog over the morals of all the citizens. Minor punishments were levied on slave owners who were guilty of having illicit sexual relations with slave women.

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The majority of the women involved in affairs brought to the attention of the inspectors were slaves or ex-slaves. For example, the visitation to Itatiaia in 1733 resulted in sixteen men and women being found guilty of cohabitation. Of the women, eight were ex-slaves, five were slaves and three freeborn. Only one white woman was con-

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victed. The number of freedwomen involved is an indication of their weak social and economic position. The church also sought to protect the sanctity of holidays by punishing slaveowners who worked their slaves on those days. Slaves caught mining on those days were to have their tools and gold confiscated.

16

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More often, however, the response of the political leaders of the captaincy was to increase the repression in response to the multiple nature of the threat. Assumar believed that rigorous punishment would serve as a deterrent. In 1718, he noted with approval the

salutory efforts of the Code Noir in "Messissippi and
¹⁸
 Luiziana." In 1719, he suggested that the Achilles
 tendon of all runaways be cut and the value of the slave
 paid to the owner by the other residents of the parish.
 This he felt, was the only way to avoid another Palmares
 (the troublesome quilombo federation in Pernambuco elimin-
 ated a quarter of a century earlier). According to Assumar
 this was a possibility because of "the various Liberties
 which the Negroes have in this Government [as opposed to]
 the other parts of America, it being certain that it is
 no true slavery in which they live today. With more
 reason it can be called licentious liberty."¹⁹ Assumar's
 brutal proposal mercifully was not approved by the king.

When the proposal to maim valuable property did not
 receive royal approval, Assumar acted within his authority
 by ordering that all slaves who ran away from their
 masters and were subsequently caught could be tried by
 an ouvidor. If at least two witnesses could be found,
 the slaves were to be executed. Their heads then were to
 be cut off and placed at the entrance to the nearest
 settlement as a reminder to other slaves of the retribu-
²⁰
 tion awaiting them if they attempted to escape.

Efforts were made to mobilize the church in the drive
 to control the slaves. This was done in four ways. First,
 all slaves born in Africa were to be baptized there or
 immediately upon arrival in the New World. Those born in
 captivity were to be baptised like any new-born child.

This was required in the Ordenações and reinforced by an edict issued in 1719.²¹

Besides receiving the sacrament of baptism, the slave was to be taught the Catholic religion. This was another way of keeping the slave in his subservient position. Assumar, aware of the importance of religious instruction in this process felt that the Portuguese were not fulfilling their responsibility. This was due, in part, to the lack of time; "the masters make [the slaves] work all week and many who mine reserve Sundays and holy days to send their Negroes to carry food supplies from their farms, so that no weekday is wasted."²² This failure was also explained by the language barrier. "Since the majority [of the slaves] already come as adults from Angola and the Costa da Mina they learn only with difficulty to speak the Portuguese Language and the parish priests do not speak the Languages of Angola and the Costa da Mina."²³

Since few miners were overly concerned with the spiritual welfare of their charges, Assumar again tried to use coercion. He ordered the parish priests to prepare lists of all the slaves within their parishes to ensure that each had been baptised and instructed in the faith. The lists were to be sent to the ouvidores so that those derelict in their duties as spiritual overseers of their slaves would be punished "with all rigor".²⁴

The governor also tried to control the kinship relationships among slaves in such a way as to maintain stability.

Slave marriages were not uncommon and served to establish family cohesiveness. Even extra-legal unions accomplished this end. But the slave family as an institution had a tenuous existence at best because of the prerogatives of the master.

The *compradesco* relationship was a means of filling this void. In the parishes of Antônio Dias and Ouro Preto many of the godfathers and godmothers selected during this period were slaves. Assumar viewed this with disapproval feeling that this established an unnatural hierarchy among the slaves since godchildren would naturally respect and obey their godparents. This, Assumar believed would result in the diversion of the slaves' daily earnings from their owners to their godparents. Worse still, the godparents had a moral position which they could use to aid the escape of their charges or to plot rebellion.

To prevent this, Assumar required that godparents acquired either by reason of baptism or marriage (which established a weaker form of *compradesco* bond) be white. The report of the parish priest of Sabará that it was more convenient if the godparents were of the same tribe is indicative of the reception accorded Assumar's order. The parish priests of Vila Rica also ignored this edict and slaves continued to use the *compradesco* relationship as a key element of the social structure of slave society. The best indication of the limited impact on the governor's edict can be seen in the minor change in the status of the god-

parents after 1719. To 1719, 57.9% of all godparents selected in the parish of Antônio Dias were free-born. From 1719 to 1726, the proportion increased only slightly to 64.5%²⁷.

The last means by which the church was mobilized to control the slaves was through the black lay brotherhoods. These organizations, which shall be discussed below, were founded soon after their white counterparts and served to institutionalize the conflict between oppressor and oppressed. Essentially the conflict was transferred from the level of life and death to one of ostentation and prestige.

Notes

1. Generally in Minas Gerais the term quilombo was used almost exclusively. Mocambo, which in the Northeast was one group of runaways within a larger entity, was used rarely. By royal definition a quilombo was a settlement of over five escaped slaves in an otherwise deserted area although it appears that this was raised to seven in 1735. See fn. 12 below.
2. Royal Order, 24 September, 1699 in Cód. 1 (SG), fol. 126.
3. Commission of Francisco Goncalves Leça, 25 February, 1711 in Cód. 7 (SG), fol. 73.
4. Count of Assumar to João V, 13 July, 1718 in Cód. 4 (SG), fol. 555.
5. Count of Assumar to Ouvidor of Rio das Mortes, 4 April, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 121v.
6. Ibid.
7. Council ordinance, 3 February, 1714 in "Atas da Camara," pp. 307-308.
8. Royal Order, 24 January, 1756 in Cód. 64 (CMOP), fols. 264-265.
9. Count of Assumar to Council; 2 February, 1721 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fols. 24v-25.
10. Petition, undated (May, 1743) in Cód. 49 (CMOP), fols. 68-68v.
11. Ibid.
12. Junta Report, 30 January, 1735 in Cód. 28 (CMOP), fols. 153-157v.
13. Council to Manuel da Costa Pontes, Marcos de Sousa, Alferes José Nobre dos Santos, 15 March, 1735 in Cód. 34 (CMOP), fol. 18. The council was complaining of the delays in the collection of the finta in the districts where

these men were the officials who had been delegated the responsibility for ensuring that the tax was collected. Governor Gomes Freire de Andrade advised the councils in an order issued in 1741 that João V had authorized the council, if strapped financially, to collect up to three hundred oitavas by the finta.

14. This sometimes meant that clerics were convicted along with laymen. Father Felipe Teixeira Pinto of the parish of Conceição de Giruoca, for example, was found guilty of having a black female slave within his house thereby creating great scandal. He was also condemned for going to a dance with a mulatta. Sentence of Father Felipe Teixeira Pinto, 27 March, 1730 in Cód. 11 (CABM), fol. 20.
15. Report of Visitation, 1733 in Cód. 14 (CABM), fols. 44 passim.
16. Ecclesiastical Order issued by D. Frey João da Cruz, 17 February, 1745 in Cód. 9 (CABM), fol. 151v.
17. See for example the charges brought against João Ferreira and João Miguel, 1733 in Cód. 14 (CABM), fols. 126 and 40v.
18. Count of Assumar to João V, 13 July, 1718 in Cód. 4 (SG), fols. 555-557.
19. Count of Assumar to Ouvidor of Rio das Mortes, 21 November, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 170.
20. Order of Count of Assumar, 21 November, 1719 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fols. 16v-17.
21. Agostinho Marques Perdigão Malheiros, A escravidão no Brasil: ensaio histórico-jurídico-social, 2 vols. (São Paulo: Edições Cultura, 1964): 1, p. 71.
22. Count of Assumar to João V, 4 October, 1719 in Cód. 4 (SG), fols. 713-714.
23. Ibid.
24. Count of Assumar to all parish priests, 23 September, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 151-151v.
25. Count of Assumar to Parish priests of Vila Rica, Sabará, and Mariana, 26 November, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 171v-172.
26. Count of Assumar to parish priest of Sabará, 26 December, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 184.

27. Of the 202 godparents selected from 1709 to 1719, 117 were freeborn, 78 slaves, and 7 freedmen. From 1719 to 1726 there were 200 godparents chosen: ;93 freeborn, 89 slaves, and 17 freedmen. Data compiled from Registry of Baptisms, vol. 1(APAD), passim.

Chapter 15
The Slave: Living and Working Conditions

Working conditions among the slaves created numerous medical problems. The best testimony as to the state of health of the slave population in Minas Gerais is that of Luís Gomes Ferreira, a Portuguese doctor who published a medical handbook in 1735 after living in Minas Gerais for over twenty-five years. ¹ Ferreira saw work and living habits as being the major cause of sickness among slaves.

Some of the blacks live in water, (such as the miners who work in the declivities and the fissures of the earth) others like moles mine under the surface of the earth--some to a depth of fifty, eighty, and over one hundred palmos [22 meters]; other [work] in subteranean roads much longer, often reaching six and seven hundred [palmos] where they work, eat and many times sleep.²

One of the greatest killers was lung disease (pontado pluritica) from which "died numberless slaves."³ The symptoms were poor appetite, vomiting, bloated stomach and stomach pain. Apparently the commonly used cures were as dangerous as the sickness. Ferreira reported that the usual treatment, bleeding slaves, giving them cordials or purgatives without vomit inducers, usually resulted in their death. His remedy was to force the patient to sweat, and give him large quantities of liquids to increase blood circulation.⁴

Another debilitating illness reported by Ferreira were foot disorders. This was caused by the slaves constant presence in water or mud, exacerbated by the failure to use shoes. These problems afflicted all miners, not just slaves. Ferreira attributed them to small insects which burroughed their way into the soles of the feet "like ants do in the ground."⁵ In some cases, arms and hands were similarly afflicted. Great pain resulted from this affliction and slaves often had difficulty walking or even standing. Ferreira noted that it was difficult to treat because the slaveowners refused to relieve the laborers from their duties. His remedy was to induce vomiting and then to burn⁶ the area of the hole and induce scabing.

Similar difficulties were reportedly encountered among slaves who had been punished. After being whipped the slaves were often put into irons and returned to work. Seldom was care given to treat the wounds. Ferreira notes that many slaves died from this lack of attention since often gangrene set in or the wounds were attacked by flies (moscas varejeiras) causing infections.⁷

Another affliction which seems to have seriously beset the slaves was venereal disease. Known as esquentamento or gonorrhoeas its extent can not be determined because of the lack of evidence. Ferreira's remedy was to have the patient ingest as much liquid as possible in order to cleanse the circulatory system. Ferreira assures

the reader of the efficacy of this treatment since he had
used it often on patients with success. 8

The slaves' lot was complicated by the harshness of working conditions. Not only did the slave work in very humid areas but he worked extremely long hours. During the dry winter season many mining operations had to cease due to the lack of water, thus when spring and the rains arrived the slaveowner wanted to get the maximum labor out of his slaves. Ferreira reports that commonly slaves did not eat supper until after midnight and that like most meals this one was probably poorly cooked as it was made in large quantities and served cold. Because of the poor preparation of the food, its availability in large quantity, and the fact that after eating the slave went to sleep, poor indigestion was a constant problem. 9

The slave diet, however, was not simply hard to digest, it was nutritionally inadequate since it was primarily corn. Breakfast was the leftovers from the previous day's supper. It was primarily cold angú, the basis of the slaves' diet. Angú is similar in appearance to a coarse corn gruel; its only ingredients are fubá (coarsely ground corn), and water. The Paulista custom of adding no salt was followed. Lunch was simply toasted corn meal. Dinner was angú with black beans and a portion of salt. The final meal, often after midnight, was angú and beans again. Water was the only drink served with these meals and too often the water came from the gold workings and was thus full of sediment. 10

Constant work in water affected the nervous system of some slaves. Ferreira reports an illness called cangalha or camba which afflicted only slaves from the Costa da Mina. The symptoms included convulsions and an inability to control motor reflexes. Ferreira's only remedies were to put the slave to work on a job which did not require him to work in water or sell him out of the captaincy.¹¹

For those slaves unfortunate enough to labor in sub-surface mines, the dangers were compounded. These were caused not only by humid and stiffling air, and constant standing in water, but also to the dangerous fumes emanating from the earth through which the slaves were burrowing. An anonymous writer in 1740 reported that "in these holes many Negroes died suffocated with the smell of metals."¹² The absence of mining engineers also meant that mines were poorly built and the threat of cave-ins ever present.

While the doctor was often called to treat diseases and illness, he was also expected to treat the side affects of the institution of slavery. Apparently one of the most common of these was eating clay or earth. Ferreira's treatment for this suicidal compulsion was to force the slave to drink water mixed with dirt from a cemetery. This was intended to be so repugnant that future efforts to eat clay would cause extensive vomiting.¹³

Efforts to treat the maladies afflicting the slaves were complicated by the characteristics of slavery. Not

only were there wide differences in the clothing, housing, and food provided by the slave owners, but their attitudes also varied tremendously. Ferreira laments that too few masters really cared about their slaves as people. Many slaves died because their masters failed to take a personal interest in them when ill; thus they lost the will to live.¹⁴ Without the confidence which the master could impart to his slave, the latter would refuse to struggle against his illness and refuse to eat. Death soon followed. Furthermore, when the slave was given medical attention, too often it was that administered by a poorly trained practitioner who relied on bleeding as the chief remedy. The almost automatic reflex to resort to bleeding was soundly criticized by Ferreira, who felt that this further weakened the patient when what was needed usually was to conserve and build up his strength.¹⁵

Given these living and working conditions, the mortality rate of slaves was high, although precisely by what it was has been the subject of great debate.¹⁶ A very rough estimate may be made for the parish of Antônio Dias. The total slave population of the t^êrmo of Vila Rica in 1745 was 20,168. If the proportion between the slave population of the urban core of Vila Rica and the rural area remained as it had been in 1722, 26% , then there were approximately 5244 slaves in the town. Of these, about half, 2122, probably resided in Antônio Dias. If these assumptions are basically correct, then the mortality rate

among slaves in 1745 was 82 per 1000. Put another way, 8.2% of the slaves in the parish died annually. The average life span of a slave then would be about twelve years.¹⁷ It should be noted that these figures on the mortality rate are probably too high. It seems probable that by 1745 there were more slaves in Antônio Dias than the figure utilized indicates. If so, then the death rate¹⁸ would be lower and the life span proportionally longer.

More appalling than the general death rate is the mortality rate of slave infants. Lack of proper medical care, poor living conditions, and inadequate food, and the lack of motivation on the part of the slave mothers, combined to produce a ratio of infant deaths to slaves baptised which was very high. It seems probable that in those cases where infant deaths were recorded, these infants had not been baptised. For the earliest period when adequate figures are available, the 1740's and 1750's, the infant mortality rate varied from 29% (1751) to 44% (1745 and 1752). More commonly the percentage ranged from 29¹⁹ to 35%.

Despite the rigors of slavery and the constant effort of the Portuguese to substitute their culture for that of the African, there is evidence that some African cultural traits were not eradicated. Foremost among these were music and dance. Dances of African origin, called batuques, were the scandal of Minas Gerais as they were of other parts of Brazil. They were considered lewd and provoca-

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tive. The first bishop to visit Minas Gerais, D. Antônio de Guadalupe, noted in 1726 that some slaves, especially those from the Costa da Mina "retain some traces of their paganism."²¹ Gathering in the evening the slaves sang and played instruments in homage to the dead. During religious festivals the slaves chose kings and queens to reign for one year.²² This same organization appears in the black brotherhoods and among the calhambolas.

Notes

1. Luís Gomes Ferreira, Erario mineral dividido em doz tratados (Lisbon: Por Miguel Rodrigues, Impressor do Senhor Patriarcha, 1735). From Ferreira's work can be gleaned information for a short biographical sketch. A self-proclaimed Old Christian, Ferreira was born in Minho, Portugal. He made two trips to Brazil. The date of the first is unknown although he was in Salvador in 1707. He must have returned to Portugal in that year, as in 1708 he once again sailed to Salvador via the Madeira Islands. He came to Brazil in 1708 as a licensed surgeon. Immediately upon landing, he set out on the sertão road to Minas Gerais. It appears that the period before 1724 was spent in Sabará and Carmo. In 1724 he moved to Padre Faria and the following year to Ouro Prêto. By 1729 he was living near Itacolumi Mountain where he was operating a small gold mine. He wrote the Erario mineral to correct misconceptions about treating illnesses in Brazil. Since no medical books he knew of specifically discussed Minas Gerais, or even Brazil, he felt that medical practitioners used remedies which were not suitable to the climate of Minas Gerais and the habits of its people. While he sometimes cites Hippocrates, Galen, and Curvo, Ferreira felt that "reason and experience were the two columns on which medicine and surgery were based." (Proemio) Given a conflict between the two, more faith was to be put on experience than on reason. If some of his remedies for medical problems sound outlandish today, it would be remembered that he was careful to note those which he had personally employed in treating patients and which, therefore, he could recommend based on his experience.

2. Ibid., p. 2.
3. Ibid., p. 1.
4. Ibid., pp.2-5
5. Ibid., p. 348.
6. Ibid., p. 359.
7. Ibid., p. 6.

8. Ibid., p. 108. The recommended liquid was composed of egg yolks, white sugar, and white wine. p. 338.
9. Ibid., p. 12.
10. This description of the slave diet was by José Antônio Mendes, a certified surgeon, who practiced in several hospitals of Minas Gerais. Mendes prepared a medical manual for people who lived far away from professional medical advice. José Antônio Mendes, Governo de mineiros mui necessario para os que vivem distantes de professores seis, oito, dez, e mais legoas, padecendo por esta cauza os seus domesticos e escravos (Lisbon: Na officina de Antônio Rodrigues Galhardo, 1770), pp. 68-69.
11. Ferreira, Erario mineral, pp. 360-361.
12. Quoted in Lima Junior, Vila Rica, p. 28.
13. Ibid., p. 158.
14. Ibid., p. 31-32.
15. Ibid., pp. 24 & 53.
16. See Goulart, Escravidão africana, pp. 162-164.
17. Not the seven years reported by Simonsen. Roberto C. Simonsen, História economica do Brasil (1500-1820). 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1969), p. 134. Simonsen's estimate was contested by Mauricio Goulart, Escravidão africana, pp. 162-164 whose argument is based upon estimates of annual production of slaves. Goulart feels that a productive life span of fifteen to twenty years was necessary to make slave labor profitable.
18. Perhaps this would bring the annual death rate down to the 4 reported by one perceptive commentator of the situation in Minas Gerais during the late colonial period. John Mawe, "Viagens ao interior do Brasil particularmente aos districtos do ouro e do diamante, em 1809-1810," ed. and trans. Rudolfo Jacob, Collectanea de scientistas estrangeiros, 2 vols. (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Official, 1922), 1, p. 231. This work was originally published in 1822. The figures used in these computations do not include infant deaths.
19. Data compiled from the registries of baptisms and burials of the parish of Antônio Dias.
20. Report of Visitation, 15 March, 1754 in Cód. 73(DF), fols. 8-8v.

21. Quoted in Vasconcellos, História do bispado de Mariana, p. 31.
22. Order of Count of Assumar, 20 May, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 288v.

Chapter 16
The Freedman

If the threat of slave rebellions affected the residents of Vila Rica, that posed by the increasingly large number of freedmen was also being recognized. Freedom was gained in a number of ways. The practice of freeing slaves for service or for some unusually important deed, such as locating a new strike or an unusually large nugget, was followed although with undetermined frequency.

Often slaves were freed upon the death of their owner. This practice appears to change after the middle of the century when such unconditional manumissions were practically replaced by contractual agreements whereby the slave was required to pay the equivalent of his value over a period of three to five years. This process called coartação, was used infrequently before 1740. The phenomenon of its increased use is probably linked to the economic reality of a downturn in the economy of Vila Rica after 1744. Once the slave was given his certificate of coartação, he was free to travel wherever he wished. Any children born to a coartada woman were considered to be slaves and their freedom also had to be purchased.

The slave, having paid for his freedom, had no guarantee that he would receive his certificate of liberty.

For example, a slaveholder noted that despite the fact that his slave had paid the final installment on her contract and that of her children, "I had not issued her letter of liberty because I feared that she would go away taking her children."²

In other cases, the slave was granted his freedom by the slaveholder. But even in these cases manumission often was conditional upon continued service with the family of the deceased, or was subject to coartação.³ Freeing slaves via the last will and testament was seen by some as guaranteeing favor in the sight of God. Thus one person freed two slaves "since God always takes unto Himself he who is charitable...he who does good deeds is good."⁴

It would appear that the slaves freed in this manner were house slaves. This is understandable since only these slaves came into close contact with the slaveholders. In the urban setting of Vila Rica, with its relatively low master-slave ratio, more manumissions probably occurred than in the plantation society of the Northeast. Another category of slave often freed was the children of house slaves. While the question of parentage was perhaps sometimes involved, a more likely explanation of this phenomenon is the influence of sentiment.⁵

Manumission also was obtained through the intercession of the brotherhoods of blacks and mulattoes. Unfortunately, the absence of brotherhood records prevents a determina-

tion of the extent of this activity. This is particularly true for the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1784, the Brotherhood of Mercês e Perdões approved a petition of an enslaved member who asked that his freedom be purchased. The brotherhood agreed, despite its fiscal
6
insolvency.

The transition from unconditional manumission to coartação is illustrated by the will of one João de Melo Fernandes, dated July 1756. Noting that he owned four slaves, "who because of the services which they have performed for me as well as for their [advanced] age," Fernandes wrote, "beside the ills they suffer and considering that sold at auction or privately they would be of little or no value, I do order that they be coartado at a price of thirty-two oitavas for two years for the benefit of my creditors."
7

The single most important form of manumission before 1730 was at baptism. In the years from 1715 to 1728 twenty-seven percent of all children of slave women who were baptised in the parish of Antônio Dias were freed at baptism. In some years the percentages were as high as
8
fifty percent.

Governor Assumar took steps to deal with this development. Action was presumed to be needed because of the commonly held negative perception of the character of the freedman.
9
Assumar felt that there was a danger of "this

land being populated by freed blacks who, like brutes, do not maintain the good order of the community. In a short time this land could fall into the hands of the said blacks." ¹⁰ He saw the freedman as a threat rather than as a stabilizing force. In this he shared the sentiments of his contemporaries. It is significant that edicts against the carrying of arms always include blacks and mulattoes, both slave and freed.

Assumar mistakenly felt that once free of the chains of slavery the freedman would seek to aid those remaining in bondage. He failed to perceive that freedman looked forward not backward. For those freed as adults, liberty was, in effect, a reward for having assimilated the goals of the Portuguese. Their success or failure was measured in terms of the dominant culture. Once freed, many ex-slaves quickly purchased their own slaves, despite the fact that this was against the law. ¹¹ While it cannot be determined whether or not they treated their charges better than whites slaveowners, it is doubtful that they did.

In an effort to limit the manumission of slaves, Assumar ordered that no Negro be freed without his master first submitting a request to the governor for approval. ¹² In reality, Assumar's orders had little effect. Freeing some slaves was beneficial to the white ruling class. As long as freedom was a legal possibility, the majority of slaves would have something to look forward to. The

flimsy hope that freedom could be gained by serving one's master well or saving one's earnings was a major factor in maintaining the status quo. This avenue of advancement served as an escape valve for relieving the internal tensions of a slaveowning society.

During the years before 1750, the number of freedmen in Vila Rica was not large. The largest number of freedmen to be registered in Vila Rica during the years for which good information is available, 1735-1749, was in 1735. The total was 316; there were sixty-six slaves for each freedman.¹³ From 1735 to 1741 the absolute number of freedman decreased to 172 (second matriculation) and the slave/freedman ratio rose to 124.8. This trend suggests that there were more freedmen prior to 1735. This decrease could be attributed to the sharp drop in the incidence of manumissions at baptisms after 1728. The decrease in the visibility of freedman (references to them by contemporaries become increasingly rare) may explain the increase in racial tensions, both institutionalized and non institutionalized. The activity of the calhambolos around Vila Rica reached dangerous proportions during the period from 1734 to 1750. Perhaps more significant is the racial conflict which erupted during the 1730's: white brothers were ejected from the previously integrated brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário, and new brotherhoods were formed with memberships sharply delineated along racial lines.

Those slaves living in an urban setting had more liberty of movement than those in the rural areas. This is confirmed by the extensive difficulties the authorities had in controlling the activities of slaves and the need to require each slave to have a pass written by his master. The practice of *coartação* also served to expand the mobility of the slave. Unless restricts were put in the note, the slave under this arrangement was free to go wherever he wished.

Not all of the slaves who lived on the property of the master slept in the communal slave quarters (senzalas.)¹⁴ Some owners provided individual huts for their slaves. One of these owners reported that his slaves "had their pigs, chickens, and...pots in which they cook in their ranchos."¹⁵ In other cases, the *senzala* was located in the cellar of the owner's home.

Assumar and his contemporaries were justified in lumping slaves and freedmen together for purposes of legislation. It appears than in the context of urban Vila Rica there was little difference between these categories.¹⁶ Urban slaves often worked for wages; as washer women, midwives, cooks, or bakers if women, and as artisans, barbers, porters, etc., if men. They were required to give a fixed sum to their owners; the remainder was theirs to squander on *aguardente*, to buy food, or to hoard to purchase their letters of manumission. Some slaves were not required to reside in the home of their owner and

often were able to marry nonslaves. There are even cases
 on record of man marrying their own slaves.¹⁷

Slaves were allowed to own property - houses, shops,
 even other slaves. It is not unusual to encounter licenses
 for shops issued to slaves.¹⁸ Similarly, the ownership of
 slaves by slaves, while unusual, was not rare even though
 against the law. Thus one writer noted in his will, "that
 I have a slave by the name of Francisco Landano Velho who
 owns a slave named Caetano, for whom he was paid already."¹⁹

Part of the difficulty confronting the freedman was
 the absence of economic opportunity. Until the 1730's the
 military, artisan, and bureaucratic classes were closed to
 the freedman. For many, legal freedom had little practi-
 cal effect;²⁰ with no alternatives available the freedman
 continued to occupy his former position. Unfortunately
 information on the occupations of the residents of Vila
 Rica is not available for the period under consideration.
 It was not until 1764 that the first real occupational
 listing was made to include all taxpayers. From it can
 be determined the composition of the freedman work force.
 Seventy-two freedmen appear in this census. Of these,
 thirty-five were artisans. In fact, by 1764, freedmen
 made up one quarter of all artisans.²¹ This may have been
 the result of policy decisions made by the royal adminis-
 trators to encourage freedmen to become artisans in hope
 that this would turn them into honest and productive mem-
 bers of the community.²² The next largest number of

freedmen were miners and laborers. The remainder were surgeons, shopowners, and those living off the income derived from their slaves, houses, or wealth. ²³ Of the one hundred and thirteen freedwomen, only thirty-five were listed as "working" and fifty as living "from their industry" (de sua agencia--thus implying the lack of regular work). ²⁴

Because only taxpayers were listed in the 1764 roll, only a partial view of the freedmen is obtained. To get the true picture, the first complete census, that of 1804, must be used. In that year, long after the artisan positions had been opened to freedman, 52% of the freedman and women were listed as agregados, that is, they lived in someone else's home where they occupied a position on the periphery of family life. Those included in this 52% had no occupation listed and can be presumed to have performed menial tasks and domestic service. This total would have been larger still had it included those agregados who listed some occupation. Many of these were prospectors--an indication of their marginal nature.

By 1804 a larger percentage of freedmen, 42% , were artisans or apprentices than in 1767. But only 10% were salaried employees and a mere 4% owned shops. Of the freedwomen, 21% were ambulatory sellers of foodstuffs, 7% were shopowners, and 6% were washerwomen. ²⁵ Thus, as late as 1804 the majority of freedmen and women performed menial tasks with the only breakthroughs into the mainstream of

the economic system being made by the freedmen who succeeded in becoming artisans.

But the latter were exceptional, as more subjective evidence confirms. Black freedom meant little to the white man who, in describing the location of his house, stated that it was adjacent "to that of my Negress named Maria Freedwoman."²⁶ It must have meant little to Captain José de Faria Pereira who admitted "hav[ing] four illegitimate children. [They] are the pardo children of a negress of mine who is free."²⁷ Freedom probably meant little to those freedmen who were agregados or to those listed as servants.

For the freedman there was always the fear that he could be enslaved. It can not be said for certain that this occurred, as there is no positive evidence of it. But like so many of the basic mechanisms at work in this colonial society, stock must be put in circumstantial evidence. The Vila Rica council reported to the king "the number of those who are freed and who lose their liberty is infinite."²⁸ The possibility was real enough for freedmen to petition the governor for protection. Thus, for example, the petition of one João Freedman was rewarded with a certificate from the governor ordering that because João had purchased his freedom legally no officers of the militia or justice could interfere with him.²⁹

The liberty of the freedman was subject to constant scrutiny. He had to be able to prove at all times that

he had been legally freed. The municipal judges and ouvidores were authorized to arrest any freedman about whose legal status there was any shadow of a doubt. They were to keep these freedmen in jail until their true status had been determined. ³⁰ In this atmosphere the burden of proof fell upon the freedman.

For the infant who was freed at baptism, liberty meant little. His mother was still a slave and the child probably was raised in the manner he would have been were he still enslaved. Until the child was old enough to strike out on his own, the master was able to obtain some menial labor from him. Little wonder that slave owners, on occasion, failed to legalize the child's status. Thus one Salvador Rodrigues noted in his will that

for the manumission of this female slave her godfather paid half a pound of gold... about seven years ago, and until now I have not issued her certificate of freedom despite her having served me until [this the] hour of my death.³¹

The certificate was to be issued after Rodrigues' death.

It is possible that children freed at baptism were, under some conditions, to be taken away from the property of the master. This perhaps was meant to ensure that the master did not spend money on feeding and clothing a person who would leave before his productive capacity could be exploited by the master. It also might have served to remove a child from particularly degrading circumstances. The extent to which this was practiced has not yet been

determined. That it occurred is substantiated by provisions found in some wills. For example, in a will prepared in 1761, a dying woman related that upon the birth of a certain slave she accepted thirty-two oitavas instead of the predetermined forty on the condition that the child be taken away. This condition was not fulfilled and the owner insisted upon payment in full.

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Because of the dichotomy in Mineiro society of slave and free segments, the freedman occupied a very precarious position. Legally he was neither. In practice, however, popular sentiment tended to identify him with the enslaved part of the population. Even after 1720 when his opportunity for mobility had been extended as far as the artisan class and shopkeeping, there was a ceiling on the freedman's ability to climb. In the intense competition with the freeborn, the freedman was at a disadvantage. For many, freedom meant simply the end of the master's legal responsibility and, as the century progressed, the number of slaves receiving their liberty after the end of their productive lives increased.

It is in the light of this situation that the quality of life of the freedman should be studied. The process of coartação was resorted to increasingly as a means of balancing the two extremes of the master's desire to reward faithful service and his fear of losing a valuable investment. The slave who entered into this contractual arrangement probably was in the most productive period of

his life. He then spent three to five years purchasing his freedom. Upon winning his manumission, the freedman was probably beyond his most productive years. The slave who was freed gratis by his master normally was a domestic slave who had served long and loyally. Thus, once the process of manumission at baptism became exceptional, the typical freedman was older and therefore less valuable and less productive. This can be seen from the wills of freedmen. Of the fourteen who were married, only two had children through marriage; the remainder had no legal offspring.³³ Other freemen had natural children presumably while they were still enslaved. Thus the fact that manumission often came late in life had a significant effect on the quality of family life.

The freedman was not able fully to exploit his new freedom, and the options available to him were limited. Observers commented on the status of the freedman. A Brazilian commentator in 1807 noted that those who had been, or whose parents had been, slaves lived by begging and stealing.³⁴ Seven years earlier, another noted that "marriages and, more importantly, concubinage with black and mulatto women had made three fourths of the masses of people (povo de gente) freedman, without good habits, and with the insane opinion that freedmen would not work."³⁵ Seventy years earlier, Luís Gomes Ferreira succinctly noted "that blacks are worse off, for the most part, if they are freedmen than if they are slaves."³⁶

Notes

1. Will of José Fernandes de Abreu, freed black, 18 May, 1759 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fols. 379-380. "The children which [the slave woman being coartada] bears between the date of the certificate of coartação and the issuance of the certificate of freedom will not be exempted from enslavement. If she wishes to free them, paying their just value and price she is not to be impeded."
2. Will of José Rodrigues Sampaio, 7 May, 1745 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 2, fols. 65-65v.
3. Will of José Fernandes de Abreu, freed black, 18 May, 1759 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fol. 379v. A case where these situations were combined is that of Antônio João Torres. In his will, Torres lists among his possessions one slave, coartado at 340\$000. Of this slave's five children four had already been freed unconditionally but the fifth was to be manumitted only after serving Torres until his death. Will of Antônio João Torres, 29 July, 1747 in Cód. 307, No. 6582 (APHANOP). Another example is that of Joana Machado de Azevedo who had entered into a contractual arrangement with her slave who would be allowed to purchase her freedom over a three year period. In her will, Joana Machado de Azevedo gave her slave the opportunity to serve the family thereby gaining the money to purchase her freedom. Will of Joana Machado de Azevedo, 3 November, 1773 in Cód. 442, No. 9292 (APHANOP).
4. Will of Captain Domingos Francisco dos Reis, 27 April, 1756 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fol. 296.
5. Will of Captain Antônio Perreira Vilanova, 1 August, 1749 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vols. 3, fol. 277. Vilanova freed those mulattoes which were born in his house. Since at the same time he willed to his slave Francisca a gold mine, 200 \$000, and seven slaves, it is not too presumptuous to suggest that the mulattoes he was freeing were his own offspring.
6. Brotherhood Council Session, 14 March, 1784 in Cód. 11 (AIMP), fol. 73v.

7. Will of João de Melo Fernandes, 15 July, 1756 in Registry of Deaths (APAD), vol. 3, fols. 297-297v.
8. For example in 1716.
9. The town council noted in a report to the king that "Negroes and freed Negroes in this land...are of no value to the community or to Your Majesty." Council to João V, undated but sent by 1719 fleet in Cód. 19 (CMOP), fol. 3.
10. Order of Count of Assumar, 21 November, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 283.
11. Order of Count of Assumar, 21 November, 1719 In Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 282v-283v.
12. Order of Count of Assumar, 21 November, 1719 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fol. 17.
13. Mappa dos Negros, Códice Costa Matoso, fol. 181-187.
14. These had thatched roofs in comparison to the master's home which had tiled roofs. Search Order, 27 July, 1786 in "Documentos do Arquivo da Casa dos Contos (Minas Gerais)," Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro 65 (1943): 218.
15. Will of Captain Antônio Pereira Villanova, 1 August, 1749 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fols. 277.
16. A council report to João V in 1742 noted that during the administration of Governor Braz Baltezarde da Silveira daily wages of a slave averaged 4 1/2 oitavas and that thirty years later this had dropped to 2-4 vintens (one oitava = 75 vintens). Council to João V, undated but sent by 1742 fleet in Cód. 49 (CMOP), fol. 44.
17. An interesting parallel to this development is the experience of José Gomes Vieira, a freed black who "was once a slave of Luís Gaspar who sold me to my wife Filiciana Vieira Gomes who issued my letter of manumission." Will of José Gomes Vieira, 13 August, 1753 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fols. 226v-227. Vieira thus owed his freedom to his wife, who may have been free-born.
18. See licenses of Francisco, slave of Sargento-mor Antônio Dias Leme, 15 January, 1715 in Cód. 18 (CMOP), fol. 68 and Lourença Josefa, slave of Father Bernardo Madureira, 22 January, 1715 in Cód. 18 (CMOP), fol. 69.

19. Will of Captain Antônio Pereira Vilanova, 1 August, 1749 in Registry of Burials (APAD), fol. 3, fol. 277. The Lista dos Moradores das Cabeceiras de Santa Barbara acima also contains an example of this. Avulso Maço No. 173 (APM), undated but probably 1733. Assumar in his order of 21 November, 1719 noted that slaves could not own slaves. For this order see Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 283-283v.
20. One of the few concrete effects it had was to entitle the slave to add a surname. Thus Teresa, slave of Antônio da Silva, became Teresa dos Santos, freedwoman, and Tomas, slave of Maria Carvalho, became Tomas da Cruz, freedman in Cód. 3 (ANSRAC), fol. 73v and Cód. 2 (ANSRAC), fol. 9v. It should be noted that the names selected were not those of the masters involved.
21. There were 367 artisans of which eighty-eight were freedmen. Information on occupations for 1764 was obtained from the tax rolls prepared for the collection of the special penalty tax levied because revenue collected for the royal fifth had not reached the one hundred arrôbas agreed upon by a Mineiro junta and royal officials. Penalty Tax Roll, 1764 in Cód. 82 (CMOP), fols. 16-81.
22. Royal Order, 24 November, 1734 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 87v.
23. Penalty Tax Roll, 1764 in Cód. 82 (CMOP), fols. 16-81 passim.
24. Ibid.
25. Um recenseamento na capitania de Minas Gerais, pp. 63-113. These figures are based upon a sample of the residents of Vila Rica encompassing the bairro of Ouro Preto.
26. Will of João Rodrigues Chaves, 3 March, 1753 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 2, fol. 215.
27. Will of Captain José de Faria Pereira, 5 June, 1752 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fol. 292.
28. Council to João V, undated but sent by 1742 fleet in Cód. 49 (CMOP), fol. 42v.
29. Order of Count of Assumar, 2 October, 1716 in Cód. 9 (SG), fol. 48.
30. Royal Order, 11 May, 1757 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 89.
31. Will of Salvador Rodrigues, 5 May, 1760 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fols. 363-363v.

32. Will of Mariana Ferreira da Silva, 8 March, 1761 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fol. 378.
33. From wills examined in APHANOP: Cód. 460, Nos. 9737, 9750, 9754 (1761-1762), Cód. 316, No. 6735 (1765), Registry of Burials (APAD), Vol. 2, fols. 74v (1746), 81 (1750), 221 (1751), 230 (1753), and Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fols. 226v (1753), 248v (1755), 379 (1759), 395v (1762), and 402 (1758).
34. Anonymous, "Descrição dos sertões de Mines, despovoação, suas causas e meios de os fazer florentes," Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro 25 (1862): 192.
35. Nelson Omega, A cidade colonial, Coleção Documento Brasileiros, vol. 110 (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1961), p. 192.
36. Ferreira, Erario mineral, p. 243.

Chapter 17
Social Organization: Compadresco Relationships
and Marriage Patterns

One of the most important elements of the social organization of this period is the compadresco or god-parent relationship. Frequently cited by writers in discussing colonial Brazilian society, it has less often been examined systematically through parish records. This relationship can be seen as a social cement linking the various levels of colonial society, and as a mechanism of potential social mobility. The parish records of Antônio Dias are available for part of the period under study and provide an insight into the compadresco mechanism.

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From 1707 to 1726,¹ 47 male and 36 female free-born children were baptised. Of these, 43 were legitimate births -- a surprising figure, almost 52%, considering the usual assumptions concerning the lack of family life during this early period. The tendency was to choose one male and one female to serve as godparents or to select only one male. Ten cases of two male godparents were registered. Seven of these cases involved one or two godparents from the upper social strata. Two of the fathers accounting for five children were themselves

members of the elite. A good example of the process of binding together members of the elite through the compadresco relationship is provided by Ventura Ferreira Vivas, a *homen da governança*, who had served as *almotacel* in 1711 and 1715, procurator in 1712 and municipal judge in 1714. Vivas' use of *compadresco* during the *Guerras dos Emboabas* to protect his position has been noted already. In 1712 and then again in 1715 children born to Vivas and his mistress were baptised. For the daughter Anna, born in 1712, Vivas chose as godparents Pascoal da Silva Guimarães and Manuel de Almeida Costa.² Both men had been electors in 1711 and Costa was a councillor at the time of the baptism, having served as procurator the previous year. For the baptism of his son Pedro, in 1715,³ Vivas selected Manuel Martins Lopes and Belchior Nogueira. Like Guimarães and Costa, these men were militia officers. Furthermore, Lopes had served as *almotacel* in 1712 and was serving as procurator in 1715. Nogueira had been an *almotacel* in 1713. This is a clear example of the godparent relationship being used to bind together the elite.

In two of the other cases selection of upper stratum godparents was clearly an effort for lower class parents to tie their children to people who would be in a position to materially aid both the child and the parents, who also became linked to the godparent. Of the remaining three cases little can be said. One, and probably two, of the children were mulatto, but on the fathers and god-

fathers no information upon which to draw any conclusions could be obtained.

In a significant number of instances, twenty-nine, only one godparent was chosen. Seventeen of these involved legitimate births. For reasons that are not clear, the selection of a single male godfather took on special significance only after 1719. Before 1719, only one such case occurs. Between 1719 and 1726, except for 1720, the selection of a single godparent was common. In twelve of the cases, the godfather was of the upper class. On two occasions a governor was selected as the godfather; on another his military aid was chosen. The ouvidor was named once and the provedor of the treasury twice. Four other godfathers were homens da governança. One man, Dr. Tomé de Sousa Coutinho, exemplifies the use of the com-padresco to establish social status. During these years Coutinho had three children; each was given a single godparent. The three godfathers selected were Governor Lourenço de Almeida, Ouvidor João Pacheco Pereira, and provedor Antônio Belquer del Rio.

That this relationship was an avenue for establishing, rather than simply maintaining, social position is evident from the fact that none of the ten fathers in this group were members of the elite, although some, such as Coutinho and Gabriel Fernandes Aleixo, were members of the upper elements of society. Coutinho's wife was the only woman in this group with the honorific title "dona" re-

flecting her husband's importance. Only three of the twelve children were illegitimate.

One baptism is noteworthy because the single godparent⁵ selected was a godmother. The father of the child being baptised was a *homen de governança*. This was a highly unusual selection, perhaps reflecting the godmother's social position. Of the remaining eleven cases of single godparents, insufficient information was found upon which to base any conclusions.

There were forty-two cases where a male and female were chosen as godparents. In twenty-four cases one or both of the godparents selected were members of the upper elements of society. Of these, only nine cases (four different sets of parents) involved parents who were on the same social level as the godparents selected. In the other fifteen cases *compadresco* was employed to improve the situation of the parents -- the selection was vertical, not horizontal.

Often these categories overlapped. Among those who used the *compadresco* relationship first to improve and then to maintain their social position was Domingos Francisco de Oliveira. As a result of his serving as *vereador* in 1714 and municipal judge in 1723 and 1725, Oliveira was a *homen da governança*. Oliveira and his wife had six children baptised during the period from 1710 to 1722. Two of the baptisms occurred prior to Oliveira's entry into the *governança*. In both cases, the godparents

were Pascoal da Silva Guimarães and his wife, D. Isabel da Costa.⁶ One of the children was named Pascoal, presumably in deference to the godfather. Of the four children born in 1716, 1718, 1720, and 1722, Isabel da Costa was godmother to two. The four godfathers were members of the elite: Antônio Francisco da Silva, Sargento-mor Manuel de Sousa Serqueira, Manuel Alvares de Oliveira, and Provedor Antônio Belquer del Rio.⁷ Thus the compadresco was useful both for establishing ties with the elite and then for solidifying social status. The selection of D. Isabel da Costa four times while her husband served only twice could mean that she was a generous and able godmother. D. Isabel da Costa also served as godmother to three children clearly born to lower class families.⁸ Compadresco, by tying together the members of the upper stratum served as a stabilizing factor limiting in-group antagonisms. By linking people of different social levels it served to bind together the society and may have aided social mobility.

In the ten cases of children identifiably born to upper class parents, nine of them involved the selection of social peers as godparents. Thus, for example, the mulatto son of Captain Antônio de Miranda and his black mistress was fortunate to have Capitão-mor Henrique Lopes de Araújo as his godfather.⁹ Two rich gold miners thus were joined at the baptism font. Of these ten children, only two were illegitimate. Of these two cases, elite

godparents were chosen for one but not for the other.

This difference in attitude may have been due to the acceptance by the father of formal responsibility for one child and his refusal to do so for the other.

For the non-elite, free segment of the populace little information exists. The little that does points to the selection of godparents at the same social level as the parents. Several examples can be cited. The godfather of Maria, the daughter of Francisco Nogueiro, a shopowner, and his wife was Manuel Lopes, a butcher.¹⁰ In the two cases of children born of a freed woman and an enslaved father, the godparents were either slave or freed rather than free born.¹¹ While these three cases admittedly comprise a very small sample, it nevertheless seems significant that the godparents were all of the same social level as the parents.

There were eighty-six cases of children born of slave mothers and freed at baptism. Of these, thirteen were the product of illicit sexual affairs between a man and his slave. Clearly the sense of responsibility of the father was a significant factor in the emancipation of these children. The predominant characteristic of the compadresco relationships of those children who were freed was the selection of godparents who were free. In seventy-seven cases the godparent or godparents chosen were free. In six other cases the godfather was free-born while the godmother was either enslaved or a freedwomen. Stated

differently, of the 138 godparents involved, fully 127 were free born. Three others were forros (freedmen) and only eight were slaves.

That the selection of free godparents was a key to manumission becomes obvious when the slave baptisms are examined. Whereas ninety-two percent of the godparents of manumitted children were free, only sixty-one percent of those not freed were. More illuminating, however, is the fact that whereas for eighty-nine percent of the freed children the godparent or both godparents were free, the same was true for only fifty-two percent of slave children--forty-eight percent of the cases involved either one or two slave or freed godparents.

There was another difference between the godparents of those slave infants who were freed and those who were not. Those who were freed usually had only male godparents--sixty-three percent had no godmothers. Only thirteen percent of those not freed were not given godmothers. The reasons for this pattern are difficult to ascertain. It is possible that parents in the process of selecting a godfather were aware when the latter intended to free his godchild and, content with this, failed to name a godmother.

The composition by sex of those children who were freed is also illuminating. Despite the fact that fifty-two of every hundred baptisms were of males, only forty-three percent of those freed were males. This could be

interpreted to mean that, perhaps for economic reasons, a disproportionately large number of less valuable female slaves were freed. But viewed in another way these figures become less significant. Twenty percent of all males born to slave women during this period were freed as opposed to twenty-six percent of all females. Given the small sample, the six percent difference is not large enough to warrant generalizations, although the evidence indicates a propensity to free females.

Also worthy of note is the predominance of males acting as godparents. Seventy-seven percent of those chosen as godparents of children freed at baptism were males. For godparents of free born children, the figure is sixty-nine percent with the figure decreasing slightly to sixty-five percent for slave children. This shows the propensity to seek male godparents often to the exclusion of godmothers. This must have been viewed as an advantage to the child and to his family. This is particularly true for those who subsequently were freed.

It must be noted that the practice of selecting two males as godparents occurred despite the objections of the church hierarchy. ¹² If the bishopric of Rio de Janeiro through the various inspectors dispatched to Minas had little success in ending this practice, the civil authorities were just as unsuccessful in imposing the changes it wished to make. Governor Assumar, as was noted above, attempted to stop slaves from selecting other slaves as

the godparents of their children. This practice was not stopped by Assumar's edicts.

But compadresco kinship was not established only by baptism; it was also created by marriage. That this relationship existed is evident from the entry made concerning one of the earliest marriages on record in the parish of Ouro Preto.¹³ After listing the bride and groom the parish priest went on to note that godparents were present.¹⁴

It seems probable that the compadresco relationship through marriage during this period was much weaker than that established by baptism. This is due to the newness of the Mineiro society. The ties of baptism kinship were multilevel in that they linked godparents to godchild, godparents to the child's natural parents, and godparent to godparent.¹⁵ The same could not be done by marriage kinship since the parents of the people being married resided on the coast or in Portugal. Not enough time had elapsed for children born in Minas Gerais to have reached marriageable age in appreciable numbers. In fact, of the twenty-five people being married whose origins are listed not a single one was born in Minas Gerais. Thus the kinship ties were limited to principals--godparents and godparent-godparent.

As with kinship by baptism, the injunction to name one godfather and one godmother was seldom honored. Of the fifty-four marriages for which the names of the god-

parents are given, thirty-seven, or 68%, involved only male godparents. While normally two godparents were chosen, the selection of three was not uncommon. On several occasions four were named.

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The kinship ties established through marriage tended to be vertical in nature. Of the thirty-two cases about which some conclusions can be made, in only one case were all of the godparents on the same level as the couples being married. In this one case all four people involved were slaves.

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In the other fifteen cases where the principals were either black, mulatto, mameluco, or Indian, not one of the thirty-eight godparents was identified with these races. In the remaining sixteen, the vertical nature of the relationship is established by the social status of the godparents. In each case, at least one of the godparents was of a higher status than the principals. For example, the godparents of Francisco Pereira Cazado and Marcelina de Azevedo, who were married in 1719, were Sargento-mor Bento Felix da Cunha, Sargento-mor Manuel Dias de Menezes, and Captain Manuel de Matos Fragozo.

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Besides the status implicit in the militia commissions, both Cunha and Menezes were homens da governança.

It is clear that when a couple had a choice of marriage godparents they chose people of a higher social position than theirs. This seems natural since it offered the opportunity of establishing links to the elite. For

the godparents if offered the chance to further augment the personalistic bonds which institutionalized their status and allowed this status to be transformed into power.

These records also are useful for comprehending the social system. They point to the various tendencies within the Mineiro society, foremost of which was that marriage often occurred within like racial groups but in a significant number of cases matrimonial union crossed racial lines. Thus, of the nineteen cases where one of the marriage partners was black, the other was black in ten of them. Of the others, five partners were mulatto and one was Indian. The remaining three are particularly significant in that they apparently involve the marriage of blacks with individuals accepted by parish priests as white.¹⁹ In one case the bride was a slave and in another the groom was black, and perhaps still a slave, and the woman accepted as white.

There were seven weddings involving slaves. In only one of these were both principals slaves. In four cases the husband was a slave while the bride was a freedwoman.²⁰ This reinforces the conclusions stated above concerning the absence of a distinct dividing line between slave and freedman. In the remaining two instances, slave women married freemen: one of the grooms being an Indian and the other white.²¹

While on ten occasions black women married black men, on five others the brides married mulattoes. This shows the tendency of women to marry men whose skins were as light or lighter than theirs. This tendency may be seen also in the cases of two mulatto women who married white men and one black woman who did the same. There was only one recorded instance of a woman marrying a man of darker skin.

This same pattern is evident in marriages involving Portuguese-born women. Only three women are identified as being Portuguese immigrants, emphasizing the relative absence of Portuguese women in the mining district during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In each of the three cases the groom was also Portuguese-born.

Because of this absence of Portuguese-born women, Brazilian-born women had an opportunity to marry a husband from the "old country." This was considered more prestigious than marrying a Brazilian. Full information is available on seven marriages involving Brazilian women. In five of these, the husband was Portuguese. On only two occasions did Brazilian women marry Brazilian males. Significantly, not a single native of São Paulo is identified as being one of the principals during this period.

Clearly, in the unsettled atmosphere of the Vila Rica during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, marriage served as a vehicle of vertical mobility for a significant portion of those involved. In the thirty-four

cases on which information exists to draw preliminary conclusions, thirteen involved upward mobility on the part of the brides. In nine instances, this mobility was relatively slight, being in-group: Brazilian born women wedding Portuguese men, black women marrying mulattoes,²⁸ and one case of a black woman marrying an Indian. But in four of these, the distance between the principals was significant: white men taking black or mulatto spouses.

Notes

1. The data utilized in this chapter come primarily from the Registry of Baptisms, (APAD) vols. 1 and 2. It is significant that all births, free as well as slave, were registered in the same books. The years 1707-1726 constitute a distinct period because of the characteristics peculiar to it. Among the most significant of these is the slave emancipation rate. Thus, while the period under study can be divided politically into two segments, 1695-1711 and 1711-1720, socially the years 1707-1726 form a single meaningful unit. Unfortunately, no information exists upon which to make any statement concerning the pre-1707 period.
2. Baptism of Ana, 16 August, 1712 in Registry of Baptisms (APAD), vol. 1, fol. 5v.
3. Baptism of Pedro, 15 June, 1715 in Registry of Baptisms (APAD), vol.1, fol. 31v.
4. Baptisms of Bento, 13 February, 1726, Barbara, 7 January, 1725 and Maria, 30 July, 1723 in Registry of Baptisms (APAD), vol.1, fols. 69, 60, and 55.
5. Baptism of Francisco, 1 January, 1724 in Ibid., fol. 56.
6. Baptisms of José and Pascoal, 8 December, 1710 and 22 March, 1713 in Ibid., fols. 3 and 15v.
7. Baptisms of Maria, Ignacio, João and Manuel, 15 July, 1716, 3 July, 1718, 10 July, 1720 and 1 January, 1722 in Ibid., fols. 32v, 36, 42v, and 49v.
8. Baptisms of Quitéria, Isabel, and Agostinho, 13 March, 1718, 26 July, 1719 and September, 1719 in Ibid., fols. 35, 39, and 74v.
9. Baptism of Antônio, 2 October, 1718 in Ibid., fol. 37.
10. Baptism of Maria Branca, 6 February, 1715 in Ibid., fol. 27.
11. Baptisms of Cristina and Antônia, 2 May, 1723 and 27 June, 1723 in Ibid., fols. 54 and 54v.

12. Baptisterio, e ceremonial dos Sacramentos da Sancta Madre Igreja Romana, emendado, e acrescentado em muitas cousas nesta ultima impressão conforme o Cathecismo & Ritual Romano (Coimbra: Officina de Luís Seco Ferreira, 1730).

13. There are no records of marriages performed in Antônio Dias prior to 1728 so that those for Ouro Preto have been utilized in the preparation of this section. Registry of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials (APOP), vol. 1.

14. Marriage of Domingos and Josefa, 12 November, 1713 in *Ibid.*, fol. 61v. The phrase employed is "foram padrinhos."

15. That this was taken seriously can be seen from the fact that godparents of the same child were not allowed to marry one another since a spiritual bond had been created.

16. For example, the marriage of Ventura Ferreira de Queiros and Maria de Jesus da Silva, 24 May, 1723 in Registry of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials (APOP), fol. 72 and that of Antônio Gomes dos Santos and Micaela dos Reis, 7 July, 1723 in *Ibid.*, fol. 72.

17. Marriage of Domingos and Josefa, 12 November, 1713 in *Ibid.*, fol. 61v.

18. Marriage of Francisco Pereira Cazado and Marcelina de Azevedo, 21 September, 1719 in *Ibid.*, fol. 68v.

19. Marriages of Manuel Rodrigues, Cape Verdean black, and Susana Andrada, Joaquim Paes dos Prazeres and Maria da Costa Franca, freed black, and Manuel de Figueiredo and Faustina de Barros, slave of Pedro de Barros, 12 November, 1714, 24 January, 1724 and 1 August, 1725 in *Ibid.*, fols. 62v, 73v, and 77.

20. Marriages of Pedro Guine, slave, and Maria, freed black, Ilario Alvares, slave, and Teresa da Costa, freed black, Antônio Barbosa, slave, and Antônia Barbosa, freed black, and Antônio Nunes, slave, and Josefa Maria, freed black, 8 October, 1715, 30 December, 1726, 23 February, 1726, and 13 November, 1726 in *Ibid.*, fols. 65v, 79v, 77v, and 77v-79.

21. Marriages of Miguel Correa, Carijó, and Ignacia de Sousa, crioula slave, and Manuel de Figueiredo and Faustina de Barros, slave, 2 April, 1723 and 1 August, 1725 in *Ibid.*, fols. 71 and 77.

22. Marriages of Pascoal Rodrigues, pardo, and Ana Bezerra, freed black, Antônio da Cunha, pardo, and Meliciana do Espírito Santo, freeborn black, Francisco de Oliveira, pardo, and Maria da Conceição, freed black, 12 April, 1716, 17 April, 1719, 19 February, 1719, 20 February, 1724, and 18 April, 1725 in *Ibid.*, fols. 66v, 67v-68, 67v, 74, and 76v.
23. Marriages of José da Silva Aragão and Maria Borges, parda, Luís da Silva Sousa and Ighes Carneira de Brito, parda, and Manuel de Figueiredo and Faustina de Barros, slave, 20 July, 1722, 29 February, 1724, and 1 August, 1725 in *Ibid.*, fols. 70v, 74, and 77.
24. Marriage of Manuel Rodrigues, Cape Verdean black, and Susana Andrada, 12 November, 1714 in *Ibid.*, fol. 62v.
25. Marriages of Manuel Gomes Pereira and Ighes Francisca da Silva, Manuel de Sousa and Leonor Jacinta dos Ramos, and Antônio Lopes de Matos and Francisca da Conceição Catharina Fernandes, 26 September, 1718, 5 August, 1724, and 11 March, 1725 in *Ibid.*, fols. 65, 75, and 76.
26. Marriages of Manuel Ribeiro Figueiredo and Ana de Campos, Luís da Silva Sousa and Ighes Carneira de Brito, Antônio de Macedo Pereira and Francisca da Silva Xaviera, and João Fernandes dos Reis and Ignacia pereira de Jesus, 23 January, 1724, 29 February, 1724, 22 April, 1724, 16 May, 1726, and 20 November, 1726 in *Ibid.*, fols. 73v, 74, 74v, 78 and 79.
27. Marriages of Francisco Perreira Cazado and Marcelina de Azevedo and Bento da Silva and Lourença Batista Bayon, 21 September, 1719 and 8 October, 1724 in *Ibid.*, fols. 68v and 75v.
28. Marriage of Miguel Correa, Carijó, and Ignacia de Sousa, black slave, 2 April, 1723 in *Ibid.*, fol. 71.

Chapter 18
The Irmandades and Social Differentiation

One of the mechanisms created to solidify the societal bonds was the lay brotherhood, or irmandade. The brotherhoods in Vila Rica were a manifestation of the institutionalization of class conflict.¹ The links between members of social groups were made firmer through the formation of these organizations. These lay organizations were of great importance in Portugal and on the coast of Brazil, but perhaps no where did they play such an important role as in Minas Gerais. Elsewhere the brotherhoods were in competition with or subservient to the religious orders. In Minas Gerais the orders were systematically and successfully prohibited from establishing monasteries or convents, to avoid the creation of strong focii of opposition to the crown. Thus, to the brotherhoods fell the responsibility of church construction and organizing religious festivities.

As elsewhere, the individual brotherhoods came to represent certain groups. During the period before 1720 the Santissimo Sacramento Brotherhoods came to represent the upper strata, while those of Rosário represented the blacks. The Santissimo Sacramento was usually the first brotherhood to be established.

The creation of these brotherhoods was a manifestation of the increasing rigidification of the social structure. Before 1712 all social levels had been content to worship together. Conceivably this was a response to the unsettled atmosphere of the boom town of Vila Rica. After that date there was a proliferation of brotherhoods representing specific groups. The foundation of these brotherhoods indicates that a process of social differentiation had begun.

The first brotherhoods, whose existence can be documented, were composed of white men. These were the Brotherhoods of Santissimo Sacramento. One was founded in each of the parish churches of Ouro Preto and Antônio Dias in 1712 and 1717, respectively. Indications are that these represented the elite. While few of the records of the brotherhoods in Antônio Dias parish are extant today, a number of those from Ouro Preto are, and these provide an insight into the role of the brotherhood. The only available statute for the Santissimo Sacramento Brotherhood is not the original but the second one, which dates from 1738. No entry requirements are specified although the nature of the brotherhood is clear from the provision that a wife of a brother could join if she was "free from contaminated blood (sendo izenta da inflecta
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nação). Furthermore, it was this brotherhood which had contributed most to the construction of the parish church--so much, in fact, that it was given the main altar, even

though the Santissimo Sacramento was not the patron of the church.

Besides the two brotherhoods of Santissimo Sacramento there were at least nine other brotherhoods in existence in Vila Rica prior to 1720. This total exceeds by three the number of brotherhoods assumed to have existed by the foremost student of this question, Fritz Teixeira Salles.³ With the exception of the two black brotherhoods, relatively little is known of the others. The two about which least is known were composed of mixed bloods. One of these was Nossa Senhora do Parto which was established first in the settlement of Bom Sucesso and then moved to the chapel of Padre Faria when the population of that settlement began to decrease.⁴ According to tradition this brotherhood while in Bom Sucesso was to have been composed of mamelucos (the offspring of white and Indian parents). The other was that of Nossa Senhora do Conceição dos Pardos. The only reference to this irmandade is made by Father Agostinho de Santa Maria who refers to the pardos as "sinfully impure."⁵ These two brotherhoods led ephemeral and, probably, short-lived existences.

The remaining five were more successful. Two of these were the brotherhoods named after the patron saints of the two parish churches--Nossa Senhora da Conceição and Nossa Senhora do Pilar. Both of these certainly shared with the Brotherhoods of Santissimo Sacramento the responsibility for building the parish churches. It is

ironic that so little is known of the composition of these corporations. Certainly that of Nossa Senhora da Conceição was composed of whites⁶ and the same was probably true of that of Pilar.

Another brotherhood whose membership was primarily white was Bom Jesus dos Passos. The founding of this organization was approved in 1715.⁷ Included within it were many members of the elite and these consistently held positions of leadership. This is verified by the election lists of the ruling board for 1738-1739, the first year for which records exist. In that year the head of the brotherhood was a sargento-mor and nine of twenty-four members of the council had titles indicating their high social status.⁸ In 1741-1742, the head of the brotherhood was the governor; both the secretary and procurator were capitães-mores; and sixteen of eighteen council members had militia commissions and another was a priest.⁹ Clearly this brotherhood drew its leaders from the elite. The absence of any non-white board members is suggestive that these people were not allowed to join the brotherhood.

The composition of the remaining two brotherhoods is not known. The Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora das Almas was founded in 1713 with membership opened to "everyone who wished to be a brother."¹⁰ Who in fact joined is not known. The Brotherhood of Santa Quitéria is enshrouded in the same mystery as that of Nossa Senhora do Parto.

Its end is known -- it allowed its chapel to be taken over by the newly-formed elitist Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Carmo near the middle of the century. Its beginnings are unknown as is its composition, although it is known that it existed as early as 1720, when the town council awarded it land.¹¹

The existence of mulatto brotherhoods can be ascertained only for the period beginning in 1725. This time lag is an indication of the lack of strength of the mulattoes, attributable undoubtedly to their few numbers. While many mulattoes migrated from other parts of Brazil, they must have represented a small minority of the population in the mining district until the 1720's. By that time, the inevitable consequences of race mixing must have begun to be felt as the number of locally born mulattoes increased rapidly.

Frei Santa Maria refers to the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da Conceição of Ouro Preto as having been established in the parish church of Ouro Preto in 1712 by pardos (mulattos).¹² In reaction to the activities of the black brotherhood, which had been recently established, the pardos built their own side altar "which they made as whites and not as pardos."¹³ This wealthy brotherhood began having problems when it voted to accept whites who, as they increased in numbers, took over control and prohibited the further entry of pardos.¹⁴ There is no record of the existence of this brotherhood in the parish of

Ouro Prêto, which is not to discredit Santa Marta since records of several brotherhoods known to have existed have disappeared without a trace.¹⁵

The black brotherhoods were founded as a reaction to the exclusivist policy of the white brotherhoods. Because they were prevented from joining these social and charitable organizations, the blacks were authorized to form their own brotherhoods. The first one was Nossa Senhora do Rosário of Ouro Prêto founded in 1715.¹⁶ Upon its establishment it was allowed to erect a chapel in Caquende, which Frei Santa Maria describes as being "not of little grandeur because they [blacks] also had noble pride, decorating it richly."¹⁷ Santa Maria relates that an effort to build a new church got as far as acquiring the land before the idea was given up.¹⁸ This brotherhood was open to "every person black or white, of one or other sex, freed or slave, of any nation."¹⁹ Whether or not intentionally, this statute is so written as to exclude mulattoes. A king and queen were to be chosen annually, "both black from any nation [tribe]."²⁰ Furthermore two judges, male and female, and a procurator--either freed or slave as long as black--were to be chosen. The treasurer and the secretary were required to be white. Presumably this was due to the need for literate men and, in the case of the treasurer, for someone with ample financial resources to pay the expenses of the brotherhood while awaiting the receipt of dues. It is interesting to

note that the black brotherhoods did not adopt the same segregationist policies of their white counterparts.. This may have been a mechanism by which the white establishment assured itself of some role in determining the policy of the black brotherhoods.

The temper of the times can be seen in the admonition that the judges of the brotherhood were "not obligated... to go get them [the king and queen] at home, and even less receive them at the door of the church, to avoid disturbances. This could be done, however, if good communion exists among everyone; [then] they can go get them at home, if they so wish, and accompany them to the church, but in a way that it does not serve as a provocation (de
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 estorvo)."

Four years later, Nossa Senhora do Rosário of Antônio Dias was founded. The original statutes do not exist, having disappeared before 1734, "rotted and eaten by insects with all the other books and papers of the said brotherhood," as reported the Sacristão of the Church
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 of Nossa Senhora da Conceição. Those which do exist were prepared around 1734, although royal acceptance was delayed until January 27, 1785, for unknown reasons. As with its sister brotherhood, the judges and procurator were black and the treasurer and secretary white, although a black could become treasurer if he were rich.

The statutes of this brotherhood note the conflict between the brotherhood and the parish authorities which

must have been common in colonial Minas Gerais. Because the parish did not contribute to the construction of the church, the brotherhood contended that it was not subordinate to the parish priest but rather temporally to the ouvidor and spiritually to the bishop of Rio de Janeiro. The lay officers of the brotherhood, presumably supported by their chaplains, took the occasion to note that "experience has shown the continuous disorders which the parish priests commit in benefit of their interest."²³

Membership in the brotherhood was open to all Roman Catholics. One of the few papers concerning this brotherhood dating from the eighteenth century is the title page of a codex which has long since disappeared. The title page reads as follows: "This Book is for Registering the White Brothers of this Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário of the Blacks of Alto do P[adr]le Faria in Order to Participate in the Jubilee and the Many Favors and Indulgences that His Holiness was pleased to Concede to All the People Who Were Brothers of this Brotherhood."²⁴ It is dated September 13, 1737. This page is of importance in that it reinforces the tenor of the statute of the black brotherhoods: whites were admitted but kept separate and away from major policy-making positions. It is interesting to note that there is no provision in the statutes for a king and queen in this brotherhood, due perhaps to the fact that in 1719 the Count of Assumar objected firmly to the annual naming of king and queen slaves.

One of the incentives given to the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário was the grant of indulgences. That this was of some importance can be seen from the title page of the registry book cited above. These indulgences were granted in 1679 by Pope Innocent XI. This grant assigned to specific acts, such as saying the rosary or taking part in a procession, a particular period of grace. For example, attending mass on July 2 after confession and communion entitled a brother to seven years of salvation.²⁵ The concern for ensuring salvation after death was an important aspect of the appeal of the church, and should not be overlooked. Men who thought nothing of illicit sexual activities often had private chapels and chaplains and belonged to a number of brotherhoods.

While the brotherhoods satisfied a social need in that they permitted the grouping of members of similar segments of society, the brotherhoods also satisfied some of the more mundane wants of the eighteenth century man. In an age when the state did not assume responsibility for the welfare of its citizens, other institutions had to perform this function. In Portugal the guilds had fulfilled much of this role, but in Minas Gerais the guild system, as was shown above, was weak. These responsibilities fell upon the brotherhoods.

Primary among these was that of providing assistance in time of need. Some brotherhoods were organized in such a way so as to ensure that members who were ill were

visited, and received help with medical expenses if that was necessary. ²⁶ Receipts to doctors can sometimes be found among brotherhood financial ledgers. A good example was the payment of ten and a half oitavas to one Antônio Rabello da Silva, made by the Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário of Ouro Preto "for attending a crioulo and medicines for the said crioulo." ²⁷

Upon the death of the member, his wife, or minor child, the brotherhood assumed the responsibility of providing the funeral. The brothers would leave the church as a group to go to the home of the deceased to convey his body in the brotherhood's pall to its final resting place, which normally was a crypt within the church reserved for the members of that brotherhood. In this traditional society where status was so important it should not be surprising that there was a hierarchy among the available crypts, with priority going to those who had served on the governing boards.

The brotherhoods also guaranteed that a fixed number of masses would be said in honor of the deceased. So important was this aspect of the role of the brotherhoods that all the brotherhoods had provisions by which people who were critically ill could join with little of the normal formalities upon the payment of a fixed sum. This figure sometimes was extraordinarily large, such as the one hundred twenty oitavas needed to join the Santissimo Sacramento Brotherhood under these conditions. ²⁸ More

often, the figure was considerably smaller. It was also possible to have a brotherhood accompany the funeral procession of a non-member by paying a few oitavas. This is an indication of the importance attributed to the appearance of a brotherhood in a funeral procession. In wills it was not uncommon to find instructions to the executor that he is to petition a particular brotherhood to accept him "for the love of God as a member permitting me to receive the holy cloak,...and to be accompanied to the grave."²⁹ This writer, in conversations with various older residents of Ouro Preto, was told of funerals of members of the family in which the appearance of brotherhoods was treated as a symbol of status--this is an age in which the role of the brotherhood has been greatly diminished, when many more alternative forms of status exist than in the 18th century.

The brotherhoods also had responsibilities to the living. Normally the statutes contained provisions whereby members who had fallen on hard times would be given assistance. For example, the Santissimo Sacramento Brotherhood promised: "In the event a brother...reached the state of poverty...to help with the means available, examining³⁰ the just cause for not being able to earn a living." A brother who had been imprisoned could expect to receive aid³¹ from his brotherhood. It appears that the brotherhoods, if in good financial condition, also served to fill the void caused by the absence of banks. There is evidence that

some of the lay brotherhoods adopted the practice of
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 loaning money at interest.

It is also clear that the brotherhoods contributed much to the texture of life of eighteenth century Vila Rica. Their participation in religious processions--each brotherhood with its distinctive clothing--certainly must have contributed to the impression made by these ceremonies on the people. To this can be added the funeral processions when individual brotherhoods accompanied a departed brother by torch light. The absence of street lighting and the hilly nature of the town conspired to lend to these torchlight processions the appearance of glow worms inching their way across the landscape. Besides these functions some brotherhoods, such as Nossa Senhora do Rosário of Ouro Preto, had obligated themselves to walk the streets of the parish several days a week praying "for the greater honor of Our Lady and to exhort
 33
 the residents."

The belief that the brotherhood could serve to influence the morality of the parishioners can be seen through the example of the Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário of Antônio Dias. The statutes of this brotherhood straightforwardly acknowledge that a person could be expelled for "dissolute conduct" which reflected unfavorably on the brotherhood, as well as for more mundane
 34
 reasons such as failure to pay the annual dues. The absence of records makes an examination of the implemen-

tation of this threat impossible. The mere threat, however, is a statement of one of the goals of the organizers of the brotherhood.

The funds to support the activities of the brotherhoods came from various sources. The most obvious is the membership fees paid on entry and then annually thereafter. Other sums came from non members who wanted to be accompanied by the brotherhood during funeral processions. More significantly, the brotherhoods were able to rely on donations and rents paid on houses owned by them. Furthermore, the town council normally donated sizeable tracts of urban land to the brotherhoods. For example, by 1736 the Brotherhood of Santissimo Sacramento owned three parcels of land with a total frontage of 439
35
braços. This is significant when it is realized that most grants were under five braças in frontage. The brotherhood was then free to exploit as best it could this property. If a brotherhood owned slaves, these very often were rented out to bring in additional revenues.

Notes

1. Silvio de Vasconcellos has attempted to examine the development of society in the mining towns by studying the brotherhoods. Basically Vasconcellos' position is that during the pre-1711 period only chapels existed so that everyone worshipped together. This, Vasconcellos feels, is a manifestation of the "democratic" nature of early Mineiro society. With the creation of the brotherhoods there is a rigidification of classes. Initially each brotherhood established a side altar in the parish church. Then as social pressures began to increase, many of these left the parish churches to build their own chapels. Sylvio de Vasconcellos, Vila Rica. Formação e desenvolvimento-residências (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1956), p. 66 and Mineiridade: ensaio de caracterização (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1968), pp. 27-28, 63-69, and 141-150. Vasconcellos argues that prior to 1711 there were no social classes and after that date society became increasingly more stratified with the bourgeoisie dominating.

It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that, even within the framework of Vasconcellos' definitions, prior to 1711 there were at least two classes--the masters and the slaves. Despite the dramatic transformation in the ruling class resulting from the Wars of the Emboabas, the basic structure remained unchanged. Furthermore, to define the dominant class as being bourgeois without defining this much maligned and eulogized social class makes the question difficult to debate. It does seem, however, that if the bourgeoisie is defined in terms of capitalist orientation with members of this group seeing themselves as unique and important, then Vasconcellos' position is indefensible. Merchants were not particularly proud of their status and were only too willing to become miners and landowners. Their ideal pattern was that of the upper class.

2. Compromisso da Irmandade do S.mo Sacramento sita na Matriz de N.S. do Pilar do Ouro Prêto (APOP), 1738, fol. 22. It is fascinating to note that these words were lined through at an unknown date, indicating perhaps the need to integrate the membership at a later date.

3. Fritz Teixeira Salles, Associações religiosas no ciclo do ouro, Estudos 1 (Belo Horizonte: Universidade de Minas Gerais, 1963), p. 32.
4. Diogo de Vasconcellos, "As obras de arte," Bi-Centenário de Ouro Preto: 1711-1911. Memória histórica (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, n.d.), p. 139.
5. Frei Santa Maria, Santuário Mariano, p. 241.
6. Ibid., p. 243.
7. Cód. 2 (AINSPOP), fol. 58.
8. Roll of Brotherhood Officers, 1738-1739 in Cód. of Elections (AINSPOP), fol. 100.
9. Ibid., 1741-1742, fol. 102.
10. Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora das Almas (APOP), fol. 3v. It appears probable that this is the same brotherhood identified by Salles as that of São Miguel e Almas founded in 1725. Salles, Associações religiosas, p. 36. In the statutes, important events are scheduled for Saint Michael's Day. Among these, for example, are the election of new officers and major festivals.
11. Council Proceedings, 10 April, 1720 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 108v.
12. Frei Santa Maria, Santuário Mariano, p. 241.
13. Ibid., p. 241-243.
14. Ibid.
15. There is furthermore a legend that the Brotherhood of Bom Sucesso was composed primarily of mamelucos (offspring of Indian and white parents).
16. Frei Santa Maria dates the founding as 1711. It is possible that the brotherhood was organized then but its establishment not approved until 1715. Santa Maris was not an eyewitness to the events he describes. Never having visited Minas Gerais, he based his work upon the reports of people recently returned from the mining district. He is generally discriminating in the things he accepts and he refused to discuss developments in some Minas settlements because he did not completely trust some of his sources.
17. Frei Santa Maria, Santuário Mariano, p. 240.

18. Ibid.
19. Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Prêtos na sua capela filial da matriz de Nossa Senhora do Pilar de Vila Rica-Anno de 1715-em o qual foi erecta, in Francisco Antônio Lopes, "Câmara e cadeia de Vila Rica," Anuário do Museu da Inconfidência 1 (1952): 187. This work is basically Os palacios de Ouro Prêto (Belo Horizonte:
20. Ibid., p. 188.
21. Ibid.
22. Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Alto da Cruz (APAD), undated, fols. 16-16v.
23. Ibid., paragraph 14.
24. Located among miscellancous papers in the Archive of the Parish of Antônio Dias.
25. Breve recopilacam e sumario das graças e indulgencias, concedidas aos confrades da Virgem Nossa Senhora do Rosário (Lisbon: Na Officina de Antônio Pedrozo Galvão, 1721). A copy of this document was found in the Avulso Section of the Arquivo Público Mineiro.
26. For example the Brotherhood of Mercedes e Perdões voted on November 20, 1759 to provide assistance to the judge of the brotherhood since he had spent so much of his own money for the betterment of the brotherhood. Cód. 11 (AIMPAD), fol. 16v.
27. Register of Expenditures of N.S. do Rosário de Ouro Prêto (APOP).
28. Compromisso da Irmandade do Santissimo Sacramento, Cód. 17 (APOP), fol. 23. This phrase was crossed out at a later, and unknown, date.
29. Will of Manuel Pereira, 19 February, 1761 in Registry of Burials (APAD), vol. 3, fol. 375.
30. Compromisso da Irmandade do Santissimo Sacramento, fol. 25.
31. Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora das Almas, Chapter 22.

32. Register of Expenditures, 20 February, 1758 in Cód. 77 (AISFAD), fol. 3v. The brotherhood agreed to loan 1,000\$000 and 3,000 cruzados for one year at the "legal" interest rate of 6 1/4 percent.
33. Royal Edict, 20 November, 1752 in Cód. 4 (ABM), fol. 84.
34. Compromisso da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário, fol. 10.
35. Council Edict, 27 June, 1736 in Cód. 32 (CMOP), fols. 28v-29v.

Chapter 19
The Militia

While the brotherhoods were an institutionalized manifestation of social position, they were not alone in fulfilling this role. The militia system became an extremely important reflection of the social system, despite royal efforts to prevent this. The colonists wanted the militia organization to mirror social reality, with its polarized class structure at the extremes and a predominantly white middle group serving to tie the society together. They insisted that militia units be racially homogeneous. The crown preferred heterogeneous units, that is, units composed of all races and classes.

It was not until 1728 that action was taken to integrate the ordenança units. In that year, the governor was ordered to racially integrate these units. The excuse for the action was the appointment of an officer to an ordenança unit composed of mulattoes and freed blacks. The appointment was nullified on the basis that segregated units were dangerous--mulattoes and freed blacks were to be distributed among white units "to become more subservient and obedient."¹ This specific enunciation of a policy of integrating ordenança units was followed three years later by an order of a general nature forbidding² segregated units in Minas Gerais.

These orders had no effect. If segregated units represented, to officials sitting in Lisbon, a threat to law and order in the mining district, integrated ones represented a threat to the social order in the view of the miners. It is a measure of the power of local interests that the colonists' point of view won out.³

The militia system had been instituted before the municipal structure was established although not much is known of its organization. A royal letter of 1710 referring to the disbanding of a miners' militia unit notes that the men were absorbed by the terço or regiment of Mestre do Campo Gregorio de Castro e Moraes.⁴ A further indication is that, when on September 11, 1711 news reached Minas of an attack on Rio de Janeiro by the French raider René Duquay-Trouin, within one week a force of six thousand men - ten terços and one cavalry regiment were on the move to Rio. One of these terços was created as a result of the crisis.⁵ The others must have been already formed. While no proof exists, it is probable that the first units were formally created by the 1706 nomination of capitães - mores for Ouro Prêto and Rio das Mortes after the first Guerra dos Emboabas.

It was not however, until the incorporation of Vila Rica that the militia system was fully articulated. The militia was divided into two distinct types of units, auxiliares and ordenanças with the former being what would be termed today the ready reserve. Supposedly better

trained, the auxiliares during most of this period had officers who were of a slightly higher social standing than those of the home guard, the ordenanças.

The auxiliares were organized with a mestre-de-campo as commander and a sargento-mor as his assistant. In 1714 the terço of the têrmo of Vila Rica was composed of at least fourteen companies based on geographic and racial divisions. Eleven of these were established on a geographic basis, such as the units of Antônio Dias and Congonhas. It is probable that these units were made up of whites. Another two units were composed of mulattoes and one of bastards and free blacks.

In the same year, the ordenanças were divided into eighteen units, all under the command of a capitão-mor and a sargento-mor. It appears that subordinate districts also had sargentos-mores, perhaps to provide unified leadership of several units. For example, in 1717 Domingues Rodrigues Neves was named "sargento-mor das ordenanças de Itaubira"⁶. This use of district sargentos-mores may explain the appearance of the title "sargento mayor" which could refer to the second highest official in the têrmo. There were twelve ordenança units established on a geographic basis. These were almost certainly made up of whites, with five units being drawn from the urban area. One unit was composed of free blacks and bastards of low social status. At the other end of the racial and status spectrum, there was a unit filled with nobles

and retirees from active military service. This latter unit was of regiment size embracing the entire comarca.

There were, in addition, six special ordenança units. One of these was composed solely of forasteiros. Forasteiros were defined as business men who were not residing in the area on a permanent basis but rather visiting it on business. Thus the word had retained the meaning it had during the Wars of the Emboabas. To be a forasteiro was to be an outsider. To prevent confusion in the event of an emergency, visiting merchants then in the area were to join this unit. The commission granted to the first commanding officer of this unit, Manuel Antunes de Lemos, cites conflicts among unit commanding officers over these merchants as the reason for creating the unit.⁷ Besides this unit of forasteiros there were units for local merchants. These units were under the control of a sargento-mor.⁸ The fact that several units existed is indicative of the number of merchants operating in the t^êrmo of Vila Rica. Still another ordenança unit was composed of miners. This unit had an ephemeral existence having been created by Governor Mascarenhas and disbanded by his successor.⁹

A special ordenança unit was composed of all the men in the district responsible for capturing runaway slaves. The first commanding officer whose commission was found, João de Barros Pereira, was himself a capitão de mato, bush captain, and it seems probable that having a bush

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captain as commander was the usual procedure. This officer was called capitão-mor das entradas and all run-aways captured while he was in the area were to be turned over to him.

The final ordenança unit was of cavalry and was commanded by a colonel. While technically part of the ordenanças, this was a regiment-sized unit with companies throughout the comarca. Command of this unit was an important status symbol.

Of the sixteen officers of the auxiliares in 1714 (fourteen unit commanders plus the mestre do campo and sargento-mor) five were homens da governança. When the mulatto and black units are excluded, this means that five of thirteen officers were members of the elite. In the ordenanças, four of nineteen officers were homens da governança, or four of eighteen when the black unit is excluded.

In 1718, a total of thirty-three appointments were made of commanding officers for company-sized units and above. Of these, twenty-two involved individuals who were entering the militia officer class for the first time.¹¹ Of these, two already were homens da governança and six would be within seven years. The six were divided equally between the ordenanças and the auxiliares.¹² The indication is that a militia commission was a means of entering the elite and only more rarely was it a reward for someone already within the elite.

Service in the militia was required until old age or illness made continued service impossible. After the initial appointment a person served in numerous posts before and after achieving elite status. Once in, there was only a vague path of advancement during this early period when there was an astounding turnover rate in officers. If a person's first appointment were as an ordenança alferes, he would probably eventually be promoted to captain of the same unit, as was Manuel Rodrigues Pereira on April 28, 1717. The vacancy was created when Pereira's superior was promoted to captain of an auxiliar
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company. From auxiliar captain, advancement meant promotion to sargento-mor of ordenanças. This was the path taken by Antônio Martins Leça.
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From this position the path was open to command of the cavalry regiment, sargento-mor or mestre do campo of auxiliares, or capitão-mor of ordenanças. This was the ideal pattern.

Appointment to the post of colonel of cavalry represented a promotion perhaps because of the command possibilities and the glamour that romantics ascribed to the cavalry. Sebastião Carlos Leitão had served as sargento-
15
mor for three years when he was chosen cavalry colonel. Below the rank of colonel, vacancies usually were filled by lower ranking cavalry officers, so that when the post of lieutenant-colonel was vacated, a cavalry company
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commander would be selected to fill the position.

But exceptions to this ideal were very common during

the pre-1720 period. Often steps were skipped and detours made to higher posts, but in relatively insignificant areas. In this respect, the career of Faustino Rebelo Barbosa is perhaps typical. He reached the post of mestre do campo of the t ermo of Carmo after serving as alferes and sargento-mor of ordenanas, sargento-mor of auxiliares, lieutenant colonel of cavalry and mestre do campo of an area of lesser importance, Itambe.

Particularly common was the jump from captain of ordenanas to sargento-mor of ordenanas. Manuel de Sousa is merely one of many examples which could be cited. Promotions from alferes of ordenanas to captain of auxiliares also occupied often enough to deserve mention.

The appointment orders give various reasons for advancement and provide insights into the hidden history of Vila Rica and Minas Gerais in general. Obviously loyal service was the crucial factor in getting a promotion. Pedro da Rocha Gandavo had all of the "right" prerequisites. He had led the emboaba party which lifted the siege of S o Jo o del Rei during the Wars of the Emboabas. In 1711, he had joined the army led by Governor Albuquerque which went to the defense of Rio de Janeiro when the city was captured by Duquay-Trouin. When the residents of Carmo rose against Ouvidor Amorim, Gandavo was on the side of Amorim and the king. During juntas he had defended the royal position. Furthermore, he had

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served as juiz ordinário, vereador and almotacel.

Clearly his credentials were impeccable. Antônio Martins Leça's promotion order noted his support of the king at the 1715 junta and his service as collector of the quintos. His action in destroying a quilombo was

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particularly emphasized. Still another example is Manuel Gomes da Silva. His appointment to sargento-mor of cavalry in 1717 noted his service as vereador, acting ouvidor and quinto collector. Furthermore the order notes "that he is one of the richest people in Minas." 21

Clearly these were men already in the elite.

The most common types of service mentioned during this period were collecting the quinto and assistance in the relief of Rio de Janeiro. The first reflected social status because the collector was supposed to be the most influential man in the area because only the richest could be expected to be honest about preparing the tax rolls. The second was evidence of a desire to sacrifice one's personal interests in defending the king's domain from foreign intruders. In the years immediately after 1720, a person's activities during that turbulent year was the crucial deciding factor.

Service to the king was also measured in other ways. Among these was the development of new mining techniques. Thus Manuel da Silva Rosa's development of "a machine to 22
take gold out of the river," won him a militia commission.

During this period both types of militia performed basically the same types of functions. Local defense was of greatest concern to the royal officials in Lisbon. The ordenanças, according to Caio Prado Junior,²³ could not leave the immediate area of the unit's jurisdiction. Prado's description is not applicable to pre-Pombaline Brazil. For example, Albuquerque's relief army of ten terços included six of ordenanças.²⁴ In practice the question of geographical restrictions was a mute one. If there was an emergency, as occurred in 1711, all available troops were dispatched. This was an exceptional situation and there were few other occasions to send troops out of the captaincy, although the central location of Minas Gerais meant that it was in a position to provide aid to the major coastal population centers.²⁵

It would seem that in purely military terms both types were equally unprepared. This occurred despite the fact that a number of company commanders as well as higher officers had seen prior military service. Among these were men like Francisco Viegas Barbosa who had served a number of years in Sacramento in the Banda Oriental,²⁶ and João Carvalho de Oliveira who had served in Maranhão.²⁷

On the other hand, the office of capitão-mor of ordenanças had an administrative function which set these militia units off from the auxiliares. In this respect, it must be remembered that the nomination of the capitães-

mores of Ouro Prêto and Sao João del Rei in 1706 was an effort to furnish an official who would provide law and order and control the region. The officials of the ordenança living in the hamlets where judicial officials ventured but once a year shared control over the administration of justice with the justices of the peace. In this regard the appointment order of Manuel da Silva Guimarães as captain of the ordenança unit for the district of Rio das Pedras is illuminating: Due to

the existence in Minas of some districts with a large number of residents, where the capitães-mores and officials of the towns in whose termos these are found can neither live there nor execute my orders because of their distance [from the towns],... it [is] very necessary that in the said districts there be capitães-mores both for the better regulation of their residents as for the better execution of His Majesty's business, and [that these]...be chosen from among the richest men of the same districts. ²⁸

Selection of these officers was made by the town council together with the capitão-mor. A list of three names was submitted to the governor for his choice of one. Thus two conflicting levels of bureaucracy were involved in the appointment process. As the appointment order quoted above indicates, the governor issued orders to ordenança officers. The council did also. Thus not only were both jurisdictions involved in the selection process, but both also exercised a supervisory function. This conflict in Vila Rica was muted by the presence of a

forceful capitão-mor, Antônio Ramos dos Reis, who held this
 29
 office for half a century.

There was no such overlapping jurisdiction between governor and council over the use of the auxiliares. In this regard, the council had little power. Thus, when the council wished to use the officers and noncommissioned officers of the auxiliares to help collect taxes in 1714, it first had to petition the governor for his permission. This was granted only for the noncommissioned officers.
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 The governor maintained firm control over the auxiliar units.

The high social status attached to a militia commission for both the officer and his wife led to abuses. The number of posts began to mushroom during the term of office of governor Antônio de Albuquerque and, to a much greater extent, under Bras Baltezar da Silveira. This process led to a stinging rebuke of Governor Silveira by the king in 1715. Silveira was criticized for "creating various ordenança posts such as Brigadiers, Barracks Masters, Governors of Comarcas, and Mestre do Campo General never used, nor seen in Brazil, and much less in the Region [of Minas Gerais]."
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Silveira was ordered to submit a list of posts existing when he took office and those existing at the time he prepared the lists. This was done and the lists dispatched to Lisbon where the royal officials were shocked. Their reaction was partially justified. According to his

lists, Silveira had made over two hundred and seventy appointments ranging from captain to brigadier in one year and a half. Many of these were merely honorary, and others were for command positions where no enlisted troops were available. So dismaying was the report of the governor that the Overseas Council was ordered to examine the situation. It was the opinion of the Duke of Cadaval that the number was excessive and the excess posts should be abolished. He recommended the creation of regiments of one thousand men composed of companies of one hundred men, each having a captain, alferes, two sergeants and two corporals. The ordenanças would include all men capable of bearing arms and the creation of new companies would be encouraged to allow the selection of more officers.

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Cadaval's ideas were accepted to a large degree by the king, as is evident from the royal order issued shortly after the meeting of the Overseas Council. The order noted the danger that these excessive appointments posed to the administration of the colony. They resulted in the "disturbing of the good administration of justice, in the multiplication of privileges which serve no more than to disturb the administration of Justice and damage the community: [this occurs] because the men in order to sustain the appearance commensurate to their Posts go into debt, and many times quit the occupations they have."

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Each comarca was reduced to one regiment with

the normal complement of officers. All other officers lost their commissions.

Six years later, royal officials were still complaining of the problems caused by Mineiros who viewed a militia commission as a mark of high social status. These officials complained that the prestige of these posts was being eroded by the selection of "unqualified people whose nobility and prestige is not known."³⁴ This order does not appear to have had any effect on the selection of militia officers.

The order to remove these excess officers, however, did prove to be a source of problems in Vila Rica. As shall be seen below, men who attached so much social importance to a militia commission would not easily be convinced to accept the revocation of their appointments. The insistence of the crown on this very thing was one of the factors which led to the 1720 riots in Vila Rica.

One of the means used by royal officials to maintain a firm control over the militia was the court-martial jurisdiction. This authority encompassed both active army and militia personnel. The court-martial jurisdiction was in the hands of the ouvidor who served concurrently as auditor-general. The involvement of the ouvidor further confused the question of who controlled the militia. The governor and the council were vying for supervisory control and yet neither had court-martial jurisdiction, that is, the power to punish for disobe-

dience. Thus to prosecute militia officers, the ouvidores had to become involved. Often the ouvidor had to be prodded into exercising this power. For example, Governor Assumar advised the Ouvidor of Rio dos Velhas in 1719 that "the Auditores-General, should and must...[prosecute] the militia officers when they commit some crime as defined in the militia regulations."³⁵ At the same time, Assumar warned against breaking the chain of command by dealing directly with a lower grade person. In this way the governor tried to ensure that the ouvidor's involvement was limited to judicial matters.

Until 1719, the defense of Minas Gerais against enemies, imagined or real, was in the hands of the militia. A few army officers and enlisted men had accompanied each of the governors into Minas but there was no regular army unit there. The military staff of the governor was composed of a handful of officers. The most important of these was a lieutenant-general or as the full title went "Tenente de Mestre do Campo General." The commission issued to Felix de Azevedo Carneiro e Cunha narrowly defined this duty as "distribut[ing] orders."³⁶ But the lieutenant general was more than that: he was the military right-hand of the governor. Usually having long military experience in Europe, the lieutenant-general became a trouble-shooter sent to deal with extraordinary situations.³⁷ Thus when conflict broke out in Pitanguí

in 1719 over the collection of taxes, the lieutenant-general was dispatched to deal with it.

But regular army troops were a necessity for the maintenance of royal control in the turbulent mining district. Even a small number of trained men often could face down much large numbers of poorly trained militia men. This was the major reason for the dispatch of royal troops into Minas in 1719. The dragoons were not dispatched to deal with foreign enemies, but rather to guard the governor, protect and convey gold shipments, and to "reply to some insults or uprisings which some powerful
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people make."

The first company of dragoons arrived in December of 1719. While salaries were paid out of the royal treasury, the council of Vila Rica had to provide billeting. Soon a second company was sent. Even though the size of each company was raised from thirty to sixty troops later
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in 1719, this was clearly inadequate to provide secur-
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ity for the entire captaincy. Every effort was made to fill vacancies from among the residents of the settlements where the troops were quartered. But Assumar gave orders that no "son of America" was to be allowed to
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join. Presumably this was Assumar's way of ensuring the loyalty of his troops. It is interesting to note again the great gulf between orders and their enforcement: the earliest troop roster available, that for 1721, shows that among the sixty-two enlisted men was a native of

Vila Rica and a Frenchman. This native Vilaricano, Antônio Lourenço is the first person known to have been born in that town.

The introduction of the regular army gave the governors more control in the captaincy. Besides their obvious role in maintaining peace, these units provided the governors with a disinterested source of information. The army officers were given secret instructions "to report everything which happens...not only in regard to the militia but also anything political or concerning the governing of the people."⁴³

Assumar realized that the presence of regular army troops would antagonize the easily excited miners. He therefore instituted a very tough code governing the actions of these army units. Troops were to take only bed, light, water, wood, and salt when quartered with civilians. Failure to comply with the law resulted in dismissal if the guilty party was an officer and "três ratos de pole (Roldana)" for enlisted men. This was a type of corporal punishment involving an apparatus to lift the person off the ground and then drop him. Stealing was punishable by death. The commanding officer was responsible for the behavior of his troops during marches. Cutting fruit trees or shooting chickens earned the guilty person one tour on the roldana. In distant outposts, troops were required to assist judicial officers. If a prisoner escaped military control, then those who allowed

the escape were subject to arrest and trial; if found guilty the penalty was dismissal for officers and the roldana or death for enlisted men. ⁴⁴ Only strict rules and even stricter enforcement could maintain military discipline in the powder keg which Minas do Ouro was before 1720.

By the time the riots began in Vila Rica in 1720, the basic military organization had been set up. The numerically superior militia was divided into auxiliares and ordenanças, which in turn were divided racially and then further subdivided into special units based upon status, occupation, or function. As a balance to the locally controlled militia, regular army units had been introduced. But the riots broke out before these units could be brought to full strength and their organization effectively set up.

The militia and regular army units were viewed by royal officials as a means of establishing law and order and maintaining the security of the mining district. But they were not the only institutions created to fulfill this mission. The town council and the apparatus of local government played an important role in performing this function.

Notes

1. Royal Order, 27 January, 1728 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 5v.
2. Royal Order, 13 January, 1731 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 6.
3. Troops List, 1775 in Cód. 211 (SG), fol. 75v.
4. Ibid.
5. Albuquerque to João V, 26 November, 1711 in Veiga, Ephemerides Mineiras, 4, p. 262.
6. Appointment order of Domingos Rodrigues Neves, 8 March, 1717 in Cód. 9(SG), fol. 202.
7. Appointment order of Manuel Antunes de Lemos, 12 April, 1711 in Cód. 7 (SG), fols. 86-87.
8. Appointment order of Francisco de Oliveira da Costa, 20 January, 1715 in Cód. 9 (SG), fol. 168.
9. João V to Governor Mascarenhas, 10 October, 1710 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. iv.
10. Appointment order of João de Barros Pereira, 12 January, 1714 in Cód. 9 (SG), fol. 77v.
11. Included in this figure is Francisco da Costa de Oliveira, which probably is an error and should be Francisco da Costa de Oliveira. I have assumed that this is the same person.
12. These figures were arrived at by comparing appointment orders found in Cód. 12 (SG) and the homens bons found in "Atas da Câmara," Cód. 4 (CMOP), and Cód. 13 (CMOP).
13. Appointment order of Manuel Rodrigues Pereira, 28 April, 1717 in Cód. 9 (SG), fol. 226v.
14. Appointment order of Antônio Martins Leça, 27 January, 1718 in Cód. 12 (SG), fols. 31-31v.
15. Appointment order of Sebastião Carlos Leitão, 18 February, 1718 in Cód. 12 (SG), fol. 33v.

16. Appointment order of João Pinto da Silva, 28 February, 1718 in Cód. 12 (SG), fol. 34.
17. Appointment order of Faustino Rebello Barbosa, 19 January, 1720 in Cód. 2 (SG), fols. 53v-54.
18. Appointment order of Manuel de Sousa Serqueira, 30 April 30, 1718 in Cód. 18 (SG), fol. 43v.
19. Appointment order of Pedro da Rocha Gandavo, 18 February, 1716 in Cód. 9 (SG), fols. 196-196v.
20. Appointment order of Antônio Martins Leça, 27 January, 1718 in Cód. 12 (SG), fols.31-31v.
21. Appointment order of Manuel Gomes da Silva, 31 May, 1717 in Cód. 9 (SG), fol. 247v.
22. Appointment order of Manuel da Silva Rosa, 20 April, 1719 in Cód. 12 (SG), fol. 75.
23. Prado Junior, Formação do Brasil, pp. 308-311.
24. Albuquerque to João V, 26 November, 1711 in Veiga, Ephemerides mineiras, 4, p. 262. Albuquerque noted that he left for Rio de Janeiro "with about six thousand men of the best and most splendid people which the said Minas had, both forasteiros and Paulistas, formed in ten terços, three [of] auxiliares, and six [of] ordenança, and the paid terço created for the occasion of picked soldiers and officers capable of service,...and with fortunes [sufficient] for the expense of similar marches as well as one more regiment of good cavalry."
25. This view of the defense role of Minas Gerais was clearly enunciated in the instructions issued to Governor Antônio de Noronha on January 24, 1775.
 The captaincy of Minas Gerais...is found in the center of the others, each of which therefore serves as a barricade, especially Rio de Janeiro. It is the indispensable obligation of the first [Minas Gerais] to aid the latter with all available forces, in the event that this is ordered by the Viceroy and Captain General of the State of Brazil. [Instructions to Antônio de Noronha, 24 January, 1775 in Veiga, Ephemerides mineiras, 2, p. 308].
26. Appointment order of Francisco Viegas Barbosa, 3 February, 1715 in Cód. 9 (SG), fols. 170-170v.

27. Appointment order of João Carvalho de Oliveira, 4 August, 1718 in Cód. 12 (SG), fol. 61v.
28. Appointment order of Manuel da Silva Guimarães, 13 March, 1719 in Cód. 12 (SG), fol. 74. The standing orders issued the ordenança cavalry officers is illustrative. Responsibilities that are mentioned include the following: transport of prisoners, service of warrants, carrying out judicial decisions, and arresting criminals. Standing Orders of Ordenança Cavalry Troops, 22 August, 1736 in Cód. 2 (SG), fols. 164-165v.
29. By royal order of January 24, 1703, the term of office of the capitão-mor was three years followed by a residência or investigation into the actions of the officeholder. Royal order, Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 38. It is an indication of Ramos' domination over the town that he was removed from office only by death.
30. Council Proceedings, 11 and 14 April, 1714 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 320-321.
31. Royal order, 15 January, 1715 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 38.
32. Consulta of Duke of Cadaval, 13 April, 1719, Document No. 315 in Rau and Silva, Os manuscritos, 1, p. 227.
33. Royal order, 25 April, 1719 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 38. Also see in this connection the royal order, same date, in Cód. 5 (SG), fol. 58.
34. Overseas Council to Lourenço de Almeida, 9 July, 1725 in Cód. 20 (SG), fol. 113.
35. Assumar to Ouvidor of Rio das Velhas, 22 December, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 182v.
36. Commission of Felix de Azevedo Carneiro e Cunha, 6 April, 1713 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fols. 20v-21.
37. Commission of João Ferreira Tavares, 10 December, 1717 in Cód. 12 (SG), fol. 23v.
38. Royal order, 18 January, 1719 in Augusto de Lima Junior, Vila Rica do Ouro Preto. Síntese histórica e descritiva (Belo Horizonte: Author's Edition, 1957), p. 87.
39. Royal order, 25 February, 1719 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 32.

40. In 1729 a third company was created to patrol the northern areas of the captaincy fronting Bahia.

41. Count of Assumar to Lieutenant José de Morais, 29 April, 1720 in Cód. 20 (SG), fol. 224v.

42. Cód. 38 (DF), passim. The geographical distribution of the troops is typical, I believe, of the general pattern of migration. The major centers were the northern regions of Douro, Minho, and Tras os Montes which supplied 40% of the troops, and the Estremadura area around Lisbon with 30 %. The interior areas of Beira Alta, Beira Baixa, Alto and Baixo Alentejo, and Algarve together supplied only 13%.

43. Count of Assumar to Lieutenant José de Morais, 29 April, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 224v-225.

44. Assumar's Orders to the regular army troops, 25 November, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 284-284v.

PART IV
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Chapter 20
Structure of the Municipal Council

The powers of the câmara were extensive and its role in the Portuguese administrative system so great that a detailed examination of its internal structure is warranted. Each of the three component posts of the council were, in many ways, antithetical to the others. Essentially this was due to the Portuguese concept of administrative checks and balances even at the most basic level. Functional jurisdictions were seldom clear, and the distinction between administration and judiciary often blurred. The municipal judge had judicial functions, but the councilmen could order him to arrest a criminal or open hearings into a crime; and the entire câmara served as the appellate court for decisions from the fiscal officer (almotacel) and the justices of the peace (juizes de vintena). The procurator was a force potentially capable of stymieing the combined action of the judges and councilmen. Thus each post served as a check against the others.

One of the two municipal judges was the chairman of the council. As chairman, his role in the legislative

processes of the câmara was limited. He presided over the meetings and cast the tie-breaking vote on those occasions when the council was divided evenly.¹ Until the early 1730's the older judge usually served as chairman; then provision was made for the alternation of the two judges on a monthly basis.² The chairman assumed the title of "President" or "President of the Senate."³

The municipal judge occupied an intermediate position in the judicial hierarchy of the capitancy. He had authority over both civil and criminal cases; he could adjudicate disputes between private citizens as well as sit in judgement in cases where a public offense had been committed. His jurisdiction included cases involving one mil réis or less in moveable property and four hundred mil réis in nonmoveable property with only a summary trial.⁴ Cases involving larger values were heard by the municipal judge subject to appeal to the ouvidor. Subordinate to the municipal judge were the fiscal judges and the justices of the peace: above him was the ouvidor or third-level magistrate, chief judicial and administrative officer of the comarca.

The spatial jurisdiction of the municipal judge was the entire t^êrmo; a judge was required to make a circuit through the township once during his period of service. This requirement created some hardships due to the poor roads and the harsh topography of the area. The câmara complained of the great

expenses which one of the municipal judges incurs going on the annual circuit to investigate more than twenty cases with the expenditure of two or three days of travel and not finding the guilty ones because almost all run to the backlands as soon as they commit the crimes.⁵

The câmara went on to describe the great difficulties which this created since, without the guilty party to pay the costs, the judge had to bear them himself from his pay (propinas). Among these costs were those incurred by the two assistants, the investigator and the secretary, that he was required to have.⁶ While on circuit, the judge was not interested only in investigating crimes, but also in examining the performance of local officials and surveying the local situation in general.⁷

During the early years of the town, the municipal judge also served as the judge of orphans. As such he was responsible for ensuring that orphans received good treatment and that their property was not squandered--the latter being an obligation too often disregarded. In 1718, the governor appointed a judge of orphans for Vila Rica for the first time, apparently taking advantage of the confusion surrounding the status of the câmara due to extensive litigation. The council of 1719 criticized this diminution of the judge's prerogative, noting that if previous judges committed errors or crimes they should be punished but that jurisdiction in orphans' matters should not be taken from the municipal judge.⁸ At the same time, the council also protested to the governor.⁹

The protests were to no avail.

One of the responsibilities of the municipal judge could have created a great hardship for the man occupying that post. This was the requirement that the judge patrol the town in the evening. Again the law and reality were at odds as the judge often failed to leave the comfort of his home to brave the harsh climate and steep hills of Vila Rica. Ouvidor José Antônio de Oliveira Machado reacted forcefully to this commission: "I order that the municipal judges, each during his month [as president], conduct the nightly patrols [rondas] which he is obligated to do by Law."¹⁰ This was particularly hard for those judges who lived outside Vila Rica.

Besides patrolling the town, the judges had other duties related to the maintenance of law and order. Basically these involved the functional control of the local police--both criminal and fiscal. The constable (alcaide) and the fiscal officer were responsible to the municipal judge. The fiscal officer had first instance jurisdiction in those matters within his purview involving sums of up to six hundred milréis; those involving more than that amount were heard by the municipal judge.¹¹

There were some severe limitations upon the prerogatives of these judges. Certainly one of the most significant was the requirement that a university graduate (letrado) be present during civil trials. This could not be enforced during the years before 1720 because of the acute shortage of university graduates in the mining district. It was not until the 1740's that this requirement

was enforced. By 1745 the ouvidor had taken a firm stand: "I am informed that the municipal judges of this town, not being [lawyers] act by themselves upon civil cases and [impose] fines, pronouncing in the investigations and charges without a letrado as assistant [and] without the signatures of letrado assistants which is against the law."¹² A month later criminal cases were decreed to be within the purview of this law.

It appears that serving as the assistant was one of the duties of the municipal lawyer (sindico), an official appointed and paid by the câmara. The municipal lawyer was mentioned in town records as early as 1717 but his service was confined assisting in "the defense of [the câmara's] cases."¹³

A second limitation upon the powers of the municipal judges came from within the council itself. The councillors had the power to instruct the judges to arrest and try anyone. For example, in 1738 when the contractor of the taxes on weights and measures fell behind on his payments to the council, the councillors "agreed to petition the municipal judge to order the arrest of [the contractor]...for not satisfying what he had obligated himself to do in [adequate] time...[and] the municipal judge ordered him arrested."¹⁴ While couched in the formal language used in the minutes of the council, the "petition" of the councillors was, in effect, an order.

In this same year, 1738, there occurred an incident which illustrates the ambiguity of the lines of jurisdiction between the non-judicial functions of the municipal judges and the normal functions of the councillors. On June 21, the vereadores criticized the municipal judge for not naming a new jailer. After the selection of various jailers who proved unsatisfactory, a heated debate ensued and "the said vereadores and procuradores [sic] of the same Senate were petitioned by the municipal judge, Cavalry Captain Francisco da Silva Rebelo, on behalf of the king that they nominate immediately a jailer,...and immediately by the said vereadores it was said that they would call upon the underwriter of the jail [contract] to choose a jailer capable of serving." ¹⁵ The responsibility for acting in this situation was passed from councillors to judge and then back.

There was still another limitation on the powers of the judge. Because of his judicial functions the municipal judge was, in a vaguely defined way, under the jurisdiction of the ouvidor and the governor. These officials could, and did, issue orders to the judge, particularly to force the investigations of crimes which perhaps the judge was inclined to overlook. For example, Governor Assumar ordered the municipal judge, Manuel Gomes da Silva, to investigate some riots of slaves in Itaubira, while at the same time forcing Silva to act by ordering his military aid to arrest the instigator of the distur-

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bances. This ensured the action of the judge who, for personal reasons, might not have indicted the disturber of the peace. The governor's insistence that the judge act when ordered was one of the sparks which ignited the 1720 uprising in Vila Rica.

The power of the municipal judge was more a reflection of the personal power and prestige of the individual involved and the spatial distance from higher authority than of statutory powers of the office. The anonymously written "Discurso histórico e político sobre a soblevação que nas Minas houve no ano de 1720" provides an excellent example.¹⁷ Pascoal da Silva Guimarães was elected municipal judge Christmas Day, 1718. While in office, he passed sentence upon one Silvestre Coutinho, evicting him from his share of a gold strike. This share was then purchased from Coutinho's partner by Guimarães. This in itself was probably not an unusual occurrence. Coutinho sought out the governor's assistant and enlisted his support, but despite the intervention of Governor Assumar,¹⁸ Guimarães retained possession of the mine. In this confrontation, the most powerful man in Vila Rica was able to disobey the governor--a stand probably made easier by the governor's residence in Carmo.

The councillors had a wide range of powers. These were defined by the civil code, the Ordenações, as being the responsibility for the "Regulation of the land and the works of the Council and of all that they can know

and comprehend so that the land and its inhabitants can live well.¹⁹ The councillors therefore, it would seem,

were given most non-judicial functions of the câmara.

It is difficult to determine whether or not practice conformed to the law. Each action recorded in the Livros de Acordãos and Vereanças (Minutes of Council Sessions) begins with the third-person plural acordarão, they agreed, and the minutes of the proceedings are signed by all those present. While the role of the procurador is relatively easily discernible from the minutes, internal evidence to substantiate the division of powers between councilmen and judges is more difficult to locate.

But the little internal evidence which exists does substantiate the coincidence of law and reality. First, on the various occasions when the councillors ordered the municipal judge to act, indications are that the latter took no active role in the voting. Second, the wording of council minutes and petitions to the council offer more positive evidence, from which several examples can be cited. When some residents of Padre Faria petitioned to have a street repaved because "it was ruined [and] incapable of being used unless the vereadores of this Senate order it repaired" they addressed themselves²⁰ to the vereadores and not to the câmara as a whole. On one occasion, the councillors ordered the municipal judge to investigate possible fraud in the court of the fiscal officers who were nominally under the authority of the

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judges. Finally, the fact that the presiding municipal judge had the tie-breaking vote indicates that normally he did not vote. Regular voting was confined to the vereadores and the procurador.

At the same time it should be noted that, in typical Portuguese administrative style, things were not exactly what they seemed to be. While the municipal judge might not be able to vote, the councillors and procurator had to depend on him to carry out their orders--which he could be slow in doing if he disagreed with them. Moreover, his presence and participation in the deliberations certainly had their effect upon the other members. Normally of high social status, the judges must have had an impact upon the deliberations of the council. The judge's ultimate weapon, of course, was his refusal to call the câmara into session.

The most controversial official on the municipal council was the procurator. As the descendent of the people's representative on the medieval Portuguese câmara, the procurator played an important role in the working of the council. Elected along with the other
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members the procurator acted principally as the defender of the corporate rights and property of the town and
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the people.

The procurator served as a link between the people and the council. Petitions, the standard means by which a person communicated his needs to the council, had to be

channeled through him. Efforts to bypass the procurator brought an immediate reaction.

Any member of the council could protest a decision of that body. This disassociated the protestor from a decision he opposed. Nevertheless, the majority carried the day, and the minority was expected not only to accept this but to sign the decision and thus give the impression that the decision was unanimous. The act of protest meant that the protestor's name appeared not because he favored the decision but because of the rule requiring unanimity. Thus if the decision was later declared illegal and the council punished, the protestor was not subject to this punishment which was usually pecuniary. There are examples of councillors and even judges who were not acting as presidents protesting, but the majority of these actions involved the procurator acting in the capacity of protector of the patrimony and the people. ²⁴

Beyond protesting and appealing to royal officials for support, the procurator had other weapons at his disposal. One was the simple refusal to release funds for a use to which he was opposed. While not employed during the pre-1720 period it was a potential weapon. ²⁵

The second weapon in the procurator's arsenal was weaker and effective only in certain circumstances. This was his refusal to sign appointment orders. Since it appears that the procurator's signature was required for an appointment to be effective, this could have made the

procurator the most important member of the câmara. That this did not occur is testimony to the delicate balance which existed within the câmara. The need was for the signature of a procurator, but not necessarily of the one in office. All the council had to do was find someone who had held the post previously and who agreed with the proposed appointment. Thus when Manuel Rodrigues de Almeida refused to sign the appointment order of a new urban street aligner, the council turned to the procurator of the previous year who signed the order.²⁶ The procurator effectively could act in this manner only in a situation wherein he had popular support strong enough to intimidate those exprocurators available. Otherwise the act of refusing to sign was simply a slightly stronger form of protesting.

This loop-hole limited the independence of the procurator. But the ultimate constraint upon the activities of the procurator was the possibility of removal from office. This, however, seldom occurred in eighteenth-century Vila Rica. This was due primarily to the fact that while the protests and refusals to expend funds or sign orders were irritating to the other officers of the câmara, they were not sufficient cause for punishment. Removal from office required constant disobedience to the will of the council or dereliction of duty.

The council functioned only because of the good sense of its members. The balance which existed could be easily

upset by the intransigence of any official. That this seldom occurred was due to the fact that the members of the council represented the same socio-economic group and thus had the same interests to defend. When the balance was tipped it was usually the doing of the procurator acting as the protector of the commonwealth and the patrimony of the council.

Notes

1. A long debate within the council was decided on June 20, 1742 by the municipal judge: "since the votes were tied [on a question of] religious processions the municipal judge broke the tie." Council Proceedings, 20 June, 1742 in Cód. 42 (CMOP), fol. 111v. This is one of the few examples where the judge's involvement is reflected in the minutes of the council sessions.
2. Alternation was tried as early as 1712. The chairmanship of the 1712 council was divided the first two months, then alternated monthly during the next five months. The judge who served as chairman in July held that post in August. In September the post was shared. November had but one session and October and December none. Presumably the alternating was done for the convenience of the two individuals involved. The following year the oldest judge resumed his functions as sole chairman. Council sessions, "Atas da Câmara," pp.199-391.
3. The municipal council was referred to indiscriminantly as the Senado, the câmara, and the Senado da Câmara. The use of the term senado was unwarranted since this was supposed to be reserved for councils of cities. However there was no effort to stop the municipal council of Vila Rica from using the title.
4. Edmundo Zenha, O município no Brasil: 1532-1700 (São Paulo: Instituto Progresso Editorial, 1948?), p. 57.
5. Council to João V, 7 May, 1751 in Cód. 50 (CMOP), fol. 50v.
6. Ibid.
7. Council Proceedings, 16 May, 1744 in Cód. 50 (CMOP), fol. 90v. The council members "agreed to write a letter to the municipal judge Captain Luís de Figueiredo Leitão, who is in Cachoeira investigating a case, advising him to examine the actions of the justice of the peace of the parish of Cachoeira."
8. Council to João V, undated but sent by 1719 fleet, in Cód. 19 (CMOP), fol. 2v.

9. Council Proceedings, 13 May, 1719 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 85.
10. Auto de Correição, 3 April, 1745 in Cód. 22, (CMOP), fols. 96-96v.
11. Zenha, O município, p. 58.
12. Auto de Correição, 3 April, 1745 Cód. 22 (CMOP), fols. 96-96v.
13. Appointment Order, 20 October, 1718 in Cód. 13, fol. 61v.
14. Council Proceedings, 18 October, 1738 in Cód. 39, fol. 65. Edmundo Zenha in his study of local government confuses the judicial function of the councillors. While they can order the arrest of a person, they do not participate in the trial of those arrested. Furthermore, Zenha over simplifies the judicial functions of the câmara. Only the judges had first instance jurisdiction while the councillors acting as part of the whole council had appellate jurisdiction over cases originally tried in the fiscal courts and by the justices of the peace.
15. Council Proceedings, 21 June, 1738 in Cód. 39 (CMOP), fol. 45.
16. Count of Assumar to Manuel Gomes da Silva and to Lieutenant General Manuel da Costa Fragoso, 12 October, 1718 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 61.
17. This work was written either by the governor, the Count of Assumar, or by an official subordinate to him. While it is clearly a defense of Assumar's actions during the 1720 uprising and is biased in its description of the extent of the plot and of the imminent danger which it presented to the continuation of royal authority, the description of the steps leading to the uprising are confirmed in many respects by other sources. Furthermore the incident described here is not out of character for the individual involved. The original manuscript of the "Discurso histórico" is in the Arquivo Público Mineiro, Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais and references are to this manuscript.
18. "Discurso histórico", fols. 29v-30.
19. Ordenações, Livro I, Titulo LXVI in João Camillo de Oliveira Torres, História de Minas Gerais, 5 vols. (Belo Horizonte: Difusão Pan-Americana do Livro, n.d.) I, 242-243.

20. Petition, July, 1733 in Avulso Maço, No. 173, APM.
21. Council Proceedings, 18 June, 1738 in Cód. 39 (CMOP), fols. 43v-44v.
22. Torres, História de Minas Gerais, vol.1, p. 250 states that the procurator was selected by popular election. Torres appears to be confusing the procurator with his counterpart, the procurator or solicitor of the people (procurador do povo), who was an official elected by all interested people to deal with a specific problem. The procurator was elected in the same manner as the other members of the council.
23. Zenha, O município, pp. 6-69, in his quest for proof to substantiate his belief in the democratic character of the council, sees the procurator as the defender of individual rights. This, at least in Vila Rica, does not appear to have been the case. The procurator was concerned with corporate rather than individual rights.
24. This rule of unanimity also means that splits in the council over issues which were not crucial were covered up with no record of squabbles or voting differences being kept.
25. Thus in 1748 the procurator Guimarães opposed the use of council funds for fighting quilombos. Despite the demands and threats of the councillors he remained steadfast. The councillors accused him of "impeding by this means the [only] solution required by such a great evil." Even after the ouvidor approved the expenditure, thus removing any doubt concerning the legality of the decision, the procurator remained adamant. The councillors could do no more than make Guimarães responsible for whatever damages resulted from his refusal to release council funds. Council Proceedings, 13 and 26 October, 1748 in Cód. 52 (CMOP), fols. 202 and 207-207v.
26. Council Proceedings, 16 December, 1741 in Cód. 42 (CMOP), fol. 60.

Chapter 21
The Municipal Council: Selection of Members

The selection of people to fill the six seats on the municipal council of Vila Rica was a process established in elaborate detail by laws and custom. The councilmen were chosen in elections, but those eligible to vote and, therefore, to serve on the council represented a miniscule percentage of the total population of the municipality.

Council members served for one year with three complete councils being selected every third year. This has led to some confusion over the council members' term of office.¹ The statute requiring triennial elections was observed in Vila Rica only during the early period. Annual elections soon became the rule. This violation of the law was acknowledged by the municipal council in 1735 during the ouvidor's annual inspection (correição). The council defended its action by citing "the unstable residence of the inhabitants."² No action was taken by the ouvidor and the violation was ignored.

Council members were prohibited from succeeding themselves. But movement from one post to another was not uncommon. An example is provided by Manuel de Figueiredo Mascarenhas who served as the senior councillor in 1711 and then as the senior municipal judge the following year.

While elections were triennial the procedures utilized were often bizarre in their details. Held normally about December 8, the elections were indirect with the elite (homens bons) first selecting electors who, in turn, chose the council members. The electors chose six men for the post of judge, nine for councillor and three for procurator. It was the responsibility of the ouvidor to take these names and from them form three councils. When the election was complete the names were placed in balls, (pelouros), probably of leather "sewn and sealed with five drops of laquer."³ The pelouros, each containing the names of the members of three complete councils to maintain secrecy, were placed then in a safe until the time of the formal announcement--normally between December 26 and 28 at which time "the safe locked with three keys of which the municipal judge...had one, the senior councillor had another [and] the procurator the other... [was opened and] a boy six years old more or less was called [and] instructed to take one of the pelouros from a sack."⁴ Then the membership of the new council was announced.

Despite the role played by the ouvidor in the arrangement of the councils, neither that official nor the governor normally were able to interfere directly in the election process. One of the few occasions when a governor intervened occurred in 1718 when the ouvidor, Manuel Mosqueira da Rosa, could not attend the election, osten-

sably because of illness. The election was accompanied by such a scandal and disturbance that the governor was forced to step in, ordering Lieutenant General João Ferreira Tavares to Vila Rica until the completion of the selection "to observe as a disinterested person."⁵ This dispatch of "a disinterested person" initiated a long period of litigation concerning the election and the intervention.

There was one real weapon which the royal authorities could use against "independent" electors. This was the authority of the ouvidor to issue the carta de usança, or authorization given to elected officials to assume their posts. While this requirement specifically refers only to the municipal judges, cartas de crença e confirmação, literally letters of loyalty and confirmation,⁶ were required of all the members.

Service was mandatory for all those elected.⁷ Excuses were seldom accepted. The power to decide on the validity of an excuse was held by the ouvidor. Particularly when elections were triennial there was the chance that a man selected for a council post had died or had moved to another town before his service began. Men were excused because of old age or because of the need to conduct business in distant places. The ouvidor had to ascertain whether the absence was an effort to avoid serving on the council or had occurred by coincidence.

When the ouvidor decided that a legitimate vacancy

did exist, he called a special election (eleição de barrete). This election was direct, with all the homens bons present voting, and freedom of choice was protected zealously. Judges elected in this manner were called juízes de barrete and councilmen, vereadores de barrete, distinguishing them from those regularly elected who were called juizes or vereadores da vara.

This process is illustrated by the actions of the lame-duck council which met on January 1, 1716 with the homens bons in order to open the letters of acknowledgement sent by the men chosen to serve on the new council. Only four letters were received as two of the men selected were absent from the region. Of the four still residing in the area, two asked to be excused from serving. The excuses were submitted immediately to the ouvidor for his decision. The ouvidor accepted one of the excuses and ordered that a special election be held to select two judges and one councillor.

The number of men entitled to vote had grown slightly since 1711 when twenty-three homens bons had selected the first electors. In the direct elections for juiz de barrete in 1716, the winner received thirty votes. The numbers received by the losers are not given. But the increase was relatively small. Elections in which more than fifty voters exercised their prerogative were not common--fifty out of a total population by 1720 of ten to twenty thousand, of which probably four to eight thousand

were free. The voters came from the entire t^êrmo although obviously those residing in Vila Rica itself were more likely to vote.

The *homens bons* or electors were a well-defined body of men. In general, they were the richest and most prominent men in the region. Because they constituted the body from which council members and fiscal officers were drawn, they had to be free of the impediments which could preclude a person from serving. The list of the *homens bons* in 1711 offer an insight into the structure of the ruling elite during the early years in Vila Rica.

Table 3
Homens Bons: 1711

Name	Militia Post	Birthplace	Offices Held	Economic Status
Antônio Francisco da Silva	Coronel	Portugal	Elector (1711)	
Felix de Azevedo Carneiro e Cunha				
Pascoal da Silva Guimarães	Mestre do Campo	Portugal	Judge (1719)	Rich miner and farmer Owned over 300 slaves
Lionel da Gama Belles	Captain	Portugal	Judge (1716)	
Bartolomeu Marques de Brito			Almotacel (1713)	
José Eduardo Passos Rodrigues				
Francisco Viegas Barbosa				
Jorge da Fonseca Freire	Captain		Councillor (1715)	Owner of kiln works
Luís de Almeida Barros	Captain		Almotacel (1711)	
Fernando da Fonseca e Sá			Judge (1711)	
João Carvalho de Oliveira	Mestre do Campo			Large property holder
Francisco Maciel da Costa	Captain		Councillor (1715)	Large property holder
			Almotacel (1715)	

Table 3 continued

Name	Militia Post	Birthplace	Offices Held	Economic Status
Manuel de Figueiredo Mascarenhas			Elector (1711) Councillor (1711)	
Felix de Gusmão Mendonça e Bueno	Lt. General Royal Army	São Paulo	Councillor (1711)	Owner of kiln works
Manuel de Almeida Costa			Procurator (1711) Councillor (1712)	
José Gomes de Melo	Coronel		Judge (1711)	
Roberto Neves de Brito				
Manuel da Silva Borges				
Antônio Ribeiro Franco			Almotacel (1718)	
Henrique Lopes de Araújo	Capitão-mor	Portugal		Miner
Antônio Alvares de Magalhães	Alferes		Councillor (1716)	
Lourenço Rodrigues Graça				
Manuel de Nascimento Fraga				

This information was compiled from the following sources: Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 2, Part 1 (January-March, 1897): "Atas da Camara, Cód. 4 (CMOP), Cód. 8 (CMOP), Cód. 13 (CMOP) and Franco, Dicionário de bandeirantes e sertanistas.

Fourteen of the twenty-three *homens bons* went on to enter the *governança*, which was the pinnacle of the social hierarchy, composed of men who served either on the council or as fiscal officers. Eleven, at least, held militia commissions. Of the five men whose birthplace is known only one was a Paulista.

The *homens bons* formed a recognizable corporate body. While they appear often in the colonial documents, only a few of these documents are helpful in sketching the characteristics of this body. One of these few was the inspection (correição) of March 29, 1737 which took the council to task for failing to have the "*homens bons da governança*" in attendance when it decided that two men were unfit to enter "the *governança*". The *ouvidor* revoked the decision and authorized their entrance, thereby entitling them to hold public office.¹¹ Thus the elite had a recognized constituency with established procedures for entrance.

Withdrawal from this body was effected in several ways. A person elected to office who failed to serve could be expelled from the inner circle. In 1724, for example, the council

agreed that the fiscal officer who had been elected, Bento Correia de Melo excused himself by leaving for Ribeirão a Baxo [sic] after receiving [a] letter to take office ...despite being warned to attend this session today for which reason they elected Domingos Francisco de Oliveira as fiscal officer....

Also they determined that because Bento Correia de Melo did not accept the staff of the fiscal officer for the above Reasons he will not be employed any more in the governança of the Republic of this Town.¹²

Departure from this select group without prejudice was possible only by retirement or death. As an example of the former, one of Vila Rica's leading citizens, Colonel Manuel Ferreira Agrelles requested a certificate of retirement and exemption from all public employment "on the basis of his age, seventy, and having served four times as municipal judge and once as councillor.¹³ He thereupon withdrew from the small group of men who actively ruled the town.

Besides the general qualifications contained in the Ordenações two special ones were proposed to control entry into the council. The first was signed on March 22, 1721 after the quelling of the riots which had rocked Vila Rica. By this order, João V ordered that "the principal people" were to be strongly encouraged to marry and asked for the governor's recommendation as to whether "it would be convenient to order that only those [who were] married could enter into the ruling bodies of the council of the towns."¹⁴ The king expressed reservations concerning the sufficiency of married men who could meet the prerequisites for entry into the ruling elite. While the governors response is unknown, this initiative was one of the means by which the crown hoped to pacify the tur-

bulent miners, not only of Vila Rica but of all Minas Gerais. It was felt that the propensity to quarrel and revolt was related to the absence of family life, due to the predominantly male migration into the gold fields. Marriage would force the miners to put down roots.

The second effort was aimed at another group entirely. During the early years of the municipal life of Minas do Ouro the great social mobility of the miners and the fluid situation which had resulted had provided an atmosphere conducive to the entry of some non-whites into the ruling elite. These were probably mulattoes of light skin tones whose wealth served as a whitening device. On January 29, 1726, the crown moved to reaffirm the law permitting only whites to rule. In part, this law, whose social significance already has been discussed, stated that:

Since a large part of the families [in Minas]...are of clean birth it is fair that only the people who had this quality should be elected to serve as councillors and join the ruling elite....[While] the lack of capable people made it initially necessary to tolerate the admission of mulattoes to the exercise of those offices, today this reason has ceased [and] it becomes improper that they be occupied by people in which occurs such a blemish.¹⁵

These efforts were only partially successful. Their significance lies more in the intentions of the crown than in the results they wrought. They reveal an intention to progressively purge and thereby define more narrowly the

elite. It must be noted that these limitations were not universally accepted by even the white elite which often resisted efforts to racially define its composition.

Notes

1. Torres, História de Minas Gerais, 1: p. 249 states that the term of office was three years. Torres apparently is confusing the frequency of election with the term of office. By statute elections were held every three years but three entire councils were chosen at the same time when this method was employed.
2. Inspection Report, 8 July, 1735 in Cód. 22, (CMOP), fol. 60.
3. Council Proceedings, 1 January, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara" p. 255.
4. Council Proceedings, 28 November, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara"; pp. 285-286.
5. Count of Assumar to Manuel Mosqueira da Rosa, 26 December, 1718 in Cód. 11 (CMOP), fol. 93v.
6. Council Proceedings, 14 January, 1716 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 10. The first judges had had this requirement waived for the initial appointment because of the unavailability of an ouvidor.
7. There were exceptions to this rule as some individuals had been granted special exemptions from serving even if selected but it was generally known who had these. It is very rare to encounter someone claiming exemption on the basis of privilege during this period.
8. Council Proceedings, 1, 4 and 11 January, 1716 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fols. 4-10.
9. Council Proceedings, 11 January, 1716 in Cód. (CMOP), fol. 10.
10. This information was compiled from the following sources: Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 2, Part 1 (January-March, 1897): "Atas da Camara," Cód. 4 (CMOP), Cód. 8 (CMOP), Cód. 13 (CMOP) and Franco, Dicionário de bandeirantes e sertanistas.
11. Inspection Report, 29 March, 1737 in Cód. 22 (CMOP), fols. 66v-67.

12. Council Proceedings, 25 February, 1724 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 87v.
13. Council Proceedings, November, 1752 in Cód. 63 (CMOP), fols. 72v-73.
14. King to Count of Assumar, 22 March, 1721 in Cód. 23 (SG), fol. 6 also cited in Sylvio de Vasconcellos, Vila Rica, p. 62.
15. João V to Lourenço de Almeida, 29 January, 1726 in Cód. 5 (SG), fols. 115-115v.

Chapter 22
The Functions of the Municipal Council

The council had a very wide range of responsibilities most of which dealt with local matters. During the first twenty five years after the incorporation of Vila Rica the power of the council to act on local issues went unchallenged. Only when the ouvidor was able to enforce his authority to pass judgement on the legality of the expenditures of the council was the latitude of the council limited. This did not occur until the fourth decade of the eighteenth century, although the process was begun immediately after the suppression of the 1720 urban
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riots.

One of the major problems facing the council of Vila Rica was the regulation of commerce. Because of the location of the town, crops could be grown only with difficulty; the numerous hills on which the town was built required extensive terracing and the soil was generally poor. While among the first urban land grants were some for gardens, the residents of the town with its ferrous soil certainly could not grow enough crops to make the community self-sufficient.

Food stuffs had to come from those regions outside the urban area where the mountains were less steep and

the soil more fertile. There were three areas in the municipality suitable for this. The first was the area around São Bartolomeu, which had a large number of farms in 1715-1717. While some of these were major holdings, such as that of Antônio Martins Leça which measured half a square league² the majority of the properties in the area were of smaller size. The second major region was the long valley between Tripui and Cachoeira, which became an important producer of cattle for the Vila Rica market. The third area was to the north and west of Cachoeira. Called the campo, or plain, it became a provider of cattle and food crops. It is in this area that early efforts were made to produce sugar cane. In 1711 a sesmaria was given to Antônio de Araújo dos Santos "a married man and resident of Minas with his family, who had lived ten years on a farm along the Velhas River in a place called the Curralinho [little corral] on which he had built a sugar mill to make sugar five years ago [1706] which was the first to be built in Minas."³

The crops grown were the staples of the Mineiro's diet then as now. These were corn, manioc, and beans. Corn was by far the most important. Governor Assumar noted in a letter to João V that "I saw with my own eyes that there is no distance in excess of half a league in this Captaincy where one does not find cultivated those foodstuffs which here are common such as corn and manioc."⁴

The mineiros' favorite alcoholic drink also then as now

was aguarente or cachaça distilled from sugar cane juice. This production was an important factor in the internal trade of Minas. Assumar noted the large number of merchants travelling the roads in convoys of up to sixty horses. He estimated that more than nine thousand pack animals were travelling the trails of Minas.⁵

Much of the corn was ground and then roasted to make corn meal for the slaves. By 1714 grinding mills could be found within the urban limits of Vila Rica.⁶ Various efforts were made to control the quality of the corn meal and to ensure its availability to the residents of the urban core.

The regulation of commerce in meat was also of great concern to the council and many ordinances were enacted prior to 1720 in an effort to ensure a constant supply of meat. The council's involvement was precipitated by a meat shortage in 1712, caused by the refusal of cattlemen to bring their herds into Vila Rica to be slaughtered. The council reacted by prohibiting local ranchers from selling or transporting their cattle outside the municipality of Vila Rica. Anyone doing so was subject to having all his cattle confiscated. Cattle were to be brought into town on Fridays and Saturdays "as customary."⁷ This ordinance did not have the desired effect and in January, 1713 a penalty of thirty days in jail was added to the threat of confiscation and the sale of live cattle within the municipality was prohibited to force the cattle-

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men to slaughter their cattle. In the same year the council, in consultation with Ouvidor Amorim and Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, enacted a one-quarter oitava tax on each head slaughtered in the district of Vila Rica. In return the council obligated itself to construct corrals. This was not done, however, until 1718 when the contract was let for the construction of corrals and a building for butchering and selling beef. To provide meat on a more regular basis cattle were ordered brought into town on Saturdays and Tuesdays for butchering.

At the same time, the council changed its attitude toward the system of providing meat. The monopoly meat contract, which had played such a prominent role in igniting the Wars of the Emboabas, was again seen as the best means for guaranteeing the supply of meat. All those involved in the meat business were called to a session and the contract put up for sale. The contractor had to provide ample meat during an entire year or suffer severe penalties. This restrictive policy was unworkable due to the size of the market, and, the following year, 1715, the council returned to the policy of decreeing ceiling prices and allowing competition among the merchants. The meeting of the council with the meat merchants, who together effected this change in policy, established several conditions: maximum prices were set at twenty pounds for one oitava, and a quarter of a steer for three oitavas; the butchers were to be licensed and

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the weights used had to be examined semi-annually.

Three years later it was decided to provide fresh meat daily and the ceiling price was lowered to twenty-four pounds per oitava with licenses renewable monthly. It was hoped that doing away with the meat monopoly would ensure that prices were the lowest possible.

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Thus the council had become involved intimately with the problem of providing large quantities of beef. The policy of the council had switched from minimum intervention--the regulation of the number of merchants involved--to return to a monopoly system and then, finally, to maximum involvement through the issuance of licenses to ensure that prices were low. Furthermore, the number of those licenses issued was limited to guarantee a minimum of competition in any given district.

Besides providing for an ample supply of food, the council was responsible for regulating its quality. Once again meat was a particular problem. Normally cattle were brought in from the major northern centers, such as Bahia, through Sabará, Curral del Rei (presently-day Belo Horizonte), and Contagem (the present-day industrial park area of Belo Horizonte), and then on to Vila Rica where the animals were slaughtered upon arrival. No time was spent fattening the animals before butchering. To improve the quality of the meat, the council required at least one week pasturage in Cachoeira. Moreover, animals brought into town to be slaughtered had to be put

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out to pasture if they were not killed immediately. This apparently did not have the desired effect since in 1744 Ouvidor Caetano Furtado de Mendonça specifically noted that animals awaiting slaughter were kept in the corrals without food or water, thereby prejudicing the quality of the meat. He forbade this procedure and re-
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quired pasturage after two days of waiting.

Pork was another important element in the diet of the Vilaricano. Pigs roamed the streets of early Vila Rica in much the same way the visitor finds them in the small isolated towns around Vila Rica today. One of the routine ordinances enacted year after year by the council prohibited pigs from being permitted to roam the streets freely. Because pork needs to be refrigerated, salted, or eaten immediately to prevent spoilage, its supply was a problem due to the lack of refrigeration and the high cost of salt. The council therefore reacted strongly to the practice of butchering the pigs outside of town and transporting the meat to Vila Rica for sale. As often as not the meat arrived spoiled so that white men refused to purchase it and the meat was sold cheaply to Negroes who became sick. To prevent this the introduction of un-
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salted pork was prohibited.

The council was also concerned about the quality of other products. The sale of fresh corn (milho verde) was prohibited as prejudicial to the health of slaves, al-
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though no explanation was given for this. Similarly

the sale of corn meal was prohibited for a time because
it was not being roasted adequately.²⁰ Problems also
were encountered with the roasting procedures for flour
of benzoin (benjoim) and its sale was prohibited.²¹

Bread had, such a crucial place in the diet of the residents of Vila Rica that its price was closely regulated by the council. Whereas the fiscal officers determined the prices of most items, those of bread and corn were set annually by the council, which normally kept the price stable and instead manipulated the weight of the loaf. Perhaps due to the unavailability of sufficient quantities of wheat, corn meal was mixed with wheat flour in making bread until 1742 when this practice was prohibited.²²

Beyond controlling the availability and quality of the foods eaten by Vilaricanos, the council acted to regulate the stores and shops which sold these items. This regulation of businesses proved to be an important factor in the growth of Vila Rica. Several of the mountain mining camps, especially Ouro Bueno, seemed to be evolving rapidly into major settlements; until the council prohibited businesses in these settlements. Thus urban growth was channeled into the area of the three original settlements. The members of the council which initiated this policy was aware of its implications.

They agreed to forbid that there be in the district of this town, within a distance of one league, stores of dry goods or wet goods or any shop of any kind because of the damage which occurs to the settlement of this town and the diminution of the [rate of] increase among the merchants of the town and the miners.²³

One month was given to close the business establishments under threat of arrest and imprisonment for thirty days and a fine of sixteen oitavas. Several exceptions were made, such as along the road to Carmo because of the extensive transit of travelers along that road.

In 1714 further action was taken to curb commercial growth outside the central settlements. First taverns and restaurants (cuzinhas das lavras) were prohibited, followed shortly by shops which sold "any perishable item or liquors."²⁴ This was aimed specifically at the settlements on the mountain. That these ordinances were not enforced can be seen from the report which Ouvidor Manuel Mosqueira da Rosa issued during his inspection in 1716. Rosa forbade all shops in the areas of the mines and ordered that all ranchos obtain licenses to remain on the mountain since it was feared that these acted as clandestine shops.²⁵

Areas closer to the urban center also were subject to these restrictions. Shops were prohibited in the area of Córrego Seco in 1719. This area near Caquende was one of extensive mining operations. The prohibition was decreed by the governor who ordered those shops still standing after fifteen days be put to the torch.²⁶

Enacting ordinances was one thing, enforcing them another. The 1718 council acknowledged the difficulty of enforcing the prohibition on shops near mining sites, noting that the edicts were enforced only on the poor; the rich went untouched. The council members felt that "the Law should be equal for all, distributing justice without exception, to the important as well as the little man."²⁷ Since it felt powerless to act against the magnates of the outlying areas, this council admitted defeat and rescinded the previous ordinances, and licenses were again issued for businesses in the mining districts.²⁸

This strange admission of weakness and the invitation to businessmen to return to the mining districts and open their shops lasted only a short time. The 1719 council reinstated these edicts although there is no evidence that anything was done to enforce them.²⁹ This reversal in policy probably was due to pressure exerted by the Count of Assumar, whose determination to close these establishments was one of the causes of the 1720 uprising.

Various orders were issued to close stores and shops outside the urban perimeter but within the sesmaria of the town. But whereas the council of 1713 had stated its reasons honestly, each of the other councils used the rationale that these establishments were dens of iniquity preying upon the gullibility and natural dishonesty of the slaves. That they were dens of iniquity need not

be doubted, but there was more involved than a desire to protect the miners.

Without commerce a mining community could not expand and evolve to a new level of development: once the gold deposits were dissipated the settlement disappeared. Bom Sucesso is an excellent example of this. The residents of Bom Sucesso pulled up stakes and moved to Padre Faria when the gold played out because there was no other economic base. But both Antônio Dias and Ouro Preto continued to grow even after the quantity of gold produced began to decline. One of the major reasons for this continued growth was that each settlement had a thriving business community. Ouro Preto and Antônio Dias grew because each had evolved to a second level of development--no longer mere mining camps, both had become commercial centers. If less gold was panned from the streams of Vila Rica, the gold ripped from the Morro de Vila Rica and spent in the stores, shops and taverns of the urban core, amply made up for this decline. Once the mountain settlements were prohibited from establishing their own commercial base they were doomed to total dependence on the already developed area. Despite the fact that the quantity of gold taken from the Morro de Vila Rica probably was much greater than that extracted from the valley, the areas of Ouro Podre, Ouro Fino and Ouro Bueno remained mere mining camps, doomed to disappear when the gold played out.

The council also played an important role in regulat-

ing guilds. The organization and the role of the guilds has already been discussed. However, some general comments as to the relationship between the council and the guilds are appropriate here. The guilds of Vila Rica were dominated by the municipal council. The election of guild officers was conducted under the auspices of the council which issued commissions to the winners and administered their oaths of office. At times, in fact, the council had to cajole the artisans into showing up for elections. Furthermore, guild pay scales were established by the council, apparently in conjunction with guild officers. Each artisan had to be approved by the council before he could practice his craft within the guild corporation, but even then he was required to obtain yearly licenses to practice his trade. Those men who applied for membership without having been tested previously were examined by the judges of the guild who issued a letter of examination (carta de exame). But the decision of the guild judges had to be approved by the council in order to have legal force. Even the ceremonial functions of the guilds were controlled by the council which could, and did, order its members to participate in various functions. Clearly the guilds in Vila Rica were controlled tightly. The weakness of the guild system was counterbalanced by the emergence of the lay brotherhood, which in took over some of the functions which the guild traditionally had in Portugal.

Another major responsibility of the council was to provide for municipal improvements. There were always public work projects underway, such as the paving of streets which was an annual affair. ³⁰ Constant repairs were needed not only because the work was poorly done—many times contractors did substandard work—but also because slaves looking for gold would remove the stones or break them. Carts carrying stones, other building materials, food, or other goods also wreaked havoc with the streets.

Bridges were another civic improvement of great importance in this region cut by numerous streams and creeks. In the urban area bridges, like roads, were usually built by the council, although sometimes secondary bridges of wood would be built by the residents in the immediate area who would profit most by their construction. On occasion still another means of building bridges or roads was employed. This was the sponsoring of the work by an organization such as a lay brotherhood. It was through the intercession of the "black brotherhood" of Nossa Senhora do Rosário of Ouro Preto that the upper road connecting the chapel of Nossa Senhora do Rosário ³¹ to the parish church was built. Other work such as the construction of retaining walls to prevent landslides was sponsored by the brotherhoods.

Outside the urban area the bridges were built by the local residents under the direction of the justices of the peace of the local militia commanders. The council

usually acted after petitions from the people focused its attention on a problem area. Typically the contract for the repair work was put out for bids several months after the council was made aware of the need and only after a personal inspection was made by the procurator or the entire council.

Also of great importance was the furnishing of water for public and private use. Fountains were built in all the settled areas at great expense due to the need to pipe water from its source. If there was a surplus of water available for any fountain, the council would authorize people along the path of the pipes to divert some of the water for their own use. Vila Rica was, and is, famed for both the abundance and purity of its water.

As with the supply of food, the council not only acted to ensure an adequate supply but also to maintain its purity. Innumerable times the council admonished a resident to repair the broken water pipes on his property which allowed impurities to get into the water. Similarly people were ordered to find ways of dumping human wastes which would not pollute the water. Apparently much of the pollution was caused by the people who insisted on washing themselves and their clothes in the public fountains. An annual council ordinance prohibited washing in these tanks. Horses drank from these same tanks, presumably in competition with the many people who obtained their drinking water there. The overflow from

these tanks was then piped into private homes for consumption.

The special geological features of the region in which Vila Rica was built necessitated costly work to make the area safe. To prevent slippage, mountainsides had to be buttressed. Many of the huge walls built to accomplish this in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can be seen today. Marvelously well constructed, they still accomplish their purpose and are but one example of the way in which the settlers dealt with a harsh physical setting.

Besides providing for fountains, retaining walls, streets and bridges, the council took an active hand in urban planning. This involved ensuring that the houses were aligned correctly, the streets reasonably straight and largos (small squares) and the larger praças, were planned. Constructions which protruded too far into the street, such as stairs, were ordered demolished; alleys which became obstructed or had been closed by someone for their own use, were opened; unauthorized building of fences and extensions on houses similarly were ordered demolished. Furthermore, through its power to issue urban land grants, the council controlled, in a very general way, overall urbanization patterns. It also had the authority to grant building permits--a power which it used extensively as a means of influencing urban growth.

Public works accounted for a large part of the council's expenses. Unfortunately, information concerning the first ten years of the council's existence is unavailable due to the loss of the budget reports. But for the period after 1721 reliable budgetary information is available. In 1722, sixteen percent of the council's expenditures were for public works; by 1755, the percentage was forty-five. If the money expended on evaluations and repairs for damage to private homes which resulted from public construction, and the purchase of homes to make way for new construction, is included, the figure reaches fifty-six per cent. ³³ This is extraordinary but illustrative of the attention devoted to this aspect of the council's general responsibility.

Religious and secular festivals and ceremonies also accounted for a portion of the council's expenses. Whereas normally money devoted to religious festivals did not exceed ten per cent of the total, the occurrence of a secular festival made expenses skyrocket. These festivals were held upon the arrival of a new governor or bishop, the birth or death of a member of the immediate royal family, or the coronation of a new monarch. In 1721, the arrival of the governor sent the festival percentage of the budget up to twenty percent. ³⁴

The council financed these activities and also actively participated in them. Processions were held on major religious and civic holidays. The council always

marched in a body--each member with his insignia of office held high, preceeded by the standard of the council. Other standards were carried by selected homens bons, often in rotation, so that the lists of men chosen to carry them serves as a roster of the homens bons.

At the same time the council members were accorded courtesies due their position. A priest met them at the door of the church and on their departure bade them farewell. Both ceremonies were accompanied by the ringing of bells in accordance with tradition. During high masses the church had to provide incense to burn if the council was in attendance. During festivals the council occupied a box immediately to the right of that of the governor.³⁵ These and other symbols of prestige were extremely important in an age when status was manifested by outward appearance.

One of the more intriguing responsibilities of the council derived from its special position of being located in the capital of the captaincy, especially after 1720. As such it claimed to have the power to register the letters of appointment or commissions of "Justice, military, treasury officials or any other posts."³⁶ It also registered the appointment of the governor and of the ouvidor and these officials took office in the pressence of the council, taking the oath administered by the senior municipal judge. While the council never refused to register the orders concerning these two officials, such a possibility existed.

Because of Vila Rica's position as the capital, the senior municipal judge of the council was the successor to the ouvidor when the latter died or was impeded from serving for other reasons. When a juiz de fora was established in Carmo in 1728 this official, as a royal appointee, replaced the municipal judge as the ouvidor's successor. However, the Vila Rica council continued to play a key role in the process of succession because it decided when the post was vacant.

One of the council's major responsibilities was that of maintaining law and order. Various officials subordinate to the council were involved in this role. The primary one was the sheriff (alcaide), who was chosen by the council. Assisting him was a secretary and investigators or constables, (meirinhos) who apparently also helped patrol the streets. ³⁷ The sheriff was under the operational control of the municipal judge.

The militia also assisted in maintaining law and order. Besides taking an active role in catching runaway slaves, militia officers also performed normal police functions. This usually occurred in the outlying settlements where not even a rudimentary police force existed.

These officials, however, were unable to cope with the violence-prone miners and the poorly supervised slaves who turned to drink to alleviate their suffering. A police force was needed. In 1720 the members of the council "agreed to order the preparation of a list of all the

people of this town in order to elect twelve men in each bairro, that is, Ouro Prêto, Antônio Dias and Padre Faria, to walk patrol every night through this said town to calm any disturbance that occurred." ³⁸ The following day, August 8, two men from each of the areas were named corporals (cabos) ³⁹ of the patrols. This organization formed the basis of the police force of colonial Vila Rica.

The municipal council thus had a wide range of responsibilities, from law enforcement to establishing and maintaining prices and quality standards on food and water. If some of its decisions reflected a conflict of interest this should be seen in light of an age which did not share today's abhorrence of such action. When the members of the ruling body were drawn from such a small group of men, impartiality was impossible. What is surprising is that so often these men were able to rise above pettiness to legislate for the good of the entire community: roads were indeed built over mountainous terrain, good and ample water provided, prices on essential foodstuffs kept low, and lawbreakers punished. Most important, law and order was established: after 1720 no significant outbreak of violence was to occur.

Notes

1. The process began simply enough when Lourenço de Almeida ordered the town council to turn over their financial records to the superintendent of the smelter for inspection. The council apparently refused and had to be ordered to comply "numerous times." The reason given for Almeida's action was the council's "lack of care" in maintaining the records. Lourenço de Almeida to Council, 1 September, 1722 in Cód. 17 (SG), fol. 122.
2. Land Grant made to Antônio Martins Leça, 11 August, 1711 in Cód. 7 (SG), fol. 129v.
3. Land Grant made to Antônio de Araújo dos Santos, 16 January, 1711 in Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 2 (1897), p. 262.
4. Assumar to João V, 15 July, 1718 in Cód. 4 (SG), fols. 524v.
5. Ibid., fols. 524-527.
6. Land Grant made to Gonçalo Rodrigues, Council Proceedings, 9 May, 1714 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 325.
7. Council Ordinance, 3 September, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p.248.
8. Council Ordinance, 21 January and 1 April, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," pp.259 and 266.
9. This tax was called the "meia pataca" tax since one quarter of an oitava equalled half a pataca.
10. Council Proceedings, 27 April, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 267-268.
11. Council Proceedings, 17 September, 1718 in Cód. 17 (CMOP), fol. 59v.
12. Council Proceedings, 27 January and 8 February, 1714 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 320 and 309-310.
13. Council Proceedings, 25 February, 1715 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 366.

14. Council Proceedings, 14 February, 1718 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fols. 43v-44v.
15. Council Ordinance, 10 October, 1742 in Cód. 49 (CMOP), fols. 33-33v.
16. Council Proceedings, 7 April, 1742 in Cód. 42 (CMOP), fol. 82v.
17. Report of Inspection, 4 May, 1744 in Cód. 22 (CMOP), fol. 94v.
18. The council decision required that pigs be brought alive to Vila Rica. Council Proceedings, 11 June, 1723 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fol. 42. But the ordinance which was issued on that date merely prohibited the introduction of unsalted meat (carne fresca). Council Ordinance, 11 June, 1723 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fol. 42. The reason for the change in policy is not explained although it is possible that the council changed its mind after being convinced that salted port could be transported and sold within a period considered safe.
19. Council Ordinance, 16 February, 1743 in Cód. 49 (CMOP), fol. 56v.
20. Council Ordinance, 4 October, 1733 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fol. 190.
21. Council Ordinance, 8 January, 1738 in Cód. 32 (CMOP), fol. 131.
22. Council Ordinance, 27 January, 1742 in Cód. 43 (CMOP), fol. 5v. Council Proceedings, 3 February, 1725 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 113 gives a good example of the council's concern for the quality of wheat bread.
23. Council Proceedings, 1 April, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 266.
24. Council Proceedings, 11 and 12 January, 1714 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 297-298.
25. Report of Inspection, 21 November, 1716 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 6v.
26. Assumar to Council of Vila Rica, 26 April, 1719 in Avulso Maço, No. 188, APM.
27. Council Ordinance, 7 September, 1718 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fol. 8.
28. Ibid.

29. Council Proceedings, 15 July, 1719 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 90.
30. A typical decision to pave is that of November 8, 1738 "They [the council members], finding it in the public good, agreed to put out for bids the paving [of the road] which goes from the bridge of the Rua Nova to the chapel of São José." Council Proceedings, 8 November, 1738 in Cód. 39 (CMOP), fol. 69v.
31. Petition of the board of the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário, 26 February, 1735 in Cód. 32 (CMOP), fol. 36-36v.
32. Interestingly, later projects such as the "new" road to Carmo were built along the geological lines of flow of the mountains without retaining walls and consequently land slides and erosion constantly necessitate repairs. Eighteenth century roadbuilders did not have the capability of ripping apart a mountain, so they built the road to fit the physical contours of the land. Rather than cut a road bed into the side of a hill, they used a terrace-type construction to build a level surface for the road bed. An indication of the ability of the early roadbuilders to follow the lay of the land can be seen in the fact that when the railroad was laid from Rio de Janeiro to Belo Horizonte it was built, with few deviations, along the Caminho Novo.
33. In 1722, 766 oitavas were expended for public works out of a total of 4,786. Cód. 12 (CMOP), fols. 8-10. The 1755 figures are 3:897\$304 of a total of 8:614\$201. Expenses on repairs and expropriations totalled an additional 917\$000. Cód. 51 (CMOP).
34. Of a total of 4233 1/2 oitavas spent during 1721, 896 1/2 was spent on ceremonies. Cód. 12 (CMOP), fols. 2-5.
35. "Descobrimento de Minas Gerais," pp. 33-34.
36. Vila Rica Council to João V, 4 September, 1734 in Cód. 9 (CMOP), fol. 44.
37. Nelson de Senna, "Origem da cidade; instalação da municipalidade," Bi-Centenário de Ouro Preto, 1711-1911 (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, n.d.), p. 5.
38. Council Proceedings, 7 August, 1720 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 119.
39. Council Proceedings, 8 August, 1720 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fol. 119v.

Chapter 23
The Municipal Council: Income

The municipal council occupied a prominent position within the Portuguese administrative system. In part this can be explained by the power of the council to impose and collect taxes and its freedom to spend the sums collected in the manner it saw fit. During the decade after the incorporation of Vila Rica in 1711, the fiscal independence of the council went unchallenged and it was not until 1741 that this power was completely curtailed. This fiscal freedom allowed the council to challenge politically this power of the royal governor.

During the years immediately after the incorporation of Vila Rica the council's most lucrative source of income was the contract on the jail. The jail was built and owned by the council but the jailer and guards were not paid from public funds. Instead, they purchased the right to run the jail on an annual basis. The contractor received his profit from the fees paid by the prisoners and by owners of slaves who had been incarcerated. The fees were paid on a daily basis. Those paid by slave owners were particularly lucrative and slaves could not be released until complete payment had been made.

While the jail contract was lucrative, it was also a constant source of problems. Often the contractor did not serve as the jailer but hired someone to serve in that post. The fact that the jail was a profit-making enterprise led to all sorts of chicanery and unsavory conduct. The jail itself was a major hazard: built of daub-and-waddle (pau-a-pique) it was relatively susceptible to jail breaks. Because of the danger and financial loss involved there often was a rapid turnover of jailers and it became increasingly difficult to find people willing and capable of serving.¹ While initially important the income obtained from the contract for running the jail came to be an insignificant part of the total income picture of the council. In 1721, the jail contract accounted for one quarter of the council's income.² The profits which could be earned by the contractor decreased as the society passed from the boom stage to one of relative stability; the council was less willing to accept illegal activity on the part of the jailer, thus limiting the contractor's profit.

A second profitable tax was that levied upon the cattle brought into town for butchering. A tax of one half pataca, or 160 réis, was levied on each animal. The tax, apparently, was instituted in 1712 after a conference of cattle ranchers, merchants, citizens of Vila Rica, and the council.³ The early efforts of the council to impose it are discussed above. This was not a fee for butcher-

ing but simply a tax imposed on each animal brought within the town limits for butchering at any one of the privately-owned slaughteryards.

Like many other colonial taxes, the "meia-pataca" was farmed out for collection. The contractor was responsible for enforcing the rules passed by the council concerning the points of entry of the cattle being brought in for slaughter, the days of butchering, the quality of the meat, and the collection of the tax. For the convenience of the contractor, all cattle had to enter Vila Rica by way of Tripui.⁴ Anyone could obtain a license to bring cattle into town and those butchered for home use⁵ were not taxed.

Apparently because of the low profit margins, it was not always possible to find someone willing to make an acceptable offer for this contract. When there was no satisfactory bid, as occurred in 1713, for example, the tax⁶ was collected by the town officials. This practice was not encouraged; collection by private parties was preferable to that by government agencies because the former represented a "safer" method of collection in that the total was predetermined and payment guaranteed. This tax provided on a regular basis a significant portion of the council's revenue throughout the period under consideration. In 1721, it represented fifteen per cent of the total collected. In 1743 the percentage had increased to twenty-five, only to return to previous levels

by 1753 when it made up thirteen per cent of the council's
7
income.

Next in importance among the sources of municipal income was the fee charged for the inspection of weights and measures called the calibration tax (aferição). It also was farmed out to the highest bidder. So important was this fee, both as a revenue source and as a means of maintaining standardized weights and measures, that it was the first topic of business discussed by the Vila Rica council in 1711.
8
It was based on the requirement that each person who sold goods to the public had to use specified weights and measures and that these had to be verified semiannually to protect the public from unscrupulous businessmen. In a town such as Vila Rica, where commerce was an important part of the economy, this was
9
a vital function.

During the course of the eighteenth century it was found that the size of various weights and measures had to be decreased as the quantities they marked often were so great as to be beyond the means of the increasingly numerous urban poor. The lack of adequate measuring instruments put the poor at a disadvantage. In 1713, for example, there were numerous complaints that the vara (1.1 meters) was too large a measure for general use. In this case, as in others, the council authorized the
10
use of smaller sizes. In this manner the council fulfilled its responsibility for ensuring that the weights

and measures in use were appropriate to the needs of the populace.

The contractor paid a fixed sum to the council and then tried to make a profit basing his prices upon the standards set by the council. Some men like the 1712 contractor used unscrupulous means to make a profit. This contractor disregarded the fee scale established by the council and charged exorbitant sums--for which he went unpunished as the council reacted only by enacting guidelines for dealing with future violators.

The income brought in by the tax on weights and measures comprised an increasingly significant portion of the council's revenues. Whereas in 1721 this tax accounted for only about ten per cent for the total income, by 1749 the contribution from this tax source had risen to over forty-two per cent.

Another important source of revenue for the council was the tax on urban properties. Urban land was granted by the council which had the power to tax this property. The tax was half an oitava for every braça (2.2 meters) of frontage. It was collected normally by the town council, although on occasion it was farmed out. The official entrusted with the responsibility of collecting this tax was the porteiro. The porteiro, literally doorman, had a number of duties such as auctioning contracts and collecting taxes which make the literal translation of his title inappropriate.

This tax was especially difficult to collect. This was particularly true during the years immediately after 1711 because it took some time to set up the bureaucratic collection machinery. Furthermore, the collection was complicated by the presence of squatters on common land and by tax evasion. The minutes of the council are filled with comments similar to that of the 1712 council which noted with dismay that "many people who construct Ranchos¹⁴ in this town do so without the permission of the Senate." To stop this tax evasion, the council imposed stiff penalties, including the demolition of the unlicensed construction¹⁵ at the owner's expense.

The incidence of tax evasion within the town was brought under control gradually. The technique used was to require that all property owners present proof of ownership to town officials so that a record could be maintained and updated and then following this up with periodic house-to-house inspections. Thus the council had a fairly accurate idea of the number of houses in the town; the problem, was determining ownership. Legally, all sales of property within the town had to have prior¹⁶ council approval. However, despite the periodic inspections, the council regularly encountered problems in enforcing this requirement.

Not all property was taxed. The law contained a loophole whereby all houses existing prior to the incorporation of Vila Rica were exempted. This provision of

the law was brought to the attention of the council in a forceful manner by Father Luís Barbosa de Araújo, serving as "solicitor of the residents and people of Vila Rica."¹⁷

Father Araújo acted not because the council was unaware of the law but rather because the council had urged all the people, even those who were exempt, to pay the tax as a means of helping the town become financially solvent.¹⁸

This solicitor of the people succeeded in forcing the council to give up this fanciful hope. The council took this occasion to enact guidelines for the imposition of the tax on pre-1711 properties in the event of additions to existing structures or their reconstruction after being abandoned. These guidelines were accepted by the people's solicitor in the name of his "constituents."¹⁹

This loophole was especially important prior to 1720 because of the high proportion of houses built before 1711 then existing.

The income realized from this tax varied greatly over the years. In general, it comprised an increasingly larger share of the council's revenues. In 1721 only five percent of the council's income was derived from it whereas in 1753 the figure had risen to twenty-five percent.²⁰ This was an unusually large proportion, resulting apparently from the fact that taxes from the previous three years still were being collected. The delays in collecting taxes could explain why property tax revenue was so meager in some years and so lucrative in others.

Besides these revenue sources, the council had others from which minor sums were obtained. Among these were the fines imposed by the municipal judges and the council as a whole for breaking local ordinances. The money obtained from the court of the municipal judge (ordinária) is one example of such secondary revenue. Another was the fines collected during council inspections for such violations as illegal building, improper water piping, or blocking alleys. The sums collected in this manner were never large. For example, on August 3, 1712 three people were fined sixteen oitavas each for making structural changes to their houses without authoriza-
 21
 tion.

One of the fairest forms of colonial taxation was the special tax, the finta. It was assessed in proportion to the wealth of the payer. The requirement that the ouvidor authorize the levying of the finta was ignored during the period before 1719, perhaps because of the political turmoil which diverted the attention of the royal officials. The finta was first levied in 1712 when money was needed to construct streets. Collectors were chosen for Ouro Preto, Antônio Dias, the Morro de Vila Rica, Padre Faria, and Córrego Sêco. The tax was to be extracted "with gentleness, each [paying] according to
 22
 his capacity." The finta invariably was a one-time tax: "This finta is enacted for this time only because the Senate is without income to cover expenses [and] does

not serve as an example for the future."²³ However, a new source of taxation once found is not easily discarded. The following year, 1713, another finta was enacted for the paving of streets.²⁴ Others were levied in the following years as needed.

This tax represented a threat to royal control. Whereas the other revenue sources were capable only of slow expansion, the finta offered the council an opportunity to become financially solvent and politically independent of the local royal officials. The inelasticity of normal revenue sources is evident from the fact that in 1721 council income was 8:794\$500 - a figure which exceeded the council's average annual income in the 1740's and 1750's.²⁵ This danger was realized by the royal officials at the eleventh hour and their efforts to regain control over the finta was one of the steps leading to the 1720 Vila Rica uprising.

To understand the mechanism of local government one needs to be familiar not only with the sources of council income but also with the manner in which these revenues were expended. How the council spent the money at its disposal is a good indication of its priorities.²⁶ An examination of council expenditures reveals the duality of council objectives; on the one hand, the emphasis upon conspicuous consumption and, on the other, the desire to expand the physical resources of the town while maintaining essential services. Faced with a conflict between the

need to spend money for ceremonies and special bonuses and for public works, charities, and law and order, the council routinely favored the former category.

Normally the major expenses were for propinas, or bonuses, and public works. Propinas were voted by the council to its membership, to the ouvidor, and, in smaller sums, to the treasurer, secretary, and the secretary of the Overseas Council in Lisbon. Propinas were of two varieties: annual and extraordinary. During the earliest period for which there are expenditure reports, propinas represented a minor proportion of total expenses. In 1721, for example, only eight percent of the budget was devoted to propinas and in 1723 only fourteen percent.²⁷ By 1743, these special bonuses amounted to forty-eight percent of total expenditures.²⁸

Expenses for public works, on the other hand, underwent major fluctuations both in absolute terms and in proportion to total expenditures. It represented the most flexible budgetary item. Examples of this flexibility abound. In 1721 less than one percent of expenses was for public works; two years later the proportion was 51.6%.²⁹

Expenditures for public ceremonies during extraordinary times made a significant impact on council finances. Under normal conditions this responsibility was met by an outlay of less than 10%. Included within this figure were payments for sermons, music, bullfights, in-

cense, candles, special furnishings and decorations, masses, and the maintenance of the Chapel of Santa Rita which served the civil prisoners.

The question left unanswered concerns the general nature of the council: What was the role of the camara? Caio Prado Junior presents a dismal picture of the powers of the São Paulo câmara; totally dominated by the juiz de fora and subjected to the constant meddling of the governor, the council by the 18th century had entered a period of stagnation.³⁰ This was not true for all of Brazil. In Minas Gerais, where royal authority was strong and ceaselessly trying to expand. The council resisted-sometimes successfully, though ultimately unsuccessfully. This is not to say that the council conceived of itself as a bulwark against the enhancement of royal authority. It did not. But the defense of its own power and local interests brought it into confrontation with royal officials.

Writers such as Edmundo Zenha refer to the decadence of the council by the beginning of the eighteenth century, but that is precisely the time that the councils of Minas Gerais were being established with extensive powers. This initial power was due to the power vacuum which existed in the mining districts. The first municipal judges of Vila Rica hurriedly were ordered by the governor to assume their posts with written instructions which extended to them powers not granted in the Ordenações, and which

went far beyond those exercised by the royally appointed
 superintendent.³¹ It would take three decades for the
 royal officials to substantially whittle down these
 powers--a task made difficult by the constant opposition
 of the councils. Certainly during the period covered by
 this study the councils remained a strong instrument for
 the defense of local prerogatives and interests against
 the encroachment of royal fiat.

Some writers such as Diogo de Vasconcellos,³² Daniel
 de Carvalho,³³ and João Camilo de Oliveira Torres³⁴ defend
 the council as a democratic counterpoise to the despotism
 of the royal authorities. Almost a cliché among Mineiro
 historians are the constant references to the physical
 location of the governor's palace on the square facing
 the municipal council building. This interpretation as-
 sumes too much. That the term "democratic" is even used
 must be due to a misunderstanding either of the meaning
 of the word or of the council. The council was elected
 by a small group of voters, the *homens bons*, who seldom
 numbered over fifty. The men they selected came from
 within their own ranks or were men of elite social
 standing whose selection gave them entry into this select
 inner circle.

The council itself did not conceive of itself as the
 defender of popular rights in opposition to the extension
 of the powers of the governor or of the *ouvidor*. In
 fact, the council of Vila Rica petitioned various times

for the appointment of a juiz de fora in place of the municipal judges, in effect, placing prestige before the maintenance of independence of action. ³⁵ If it fought at times to retain its prerogatives this was not because it saw itself as representing the people but because it behaved as any administrative organ would when its jurisdiction is endangered. On those occasions when the council opened its sessions to enlist wider support, it did not call the "people" but the homens bons. Far from a democratic element, the council was a tool of the elite who used it in defense of their own interests. When their interests and those of the population at large coincided, then those of the community were served. But seldom did the council sacrifice the interests of the groups it represented for the good of the "people".

Notes

1. Cf. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História média de Minas Gerais (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1948), pp. 95-96. Vasconcellos describes the post as one of the most lucrative and important positions available, apparently not realizing that the contractor often hired someone to serve as the jailer.
2. Council Receipts for 1722 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fol. 6v. By 1745 it represented only slightly more than two percent of the total council income and in 1753 four percent. There are several reasons for this decrease. First, council income had increased so that even if the money paid by the contractor had remained fixed it would have represented a smaller portion of the total. This explanation alone is inadequate; in fact, the payments also decreased absolutely. Council Expenditures, 1745 in Cód. 51 (CMOP), fols. 28-46.
3. Council Proceedings, 18 January, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 221.
4. Regulations Governing the Tax on Cattle, 11 January, 1738 in Cód. 32 (CMOP), fols. 126v-127v and 2 January, 1742 in Cód. 49 (CMOP), fols. 18-18v.
5. Council Proceedings, 1 March, 1714 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 315-318.
6. Council Proceedings, 3 June, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 270.
7. Council Income, 1721 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fol. 5v; 1743 in Cód. 51 (CMOP), fold. 1ff; and 1753 in Cód. 51 (CMOP), 184ff.
8. Council Proceedings, 21 July, 1711 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 207.
9. The Regimento do Aferidor, 21 July, 1711 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 208 gives an insight into the wide range of weights and measures used:

Items:	Fees:
Balance of over 1/2 pound.....	1 1/2 oitavas
Balance with weights from 1/4 to 1/8 grams for black female venders..	1/2 oitava
Iron weights from 1 to 8 pounds.....	1 oitava
Half or quarter <u>alqueire</u> (36.27 liters).....	1/2 oitava
Plate to measure salt.....	1/4 oitava
Set of measures.....	1/2 oitava
Vara (1.1 meters).....	1/4 oitava
Côvado (0.66 meters).....	1/4 oitava
Measures for liquids, 1, 1/2 and 1/4 (a <u>medida</u> is 2.662 liters).....	1/2 oitava

10. Council Proceedings, 7 January, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p.257.

11. Council Proceedings, 25 June, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 238.

12. Council Income, 1721 in Cód. 12 (CMOP) , fol. 5v and 1749 in Cód. 51 (CMOP), fols. 102ff. The income from the tax on weights and measures provides some indication of the general business climate of Vila Rica. Business came to play an increasingly important role in the economy of Vila Rica and the town came to play an increasingly important role in the economic life of Minas Gerais. From the early years after the incorporation of the town, the number of businesses in Vila Rica increased until the early 1750's, after which there was a rapid decline. It seems significant that a revenue decrease preceded the decline in the number of businesses--an indication, perhaps, that the tax collectors were aware that a depression was at hand.

13. Council Proceedings, 19 April, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 267.

14. Council Proceedings, 5 March, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 230.

15. Ibid.

16. Council Proceedings, 9 February, 1715 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 363.

17. It is significant that a priest was chosen to represent the people in defense of the privileges granted to the early settlers. How Father Araújo was chosen is not explained although it is noted that the selection was duly registered with the notary public.

18. Council Proceedings, 30 June, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 239.
19. Council Proceedings, 13 July, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 242.
20. Council Income, 1721 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fol. 2ff and 1753 in Cód. 51 (CMOP), fols. 184ff. The four income sources mentioned accounted for less than 60% of the total income of the council. Most of the remainder came from surpluses from previous years and money owed the council from 1720 contracts.
21. Council Proceedings, 3 August, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 243-244.
22. Council Proceedings, 7 May, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," pp. 232-233.
23. Ibid.
24. Council Proceedings, 28 January, 1713 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 260.
25. Council income for 1721 was reported to be 5863 oitavas which at the prevalent rate of exchange of 1\$500 was equal to 8:794 \$500. Council income, 1721 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fol. 5v.
26. The council budgets used for this analysis were those for the following years: 1721, 1722, 1723, 1743, 1745, 1747, 1749, 1751, 1753, 1755, and 1757.
27. Council expenditures, 1721 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fols. 3-5 and 1723 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fols. 19-21.
28. Council expenditures, 1743 in Cód. 51 (CMOP), fols. 1ff.
29. Council expenditures, 1721 in Cód. 12 (CMOP), fols. 3-5 and 1723 in Ibid., fols. 19-21.
30. Caio Prado Junior, Formação do Brasil contemporâneo: colônia, 7th ed. (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1963) pp. 314-316.
31. Order of Antônio de Albuquerque, 10 July, 1711 in Cód. 7 (SG), fols. 120-120v.
32. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História antiga, 2, pp. 137-138.
33. Daniel de Carvalho, "Formação histórica das Minas Gerais," Primeiro seminário de estudos mineiros (Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1957); p. 23.

34. Oliveira Torres, História de Minas Gerais, 1, pp. 241-257. The title of this chapter "Democracy in Minas Gerais" is indicative of the author's sentiments.

35. Council to João V, 15 March, 1730 in Cód. 9 (CMOP), fol. 25. The council argued that as the largest town in the mining district in terms of commerce, it had the largest judicial work load. The council felt that the load was far beyond the capacity of the municipal judges to handle and therefore asked that a juiz de fora be named. Coincidentally nine days later a royal order was issued authorizing a juiz de fora for Carmo. None was authorized for Vila Rica since the ouvidor resided in the town. Royal Order, 24 March, 1730 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fol. 97.

Chapter 24
The Apparatus of Local Government

The establishment of the municipal council was the first major step in creating a bureaucratic organization in the mining district. But the council was only one part of a complex system. Local government was complicated by the vagueness of jurisdictional lines between functions and the Lusitanian penchant for establishing checks and balances which often created confusion over responsibility and made a mockery of lines of control.

The council was responsible for selecting a number of officials and supervising their activities as well as those of other officials who had been chosen by the governor or the king. Because of the large number of officials at the local level and changes in political organization, it often becomes difficult to distinguish among these officials and to examine each separately. A case in point is the sheriff and his secretary, who were nominated by the council until 1725. In that year, the king declared that the council had no authority to select either the sheriff or his secretary. The royal order as it pertained to the sheriff, was ignored, despite pressure from the governor, and soon forgotten.¹ Exactly when the power of selecting the secretary was surrendered by the

council is unclear, but even after the secretary came to be appointed by the governor, the council retained its supervisory role over the secretary's activities. The council continued to select the sheriff. This is but one of a number of examples which could be cited to show the conflict between the law and reality and to point out the difficulty of studying each individual position.

The fiscal officer was one of the most important of the local officials. In the selection of these officers the council exercised a wide latitude of independence and brooked no outside interference by the governor or by any other royal official. Service as a fiscal officer was considered training for later service on the council itself, and selection was tantamount to initiation into the *homens da governança* and thus into the *homens bons*. Two fiscal officers were elected by the council for concurrent service lasting two months. Most of those whose residence is known lived in the town of Vila Rica, although many may have owned properties outside town. Entry into the elite by this route was considerably easier than through direct appointment to the council, since twelve fiscal officers were chosen annually as opposed to only six councilmen. Entry into the council via the post of *almotacel* became the normal path of upward mobility.

The fiscal officer's responsibilities centered on the fixing of certain prices and the enforcement of these and those set by the town council. While this was the

primary responsibility of the fiscal officer, he had a number of other duties related to the regulation of the marketplace. He was to prevent anyone from monopolizing any foodstuff since that would force prices upward. The fiscal officers were charged with ferreting out users of illegal weights and measures and shopkeepers who refused to sell their goods in small quantities. Clandestine shops were to be closed and legal action taken against the proprietors. The fiscal officers also were responsible for ensuring that the quality of foodstuffs met the standards set by the council.

These officials also had a number of duties which were only indirectly related to the regulation of the marketplace. They were to arrest people who aided runaway slaves. The council ban on black vendors in the mining areas was enforced by the fiscal officers as were the council edicts prohibiting the opening of shops in these areas.

The fiscal officers also had a number of duties relating to land ownership and building in Vila Rica. They had the power to take legal action against squatters and people who moved the sesmaria markers to give the impression that their property was outside the municipal land grant. They were also charged with acting against those who built houses, made additions to houses, or built gardens without council authorization.

Besides the administrative function of establishing prices and the police function of ensuring compliance with regulations, the fiscal officer also had judicial powers, since he was authorized to try people who violated the ordinances of the council or the regulations of the fiscal office. His court, the almotacaria, provided only meager revenue for the council since the almotacel received a large percentage of the fines collected. The fiscal officer was required to police not only the town but also the entire municipality. Periodically he had to leave the comforts of Vila Rica and make a circuit through the countryside.

The fiscal officer had the assistance of a group of officials who, while responsible to him, were appointed by the governor or, more rarely, by the king. These included the secretary of the almotacária who was responsible for keeping a record of the proceedings of the court and providing some administrative continuity in a court where judges changed every two months. The fines levied by the court were collected by the constable of the almotacária (meirinho da almotacária) who also had the power to arrest those who refused to pay. In medieval Portugal, the meirinho had exercised judicial powers, but in the eighteenth century he seems to have performed only the functions of a constable and bailiff. The merinho was assisted by a secretary.

Like all holders of remunerative offices, the meirinho was required to pay certain taxes. Initially all paid only the "new" tax, (ново direito), equal to ten percent of the established value of the office. The value was based on an estimate of the income derived from the post. In 1722 by royal edict the tax of the third part (tereceira parte) was created and the estimated income of all offices were raised by the ouvidor, within whose purview the establishment of values fell. Thus, in 1714, the secretary of the merinho paid 8\$000 in taxes on an estimated value of 80\$000. In 1722, the value was raised to 300\$000 and the tax skyrocketed to 100\$000 for the one-third tax, plus 30\$ 000 for the "new" tax. Having paid these taxes, plus some additional administrative fees for the preparation and issuance of the appointment papers, the office holder was subject to no more taxes. To collect the "new" tax a treasurer was nominated on January 20, 1714⁵ by the governor but it appears that once the administrative bureaucracy of the royal treasury was established it assumed this responsibility.

The office holder's salary came from fees for specific functions such as filling out administrative forms. These fees were controlled by regulations which set the price of each service. Thus in the May 1724 regulation the merinho's secretary received one tostão (100 réis) for each case handled, two tostãos for each case involving litigation between two people, fifty réis for each charge

on which a person was found guilty, and two tostãos when
absolved of guilt.⁶

What the almotaceis represented in terms of status within the town, the justices of the peace represented in the countryside. Juiz de vintena, translated literally as "judge of twenty" refers to the provision that all settlements with twenty or more houses have a judge. The first reference to this official in the records of the Vila Rica council occurred in 1712.⁷

There was no further reference until 1716 when the council acted to select justices of the peace for the settlement of Padre Faria, an event of particular significance. Since these officials usually were appointed for parishes outside of town in areas where the municipal judge was unable to maintain close scrutiny, the selection of justices for Padre Faria is indicative of the isolation of Padre Faria from the other settlements which made up Vila Rica -- an isolation imposed by geographic considerations and which existed until the settlements expanded and fused together (even today an automobile trip from Antônio Dias to Padre Faris is a difficult one.) This selection indicates that Padre Faria was not considered to be an integral part of the town and confirms the view that the omission of any reference to it by Governor Albuquerque in his 1711 order incorporating Vila Rica was intentional--only Antônio Dias and Ouro Preto were considered to be within the limits of the newly formed town.

Until the growth of the area of Alto da Crus after 1719, Padre Faria was outside the settled core area.

The method by which these justices were selected is significant. Normally justices were appointed directly by the council. But on August 21, 1716 the council called upon the common people (peessoas do povo), of Padre Faria to choose two justices of the peace "in order to avoid in this way the confusion and unrest which is occurring in that settlement."⁸ The voting was conducted in secret.

The justices were empowered to "rule and govern."⁹ They were responsible for maintaining law and order and had authority to arrest malfactors. They had judicial authority to fine up to 2 1/2 oitavas without appeal in acts of conscience (acções da alma).¹⁰ The justice had a constable and a secretary to assist him.¹¹

Beyond the mention in 1712 of the justices of Itatiaia there are no such references to the other peripheral settlements prior to 1720. This lapse is probably due to the selectivity of the documents which remain from the early years since after 1720 there are numerous references to the justices of the peace in Ouro Branco, Casa Branca, Cachoeira, Itatiaia, and São Bartolomeu.¹¹

Like the fiscal officer, the justice of the peace was a representative of the upper strata of society. But the precise relationship between the men selected as justices and the homens bons, which included both the fiscal officers and council members, is difficult to de-

termine. Indications, however, point to the existence of a rural elite which, perhaps out of personal inclination, did not participate actively in municipal affairs. Few served as fiscal officers and fewer as councilmen. This, if confirmed, would disprove the accepted view that the rural elite controlled urban political life and conversely would point to the existence of a powerful urban elite.

The council also chose a number of other officials. Perhaps the most important of these were the militia officers. Those of the *ordenança* were chosen by the council in consultation with the *capitão-mor*, who in turn was chosen by the governor from a list of three names submitted by the council. When the *quinto* was being paid by the equivalent of a head tax on slaves and each council was required to pay a predetermined quantity, the council was responsible for the collection within its jurisdiction. The council then apportioned the tax among the inhabitants of the municipality and selected tax collectors--normally from among the richest residents of a tax district. Other officials such as the municipal lawyer, the municipal medical officer (the power of appointment to this post fluctuated between the council and the king), the *porteiro*, the street aligner (arruador), the librarian (the guarda-livros), the procurator of lawsuits, the treasurer of the orphans, and the appraiser and divider of the property of orphans, (avaliador e

partidor dos orfãos), were chosen directly by the council. While there is some difficulty in determining the functional channels of responsibility, apparently the council exercised operational control over all but the last two-- these were under the control of the judge of orphans.

This group of local officeholders was complemented by a larger number appointed by the governor or, on occasion, by the king. Among these, the council secretary (escrivão), was the most important. This lucrative post, like others in this group, was purchased during the period under examination. Men like Hieronimo de Castro e Sousa were appointed by the king to the post directly from their native Portugal. The case of Sousa is illuminating in that he was residing at the court at the time of his appointment but already had some business interests in Minas Gerais which needed his personal attention.¹² Thus by purchasing the post he gained a lucrative position in precisely the area where he had personal business to transact. He could then chose to serve in the post or farm it out to someone else for a good price. It was not uncommon for such posts to be farmed out. In some cases it was done as an investment with the work being done by an employee. More often the proprietor personally served in the post. The death of the proprietor also provided an opportunity to farm out the post by the bondsmen or underwriters of the proprietor.¹³ The selling of this post often resulted in the selection of a complete stranger

to a position intimately involved in the activities of the council, and was a cause of friction. The council several times fought to have a secretary's commission revoked because of incompetency or incompatibility, but without success.

The only other post to which royal appointment was a common occurrence was the notary public (tabelião de público, judicial e notas). This official was, in fact, more than that title implies. He was a combination notary public, registrar of deeds and other documents, and court bailiff. He prepared and filed legal actions, attested to the validity of documents and signatures, and kept a copy of each document he prepared such as wills and civil actions.

Vila Rica had two notaries during the period prior to 1720. After that date the volume of work in a society in which litigation was very common necessitated the creation of a third notary public. While many of these officials were named by the governor, a surprisingly large number came with appointments from Portugal, indicating the lucrative nature of these positions. Thus Carlos de Abreu, an escrivão das execuções in his native Braga, Portugal, applied to fill a vacancy in Vila Rica as soon as he was informed by his father that one existed. ¹⁴ Appointment to such a post also was a means of rewarding loyal service to the king. This appears to have been the

motivation behind the appointment of João de Melo Fernando in 1717. Fernando was rewarded for his good service as a military officer.¹⁵ The usual term of office of the notary was either six months or one year, with the latter occurring usually when the appointment authority was the king.

A grave concern in colonial Vila Rica was the problem of orphans and minors. Given the uncertainty of the times and the presumably short life span, children were orphaned at a rate which cannot be estimated but which was certainly high. Administrative officers, judges of orphans, were appointed to care for these orphans and to protect their property. These posts were considered lucrative prizes and often were held by members of the elite. This particular post was coveted because the judge could use the property belonging to the orphans, which often ran into sizeable fortunes, as if it were his own. Besides "protecting" the property of the orphans, the judge was responsible for caring for their welfare, either directly or by having a tutor appointed as a guardian. It appears that the judge of orphans also had power over minor children left fatherless. Interesting is the number of wills of husbands which contain the explicit statement that the wife is capable of being named tutor of underaged children. Presumably this prevented the interference of the judge of orphans. The judge took responsibility of all property bequeathed to orphan minors and in general

was responsible for them until the age of majority was
 16
 reached.

To assist the judge of orphans a secretary was appointed. Unfortunately insufficient data is available to determine the social level of the secretary, although there is evidence that he was also an homem bom. Beside these officials involved in the administration of the affairs of orphans there was also the appraiser and divider of the property of the orphans, (avaliador e partidor dos orfãos), who performed the functions so clearly described by his title.
 17

Because of the character of the early colonization of Minas Gerais, the posts concerned with the properties of the deceased were very lucrative and, consequently, very much in demand. Even more than the judge of orphans, the officials who administered the property of the deceased created major problems. Many gold-hungry men came to seek their fortunes unencumbered by families, and the fluid life of the miner left little opportunity for writing wills. Many died without wills and many more died without relatives in the mining district. The official responsible for assuming control over the properties of the men who died in either of these situations was the Provedor of the Properties of the Deceased and Absent, Chapels and Residues. There is no evidence to indicate who served in this post before 1711, but with the appointment of the ouvidor its functions were performed by

this royal appointee. These were not an integral part of the ouvidor's duties, as can be seen from the fact that one commission was issued for the post of ouvidor and
18
another for provedor.

The major problem created by this situation was the opportunity for fraud which it provided. As early as 1713 the obstreperous Ouvidor Amorim was engaged in conflict over his powers. In a very clear-cut case of a man who died with a valid will, Amorim refused to hand over the man's possessions to the wife of the deceased, claiming that he needed authorization from the Judgeship of India and Mina (Juizo de India e Mina). The intervention of the governor was required to force the ouvidor to hand over the inheritance to the wife, and even then a bond had to be posed by the wife to protect the ouvidor in the eventuality that the Judgeship of India and Mina ruled
19
against the governor.

The situation did not improve despite the constant appeals of the town council to the king for relief from the arbitrary actions of the provedor. Not all the blame lay with the provedor, however. Because the provedor was occupied with his duties as the ouvidor, day-to-day operations were in the hands of a secondary officer, the treasurer of the property of the deceased. The lucrative nature of this post is indicated by its evaluation for tax purposes. In 1722 it was appraised at 600\$000--a figure surpassed only by that of the ouvidor's personal

secretary (who was not the same as the provedor's secretary) which was set at 750\$000.²⁰ The appointment of the treasurer was made annually by the king.

The activities of the treasurer often brought him into conflict with the town council. The council vented its displeasure by accusing the treasurer of arbitrary actions. A council letter to the king in 1723 is typical. It cited a number of cases of such actions on the part of the treasurer, one of which gives an idea of the atmosphere of the period and the power of the treasurer. The case involved one Hieronomo Antunes Vasques, who prior to dying had sold almost all his properties to one Antônio dos Reis. Vasques' will was probated by the municipal judge but the treasurer arbitrarily annuled it. He then prohibited Vasques' burial and the saying of masses until the will's beneficiary paid six hundred oitavas. Because Reis could not pay immediately he was arrested and kept in prison until the sum was paid.²¹ The protests of the council against the arbitrary action of the treasurer brought commiseration but only slowly was effective action taken by the king.

The crown finally acted in 1733 to curb the abuses of these officials. The royal order issued in December cited as its justification not the numerous protests of the councils but rather the petitions of businessmen. These resulted from the inability of some businessmen to collect debts from estates which had fallen into the hands of the

provedoria. This royal order prohibited the involvement of these officials in cases where a will existed, or where no will existed but next of kin resided near by. In these cases the responsibility of preparing the inventories of the estate and paying the debts of the deceased fell to the municipal judge. Most important the power to annul a will was specifically entrusted to the municipal judge. ²²

Because of the sensitive nature of the work of the provedor dos auzentes, no interference from other officials, not even the governor, was allowed. This independence was zealously guarded and was one of the reasons for the extent of the frauds practiced. There was no effective system of accountability. In 1728 this independence was put to a crucial test. Upon the death of a parish priest, another priest attempted to take possession of the most valuable slave woman owned by the deceased. This action was opposed by the treasurer, despite threats of excommunication. The treasurer held firm and his ac-
²³
tion was upheld by the king.

While the provedor could count on royal support to meet direct challenges to his authority, he could not always surmount the many small hurdles thrown up by the people he was supposedly protecting. There was the problem of receiving news of a death in time to stop the pilferage of the deceased's property or the escape of his slaves. The reaction of the people to the fraudulent behavior of the officials of the provedoria was simply to avoid bringing the case to their attention.

It is fitting that this discussion of the lower bureaucratic officials close with an examination of the ouvidor. Directly beneath the governor in authority, the ouvidor, or magistrate, occupied a very ambiguous position. This is particularly true in Vila Rica after 1720 because of the immediate presence of the governor. This ambiguity was partially the result of the lack of specific instructions. The general standing orders which the ouvidores in Minas Gerais were required to obey and enforce were those first issued to the ouvidor of Rio de Janeiro in 1669.²⁴ To these had, of course, accrued a large number of specific orders. As a judge, the ouvidor had original jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases involving sums up to a modest two hundred réis. This meant that in regions where a council existed, conflict between the jurisdictions of the ouvidor and the municipal judge could be expected. In practice, due to overlapping jurisdiction it appears that the appellate power of the ouvidor over the decisions of the municipal judge, the heavy workload of the ouvidor, and the petty nature of many of the cases resulted in the hearing of the majority of the lesser cases by the municipal judge. The ouvidor together with the governor and the Provedor of the Treasury (Provedor da Fazenda) formed a court which could impose the death sentence on Indians, slaves, and poor whites. This court could exile nobles for six years--any harsher sentence resulted in automatic appeal to the High Court in Bahia.

By himself the ouvidor could impose a maximum sentence of five years exile on a nobleman. He had court-martial jurisdiction over the regular army troops within his jurisdiction. All judicial officers required his authorization before they could assume their posts. He also was empowered to issue cartas de seguro, letters of security, a kind of habeas corpus. ²⁵ These were the responsibilities as established by the regulation of 1669. Under this code the ouvidor was primarily a judge.

In reality the ouvidor in Minas Gerais was much more than this. New responsibilities were added, in some cases, by the king; in others, the archaic nature of the code of 1669 allowed the ouvidor to expand his powers. Two of the functions he acquired by royal fiat was that of provedor of the dead and absent and auditor general, as has been noted. Another acquired power was that of provedor dos quintos, ²⁶ official responsible for the collection of the tax on minerals. A junta composed of royal and ecclesiastical officials and representatives of the town councils decided what the tax would be and how it would be apportioned among the councils, which nominated the actual collectors. The ouvidor's function was to prod the councils to make the collections on time.

To assist him the ouvidor was authorized several aides. These included a secretary, who was the best-paid local official in Vila Rica, a general constable with his secretary, an investigator (inqueredor), a narrator,

(contador), who described the crimes for which persons were tried, and a doorman. The posts of inqueredor and contador often were held by the same man. These officials were directly responsible to the ouvidor.

The ouvidor's fiscal responsibilities ended with the change in tax collecting methods. Overall supervision of royal income was then assigned to officials of the royal treasury. The local head of this administrative organ was the Provedor da Fazenda, who was named by the king. Assisting him was his secretary, a constable and his secretary, and a librarian or custodian of books. These latter posts were created between 1714 and 1722, probably after 1720 when a drastic overhaul in the tax system was effected. In addition to these functionaries of the Fazenda Real there was the Procurator of the Crown and Treasury (Procurador da Coroa e Fazenda), the king's personal representative who served as a check on the treasury officials.

With the establishment of the smelter, first attempted in 1720 but not effected until 1722, a new echelon of officials was created. The need to staff the smelter led to the creation of at least thirty-one new posts, with the Intendent of the Smelter being the officer in charge.²⁷ Most of these officials were chosen by the king although a few were named by the governor.

The presence of all these officials, plus others such as the military officers of the governor's staff, point

to one of the reasons for Vila Rica's blossoming into a major urban center. It was the administrative hub of Minas Gerais, especially after 1720. These local officials provided the basis for the formation of an office-holding class--a class whose mobility into the homens bons was made increasingly more difficult. That these officials were not vertically mobile can be inferred from the long period that many served in the same or comparable posts. Because of this long service this group represented a core of trained personnel not easily replaced.

While the administrative complex which evolved in Vila Rica was a critical factor in the urbanization of that town, it was not the initiator of this growth; gold was. But other towns, Carmo and Sabará, for example, were the sites of fabulous gold strikes. Vila Rica's evolution into an administrative center was one of the factors which made it different from these towns. Another was Vila Rica's position as the commercial center of Minas Gerais. An examination of eighteenth century maps shows Vila Rica as the hub of the trade routes. For goods entering Minas from Rio the shortest and best routes to Carmo and the settlements subordinate to it, Sabará, Caeté, Sêrro and Tijuco, all passed either through Vila Rica or very close to it. Similarly, cattle and other goods coming from Bahia or Pernambuco were funnelled through or very near Vila Rica on their way southward.

Notes

1. Royal Orders, 22 November, 1725 and 24 October, 1726 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fols. 37-38.

2. Regimento dos Almotaceis, 8 July, 1733 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fols. 170v-172. The regimento takes the form of a list of things for the fiscal officers to watch for:

1. People who customarily purchase foodstuffs in order to corner the market.
2. People who build grinding mills, being paid in money or bartering fubá for corn, without council license.
3. People who customarily purchase corn to make fubá.
4. People who customarily bring black women venders to the mining areas.
5. People who take slaves of others into their homes or shops.
6. People who give aid to runaway slaves.
7. Hidden shops whose owners refuse to obey the council.
8. People who butcher cattle without a license or without posting a bond to pay the meia pataca cattle tax.
9. Shops which sell liquor for higher prices than established or which add cachaça (sugar cane brandy made in Brazil) to aguardente (sugar cane brandy made in Portugal).
10. People who fail to repair the streets in front of their houses.
11. People who use illegal weights or sell wine or aguardente by the cup.
12. Butchers who refuse to sell meat in small quantities.
13. Owners of grinding mills producing flour who refuse to sell by quarters.
14. Shop owners who receive gold to be assayed and charge for this service.
15. People who try to corner the market on pork.
16. Owners of grinding mills whose weights and measures have not been verified.

The role of the almotaceis was enlarged in 1739 as the council directed them to look also for the following:

1. People who sell items of consumption on the mountain.
2. Squatters on council lands.
3. People who move sesmaria markers to make it appear that their property is outside the town sesmaria.
4. People who construct houses or establish gardens without council permission.
5. Butchers who sell meat without weighing it.
6. People who sell spoiled meat.
7. People who sell flour which is poorly toasted.
8. Venders who do not have verified weights and measures.

Regimento dos Almotaceis, 23 May, 1739 in Cód. 32 (CMOP), fols. 208v-209v.

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Appointment Order, 20 January, 1714 in Cód. 9 (SG), fols. 80v-81.
6. Regimento, 13 May, 1724 in Cód. 1 (SG), fol. 47v.
7. Council Proceedings, 12 May, 1712 in "Atas da Câmara," p. 236.
8. Council Proceedings, 21 August, 1716 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 3.
9. Council Proceedings, 29 January, 29 January, 1718 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 41v. The Portuguese expression is "reger e governar."
10. Regimento do Juiz de Vintena, 3 February, 1718 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol. 42.
11. Many of the letters and instructions which were found were not in the bound council files but rather in the collection of loose documents, avulsos. Most of these are from the post 1733 period probably because of the ease of misplacing loose documents. Furthermore, while the minutes of council sessions are available for the immediate post 1711 period, the correspondence is not complete.
12. Appointment Order, 27 February, 1720 in Cód. 3 (SG), fol. 255v.

13. All renumerative posts and all contracts necessitated the nomination of bondsmen (fiadores) to guarantee the satisfactory performance of the stipulated duties.

14. Appointment Order, 10 April, 1723 in Cód. 17 (SG), fol. 61.

15. Appointment Order, February, 1717 in Cód. 2 (SG), fol. 34v.

16. A. Tavares de Lyra, Organização política e administrativa do Brasil, Brasiliiana, vol. 202 (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1941), pp. 38-39.

17. Regimento do Partidor dos Orfãos, 13 May, 1724 in Cód. 1 (SG), fol. 46.

18. See, for example, the Appointment Orders of João Pacheco Pereira, 9 and 11 June, 1723 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fols. 32-33.

19. Petition of Tomas Pinto Ribeiro, undated, 1713 in Cód. 9 (SG), fols. 13-13v.

20. Avaliação, 1722 in Cód. 81 (DF), fol. 50.

21. Council to João V, 23 December, 1723 in Cód. 9 (CMOP), fols. 8-8v.

22. Royal Order, 3 December, 1733, Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 17 (1913): 205-206.

23. Royal Provisão, 21 February, 1729 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fols. 73-73v.

24. Regimento da Ouv.a Geral da Cidade do R.o de Janeiro e Repartição do Sul no Estado do Brasil por Sua Mag.de ao Dr. João de Abreo e Silva, Códice Costa Mattoso, fols. 452-454.

25. Ibid.

26. José João Teixeira Coelho, "Instrução para o governo da capitania de Minas Gerais," p. 362.

27. Rellação dos escravos dos officiães destas casas da fundição e moeda, no date but probably 1733, Maço Avulso, No. 173, APM.

PART V
THE END OF THE AGE OF POTENTATES

Chapter 25
Political Conflict in an Evolving Society

The years before 1720 were ones of great political stress as the crown attempted to impose its control upon the recently created councils, while the latter were seeking to expand their powers. Royal officials in the mining district confronted the locally selected town councils in a conflict which could have but one end. This confrontation lasted from 1711 to 1720, although aftershocks could be heard well into the 1730's.

The first area of conflict, predictably enough, concerned taxes. One of the methods employed by the crown to get unified action on questions of taxation from the councils was a representative assembly, or junta. The problems encountered by Governor Albuquerque when he called the first junta held on Mineiro soil have been related already. Even a decision on a matter so simple as where to hold the junta created friction and necessitated the confocation of two juntas--one in Carmo and the other in Ouro Prêto. This was one of the battles in a protracted conflict between the two towns for predominance in the
1
captaincy.

While Governor Albuquerque was having trouble getting his tax proposals accepted by the feuding councils, the first ouvidor was having more serious problems. Ouvidor Manuel da Costa de Amorim had become involved in a jurisdictional dispute over water sources indispensable for mining a particular area in Carmo. Words soon led to bullets and the fighting got out of hand. An eyewitness noted that "many Magnates" in Vila Rica came to the defense of Amorim, and the disgruntled miners in Carmo² quickly backed down.

In marked contrast with its later actions, the council of Vila Rica acted responsibly in this situation. Feeling that the disorders had to be quelled before they spread, it ordered Mestre do Campo Pascoal da Silva Guimarães to prepare his terço and the homens bons in the event further action was needed to quell the disturbances in Carmo. At the same time it selected homens bons Captain Manuel de Figueiredo Mascarenhas and Dr. José Rodrigues de Abreu to go to Carmo and negotiate a settlement with the rioters. This delegation was successful in opening negotiations and two days later the entire Carmo council came to Vila Rica and the conflict was³ resolved.

This incident shows the town council of Vila Rica acting on the side of the royally appointed ouvidor. In a situation which did not involve directly its own interests it chose to act to maintain stability. When its interests

were at stake, however, the council tended to act less responsibly as can be seen most clearly in the conflict over taxation. The councils steadfastly refused to compromise on this issue and it was not until late 1713 that Governor Albuquerque was able to get an agreement on the collection of the royal fifth. This called for the levy of a tax of ten oitavas per mining pan, which meant, in effect, a ten-oitava tax on every slave engaged in mining.⁴ This agreement was never implemented, due to the opposition of the councils and of the rich miners.

The situation worsened during the terms of office of Albuquerque's successor, Bras Baltasar da Silveira, who took over that office in August, 1713. One of his primary responsibilities was to get the councils to agree to a supplemental tax as royal revenues had not kept pace with the spiraling expenses for the huge bureaucracy which had been established in the mining district. A junta was held in January, 1714 to discuss this problem. It was agreed that the Mineiros would pay thirty arrôbas of gold with each person paying "according to the wealth that each possessed, collected by the councils...with the condition that the [import] tax stations [set up in 1710] be abolished wherever they be found."⁵ Free circulation of gold dust was to be allowed. The councils took this occasion to note "the miserable state of the mines."⁶ This was the first in a long litany repeated so often and so loudly that when it became true it was not believed. Signifi-

cantly this proposal for a fixed sum was made by the town representatives only after private discussions, showing an ability to work together for common goals.

The implementation of this agreement necessitated the convocation of another junta. Until this time the territorial demarcations of the comarcas had not been defined. The manner in which the new tax was to be collected required that this be done immediately. In the process of establishing the comarca boundaries, the dividing line between the towns of Vila Rica and Carmo was also made more precise. The eastern limits of Vila Rica were fixed as the Mato Dentro road which went from Carmo through Catas Altas to Pericicaba. The western and northern boundaries were the Congonhas Stream as far as Casa Branca and the highest peak to the north of Itaubira.⁷ The demarcation was not complete having omitted reference to the sparsely populated area to the southwest of Vila Rica. This agreement divided the Comarca of Ouro Prêto between the towns of Vila Rica and Carmo: Vila Rica controlling the western portion and Carmo the eastern and geographically larger part.⁸

With the boundaries established, the distribution of the thirty-arrôba tax burden among the towns was made. Vila Rica was assigned six arrôbas. To prepare the tax rolls, the council turned to the church, the only institution which had demographic information. The parish priests were instructed to send lists of their parishioners

to the council, which would give them to six men chosen from each parish to decide on the tax rates. Another group was then selected to make the collection. The tax was to be one and three quarter oitavas per bateia or slave. Deficits were to be made up by the tax on imports collected at the tax posts. These were to be administered by the council. This tax was levied at a rate of one and a half oitavas for dry goods, half an oitava for wet goods, and one oitava per cow. Perhaps because of the private interests of the men who carried out this agreement no tax was imposed on in-coming slaves, the mainstay of the mining industry.

Governor Silveira, however, had reservations about the agreement. He still wanted a direct and fixed tax on slaves, despite the opposition of the councils and particularly that of Vila Rica. Silveira's position was that the agreement with the councils should eschew a fixed sum, instituting, instead, a tax per slave. In both cases, a tax was levied on slaves, but with a fixed total the tax per slave would decrease as the captaincy grew. Under Silveira's plan the total tax collected would increase with the development of the mining district. In March 1715, as the new tax was to go into effect, Silveira called a junta in the hope of achieving a last minute reversál in the tax policy. Silveira later described what happened: "I presented the orders of the King, and in four juntas held in the church [almost certainly Our

Lady of Pilar] everyone protested against the payment by bateias, rising three times in a tone of rebellion. Not having troops to subjugate them I left them, in order that this government not end in my hands."⁹

The councils had won but their victory was shortlived. Silveira, aware of the futility of confronting the united councils, astutely played upon each council's fear of acting alone. First he avoided calling a junta which would bring the councils together from their isolated locations. Second, he sent trusted men to win support among key sectors of the populace in the towns. Lastly, in a master stroke, he simply advised each council that the others were siding with the king and that it alone was in opposition. This broke the back of the opposition. After their separate agreement to his proposals, Silveira called a junta for Vila Rica.

This junta enacted the very thing that had created such a squabble in 1713--the head tax on slaves. Furthermore, the import tax was extended to include a two-¹⁰oitava tax on slaves. The reaction of the people was immediate. The residents of a settlement near the newly established town of Caeté rebelled, quickly followed by residents of Caeté itself. Silveira rushed to Sabará where he was almost captured by a mob from Caeté which screamed "Long Live the People." Silveira was forced to suspend the tax on bateias for the council of Sabará. After his return to Vila Rica, which had remained quiet, news of the

victory of the residents of Caeté spread, creating unrest. Silveira then ordered the collection by bateias suspended in the entire captaincy. He was determined to avoid a civil war.¹¹

The quinto was collected finally at the discretion of the councils. The totals, by parish, give a general idea as to the relative sizes of the settlements comprising the t \hat{e} rmo of Vila Rica.¹²

Table 4
Royal Fifth Totals By Parish

Parish	Oitavas
Antônio Dias.....	5200
Ouro Prêto.....	4484
Cachoeira.....	3886
São Bartolomeu.....	3789
Itatiaia.....	1032
Congonhas.....	687
Itabira.....	654
Ouro Branco.....	639

Source: Tax Records, 1715 in Cód. 2 (CMOP), fol. 97.

Silveira immediately advised Viceroy Marques de Angeja of the situation. Angeja in turn notified the governor of Rio de Janeiro, Diogo de Mendonça Corte-Real, of developments in the mining district. The Governor of Rio de Janeiro was advised to set up tax posts to collect duties on imports as a means of raising revenue.¹³

Complicating Silveira's relations with the councils of the comarca of Ouro Prêto was the activities of Ouvidor Amorim, whose successor was daily awaited but who did not arrive until 1715. Amorim was a vindictive and arbitrary man. Experiencing personal differences with a militia captain from Carmo, he used the powers of his office to

have the man illegally arrested. Actions such as this ran the risk of ruining Governor Silveira's policy of achieving a modus vivendi with the councils. Silveira reacted immediately to this incident by ordering the release of the captain. Amorim was reproached sarcastically for "your zeal in apparently wishing to mask your hatred with the formalities of justice."¹⁴

Silveira's policy of controlling the ouvidor and making overtures to the councils was largely successful. By 1716 the tensions had subsided sufficiently for the governor to call still another junta into session in Vila Rica to deal with the question of the fiscal organization of the captaincy. Meeting in July the representatives of the councils accepted the royal order continuing the payment of thirty arrôbas for another year, but they added the condition that gold be allowed to circulate freely within Minas and to be carried outside Minas to a mint.¹⁵

The junta also re-established the tax posts on the major roads to prevent smuggling and to collect new import duties. These duties were established as one oitava per head on either cows or cattle, one and a half for dry goods, one half on "wet" goods (foodstuffs), and two on slaves. A tax was also levied on stores and shops.

The councils took the occasion of the junta to give vent to their accumulated jealousy toward the many priests who had poured into Minas. The immunity which the clerics enjoyed was most irritating to the councilmen. The

councils had no power to tax these representatives of the church, even though many were involved in secular pursuits. The councils had to be content with asking the governor to order the parish priests to prepare lists of the secular property owned by clerics and hope that the bishop of Rio de Janeiro would order them to pay taxes on it.

Another source of irritation was the exorbitant fees charged by the clerics. The municipal representatives complained that fees commonly were as high as an oitava for a communion and half an oitava for a confession; they asked that the price be lowered to four vinténs for each. These representatives also asked that special inspectors be sent to deal with the deplorable moral state of the priests as "the visitors [ecclesiastical officials making tours to maintain religious orthodoxy] who were sent to correct public sins [of the priests] did not succeed. They asked that the king every three years send a visitor - general of the order of Saint Peter, university-trained, and of exemplary conscience and virtue [and a] native-born Portuguese to visit them, and correct them."¹⁶

Besides attacking clerical abuses, the representatives of the councils turned their self-righteous wrath upon the civil judiciary. They complained about the long delays in judicial proceedings and obtained Silveira's agreement that the ouvidors would meet every four months in one of the capitals of the three comarcas to constitute a judicial junta in order to expedite proceedings.¹⁷

Before this extremely fruitful junta could have a salutary effect in further calming the populace, Amorim's replacement, Manuel Mosqueira da Rosa, initiated a conflict which was to last four years. Rosa proved to be every bit as arbitrary as his predecessor and, perhaps, more ambitious. The difficulties began over the annual election for the council which was to serve in 1717. The election itself became a test of strength between the council of 1716 and the ouvidor. Rosa wanted the election conducted without the presence of the council and sent two orders to this effect. The councilmen argued that it was within their prerogative to attend as *homens da governan*¹⁸*ça*. It appears that no elections were held as litigation began. The council, on December 29, voted to continue in power until the case had been decided by the High Court of Bahia.

The conflict and the litigation continued into 1718. Apparently there were no elections for the 1718 council, although special elections were held to replace individual council members who resigned, but at least one member of the 1716 council, João Pinto da Silva, was still serving as councillor in 1718.

Rosa reacted to the council's determined opposition by distorting the issues involved. He convinced the new ¹⁹Governor, D. Pedro de Almeida, Count of Assumar, that the council was making a grab for power by refusing to allow elections. The conflict was thereby elevated from

a question of the right of the council and the homens bons to choose council members without interference to the illusionary one of the council demanding powers it never had before. Assumar accepted Rosa's version of the conflict, perhaps because it served as a vehicle to limit the independence of the council. Assumar dispatched one of the judges to São João del Rei with orders not to return until called. The other judge was sent to Rio de Janeiro, to convey a cleric wanted by the law there, with the same instructions. One vereador was sent to Sabará, the procurator to Sêrro do Frio, and the secretary was arrested for illegal activities.

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Governor Assumar defended his actions in a letter to the king. He admitted that he had ordered the expulsion of the judge Manuel Dias de Menezes, the arrests of the secretary, Miguel de Andrade Ferreira, and the sindic, Antônio de Brito Liria (noting his record of notorious activities in Recife), and "the punishment of those who were his companions in the machinations." He justified his actions by accusing the council of "trying in the beginning of my administration to make my government difficult." Assumar credits his resolute action for the tranquility then being enjoyed.

21

How the municipal government functioned during these two years is not made clear either by the governor or by the council records, which are almost completely silent about this conflict. What can be said was that Rosa

clearly won. The two judges, Sargento-mor Manuel Dias de Meneses and Sargento-mor Francisco Viegas Barboza, the procurator, Lieutenant José Luís Sol, and the vereadores Captain Domingos de Araújo Dantas, João Pinto da Silva and Captain Manuel Gomes da Silva do not reappear again in the records as office holders. Furthermore, the king, while admitting Rosa's excesses, backed this representative of the crown solely because he was a royal appointee. Rather than fight back, the council, according to the king, should have acquiesced and then entered into litigation.²²

The election for the 1719 council was a potential keg of dynamite. Rosa, perhaps under pressure from Assumar, or because he felt the elections were certain to return his supporters, did not attend the election, claiming illness.²³ Assumar also took the precaution of sending Lieutenant-General João Ferreira Tavares to supervise the election and, in general, to oversee the situation.²⁴ The election was held without incident.

As if Rosa's meddling in local politics was not enough to bring the turbulent miners to the exploding point, the ouvidor went one step further: he tried to institute a contract for the supply of meat. This was the same contract which had served to spark the Wars of the Emboabas. Efforts in 1712 to institute the meat monopoly in Sabará had led to a protracted feud.²⁵ Rosa's effort in Vila Rica resulted in a mob surrounding his house

and forcing him to desist in his efforts at least for
²⁶
 the moment.

Immediately after this fiasco, Rosa's successor, Martinho Vieira, arrived in November of 1718 and Rosa took up gold mining in Itatiaia. Not one to work peacefully and unnoticed, Rosa shortly was to emerge once again into the spotlight.

One of the factors which played an important part in the squabbling of this period was "the mob." It was the mob—an outraged populace congregated in the streets—which had thwarted Rosa's plans for a meat monopoly contract. But this was not the only appearance of the mob before 1720. In June 1717, the procurator José Luís Sol called for action against the mob which had marched through the streets of Vila Rica yelling "Lõng Live the
²⁷
 People." Unfortunately, the causes behind this demonstration are not given and there is no mention of Rosa. This reference is the first one alluding to the mob in Vila Rica. Later events were to show the terrible power which had been formed.

It is possible that Sol was referring to the beginning of a storm of opposition by the people to the newly appointed parish priest of Ouro Prêto, Father Lucas Ribeiro Riba. Father Riba's unpopularity appears to stem from his abrasive, aggressive, and arbitrary personality. Initially Assumar stoutly defended Father Riba, threatening to exile to Africa for ten years anyone who opposed the

priest. But Father Riba's own defense took the form of "rigorous orders and excommunications" and Assumar was forced to advise the over-zealous priest that only more moderate actions would forestall violent reaction by the people. ²⁸

By late October, Assumar was referring to Father Riba's "bad conduct" and warning the visitor-general of his activities. Assumar also released all ecclesiastical prisoners from the public jail, stating that "I do not wish to receive in His Majesty's jail prisoners of ecclesiastical courts, especially those who with such injustice as this are vexed." ²⁹

Despite the conflicts then underway over the elections and the Ouro Preto parish priest the town councils were able to meet and deal harmoniously with fiscal matters. Juntas were held in July and August of 1717 to deal with the taxation question. After minimal debate, the junta voted to continue the tax system then in effect. The most significant aspect of this junta was not its legislation, but rather its composition. In addition to the regular membership, "procuradores do povo", peoples' solicitors, were elected by all free males. The two procuradores do povo chosen--one from the town and the other from the countryside (o campo)--were selected to attend the August junta. Both of the men elected were members of the homens da governança: Sargento-mor Antônio Martins Leça and Lieutenant Luís Soares. ³⁰

The procurador, or juiz, do povo, was an extremely important official in Portugal, where he was the head of the confederation of guilds known as the "Twenty-Four."³¹ The procurador do povo in Minas never had the power of his Portuguese counterpart. Furthermore, in Minas he was not connected with the guilds. Nevertheless, the existence of this official there is an indication that in special cases the representatives of the people had a right to be heard.

The first significant change in the tax system occurred in 1718 as the councils began to work together. The junta was preceeded by a meeting of the councils' representatives, who were able to agree on a program and thus present a united front to the governor. After several days of debate a compromise was reached: the councils won the reduction of the royal fifth to twenty-five arrôbas, but collection of the import tax was switched from council to royal control.³² This was an important concession; for five arrôbas the councils alienated forever their right to collect import taxes.

This junta also defined the manner in which the royal fifth was to be collected. The post of Provedor dos Quintos was created. These tax collectors were to be selected by the governor from among three names submitted by the councils. Each slaveowner had to present himself before the provedor, take an oath, and report the number of slaves he owned. Slaves not reported were subject to

confiscation and new purchases of slaves were to be reported within ten days. Removal from the rolls was permitted only because of death, escape, or sale, and corroborating evidence had to be submitted. Excluded from taxation were the very young, the aged, the chronically infirm, house slaves, and those working in shops. ³³ Stores and shops were taxed as were imports generally. With the creation of the provedores dos quintos, the institutionalization of tax collecting advanced a giant step.

Royal officials in Lisbon, however, were not satisfied with the tax system. They felt these modifications to be of limited importance, since it was the basic system which needed revision. What was noted by the authorities in Lisbon was the ease of smuggling and the massive quantities of gold being kept for personal or religious use, or as a hedge against inflation and taxes.

The solution envisioned by these officials was the method used on the coast--smelters and mints. Once decided upon, the edict was phrased in benevolent terms, stating the Crown's wish "to avoid the oppression which the residents, principally the poorest, of Minas experience through the inequality and excess with which they are taxed for their contribution to the total arrôbas of gold." ³⁴ One or more smelters were to be established in the mining district at royal expense to melt down all gold into bars, at which time the royal fifth would be collected. No gold was permitted to leave Minas without the quinto

having first been paid on it. Gold dust was permitted as a circulating medium in Minas at a rate of ten tostões, or one milreis (1\$000), per oitava. Gold bars, after taxes, were allowed to circulate at 1\$400 per oitava. Penalties for breaking this law included the loss of the gold and ten years exile. Ouvidores were ordered to make continuous investigations to ensure compliance with the law.³⁵

This royal order was presented to a junta on June 20, 1719. It was presented not as a subject for debate, but as an accomplished fact. The junta was told that its role was to discuss ways of implementing the order. Assumar had learned a lesson from the previous junta; by limiting debate to methods of implementation the basic decision was untouchable. Despite this, however, the junta was able to exert enough pressure on Assumar to win the temporary suspension of the implementation of the order for one year. The councils took the position that there was no time to act, since the new system was to go into effect within forty-five days or the people would be paying double taxation. The junta decided that the smelters would be located in the capitals of the three comarcas, Vila Rica, Sabará, and São João del Rei and in the town of Sêrro do Frio (Príncipe) because of the latter's distance from Sabará.

Assumar accepted the delay, feeling that he could surmount any difficulties which might arise, although he

was not really anticipating any. "And as with some labor on my part I have predisposed the peoples of this government to embrace the resolutions of His Majesty which [was a] most difficult thing among so many rebellious people, I do not have much doubt about erecting immediately the Smelter." ³⁷ Assumar's confidence and brave words soon disappeared, as his expectations were trampled into the dust by the mobs of Vila Rica. The rioting began in 1720 as the year's reprieve was ending and the new tax system was to go into effect.

Notes

1. The battle was won by Carmo because of its position as the first town founded in Minas. Royal Order, 21 February, 1729 in Cód. 7 (CMOP), fol. 76. To the consternation of the Vilaricanos, the standard of Carmo always preceded that of their town.
2. Entrei em Villa Rica, fol. 36.
3. Council Proceedings, 20 and 22 June, 1713 in "Atas da Camara," pp. 272-273.
4. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História média, p. 68.
5. Council Proceedings, 6 January, 1714 in "Atas da Camara," pp. 293-294.
6. Ibid., p. 294.
7. Junta Report, 6 April, 1714 in Veiga, Ephemerides mineiras, 2, pp. 22-23.
8. It is important to note that despite the assumption of some writers, e.g., Augusto de Lima Junior, A capitania das Minas Gerais, p. 92, that the comarcas were created in 1714, all that was done was to fix the boundaries of already existing comarcas. The exact date of their creation is not clear, but the nomination of Amorim as ouvidor in 1709 indicates that this occurred in or before that year. Furthermore, the junta report does not use the word "create" or "found", using instead "division" (repartição).
9. Silveira to Viceroy Marques de Angija, 23 March, 1715, Document No. 201 in Rau and Silva; , Os manuscritos, 1, pp. 132-133.
10. Silveira to Viceroy Marquis of Angija, 20 May, 1715, Document No. 203 in Rau and Silva, Os manuscritos, 1,p.134.

11. Silveira to João V, 26 June, 1715 in Veiga, Ephemerides mineiras, 2, pp. 434-437. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História antiga, 2, pp. 183-185, incorrectly refers to Albuquerque's actions in creating the conditions leading up to the revolt and in subduing the people. Silveira had assumed his post on August 31, 1713.
12. The total is 20337 oitavas and not 20371 as determined by the scribe.
13. Angeja to Diogo de Mendonça Corte-Real, 1 July, 1715, Document No. 211 in Rau and Silva, Os manuscritos, 2, p.142.
14. Silveira to Ouvidor Manuel da Costa de Amorim, 30 December, 1714 in Cód. 9(SG), fol. 38.
15. Junta Report, 22 July, 1716, Document No. 240 in Rau and Silva, Os manuscritos, 2, p. 178.
16. Report, 22 July, 1716, Document No. 241 in Rau and Silva, Os manuscritos, 2, pp. 179-180.
17. Ibid.
18. Council Proceedings, 21 December, 1716 in Cód. 4(CMOP), fols. 9-9v.
19. Almeida, or more properly the Count of Assumar, was appointed governor on March 3, 1717 but he did not actually arrive to assume his new duties until December of the year. Rosa was replaced in November, 1718, so that the events described must have occurred between December, 1717 and November, 1718.
20. Entrei em Vila Rica, fols. 38-38v.
21. Assumar to João V, 20 June, 1718 in Cód. 4(SG), pp. 761-762.
22. João V to council, 21 January, 1719 in Cód. 7(CMOP), fol. 8.
23. Assumar to Rosa, 23 December, 1718 in Cód. 6(CMOP), fol. 10v.
24. Assumar to [?], 26 December, 1718 in Cód. 6(CMOP), fol. 11.
25. Entrei em Vila Rica, fol. 39.
26. Ibid.

27. Council Proceedings, 7 June, 1717 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fol.22.
28. Assumar to Father Lucas Ribeiro Riba, 12 September, 1718, in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 49v. Assumar justified his interference on the grounds that "anything, even ecclesiastical [matters], which can disturb the public tranquility I should be, and am, obligated to prevent."
29. Assumar to Father Riba, 25 October, 1718 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 64v.
30. Council Proceedings, 16 and 28 July, 1717 in Cód. 4 (CMOP), fols. 25-26v.
31. Cf Harry Bernstein, "The Lisbon Juiz do Povo."
32. Diogo de Vasconcellos, História Antiga, 2, p. 220.
33. Regimento dos Provedores do Quinto, 4 March, 1718 in Cód. 2 (SG), fols. 106-108.
34. Royal Law, 11 February, 1719 in "Documentos a que referem as instrucções dadas ao visconde de Barbacena, publicadas em o n. 21 da Revista, "Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, 6, No. 21 (July 1844): 206-207.
35. Ibid. A four month tax-free period was established for the expenditure of all untaxed gold.
36. Assumar to Bartolomeu de Sousa Mexia, 20 June, 1719 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 137-139.
37. Assumar to Count of Ericeira, 5 June, 1719 in Charles R. Boxer (ed.), "Quatro cartas inéditas de dom Pedro de Almeida, Conde de Assumar e Governador de Minas Gerais (1718-1721)", Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, Anais do Congresso Comemorativa do Bicentenário da Transferência da Sede do Governo do Brasil (n.p.: Departamento de Imprensa Nacional, 1967): 4, 167.

Chapter 26
The Uprising of 1720

The culmination of the 1710-1720 decade of conflict and confusion was the 1720 riots in Vila Rica. The causes of this outburst were varied, ranging from the broad problem of the collection of the royal fifth to the vagaries of personal ambition. But essentially it was a question of whether private individuals, made rich by gold, could successfully confront royal authority. Prior to 1720 men such as Barba Gato, Manuel Nunes Viana, and Domingos Rodrigues do Prado, among others, had succeeded in undermining royal authority. The uprising of 1720 was the last time this would happen in Minas Gerais during the eighteenth century.

One of the major reasons for the outbreak was the confusion concerning the method by which the quinto was to be collected. The opposition of the miners to the creation of the smelters had won them only a year's respite, and this may have been due as much to the difficulties of setting up the smelters as to this confrontation. Even though the first smelter to be set up in Minas was given priority over all others in Brazil there were numerous delays. The equipment for the smelter came largely from the cannibalization of the smelters in Salva-

dor and Rio de Janeiro. A superintendent of the smelter, Eugenio Freire de Andrade, was appointed, but his journey from Salvador to Vila Rica via Rio de Janeiro was marred by the escape of his Indian carriers, who abandoned the smelter equipment along the Caminho Novo.

Despite the delay in making the smelter operational, legislation covering its functions was enacted. The new smelter was to accept gold dust and transform it into bars, each having stamped upon it its weight, purity, and the year it was minted. While gold dust was permitted to circulate at a value of ten tostões (1\$000) per oitava, its export from the captaincy was punishable by ten years¹ exile in India and the loss of all properties. One month after the issuance of this order, the crown issued a second ordering the construction of a mint to make coins of moeda, half moeda, and quarter moeda denominations. Since these would be of lesser value than the bars, and therefore could serve for small transactions, gold dust² was to be prohibited as a circulating medium. This expedient was aimed at ensuring that all gold would be delivered to the smelters or to the mint; it was a further blow to the mining interests.

The delay in implementing this order, and the fear of the miners that the smelter would make impossible their further evasion of the royal fifth, had immediate effects. According to Governor Assumar, many people abandoned the mining district after settling their accounts. Taking

their slaves, they went to the coastal port. So many people left that almost four thousand slaves and over one hundred shops had to be removed from the tax rolls of the mining district. The erosion of the tax base caused by the flight of so many people resulted in increased taxes on those who remained. The tax on slaves rose from $2 \frac{3}{4}$ to $3 \frac{1}{4}$ oitavas, and that on shops from 10 to 12 oitavas.³

The delays and the fear of the new tax collecting also raised havoc with commerce. The slave trade with the coast, in particular, was prejudiced by this situation; the entry of new slaves into the region stopped for a time. Other branches of commerce were similarly hit because of the customary procedure of selling goods on one year credit. If the smelter were set up during the year, then the debtors would be required to pay their debts with inflated money. Not only were imports curtailed for this reason but Mineiro merchants were pressured by their creditors who attempted to collect their debts before the value of money became inflated.

While fear of the smelter and mint was the single most important factor in creating the preconditions necessary for the uprising, there were others. Important among these was the importance of credit in the economic life of the mining district. The ease with which debts were contracted was seen as a principal cause of the unrest in the area. Slaves were bought on time, with pay-

ments often spread over a few years, in the hope that the slave would generate the capital for his own purchase through gold mining. When this failed, the slave was sold at public auction, but at ridiculously low prices.

To end this practice, a system was instituted by which the value of the slave was determined by disinterested parties. If the bids did not reach the predetermined value, the creditor had to accept the slave at that value.⁴ But this did not resolve the primary problem which was the ease of obtaining credit and the prevalence of miners who were in debt. The leader of the 1720 uprising, Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, according to Assumar's successor, was heavily in debt: "so many were his debts, that his possessions barely sufficed to pay them; for this reason his creditors began to subpoena him; and seeing himself lost, all his energies were turned to plotting against the ouvidor and the governor."⁵

The threat of status deprivation also played a role in creating an explosive atmosphere. The efforts of royal officials to limit the number of commissioned officers in the militia were described above. Several edicts⁶ were issued in 1720 implementing the new policy. This policy constituted a real threat because a militia commission was one avenue of entry into the elite. Also, while militia commissions were being cut back, the first regular army units were arriving from Portugal, presenting

visual proof of the determination of the royal government to get its way.

Still another cause for the rioting was the governor's determination to eradicate the remaining shops on the Morro de Vila Rica, particularly those in Ouro Podre, where Pascoal da Silva Guimarães lived. The council had attempted to accomplish this in 1718 but stopped because of its inability to enforce the law against the resistance of strong local interests. The cudgel was then picked up by Assumar, who issued several orders to this effect in 1720.⁷ The anonymous author of the "Discurso histórico" suggests that this effort had deeper ramifications than meet the eye. According to this writer--who may have been the governor or, more likely, a close associate--Guimarães had control of the mountain and allowed only those shops to open that belonged to him or to trusted friends. These became havens for the slaves from Antônio Dias and Padre Faria, who exchanged gold for aguardente and other goods. According to this biased source, Assumar intervened because the council did nothing more than issue ordinances. The council could go no further, since Guimarães was the law on the mountain.⁸

If the Vilarican elite felt that its economic and social position was being threatened by the developments of 1719 and 1720, it could also see that its political position was eroding. During the years prior to 1720 the crown sought to gain undisputed control over the mining

district. The council, which was created initially as an ally in the establishment of law and order, soon became a competitor for power. One of the critical actions taken by the governor to limit the authority of the council was to ban the levying of the finta. The finta had been levied by the council for specific public work projects. In 1720 Assumar moved against the câmara's use of this tax, arguing for the first time that by custom it belonged to the royal prerogative and, therefore, the governor's authorization was needed before it could be levied.⁹ This undermined the council's chances for fiscal independence, since all other revenue sources were fixed, precluding increases sufficient to meet rising expenses.

Furthermore, Assumar was aware of the ambiguity in the relationship between levels of government. As he realized, no regulations had been issued specifically to governors of the mining district. In the absence of specific instructions, Assumar defined his powers rather broadly. Thus when something as superficially simple as the council's decision to begin building a new town hall and jail was made, the governor intervened arguing that the council could do with less luxurious quarters than those being planned.¹⁰ The council found itself facing an astute governor who saw the absence of detailed instructions as a chance to curtail the power of the câmara.

Assumar interfered in the affairs of the council in other ways. Complaining of the poor administration of

justice, he accused the municipal judges of failing in their duty by not investigating some crimes committed in São Bartolomeu. Moreover, he reproached the council for its failure to act on his orders for an attack upon the quilombo of Palmitos.¹¹ While the elite of Vila Rica was under the most pressure, Assumar was attacking not only their positions. In fact, the general nature of Assumar's policy is illustrated by his ordering the arrest of the capitão-mor of Sêrro because of the extreme power that official wielded.¹²

While Assumar was working to establish his supremacy, his efforts were being undermined by the very official who should have supported him the most. Martinho Vieira, the Ouvidor of Ouro Prêto, was a headstrong, arbitrary official. In a situation which called for moderation and the careful selection of goals Vieira acted in a high-handed fashion. For this he was admonished by Assumar on several occasions.¹³ Vieira ignored these admonitions in the same manner that he would ignore Assumar's warnings about a possible uprising. Thus the intemperance of this royal official was a direct cause of the uprising.¹⁴ Assumar consistently blamed him for the revolt, although Assumar probably was aware that the real causes were deeper and were, in fact, directly related to Assumar's policies.

Prior to the outbreak Assumar had reason to feel that, despite Martinho Vieira, his policies were having

the desired effect. He had finally resolved the problem posed by the Paulista residents of Pitangui, who refused to pay taxes. The departure of the local leader, Domingos Rodrigues do Prado, to São Paulo had given Assumar his chance. He appointed a trusted man as capitão-mor and encouraged Portuguese to settle in Pitangui. When Prado returned and expelled Assumar's appointee, the newly arrived dragoons were sent to Pitangui where they defeated the numerically superior Paulistas.¹⁵ Thus a major obstacle to Assumar's policy was removed.

Yet as Assumar himself noted, the discussions among the Mineiros concerning the smelters were heated (muito em quente).¹⁶ In fact, open conflict over this issue had erupted along the Rio São Francisco. But this was a minor problem since it involved a peripheral area. The major confrontation was to occur in Vila Rica.

It erupted on the night of June 28, 1720. It did not, however, catch Assumar by surprise. As early as February, 1720 Assumar warned Martinho Vieira that there was evidence that an uprising was being planned. This evidence apparently included reports of people being contracted and encouraged to betray the crown, as well as reports that money was being collected to bribe the regular army troops. Assumar's reaction to these reports was to order the arrest of all excess priests, thereby removing one source of discord.¹⁷

By April, the activities of the plotters were becoming more serious. In that month one of the leading conspirators, Pascoal da Silva Guimarães, tried to bribe one of the members of Assumar's entourage to leave the governor unguarded. In return for his betrayal of the governor, he would receive one arrôba of gold. This bribe attempt was reported to Assumar, who chose to take no action at that time. Shortly after this incident, which had occurred at a party for the governor's wife, seditious leaflets began appearing.¹⁸

The main conspirators were Guimarães, the ex-ouvidor Mosqueira Rosa, and Sebastião da Veiga, a rich, ambitious man who probably saw himself as another Nunes Viana--a man chosen by the people to lead them. Allied with the three were João da Silva Guimarães, the son of the mestre do-campo and the municipal judge of 1720 and also Rosa's son, Father Vicente de Botelho, and Father Francisco de Monte Alverne, who were probably the object of Assumar's effort to expell quarrelsome clerics. The leadership of the plot was composed of some of the most important men in Vila Rica.

The details of their plot provides a clue as to the motives of these men. Following the pattern of the uprising in Vila Rica during the Wars of the Emboabas, the first stage involved an urban riot. Masked men, probably white, leading bands of thirty to forty slaves each would seal off a street. Then the people would be awakened; if

they failed to open their doors, these were broken down. The people would be exhorted to join the uprising amidst yells of "Long live the people-or die."¹⁹

Three days before June 28, when the first riot occurred, Assumar was warned of the danger by João da Silva Guimarães. This raises the question of Guimarães' motivation. The plotters later would stoutly maintain that they were loyal subjects of the king being forced to participate in the rebellion by the headless mob. By warning the governor, Guimarães was preparing the foundation for this explanation. He risked nothing since it was clear that Assumar knew that something was in the wind. Furthermore, Guimarães did not reveal the date for the uprising. Moreover, since one of the objects of the conspirators was to eject the governor from the captaincy, this was good psychological warfare.

Assumar immediately warned Martinho Vieira of the danger, only to see the latter be so impolitic as to insult Guimarães. Vieira did nothing else. It seems clear that the canny Assumar was giving the plotters all the rope they needed to literally hang themselves.

The mob descended from the stronghold of the Guimarães family in Ouro Podre at 11:00 PM on the night of the 28th. It marched upon the home of the ouvidor who, having been warned of the mob's approach just before it arrived, escaped by hiding in the woods of the Morro de Santa Quitéria. Vieira's home was ransacked, a servant

stabbed, and his official documents destroyed. After searching for Vieira without success, the mob marched on the council building. There a university graduate was summoned to prepare the demands of the "people."²⁰

These demands dealt almost exclusively with economic issues, many of which had little relationship to the people in the mob but which meant a great deal to those pulling the strings. The first, and most important item was the abolition of the smelters, which would have been a boon to the major gold miners. Other clauses dealt with lowering the costs of business licenses, verifying weights and measures, the fees of a number of bureaucratic officials, and the penalties levied for minor offenses. Another set of demands dealt with slavery: the taxes on slaves were to be lowered; anyone hiding slaves from the tax collectors, and thereby increasing the share paid by others, would lose all his slaves; and all slaves were to be evaluated before they were auctioned. Still another group of demands dealt with tax relief: these included having regular army troops pay for their board, requiring the council to pay for street paving from its regular income, and requiring the tithe collectors to pay their fair share of the ecclesiastical tax. Still other demands would have led to the payment of the import tax only after the goods arrived at their destination and not during the trip, so that proceeds from their sale could be used to pay the taxes. Licensing of shops was

to be done annually rather than monthly. A call was made for fairer judicial proceedings at lower prices. Finally, a general pardon was demanded.²¹

Clearly these were not revolutionary aims. Without exception they merely called for ameliorating the tax system and moderating the arbitrariness of the judicial system. Few of the demands would have greatly benefited the common people; most would have helped the merchants and large-scale miners. The conservative nature of these demands is in sharp contrast to the later statements of the governor, whose description of the uprising became increasingly more radical as he got further removed from it. None of the demands was political in nature; no effort to establish a government in opposition to the royally-appointed governor can be detected in these demands.

A messenger was sent with these demands to the governor, then residing in Carmo. Assumar immediately ordered all the dragoons to Carmo. His actions during the uprising were dictated largely by the time needed to gather these troops. At the same time, seven soldiers, of those on hand, were sent to Vila Rica to save the hiding Martinho Vieira and bring him to Carmo.

The rebels frantically tried to rally support in the other comarcas, but whatever support was forthcoming was solely in terms of sympathy--no material help was provided. Failing to get outside support, the rebels sent

three representatives to discuss the situation with the governor: municipal judge Sargento-mor Antônio Martins Leça, José Peixoto da Silva, and José Ribeiro Dias. Leça had been named procurador do povo and Silva juiz do povo, indicating that the institution of the peoples' representative still had some vitality. They urged that Assumar personally go to Vila Rica and grant a general pardon. However, Assumar was warned in private that this was a trap to capture him. After meeting with his advisors, Assumar agreed to grant a pardon, conditional upon royal approval. This the procurators refused to accept.

Assumar then decided to attempt to win the support of the Vilaricanos. Father José Mascarenhos, one of Assumar's two Jesuit advisors, was sent to talk to the people. In a further step to win over the people, Assumar ordered his military aide to carry the news of the pardon to Vila Rica. The aide, João Tavares, was refused entry into town as the council insisted that pardon had to be issued directly by the governor in order to be valid.

Faced with the intransigence of the council and the need to wait for all the regular army units to gather, Assumar was forced to make concessions. First, he suspended the opening of the smelter for one year and announced that the importation taxes on the Rio and Bahia roads would be suspended as soon as the smelter went into operation. He also hinted that privileges would be given to those councils that proved their loyalty.

While winning time during this crisis by making these concessions, Assumar also dealt directly with the conspirators. He was probably seeking information about their intentions. First Sebastião da Veiga Cabral and then Rosa were summoned to visit the governor, but both refused, Rosa claiming his appearance in public would only arouse the adulation of the people who would proclaim him ouvidor. Rosa was finally persuaded to go to the governor's palace. He demanded two positions--Provedor da Fazenda and Provedor dos Auzentes - in return for his support; no agreement was reached. Veiga then appeared and attempted to convince Assumar to run away. When Veiga reported that he had been given the option of accepting the peoples' nomination as governor or death, Assumar mockingly advised him to accept the post and use the position to restore peace.

On the morning of July 2, the mob again streamed down off the mountain. The goal this time was Carmo. The mob numbered from 1,500 to 2,000--an extremely large number indicative of the size which Vila Rica had attained. Along with the mob went the town council--all the while proclaiming it was coerced into going. Apparently there was in the mob a small radical group, whose aim was to kill the governor if he refused to accede to the demands of the Vilaricanos.

Assumar moved to stop the mob from reaching Carmo. First he tried to get the people of the settlement of

Passagem, located on the road to Carmo, to stop the mob, but the effort failed when the people joined the rebels. Then he ordered the council and elite of Carmo to block the road, temporarily stopping the advance, although the hotter heads in the mob had to be prevented by their comrades from forcing their way into Carmo.

Shortly after this confrontation, Assumar reversed his policy. He decided to address the mob, which then was allowed to enter the town. Assumar realized that a long speech would force the mob to spend the night in Carmo, offering an unusual opportunity for further mayhem, so he simply accepted their demands and issued a general pardon. Assumar's quick capitulation was due, in part, to the presence of the mob and the lack of an armed force which would be relied on; but it was due also to his realization that the council and people of Carmo, his only supporters, were sympathetic to some of the demands of the conspirators, especially that for stopping the smelter from opening.

Assumar's quick acceptance of the demands of the Vilaricanos and their apparent victory led to the dispersion of the mob. After the mob broke up, rumors began to spread--rumors that all the residents of Vila Rica were to be punished by paying the entire royal fifth, and then others that Vieira was going to conduct an investigation of the rioting. If these rumors were started in the hope of keeping the situation tense, they failed.

Assumar met each with deft explanations that the tax would be paid by all and that he was ordering the senior judge of Vila Rica to assume the ouvidor's post.

During the breathing spell which these actions won him in Vila Rica Assumar moved against the peripheral area of Mato Dentro de Sêro do Frio, where taxes had not been collected in years due to the opposition of Antônio Soares Ferreira, "who there made the Law." This show of strength was meant to serve as an example of the governor's power and induce the Vilaricanos to moderate their demands.²⁴

This was but one aspect of Assumar's public change in attitude. On July 7 and then again on July 10 he had issued pardons, and on the latter date he further had promised that Martinho Vieira would leave the comarca.²⁵ On July 13, however, his decision to go on the offensive was reflected by an order authorizing the killing of masked men and establishing a hundred-oitava reward for the death of any masked man.

Responding to this activity, the conspirators renewed their efforts to convince Assumar of the untenability of his position. Again Assumar was visited by Veiga, who urged the governor to leave the captaincy, and again Assumar put him off by asking for more time. After Veiga departed, Father Monte Alverne arrived with a plan to organize the people of Itaubira, Cachoeira, and São

Bartolomeu in support of Assumar. This offer was rejected as Assumar feared that its acceptance would allow the conspirators to openly organize more people.

Shortly after this meeting, the governor learned that preparations were underway for an attack upon Carmo that evening. Assumar decided to act before the attack. He ordered troops to arrest Veiga, who was immediately sent to Rio de Janeiro. Then thirty troops were sent to arrest Guimarães, Monte Alverne, Rosa, and Botelho--a task which was quickly accomplished as no one expected Assumar to act so forcefully. These arrests stopped the projected attack on Carmo but provoked serious rioting. That evening the rioting was worse than ever, buildings were burned and people were harangued to free the victims of the governor's duplicity. Even the parish church was invaded by the mob in search of informers.

The rioting was all the excuse Assumar needed to move into Vila Rica with the dragoons, supported by some Vilaricanos, among whom the most prominent was Antônio Ramos dos Reis. Steps were then taken to burn Guimarães' massive house and properties as well as those of other plotters. While popular legend and some historians portray in chilling terms the burning of the entire mining settlement ²⁶ the truth is that only selected houses were put to the torch and local militia officers were present to point out those belonging to the conspirators. Even though the fire got out of hand, due to rioting slaves,

and other dwellings were burnt, only a part of the mining camp of Ouro Podre was razed. The writer of the Discurso historico is emphatic that the heroic efforts of a dragoon captain prevented the further spreading of the fire.²⁷

Having forestalled a violent reaction in Vila Rica, Assumar once again turned his attention to the outlying settlements. The conspirators hoped to win the support of the residents of the settlements of Cachoeira, Casa Branca and Itatiaia. Felipe dos Santos, Tomé Afonso Pereira, José Carlos, and Theodozio da Silva were dispatched by the conspirators to harangue the people of the peripheral areas. But Santos and Pereira were quickly arrested and the settlements were not mobilized on the side of the conspirators.

Assumar, knowing that his actions could renew civil war in Minas Gerais, acted summarily. While most of the prisoners were sent to Rio de Janeiro, one remained to move into the partheon of Brazilian martyrs. This was Felipe dos Santos²⁸ who was executed on the same day he was brought to Vila Rica. His quartered body was then dragged through the streets of town as a ghastly reminder of the fate awaiting those who opposed the crown--those, that is, who were poor. Assumar had no authority to condemn a white man to death without a meeting of the ouvidores. His excuse was that he could not risk calling ouvidores from others comarcas during this period of crisis, when the true extent of the plot was not known.

He did not attempt to obtain written decisions which would not have unduly delayed any executions.

Assumar would long try to justify his actions and erase the stigma left by his arrest of the ringleaders after he had granted them pardons. One of the ways he attempted to do this was by magnifying the extent of the plot. Assumar's correspondence shows a descriptive escalation of the threat posed by the uprising and of Santos' position among the conspirators. On July 14, Assumar wrote that the plot was aimed at expelling all royal authorities and thus avoiding the payment of taxes.²⁹ On August 2, Assumar reported that the goal of the conspirators was the establishment of a republic.³⁰ By the end of August, Assumar was adding details like the fact that the republic would have a ruling junta of twenty-four and that the real goal of the plotters was to capture Rio de Janeiro and open the port to free trade.³¹ These embellishments were not the result of new discoveries but rather part of the effort to justify actions which, while necessary, were contrary to law.

The uprising of 1720 had been crushed and three of the leading men in Minas arrested. The age of giants was over. After 1720, men such as Antônio Ramos dos Reis continued to reach positions of great power, but their power was based on royal support and not due to their opposition to royal policies. While Antônio Ramos dos Reis probably became richer than Guimarães had been, he

is perceived as a faithful bureaucrat whereas Guimarães appears as an independent power who misjudged the capacity and tenacity of his royal adversary. Assumar was aware that

The freedom, unlimited by law, with which the potentates live in this land is one of the greatest dangers, if not the primary one. This [climate] favor[s] Liberty and depravity. Applying only the means provided for in the Ordenações of the Kingdom [is] too benign for such perversity; it would not be possible to conserve the peace, where everyone achieves with arms in their hands all that they wish.³²

Only when power was made contingent upon royal approval could law and order be established.

Not only was the power of the potentates suppressed, but inroads were made on the independence of Vila Rica's council. The council had played an ambiguous role in the conflict, consistently claiming that it was being coerced. Once the main conspirators had been arrested, the council members fell over themselves in their haste to show their loyalty to the governor. Special masses and sermons were said in celebration of the resolute action saving the town from the anarchy which threatened its destruction.³³ On August 17, 1720 the council officially and publicly acknowledged the error of its ways and, taking the hint from Assumar, agreed to build the mint at its expense as a tangible means of showing its loyalty. The money for this construction was to come from the sum allocated for building a new town hall plus

revenue to be raised from a tax on slaves. This decision was ratified by the homens bons as each tried to prove his loyalty by supporting the very thing that thirty days previously they had opposed.³⁴

Assumar initially wanted the mint built in Cachoeira. This was part of an interesting strategic concept which he envisioned. He wished to move the capital as well as the mint to Cachoeira. In his view this settlement was ideally located, being in the center of the mining district and with good land to support the many people which the mint would attract. But most important was its central location astride the major roads. This was Assumar's chief interest, since political control could be more easily maintained from this central position. Apparently he was only dissuaded from implementing this plan by the fear that if the mint were built in Cachoeira the town council would refuse to pay the expenses. Therefore, Assumar decided to build in Vila Rica a combination mint, palace, and fort. He appealed to the governor of Rio de Janeiro for six artillery pieces to use to defend this building, which would have the form of a fort.³⁵

Nor did the uprising deflect Assumar's thrust to clear the Morro de Vila Rica of the shops. In fact, initially Assumar overreacted and unrealistically tried to remove all the whites from the mountain, calling it "more dens of wild beasts than domiciles of men." The council opposed Assumar's policy, arguing that whites were needed

to control the slaves. The council did accept, however, the eradication of all the shops on the mountain; only meat markets were permitted there because distances prohibited the making of daily trips down to Ouro Preto or Antônio Dias. The governor retaliated for the council's show of independence by decreeing no members of the 1721 council could be related either by blood or compadresco to those of 1720.

The uprising also had a great effect on the organization of the captaincy. The Wars of the Emboabas had led to the creation of the Captaincy of São Paulo and Minas do Ouro. The uprising of 1720 led to the creation of the separate Captaincy of Minas Gerais. In practical terms, the creation of the separate captaincy was a logical step. Assumar had spent almost his term of office in Minas, since that turbulent area demanded the constant presence of a governor. Each time Assumar attempted to visit São Paulo, the councils would bombard him with appeals urging him to stay in Minas to give personal attention to the affairs of the mining region.

Assumar also made the critical decision to move his residence from Carmo to Vila Rica, which thereupon became the true administrative capital of Minas. Before this the governors took their oath of office in Vila Rica, but resided in Carmo. This shift was due probably as much to the governor's need to be close to the main trouble-spot and nearer the geographical center of the mining

district, as it was to an appreciation of Vila Rica's size and commercial importance.

The establishment of royal authority was complete by 1720. The goal of the royal governors since 1695 was finally achieved. The effects of the victory of the emboabas in 1709 was erased by the defeat of Pascoal da Silva Guimarães and his cohorts in 1720. Much of the credit for this dramatic change must be given to the Count of Assumar. His resolute actions, and arbitrariness, set the stage for almost seventy years of peace in the comarca of Ouro Preto.

Notes

1. Lopes, Palacios de Vila Rica, pp. 49-50.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
3. Count of Assumar to Bartolomeu de Sousa Mexia, 1 June, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 245-245v.
4. Royal Order, 26 March, 1721 in Cód. 16 (SG), fol. 85v. Also appears in Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro 5, [1900] p. 216.
5. Lourenço de Almeida to [?], 16 September, 1721 in Feudo Carvalho, Ementário da história de Minas; Felipe dos Santos Freire na sedição de Vila Rica-1720 (Belo Horizonte: Edições Históricas, 1930 ?), p. 15.
6. Assumar Order, 30 April, 1720 in Carvalho, Ementário, p. 49 and Royal Order, 16 November, 1720 in Cód. 18 (SG), fol. 54.
7. Assumar to Council, 6 May, 1720 and 24 June, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 230 and 240.
8. Discurso Histórico, fols. 26v-28. An element suggestive of the broader implications of the uprising is the fact that Manuel Dias de Menezes, who had been one of the municipal judges sent out of Vila Rica in 1718 by Assumar, was arrested in the home of Pascoal da Silva Guimarães. This might indicate that the 1720 uprising was related to the conflict between the council and the royal authorities which had raged from 1716 to 1718.
9. Assumar to Council, 6 May, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 229v.
10. Assumar to João V, 25 April, 1720 in Cód. 4 (SG), fols. 782-783.
11. Assumar to Municipal Judge of Vila Rica, 29 February, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 206v.
12. Assumar to Colonel José Borges Pinto and Council of Príncipe, 4 May, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 227v-228.

13. Assumar to Vieira, 25 and 27 June, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 240 and 242.
14. Assumar to Viceroy Vasco Fernandes Cesár de Menezes, 13 January, 1721 in Cód. 13 (SG), fol. 15.
15. Assumar to Bartolomeu de Sousa Mexia, 9 February, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 200-201v.
16. Assumar to Bartolomeu de Sousa Mexia, 1 June, 1720 in Rau and Silva, Os manuscritos, 2, pp. 269-270.
17. Assumar to Martinho Vieira, 26 February, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 205.
18. Discurso Histórico, fol. 60v. Perplexingly these leaflets were written in Latin, and so poorly written as to defy translation. The text is as follows: Conversus Joannes Respexit Petrun, Petrus autem exhibit foras, e Hebita more.
19. Ibid., fols. 44-44v.
20. Assumar to ? , 3 July, 1720 in Revista do Arquivo Público Mineiro, pp. 221-222.
21. Cópia do q. o povo das Minas amotinado pedio as Sr. Gn. 1 D. Pedro de Almêida. Portugal, Conde de Assumar, Codice Costa Matoso, fols. 157-157v. It also appears in a somewhat altered form in Diogo Vasconcellos, História antiga, 2, pp. 345-349.
22. Discurso Histórico, fols. 64v-75.
23. Ibid., fols. 99v, 101v, and 108v.
24. Ibid., fols. 149-151.
25. Pardon Decree, 10 July, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 290-290v.
26. Cf. Charles R. Boxer, "Some Considerations on Portuguese Colonial Historiography," Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Luso-Brazilian Studies (Nashville; The Vanderbilt University Press, 1953), p. 175. Boxer holds Assumar "responsible for the destruction of a large part of the old Villa Rica (Ouro Prêto) on the Morro da Queimada...." What was destroyed was merely a part of one of the mining camps, Ouro Podre, which was never known as Vila Rica. Sales, Vila Rica do Pilar, p. 84. Sales refers to the destruction of the entire bairro in particularly emotional terms.

27. Discurso histórico, fols.138v-140v. Those not involved in the conspiracy were allowed to return to their homes in Ouro Podre.
28. Felipe dos Santos was born August 11, 1701 in Cascais, Portugal. Certificate of Baptism in Carvalho, Ementário, pp. 162-163. His place in history as well as that of the entire uprising has been greatly misinterpreted. For example, Augusto de Lima Junior, Vila Rica, p. 91, describes Santos as an "unfortunate preacher of the Republic and defender of the interests of the people whose claim to being the first man in the Americas to proclaim the doctrine of the Republic and to deny to the Monarchy the right to rule has been verified before the tribunal of History." It must be noted that Santos' personal views are unknown and republican ideas played absolutely no part in the planning stage of the uprising; nor did the conspirators show any inclination toward the establishment of an independent state. These concepts are attributed to the conspirators by Assumar only long after the event in an effort to justify his own immoderate action.
29. Assumar to [?], 14 July, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 290-290v.
30. Assumar to Governor of Bahia, 2 August, 1729 in Cód. 11 (SG), fols. 249v-250v.
31. Assumar to Governor of Rio de Janeiro, 30 August, 1720 in Cód. 11 (SG), fol. 259.
32. Assumar to Diogo de Mendonça and Bartolomeu de Sousa Mexia, 14 December, 1720 in Cód. 13 (SG), fols. 11-12.
33. Council Proceedings, 16 August, 1720 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fols. 124-124v.
34. Council Proceedings, 17 August, 1720 in Cód. 13 (CMOP), fols. 130-131.
35. Assumar to João V, 30 August, 1720 in Cód. 4 (SG), fols. 891-894.
36. Assumar to Council, 22 July, 1720 in Carvalho, Ementário, p. 200 and Assumar to Council, 23 July, 20 August, and 7 November, 1720 in Cód. 6 (CMOP), fols. 25v, 25, and 24.
37. Royal Order, 2 December, 1720 in Veiga, Ephemerides mineiras, 4, pp. 288-289.

GLOSSARY

- ALMOTACEL, fiscal officer selected by the town council.
- AUXILIARES, militia units, ready reserve.
- BANDEIRA, expeditions dispatched from São Vicente in search of Indians, precious stones and metals.
- BANDEIRANTE, member of a bandeira.
- CÂMARA, town council.
- CAPITÃO DO MATO, bush captain employed in capturing runaway slaves.
- CAPITÃO-MOR, commanding officer of ordenança regiment with administrative powers.
- COMARCA, administrative and judicial district presided over by an ouvidor.
- EMBOABA, derisive name given by Paulistas to residents of other areas of Brazil and of Portugal.
- FAZENDA, large estate.
- FAZENDEIRO, owner of a large estate.
- FORASTEIRO, synonym for emboaba, also used to describe travelling merchants.
- FORRO, freedman.
- GUARDA-MOR, official responsible for distributing mining claims, preventing smuggling, and maintaining law and order.
- HOMEM BOM, member of the upper class.
- HOMEM DA GOVERNANÇA, member of the ruling class, having served either on the town council or as fiscal officer.
- JUIZ DE FORA, royally appointed judge presiding over a town council.

JUIZ DE VINTENA, justice of the peace appointed by the town council.

JUIZ ORDINÁRIO, municipal judge, elected by the homens bons for one year term.

MESTRE DO CAMPO, commanding officer of the regiment of auxiliares.

ORDENANÇA, militia units, home guard.

OUVIDOR, royal magistrate.

OUVIDORIA, court of the royal magistrate.

PARDO, mulatto.

PROCURADOR, procurator, member of town council elected by homens bons.

PROPINAS, bonuses granted to members of the town council.

QUINTO, royal fifth tax on mineral production.

QUILOMBO, group of at least five runaway slaves.

REGIMENTO, standing orders.

REGISTRO, toll stations.

SARGENTO-MOR, second in command of auxiliares and ordenanças.

SESMARIA, land grant.

TERÇO, military unit of regiment size.

TÊRMO, jurisdiction of town council.

VEREADOR, town councillor elected by homens bons.

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Manuscript Materials

The Arquivo da Curia do Arcebispado de Mariana

The Arquivo da Curia possesses a very large manuscript collection with extensive holdings for the eighteenth century. Among the manuscripts consulted with the processes submitted by applicants for admission to the local seminary, petitions for authorization to marry, brotherhood records, records of religious inspections, and correspondence concerning church business. Most of this material deals with the post-1748 period although many contain valuable information for analyzing the pre-1726 years.

The Arquivo da Irmandade de Mercês e Perdões

One of the few brotherhoods in the parish of Antônio Dias to have preserved its records, Mercês e Perdões is also one of the few brotherhoods whose history and conflicts can be traced through its records.

The Arquivo do Museu da Inconfidência in Ouro Preto

The Museu is in the process of purchasing codices dating from the early part of the eighteenth century and those which were available were consulted. The most valuable of these are the records kept by the notary publics. The Museu also has a collection of private papers belonging to an eighteenth-century businessman.

The Arquivo do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional in Ouro Preto

Located in the Casa da Baronesa on the main square, this archive contains an excellent collection of eighteenth-century wills and inventories which should be used in conjunction with those wills which appear in the parish registers of burials. This archive is very well organized and the documents are indexed.

The Arquivo Parochial de Antônio Dias

This archive, located in the parish house, is particularly rich in regard to records of baptisms and burials. Records of baptisms are available for the period after 1710 although there are a few for the pre-1710 years. Records of burials begin in 1713. Marriage records are not available until 1727. This archive is notably lacking in documentation relating to brotherhoods although some, belonging to Nossa Senhora do Rosário, are now under the care of the parish

priest. The records of the brotherhood of São Francisco de Assis, one of the most important brotherhoods in Vila Rica, are also under the care of the parish priest although still housed in the church of São Francisco. These were not utilized in the preparation of this study because the brotherhood was not founded until 1745.

The Arquivo Parochial de Ouro Prêto

This archive is very rich in its holdings of parish records. Records of baptisms, marriages, and burials are almost complete for the post-1712 period. It also has a larger collection of brotherhood records than the archive of its sister parish, Antônio Dias. Among the documents available are those of the brotherhoods of Nossa Senhora do Terço, Bom Jesus dos Passos, Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Santissimo Sacramento, Nossa Senhora do Pilar, São Miguel e Almas, and Santo Antônio.

The Arquivo Público Mineiro

Located in the state capital, Belo Horizonte, the Arquivo Público Mineiro is one of the richest archival sources of colonial documentation in Brazil. The major collections utilized in this study were the Câmara Municipal de Ouro Prêto, the Secretária do Governo, the Delegacia Fiscal, and the Delegacia Fiscal Avulso. Extensive use was made of the large number of unorganized and uncatalogued individual documents referred to as avulsos.

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This collection of documents is extremely important because it includes accounts of the early history of the mining district written, in many cases, by people who participated in the events they describe. The original of the Codice Costa Matoso belongs to the Biblioteca Municipal de São Paulo. I utilized a microfilm copy owned by the Arquivo Público Mineiro.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

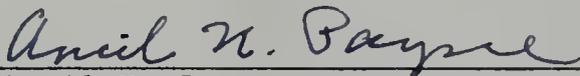
Donald Ramos was born July 12, 1942 in New Bedford, Massachusetts. The son of Francisco Nascimento Ramos and Maria Conceição Ramos, he was raised in a bilingual home and attended public schools in New Bedford. Mr. Ramos attended the University of Massachusetts, graduating Cum Laude in 1964 with Honors in History. From 1964 to 1966 Mr. Ramos served as a personnel officer in the United States Army. Upon completion of his active duty commitment, he attended the University of Florida. During the academic year 1966-1967 he held a NDEA Title VI Fellowship; during 1967-1968 a University of Florida Fellowship; and during 1968-1969 a Teaching Assistantship. In 1969, Mr. Ramos was awarded a Foreign Area Fellowship to conduct field research in Brazil for his dissertation. Under the auspices of this grant Mr. Ramos was able to spend seventeen months in Brazil, returning in February, 1971. Mr. Ramos was appointed Instructor of History at The Cleveland State University in September, 1971. He is married to the former Patricia Eva Rivard and they have one child, Monica Elizabeth Ramos.

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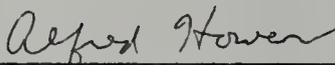
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Spanish

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of History in the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

December, 1972

Dean, Graduate School

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