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Cimarrón Revolts and Pacification in New Spain
the Isthmus of Panama and Colonial Colombia,
1503-1800

by
Frederick Rodriguez

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

May
1979

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VITA

The author, Frederick Marshal Rodríguez, is the son of Consuelo Díaz de Rodríguez and the late Julio Jose Rodríguez Torres. He was born July 3, 1938, in Joliet, Illinois.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The enslavement of black Africans and their place in the conquest, colonization and development of the Latin American nations has occupied the attention of many historians. Much has been written of the harsh existence imposed on the slave and mention has been made of the resistance shown by the slave to his servitude. This resistance took the form of suicide, infanticide, rebellion and flight. What has largely been ignored is that groups of a certain type of fugitive Blacks known as cimarrones, through prolonged guerrilla-style attacks on Spanish settlements, were able to gain recognition, lands, and rights from the Spanish crown by means of capitulaciones or terms. These were granted if the cimarrones promised to settle in communities under Spanish control and to pledge allegiance to the crown. In this manner, at least eleven towns composed of former cimarrones were established in the viceroyalty of New Spain, the Isthmus of Panama and in the area comprising the modern nation of Colombia between the years of 1503 and 1800.

There is very little literature devoted to the cimarrones of Spanish America. Carlos Federico Guillot, Negros Rebeldes y Negros Cimarrones: Perfil Afro-Americana

en la Historia del Nuevo Mundo durante el Siglo XVI (Buenos Aires, 1961), presents a broad survey of black resistance during the sixteenth century. Unfortunately Guillot's emotional reaction to slavery weakens the work. Octaviano Corró R., Los Cimarrones en Veracruz y la fundación de Amapá (Veracruz, 1951) is an excellent study of the pacification of a seventeenth and an eighteenth century group of cimarrones by the implementation of capitulaciones. David M. Davidson, "Negro Slave Control and Resistance in Colonial Mexico," Hispanic American Historical Review 44 (August 1966) presents some insights into slave revolts and Spanish efforts to control Blacks. Oddly, he declares that the Yanga cimarron revolt (1609) was the only black revolt in the history of Mexico which succeeded in gaining sanctions and guarantees of their freedom from the Spanish. This is at odds with Corró R., whom Davidson consulted, but apparently ignored in the case of the Amapá (1768) settlement. William B. Taylor, "Documents: The Foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapá," The Americas 26 (April 1970), presents an introduction to cimarron problems in Mexico and a document relating to the eighteenth century cimarrones described by Corro R. The David M. Davidson article and Aquiles Escalante, Palenques in Colombia, are included in Richard Price, ed., Maroon Societies: Rebel Communities in the Americas (Garden City, New York 1973). This is a comprehensive anthology dealing with cimarrones in the western hemisphere. William F. Sharp, Manumission, Libres and

Black Resistance: The Colombian Chocó, 1680-1810 in Brent Toplin, ed., Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America (Westport, Conn. 1974), places little emphasis on the cimarrones. Luis Gonzalez Obregon, Rebelliones Indigenas y Precursores de la Independencia Mexicana en los Siglos XVI, XVII, XVIII (Mexico 1952) devotes two chapters to rebellions by Blacks and mulattoes, but his effort to make their activities part of the precursor movement falls short of his goal.

This study documents outbreaks of cimarron resistance and Spanish pacification methods. It will be an exclusive rather than a comprehensive study of unrest during the Spanish colonial period. A comprehensive study would provide a more accurate representation of the difficulties faced by the colonial authorities in insuring coastal and interior security, but that is beyond the scope of this study. The study is divided into chapters which investigate the cimarrones in Mexico and Central America, the Antilles and Florida, and the area comprising the modern nation of Colombia. This was done because of the volume of material utilized. The viceroyalty of New Granada was not dealt with in its entirety because this would have entailed including Venezuela and Ecuador. Since both of these areas had large black populations and problems controlling the cimarrones, they have been left for future study.

The term cimarrón is used in Spanish to describe something wild, untamed or unruly and was applied to geographic areas, animals and men.¹ Letters of the early sixteenth century often have this term applied to Indians who fled to the cimas or hills outside of Spanish control. After the introduction of black slaves to the Indies, fugitives of this group also came to be included under the term. Indian and Black cimarrones, either in concert or in racially separated groups, often set up strongholds or palenques from which they attacked isolated Spanish holdings, travelers, and, at times, towns. The cimarrones conducted effective guerrilla actions paralyzing the countryside, hindering commerce, tying up large number of men sent out to destroy them and costing the royal treasury great losses. An even greater problem was the anxiety, generated in the Spaniards, that the cimarrones would subvert the black members of the castas or mixed bloods living within the cities to revolt or flee or possibly wreak vengeance on their white master for some past wrong.

¹Webster's Geographical Dictionary, (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriman Co., Publishers, 1957), p. 237, the 600 mile long Cimarron River rises in New Mexico and eventually flows into the Arkansas River in Oklahoma; Juan de Solórzano y Pereyra, Politica Indiana in Biblioteca de Austores Españoles, vols. 252-256 (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1972), libro 6, capítulo 6, ley 11, states that wild ownerless livestock of the Indies "is called cimarron" and libro 2, capítulo 30, título 51, "cimarrones are those slaves or freemen who take refuge in the montes and from there come out to commit outrages"; El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Royal Commentaries of the Inca and General History of Peru, trans. Harold V. Livermore, 3 vols. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), 1:1421, reported that the term was of Caribbean origin which described fugitive Blacks who fled their Spanish masters.

Despite the cimarron problems, the colonial authorities made no effort to end black enslavement. Black slave labor was too vital to colonial life for its abolition. The threat of Indian cimarron revolt decreased with the length of time an area of Indian habitation was under Spanish control. For this reason, the Spaniards felt that they could deal with the cimarron groups of the later colonial period which were composed primarily of persons of black African descent. Since the term cimarron became synonymous with black cimarrones, this investigation will deal primarily with these fugitives. Reference will be made to the Indian cimarron revolt under the cacique Enriquillo in Hispaniola during the sixteenth century. This revolt is the paradigm for understanding the pacification methods used with the Blacks. The methods used in pacifying the cimarrones were repeated, with varying degrees of success, in dealing with the great numbers of black cimarrones. The revolt led by the Indian cacique Enriquillo was finally ended by the granting of capitulaciones by the King to the rebellious Indians.

Capitulaciones were concessions agreed upon between the King or royal agents and a private party to undertake a specific enterprise or public service. An example of these were the capitulaciones granted Christopher Columbus by the Spanish crown before his first voyage of discovery. In essence, capitulaciones enumerated certain guarantees between the crown and the party involved. These were

that the Faith would be recognized and followed, the King would be recognized as sovereign, and the grantee was guaranteed certain rights, privileges and rewards.²

The capitulaciones used to pacify the Enriquillo cimarrones granted them rights, equipment, lands and the protection of the crown. In this manner, the Indian fugitives were pacified, became useful citizens, and defenders of the realm. But it must be remembered, that capitulaciones were used to pacify cimarrones only as a last resort. There was no standardized or legislated cimarron pacification policy. Various methods were haphazardly applied when a cimarron threat arose.

Usually, the initial pacification attempt was undertaken by the owners of the slaves involved. If this proved unsuccessful, bounty hunters known as rancheadores or capitanes de monte were sent out. Often, these were Blacks and Indians who knew the countryside or were expert trackers. Often, they were reformed cimarrones. When neither the owners nor the bounty hunters proved successful and the cimarrones continued to threaten colonial security

⁴Silvio A. Zavala, Las Instituciones jurídicas en la conquista de América, 2nd ed. (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, S.A., 1971), pp. 101-102; J.M. Elliot, Imperial Spain, 1469-1716 (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, Ltd., 1963), pp. 47-48; Colección de documentos ineditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y colonización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de América y Océania sacada de los Archivos del reino y muy especialmente del de Indias (Madrid: 1864-84; reprint ed., Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1964-1966), 42 vols. (hereafter cited as CDI), volumes 22 and 23 contain examples of capitulaciones.

large scale military movements, paid for by the royal treasury, were employed. Members of the clergy, with a great degree of success, were also utilized. Restrictive social, political, and economic legislation to prevent those Blacks under Spanish control from becoming overly bold was also employed. If none of these methods proved successful, capitulaciones, mutually beneficial to the fugitives and the Spanish crown, were agreed upon. It must be remembered that these were granted only as a last resort. The emphasis was on eradication and punishment of the cimarrones. On the other hand, capitulaciones proved to be the most beneficial method for the colonies and the Spanish crown.

CHAPTER II

The Background Of Spanish Enslavement Of The Blacks And Their Introduction To The Indies

Black Africans were an integral part of the Spanish exploration, conquest and colonization of the New World, serving as personal servants, slaves and free men. Often, they carried out the same occupations held by Blacks in the Iberian Peninsula. An Understanding of Spanish attitudes towards Blacks and the methods used in dealing with this enslaved group can best be understood by examining the development of black slavery in Spain prior to the discovery of the New World.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the arrival of black slaves in Spain, it is usually accepted that they were brought in by the Moslems during their invasion. During the Moslem occupation of the Peninsula, slavery became a part of peninsular life as Moor enslaved Christian and Christian enslaved Moor by means of "just wars." Slaves from such disparate areas as the Circassia on the Black Sea and Sub-Sahara black African regions were also brought to Spain. These slaves were funneled through

the great slave market at Moslem Cordova and other commercial sites in the Christian areas.¹ This source of labor declined as the end of Moorish occupation drew near and the availability of slaves became less. Slave purchase prices increased astronomically between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1300 slaves cost between 20-23 libras in Castile and jumped to 50-60 libras by 1540.² Peninsular slavery might have declined or disappeared because of the inflationary prices and the elimination of Moorish sources except for two events. These were the opening of west Africa by the Portuguese and the discovery of the New World.

In the fifteenth century, the Christian areas of the Iberian Peninsula would take over the enslavement of Black Africans. This was initiated by Antam Gonzalvez, a Portuguese sea captain sailing under the banner of Prince Henry the Navigator. Off the west coast of Africa, Gonzalvez captured some Moslem merchants.³

¹J. Trend, The Civilization of Spain, (London: University Press, 1960), pp. 34, 64-65; David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithasca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 44-53; D. W. Jeffreys, "Pre-Colombian Negroes in America," Scientia (July-August 1953): 205, declares the real power in the Caliphate of Cordoba during the tenth century was held by a "slave army of negroes or of Christian slaves."

²Luis Martínez Delgado and Abel Cruz Santos, eds., Historia Extensa de Colombia, 25 vols. (Bogotá: Ediciones Lerner, 1967), 2:103.

³Elizabeth Donnan, Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America, 4 vols. (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1965), 1:22.

Following the custom of the period, the Moslems were held for ransom.⁴ But before negotiations could commence through a third party, the leader of the Moorish captives convinced Gonzalvez that a better profit would be made by the Portuguese if the Moors were exchanged for black slaves and African goods. A bargain was made and Gonzalvez returned to Portugal where the slaves were reported to have caused a sensation because of their black skin.⁵ Although this shows that the number of Blacks in Portugal were few in 1442, in the Spanish area there is earlier mention of them. During the reign of Enrique III (1390-1406) they were allowed to hold dances and parties on holidays in Seville, the city of their greatest concentration. A mayoral or steward was appointed to help settle disputes between slaves and protect their interest against their masters.⁶

⁴Sir Arthur Helps, The Conquerors of the New World and their Bondsmen, being a Narrative of the Principal events which led to Negro Slavery in the West Indies and America, 2 vols. (London: William Pickering, 1848; reprint ed., Miami: Mnemosyne Publishing Co., Inc., 1969), 1:27 reports that they were captured so that the language of the area could be learned.

⁵Ibid., 1:29.

⁶Jose Luciano Franco, "La Presencia Negra en el Nuevo Mundo," Casa de las Américas (May-August 1966) pp. 7-8; Ruth Pike, Aristocrats and Traders, Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 172.

Juan de Valladolid, the black portero de camara or chamberlain of Ferdinand and Isabella, was appointed mayoral in 1475. Known as the Conde Negro or Black Count by his contemporaries, the abilities of Juan de Valladolid were recognized by a royal decree which declared

We make you mayoral and juez of all the free and slave negros e loros in the very noble city of Seville and in all its archbishopric, and that the aforementioned male and female negros e loros cannot have nor hold any fiestas, nor agreements between themselves, except before your presence, the aforementioned negro Juan de Valladolid our juez and mayoral of the aforementioned male and female negros e loros; and order that you know of the arguments, disagreements and marriages and other things that occur between them, and no one else, because you are a person apt for it ...and you know the laws and ordenanzas that they should have and we are informed that you are of noble lineage among the aforementioned negros.⁷

This appointment of Juan de Valladolid is an interesting early example of methods used by the Spanish crown to control the black slave population. The appointment noted that Juan de Valladolid was of noble African lineage. This, coupled with his leadership qualities, made him the focus of respect and homage of the other Blacks.

⁷Hipólito Sancho de Sopranis, Las Cofradías de Morenos en Cádiz (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1958), pp. 8-9; Zavala, Instituciones jurídicas, p. 425; Information about Blacks in Segovia Spain is found in Marques de Lozoya, La Morería de Segovia (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Africanos Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1967); Sir Arthur Helps, The Spanish Conquest in America and its relation to the History of Slavery and to the Government of Colonies, 4 vols. (London: John Lane, 1904), 1:21-22, doubts that Blacks were imported into Seville before 1443, although he points out that by 1474 the royal treasury was receiving considerable sums of money from the slave trade in the form of the royal fifth.

Since he was a trusted ladino or hispanicized Black, he was the logical choice to use as a medium of control over the black population and weaken the probability of flight or revolt by the slaves by serving as an example which they could emulate." Honoring him served to bind him to the Spanish power structure and removed the potential danger which could have evolved around the leadership of a dissatisfied Black of Valladolid's background. Rather than be a leader against the Spaniards, he served as an adjunct of the Spanish crown and as an example for those Blacks who wished to gain honor and rewards from the Spaniards. In this manner it was hoped that the large number of Blacks owned by Spanish tradesmen, artisans, nobility and churchmen would endure their enslavement and not attempt rebellions.⁸

It must be pointed out that, even before the Portuguese discovery of the economic value of the black slave trade, Christian areas of Catalonia, Aragon, and Majorca had become almost complete slave holding societies. Palma de Mallorca in the Balearic Islands became by,

⁸ Information concerning slaves in Spain can be found in Vicenta Cortés Alonso, "La Trata de Esclavos Durante los Primeros Descubrimientos (1489-1516)," Anuario de Estudios Atlánticos 9(1963):23-49; Idem, "Esclavos Domésticos en América," Anuario de Estudios Americanos 24 (1967):955-983; Sánchez de Sopranis, Cofradías de Morenos; Arcadio de Larrea Palacín, "Los Negros de la Provincia de Huelva," Archivos del Instituto de Estudios Africanos 20(marzo 1952);39-57.

the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, the center and suppliers of slaves to much of the Iberian Peninsula.⁹ Slavery was an accepted principle by medieval Christians, but even popes would contradict each other over this moral question. Pope Nicolas V gave King Alfonso of Portugal the right to conquer and enslave pagans in 1452.¹⁰ Pius II would condemn slavery in 1462, while Pope Innocent VIII, in 1488, received one-hundred slaves captured in the fall of Malaga from Ferdinand.¹¹ This gift of slaves was later divided by the Pope among the cardinals and nobles close to him.¹² These papal slaves were reported to have been "very good Christians."¹³ The problem of slavery would be greatly debated within

⁹Roger Bigelow Merriman, The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and in the New, 4 vols. (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1962), 1:480, 504; Davis, Problem of Slavery, pp. 43-45

¹⁰Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:4-5; Davis Problem of Slavery, pp. 91-121, presents Medieval and modern thought concerning slavery; Luis Morales Oliver, "El Testamento de la reina Isabel y su reflejo en Africa," Archivos del Instituto de Estudios Africanos 47(diciembre 1958): 15; See also Domingo Manfredi, Africa en las Navegaciones Españolas (Madrid: Publicación Espanoles, 1958) which represents an interesting monograph showing Iberian-African contacts from classic times to the nineteenth century.

¹¹Jean Hippolyte Mariejol, The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella, trans. ed. Benjamin Keen (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1961), pp. 277-79; Davis, Problem of Slavery, p. 100.

¹²Davis, Problem of Slavery, p. 101n.

¹³Mariejol, Spain of Ferdinand, p. 279, reports them to be "young people."; Merriman, Spanish Empire, 2:271, declares them to be warriors.

the Church, but for the most part Thomistic thought would prevail. As St. Thomas pointed out, "even the angels in heaven were subjected to a hierarchal pattern of rule and authority based on intrinsic differences in merit."¹⁴

This coupled with the Aristotelian belief in the "natural slave" provided the foundation for the acceptance of slavery. It was legitimized by custom and Christian legal codes. The most influential of these was Las Siete Partidas, compiled between 1256 and 1265 during the reign of Alfonso X (el Sabio).¹⁵ Las Siete Partidas is a compendium of Justinian law and local custom which became a reference point in all legal matters of Spain and its later colonial empire. The rights and obligations of those enslaved were enumerated in Las Siete Partidas, and in this manner, the institution of slavery was recognized as an integral part of Spanish society and was given a legal basis. The rationale for the enslavement of Blacks was based on Genesis 9:25 and Original Sin.

Genesis 9:25 relates that Noah cursed his son

¹⁴Davis, Problem of Slavery, p. 95.

¹⁵See Las Siete Partidas del Rey don Alfonso el Sabio, 3 vols. (Madrid: En la Imprenta Real, 1887) and Charles E. Chapman, A History of Spain founded on the Historia de España de la Civilización Española of Rafael Altamira (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), pp. 142-143, 162-165.

Ham and his descendants saying that "He shall be his brother's meanest slave."¹⁶ Since Ham and his descendants are believed to have peopled Africa, the Bible, as the word of God, was used to justify the enslavement of the inhabitants of this area. The chronicler of the Antam Gonzalvez voyage mentions this and sought to reinforce this rationale by quoting from the Noah writings of Archbishop Don Rodrigo of Toledo, the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius and Walter.¹⁷ The curse of Ham would be repeated by many others during the succeeding centuries as a rationalization for the black slave trade.¹⁸

It was also believed that slavery was a punishment for Original Sin. Although it was caused by sin, this did not mean that a slave once Christianized was immediately freed from bondage.¹⁹ Instead, it was to be endured as a just punishment. The fact that one was enslaved was of little importance. What was paramount

¹⁶Alexander Jones, The Jerusalem Bible (Garden City N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), pp. 22-23.

¹⁷Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:22.

¹⁸Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, Compendio y Descripción de las Indias Occidentales, trans. Charles Upon Clark (Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution Press, 1968) p. 17; Solórzano y Pereyra, Política Indiana, libro I, capítulo 5, título 35; Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:22, declares that the curse was laid by Noah on his son Cain. This is probably confused with the Spanish translation of Ham as Cam. The sons of Noah were Ham, Shem and Japheth. Cain was the son of Adam.

¹⁹Davis, Problem of Slavery, pp. 86-96; W.M.V. Reade Political Theory to c. 1300, vol. 6, The Cambridge Medieval History (Cambridge University Press, 1964); p. 613; Solórzano y Pereyra, Política Indiana, libro 2, capítulo 1, títulos 3-8.

was that someone was uplifted from paganism and brought to the light of Christianity. Following this rationale, many made careers of raiding into the Barbary Coast (Fez, Morocco, Tunis and Tlemecen) and into Western Africa in search of slaves.²⁰ Africa was viewed by some as a fountain from which a wealth in slaves could be drawn, while Queen Isabela viewed it as the place from which a wealth of souls could be acquired for God.

The Reconquest accomplished, Queen Isabela turned her attention to new pagan areas to conquer for God. This zeal, the central point of her political philosophy, is especially apparent in her last will and testament. The Queen declared that she wished her heirs to carry out the evangelization of Africa and to continue the task until the infidel became Christian. She also ordered that King Ferdinand, her daughter Princess Juana and her son-in-law Prince Phillip care for the Indians of the newly discovered lands.²¹ Little did she realize how the fate of the Indians and the black Africans were to become intertwined as staggering amounts of Blacks would be brought to the Indies to save the Indians from extermination.

²⁰Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:18-23; Alejandro Cioranescu, "Melchor Mansilla de Lugo un Licenciado Negrero (1526-1575)", Anuario de Estudios Atlánticos 9(1963): pp. 119-162.

²¹Morales Oliver, Testamento de la reina, pp. 8-9
Andrés Ovejero Bustamante, Isabela I y la Política Africanista Española (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Africanos, 1951), pp. 153-156, 231-244.

Although it has been asserted that Blacks were present in pre-Colombian Spanish America, these claims have been based on fragmentary Indian artifacts and not on documentary proof. Since the analysis of these artifacts has been based on subjective rather than objective evaluation, most authorities tend to disclaim these assertions.²² There are indications that Pietro Alonso the pilot on the first voyage of Columbus was Black.²³ That there was a Black on the fourth Columbus voyage is a certainty. The Ship's manifest shows that Diego el negro served on the voyage as a grumete or cabin boy.²⁴ In all likelihood, Diego el negro and Pietro Alonso were free men, while the majority of the Blacks that came after them were slaves.

During the Conquest and early colonial period, many Blacks came to the Indies as personal servantes rather than laborers. The most famous of these was Estevanico who

²²Chicago Daily Defender (March 6-12, 1971), p. 12; Hans Horkheimer, El Peru Prehispánico, 2 vols. (Lima: Editorial Cultura Antártica, S. A., 1950) 1:82; Carmen Aguilera, "Una posible Diedad Negroide en el Panteón Azteca," Estudios de Cultura Nahuatl, 9(1971), 47-56; Jeffreys, "Pre-Colombian Negroes," 202-217.

²³Arthur Ramos, Las Culturas Negras en el Nuevo Mundo (México: Fondo de la Cultura Económica, 1943), p. 66; Documents Illustrative, p. 14, reports that legend has one or two Blacks with Columbus on his voyage of discovery; Peter M. Bergman, ed., The Chronological History of the Negro in America (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1969), p. 2, reports the name as Pedro Alonso Nino.

²⁴Jorge A. Lines, ed., Colección de Documentos para la Historia de Costa Rica Relativos al Cuarto y Ultimo Viaje de Cristobal Colon (San José, Costa Rica: Imprenta y Libreria Ateneo, 1952), pp. 43, 102. Diego's pay is also listed.

took part in the disastrous Narvaez expedition and was instrumental in the survival of his master Andrés de Dorantes and Cabeza de Vaca.²⁵ While most of the Blacks during the early period came as personal servants, some served in the transportation of supplies and equipment and, once Indian slaves were acquired, as the overseers of Indian laborers. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who left what may be the most accurate first hand account of the Conquest of Mexico, reported that on the expedition Blacks were worth their weight in gold.²⁶

Besides having contributed vitally in the conquest period, the Blacks unknowingly served as the vehicle for the decimation of the Indian population. Diego Velzquez, the governor of Cuba, ordered Panfilo de Narvaez to Mexico to stem the growing power of Cortes. One of the Blacks with the Narvaez expedition was infected with small pox.²⁷

²⁵Frederick W. Hodge, ed., "The Narrative of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca," Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1528-1534 (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1958), pp. 9-132; James B. Browning, Negro Companions of the Spanish Explorers in the New World, Howard University Studies in History, 2 (Washington, D.C., 1931), pp. 5-20.

²⁶Bernal Díaz, The Conquest of New Spain trans, J.M. Cohen (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 55; CDI, 20:215, Motolonia reports that the Blacks with Cortes were "the most valuable thing he had."

²⁷William H. Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico and the History of Peru (New York: Random House, 1936), p.399n; Juan de Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana (Madrid: N. Rodríguez Franco, 1723), tomo 1, libro 4, capítulo 80; F.A. Kirkpatrick, The Spanish Conquistadores (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 11-12 C.L.G. Anderson, Old Panama and Castilla del Oro (New York: North River Press, 1944), pp. 37-38.

The Indiana population lacked immunity from or experience with the disease and were seriously affected. Great numbers of towns around Veracruz and the lowland areas were almost completely wiped out. Torquemada reported that

Since the Indians were accustomed to wash themselves each day when healthy, they now did it because the fever burned them up. This, along with the heat of the area, worked against a cure. Thus an infinite number died.... There were so many dead, that since they were not buried the stench corrupted the air and it was feared a great plague would be caused. This epidemic of small pox was spread through New Spain causing great mortality.²⁸

The epidemic spread to the Aztec capital, where the successor to Moctezuma, Cuitláhuac, who had been the Aztec leader for only eighty days, fell victim to the plague and died.²⁹ The decimation of the Aztecs and especially of their reinforcements and food suppliers outside the city resulted in a breakdown in military preparedness among the defenders of Mexico City. Starvation helped to further demoralize the embattled Aztecs and paved the way to the Conquest.

²⁸Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana, tomo 1, libro 4, capítulo 66.

²⁹Ibid., tomo 1, libro 4, capítulo 80; Prescott, Conquest of Mexico, p. 482; Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano 17 vols. (Madrid: 1934-1957), 5:399, reports that small pox was believed by some to have been in the Indies before the arrival of the Spaniards.

The decimation of the Indian population of Mexico by the small pox epidemic was repeated throughout the areas conquered by the Spaniards. Puerto Rico was the first area affected by small pox. As later occurred in Mexico, an infected Black brought in the disease in 1518.³⁰ The epidemic spread throughout the islands exterminating one group of Indians after another. Since the Spaniards disdained manual labor, Blacks were brought in to bolster the ranks of the Indian survivors. In this manner the cycle was repeated. Epidemics occurred, the work force declined, and greater numbers of Blacks were imported, But with the increase in black slaves, Spanish slave control broke down. The greater numbers of black slaves increased the difficulties in slave supervision. Blacks took advantage of this opportunity to flee their forced servitude, formed cimarron bands, and attacked the Spaniards. By continually increasing the numbers of Blacks in the Indies, the Spaniards unwittingly developed a threat to their lives, property and control of the Indies.

³⁰ Luis M. Díaz Soler, Historia de la Esclavitud Negra en Puerto Rico 3rd ed., (New York: Plus Ultra Educational Publishers, Inc., 1970), pp. 43-83; Angel Rosenblat, La Población Indígena y el Mestizaje en América 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova, 1954), 1:72-79, 90-95.

CHAPTER III

Cimarron Revolts And Pacification In New Spain The Antilles And Florida

Royal sanction for the introduction of black slaves to the Indies was given in 1501 to Nicolás de Ovando, the governor of Hispaniola. Queen Isabela had been hesitant about sending Blacks to the Indies, fearing that they could cause religious contamination of the Indians if the slaves had originally come from Moslem areas of Africa. To prevent the introduction of the Moslem religion to the Indies, Ovando was ordered to take the Indies only those "slaves born in the possession of Christians," and to allow no non-reconciled heretic, Jew Moor or recent convert to Christianity to enter Hispaniola.¹

Although Ovando obeyed the royal directive, the Blacks who were introduced quickly became a problem to the peace of the colony. Two years after he had assumed the leadership of the colonial government, Ovando found himself forced to petition the crown that Blacks be prohibited from coming to the island. He advised the crown that black slaves escaped whenever possible from

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Charles Gibson, The Spanish Tradition in America (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968), 55-57;
Edward Gaylord Bourne, Spain in America (New York; Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1904), p. 269.

their Spanish masters and fled to outlying Indian villages where they incited the Indians to rebel against the Spaniards. Rather than risk the loss of both the souls and bodies of the Indian vassals and the new colony, shipments of Blacks were prohibited in 1503.²

The problem faced by Ovando was the first recorded case of flight by black slaves in the Americas. These fugitives were the first black cimarrones, although it is not known if they were specifically called by this name. In fact, the word was later used to describe both Indian and black fugitives. On the other hand, Indians were also called Indios alzados or rebelados. This meant that they had risen or rebelled against Spanish control. This distinguished them from indios insumisos or unconquered Indians. The application of the term cimarron to fugitive Blacks is a logical progression in the usage of the term. As the colonial period progressed and Spanish control over the Indian population increased, the term came to be applied, except for rare instances, only to Blacks.

²Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:14, reports that George Scelle, La Traite aux Indes de Castille (Paris, 1906), believed that the importation must have been in progress before the arrival of Ovando. This would have been the only way that Blacks could have been in numbers sufficient to have imperiled the administration of Ovando. In reality the few Blacks were a danger in that they incited the Indians to rebel; Bourne, Spain in America, p. 269; Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, La Población Negra de México, 1519-1810, Estudio Etnohistórico (México: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1946), p. 5; C.M. Haring, The Spanish Empire in America (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963) p. 203.

The decline of the Indian population of Hispaniola during the first twelve years of Spanish rule was so drastic that the labor force was seriously affected. For this reason, Ovando requested the crown to renew the importation of Blacks to the island. The first seventeen were sent to the governor for use in the royal copper mines of Hispaniola.³ In a letter dated September 15, 1505, King Ferdinand acknowledged Ovando's request for more slaves and declared that one hundred would be sent. He also suggested that the overseer in charge of the slave miners promise the Blacks that they would be rewarded if "they work well."⁴ The King advised that by promising rewards, the Blacks would work with more enthusiasm rather than try to escape to the hills to become cimarrones.

Slave shipments quickly increased. Two hundred fifty blacks were sent in 1510 to be used only on the royal properties or to be sold to Spanish settlers.⁵ But the demands of the colonists were not satisfied.

³Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:14-15; Haring, Spanish Empire, p. 203.

⁴Helps, Conquerors and Bondsmen, 1:211-212.

⁵Donnan, Documents Illustrative, 1:15, reports 250; Haring, Spanish Empire, p. 203, reports 200; J. A. Saco Historia de la Esclavitud, desde los tiempos mas remotos hasta nuestros dias ed. A. Garzón del Camino, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Andina, 1965), p. 166 declares the maximum to be 200; Bourne, Spain in America, p. 270, states that fifty were sent in 1510 and "up to 200" later; Helps, Conquerors and Bondsmen, 1:237, reports that governor Diego Columbus was ordered, in 1510, to send "50 Blacks to work in the mines."

They requested more, telling the King that because of the great mortality among the black slaves, replacements were needed. In June 1511 the King noted in a letter to Sampier, a royal official on Hispaniola, that he could not understand why the Blacks had such a high mortality rate. He admonished Sampier, telling him that the colonists should "take much care of them."⁶

Crown patronage of black slave labor for the royal properties encouraged the slave trade. The situation continued until the death of Ferdinand in 1516 when Cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros halted the flow of Blacks until Charles V became the new monarch.⁷ Charles V renewed the slave trade and used it as a remedy for problems confronting him. The resumption of the slave trade meant that the Indians could be spared from the labors demanded of them and their defenders would cease the clamor for Indian rights; royal favorites could be rewarded with

⁶Helps, Conquerors and Bondsmen, 1:237.

⁷Luis Querol y Roso, "Negros y mulatos de Nueva Espana, Historia de su alzamiento en Mejico en 1612." Anales de la Universidad de Valencia, 90 (1931-32); pp. 122 indicates that shipments of slaves were stopped by Cisneros because of the immorality of the slave trade; Helps, Spanish Conquest, 1:349-350, believes that Cisneros was only interested in organizing the slave trade to provide a labor supply; Jose Antonio Saco, Historia de la Esclavitud de la Raza Africana en el Nuevo Mundo y en especial en los Países Americo-Hispanos 4 vols. (Havana: Cultural, S. A., 1939, reprint ed., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1969), p. 168, presents convincing evidence that Cisneros was firm believer in slavery. Cisneros suspended the trade because he wished to reorganize it in order to impose a better system of taxation upon its profits.

asientos or slave contracts and the royal treasury would be swelled from revenues imposed on the black slave trade. Now, under Charles V, the black slave trade became an integral part of colonial life, but the Blacks did not meekly accept their enslavement.

In 1519 one of the longest lasting cimarron revolts occurred. This was not a revolt of black cimarrones, but a revolt of Indians led by the cacique Enriquillo in Hispaniola.⁸ This Indian cimarron revolt is of primary importance to understanding the methods used by the Spaniards in the pacification of the black cimarron revolts which would erupt throughout the colonial period.

Enriquillo was a ladino, or acculturated Indian, who had been raised by the Franciscan friars on Hispaniola. He spent his childhood absorbing Spanish culture and appeared to be very peaceful by nature. But mistreatment by the Spaniards during his early adult years caused him to finally gather his followers and flee Spanish control to the more inaccessible mountain areas of Hispaniola in 1519. A small Spanish force of twelve men confidently attacked the Indians led by Enriquillo. The combat ended quickly with two Spaniards killed and the rest routed by the Indians.

⁸ Herrera y Tordesilla, Historia General, 4:357-366, 10:360-364; Manuel de J. Galvan, Enriquillo, Leyenda Historica Dominicana, intro. Jose Marti (Santo Domingo: Editorial Librería Dominicana, 1966), presents an interesting romantic novel based on this period.

Fearful that the news of a Spanish defeat might incite other Indians to rebel, the Audiencia prepared and sent out a better equipped force of seventy or eighty men to smash the revolt. Again, the Spaniards were soundly defeated. As had been feared, the news of the Indian successes caused many peaceful Indians to revolt and join Enriquillo. Within a short time, his original force of less than one hundred became three hundred rebellious Indians.⁹

Enriquillo fought a defensive rather than offensive war and ordered that none of his followers were to kill Spaniards. Although splinter groups of rebel Indians did not obey his command, those directly under Enriquillo were reported having killed Spaniards only if their own lives were in jeopardy.¹⁰ Weapons were made in their palenque, captured from the Spaniards or brought in by fugitive encomienda and slave Indians who stole them from their masters before escaping to the cimarron stronghold. Scouts continually watched the countryside and spies were located near the harbors and areas through which Spanish punitive expeditions might travel. The success of these measures dispirited the Spaniards in this war which would eventually

⁹Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 4:357-359.

¹⁰Ibid., 4:359-360.

cost the Royal Treasury 1,000 ducats and the abandonment of some settlements. The Audiencia had great difficulty gathering forces to send against the rebels and eventually men had to be conscripted to go against them. But military expeditions proved unsuccessful.¹¹

The Franciscan, Fray Remigio, tried to meet with the cimarron leader in hopes that Enriquillo's former ties to the Franciscans might induce him to surrender. Fray Remigio searched for the cimarrones in the mountains, but before he was able to reach Enriquillo, he was captured by an Indian scout force and physically abused because he was suspected of being a spy. When the priest was finally allowed to meet the cacique, Enriquillo refused to end the rebellion, declaring that the Indians had rebelled rather than allow themselves to be mistreated and killed by the Spaniards as their parents and grandparents had been. Rather than return to captivity and death, the Indians vowed that they would remain free on the land they controlled, harming no one except in self-defense and that they no longer wished to have relations with the Spaniards.¹²

When Fray Remigio delivered Enriquillo's message to the Audiencia, the officials sought to win him over by

¹¹Ibid., 7:484, 8:107, 259-261, 372-373.

¹²Ibid., 4:363-364, in 10:120 the date is given as 1530.

freeing some of the peaceful Indian chieftains from the encomienda system. It was hoped that the freedom granted to the peaceful Indians might induce some of Enriquillo's followers to return to the Spanish controlled area. Instead, this served to infuriate the more radical Spaniards who feared the loss of their encomiendas. These Spaniards took out their frustrations on their own Indians by treating them more harshly. This served to aggravate the problem as more hatred of the Spaniards was engendered. The leader of the opposition group, Miguel Pasamonte, the treasurer of the colony, hoping to alleviate the growing labor problem as more Indians fled to Enriquillo, petitioned the crown to increase the numbers of Blacks being imported into the island. The crown agreed with the request and raised the numbers of Blacks sent to Hispaniola. The labor problem was alleviated, but the increase in Blacks aggravated the problems for the Spaniards.¹³ Control of the growing black population became more difficult and made the Spaniards realize that the Indian cimarron problem had to be eliminated, before problems arose with the Blacks. If the Blacks rebelled, the Spaniards would then be confronted by two enemies. An even more formidable threat to their control of the island could have occurred if rebellious Blacks and Indians joined forces. For this reason, shortly before the futile effort

¹³ Ibid., 4:365-366.

shortly before the futile efforts of Fray Remigio Spanish officials tried to gain peace with Enriquillo. This was attempted by guaranteeing the rebellious Indians their freedom, land to set up a town, food supplies, and livestock. In return, the cimarrones were to promise to live in peace and capture any fugitive and rebellious Blacks and Indians.¹⁴ The cimarrones rejected the terms and refused similar offers by Fray Remigio the following year.¹⁵ The failure of these two attempts prompted a military effort led by Hernando de San Miguel to capture Enriquillo. Although no success was achieved by force of arms, negotiations were begun with Enriquillo.¹⁶ These continued for four years, until finally, in 1533 Enriquillo accepted the terms or capitulaciones offered by the crown. Under the terms of the treaty, Enriquillo promised to

1. Notify all the Indians that a peace had been agreed upon.
2. Appoint two capitanes or expert trackers as bounty hunters to capture all black fugitives on the island.
3. See that all fugitive Indians return to their owners or original dwelling places.
4. Come down from the mountains and live on the plains when the peace was effected.

In return, the Indians were given

1. A provision real guaranteeing their safety.
2. A land grant.
3. Livestock, tools, wine and oil.¹⁷

¹⁴CDI, 1:37,390.

¹⁵Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 7:372-373.

¹⁶Ibid., 7:377-378

¹⁷Ibid., 10:361-362.

Negotiations went well and within a few months after the preliminary meetings had begun, the Indians left their mountain sanctuaries and settled in peace on the plains.¹⁸

This peace settlement between the Spaniards and these Indians cimarrones is of prime importance if one is to understand the pacification methods used against the black cimarrones by the Spaniards. The methods used against the cimarrones under Enriquillo were direct military confrontation, the use of captured cimarrones to betray their fellows or to act as agents who would persuade the cimarrones to surrender; the sending of members of the clergy to convince the rebels to surrender; the transporting of captured cimarrones to a new area, or finally execution. If none of these methods proved effective, as a last resort, capitulaciones or terms were agreed upon. Capitulaciones were granted to other Indians besides the followers of Enriquillo during the colonial period.¹⁹ Of importance is

¹⁸Ibid., 10:361-362. The chronicler repeatedly stated that the war lasted thirteen years. If it began in 1519 and ended in 1533, it lasted at least fourteen; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:261, reports that a few days after the war ended, the followers of Enriquillo caught and returned some fugitive Blacks.

¹⁹Manuel Serrano y Sanz, ed., Relaciones Historicas y Geograficas de America Central in Colección de Libros y Documentos referentes a la Historia de América vol. 8 (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1904-1929), p. 110, reports another example of these Indian capitulaciones which was made in 1655 with the Guaymí Indians near Panama; Helps, The Conquerors, 2:110-111, presents the instructions given to Pedrarias by the crown in 1514. Before going to Castilla del Oro, Pedrarias was given the power to make agreements with caciques of the area. This was done, it was pointed out, so the Indians would work for the Spaniards and not flee to the mountains as they did in Hispaniola.

the implementation of capitulaciones in the New World between the Spanish Crown and persons who were not Spaniards and who had successfully sustained a rebellion against Spanish control. Although the Spaniards relied primarily on armed confrontation to suppress both Indian and black cimarron revolts, the capitulacion would now also be utilized.

The method utilized in pacifying the Enriquillo cimarrones would be repeated with the black cimarrones during the succeeding centuries. These were armed confrontation, missionaries who fearlessly sought out the rebels in order that they might be Christianized or brought to the Church and a peaceful life, and bounty hunters such as the capitanes agreed to in the Enriquillo capitulaciones. The most successful and most utilitarian method was the capitulaciones which brought the rebels under Spanish control, and made them defenders of the peace against other cimarrones and useful citizens and defenders of the Spanish empire.

Although peace was achieved with the Enriquillo cimarrones, as the capitulaciones showed, black fugitives were still a problem in Hispaniola. The Spaniards hoped to gain the Indians as allies against the black cimarrones. In this manner, Indian expertise could be utilized in hunting the black fugitives and at the same time foster ill-feelings and distrust between these two subject races. This would heighten racial division and animosity and lessen the threat of an alliance between them which might lead to a loss of control by the Spaniards.

Blacks were serving in sufficiently large numbers in Hispaniola before the Enriquillo revolt to warrant the issuance by the crown in 1512 of specific instructions for dealing with this element of society. Ostensibly for the welfare of the black slave, the instructions were meant for social control. In that would be a forerunner of the coartación system of self-purchase by the slave, the officials of Santo Domingo were ordered to give freedom to any black slave who had served his master for fifteen years, never been a fugitive, and paid his master fifteen gold marks.²⁰ Black males were to marry and be allowed to purchase the freedom of their families. The King suggested that the family purchase price might be paid by royal revenues. In this manner, the decree declared, "the Blacks would be contented."²¹ The ideas presented in the decree are sound.

²⁰ See Hubert H.S. Aimes, "Coartación: A Spanish Institution for the advancement of Slaves into Freedmen," Yale Review, 17 (February 1909): 412-431, presents a rather biased work which does not appear aware of the previously mentioned 1528 law; Díaz Soler, Historia de la Esclavitud, p. 227, reports that a royal cedula of 1526 which allowed slaves to purchase their freedom was the forerunner of the coartation law. In actuality, the basis appears to be the 1512 law for Hispaniola; CDI, 12:9, Officials of Cuba reported to the King that unmarried black males could not be married as ordered by a cedula of 1527 because there were not enough black women on the island.

²¹ Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de ultramar, 25 vols. (Madrid: Est. Tip. "Sucesores de Rivadeneyra," 1885-1932), (Hereafter cited as CDII) 34:144.

It was believed that the black male slaves would be more peaceful and hardworking if they were allowed to work towards attaining their freedom. Of even more importance, they would be less prone to flight and revolt if they had the stability of a family life. It was also believed that by giving freedom to the families of black males through the use of royal funds, the Blacks would be more loyal to the crown. No record is available that indicates the manner in which this early method of self-purchase was to be managed. Nor is there any record of the success of this 1512 decree. It must be noted that no large scale black cimarron revolt would occur for seventeen years. But in 1522, three years after the beginning of the Enriquillo revolt, the first large scale black revolt in the New World occurred.

In 1522 twenty Blacks of the Jelofe tribe fled the ingenio or sugar mill belonging to Admiral Diego Columbus.²² The Blacks had planned the revolt so that, upon fleeing the Columbus property, they would be joined by twenty more Jelofes in the countryside. Once the forty Blacks joined forces they began attacking Spanish holdings. One of the first places sacked was the property of Melchor de Castro, a prominent encomendero. At the de Castro property the

²²Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:209, calls the revolt location an ingenio; Herrera Y Tordesillas, Historia General, 6:405, reported it to be a trapiche; Aguirre Beltrán, Población Negra, pp. 101, 115, reports them to be of the Wolof tribe, whose ancient African empire began at the Senegal River. The Jelofes/Wolofs did not accept slavery and were involved in many slave revolts.

cimarrones freed a Black and twelve Indian slaves whom they took with them. They then went toward the town of Azua where they hoped to get more supplies and augment their forces by freeing more slaves.²³ Meanwhile Diego Columbus had set out against them with a force of colonials. De Castro was assigned the leadership of a small detachment of cavalry from the Columbus force and ordered to discover the position of the cimarrones. When the Blacks were finally located, the outnumbered Spaniards under de Castro charged their ranks. The cimarrones held their ground, but with only stones, fire hardened wooden spears, and a few captured Spanish weapons available to them, they were no match for the mounted Europeans. The Spanish attack smashed the ranks of the Blacks, with the survivors fleeing to the rocky hills where horses could not follow. When the Admiral and the rest of the Spaniards reached the area, search parties were organized and within five days, the majority of the cimarrones were captured and hanged.²⁴

There are a variety of reasons why this first large scale black cimarron revolt failed, while Enriquillo continued to hold the Spaniards at bay. Unlike the Indian

²³Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 6:406, reports that they planned to occupy Azua; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:209, says they were operating around Azua.

²⁴Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 6:407; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:209.

cimarrones, the Blacks did not immediately seek to avoid confronting the Spaniards. Thus Spanish superiority in weaponry and their horses brought defeat to the Blacks. The Blacks and the Indian slaves stolen from the de Castro property did not make common cause against the Spaniards, depriving the Jelofes of their cooperation. During the conflict, they did not actively participate on either side, but when the Blacks had been routed, they came out of hiding and re-joined their master.²⁵ These Indians felt no common cause with the Blacks. Despite the fact that both the Indians and Blacks were enslaved by the Spaniards, there was no sense of brotherhood against a common enemy. Instead, the Indians saw the Blacks as part of their conquerors and oppressors. The Black taken by the cimarrones at the de Castro raid was, in all likelihood, an acculturated or ladino Black who served as overseer of the Indian slaves. Here, as so often would happen in revolts that would occur during the colonial period, the ladino Black remained faithful to the Spaniards and felt no sense of brotherhood with the Blacks who were in revolt. The first large scale black revolt failed. Spanish military action was successful against this group of Blacks, but peace was not restored to the island. The official reports about the suppression of the Jelofe revolt noted that the majority of the Blacks had been captured and hanged. But the reports made no mention of those who had survived and fled to the more remote areas.

²⁵Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 6:407.

These survivors became the nucleus of the new black cimarron pockets of resistance. Their numbers increased as they liberated other Blacks in attacks on outlying Spanish holdings and Spaniards traveling in the countryside. These fugitives established palenques against which expeditions sent by the Spaniards proved unsuccessful. Even torture was employed in an effort to stem the growth of the Black cimarron groups, but these efforts were to no avail.²⁶

Ovando had been the first to warn against the troublesome qualities of the Blacks. Cardinal Cisneros, in 1516, declared that the Blacks "are good for war, men without honor and without faith and so are capable of treasons and disturbances, and when they grow in numbers will undoubtedly rebel, hoping to put on the Spaniards the same chains which they bear."²⁷ Although the misgivings of Cisneros and Ovando would be echoed by others through the colonial period, many Spaniards seemed to feel as did Alonso Zuazo, the Juez de Residencia of Hispaniola. In a memorial of January 22, 1518, Zuazo declared

²⁶Saco, Escalavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:208:

²⁷Colin A. Palmer, Slaves of the White God, Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 131.

The fear that the Blacks can rebel is foolish. There are widows in the island possessions of Portugal [who are] very calm with 800 slaves. It is all in how they are governed. On arriving here I found some black thieves and other fugitives in the monte. I beat some, cut the ears off others and no longer are there any complaints.²⁸

But Zuazo spoke too soon. During his period of residence in Hispaniola, he would be greatly troubled by black cimarrones.

On December 27, 1523 in the face of a growing black population of Hispaniola and at the time that Enriquillo carried out his revolt, the King ordered the oidores and oficiales reales of Hispaniola to punish the rebels severely and decreed that the work force contain no more than one-third Blacks. The remaining two-thirds of the work force were to be composed of Spaniards capable of bearing arms in defense of the colony.²⁹ The impossibility of carrying out this command is apparent since it would have entailed a large scale immigration from Spain. The following year the order was watered down when it was decreed that one-third of the work force be black women.³⁰

²⁸Lydia Cabrera, El Monte, Igbo Finda, Ewe Orisha, Vititi Nfinda (Notas sobre las religiones, la magia, las supersticiones y el folklore de los negros criollos y del pueblo de Cuba (Miami: Colección del Chicherekú, 1971), dedicates chapter one to explaining the regard Blacks had for the monte or bush-uncontrolled areas which they believed were imbued with magical qualities; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:144; CDI, 1:293.

²⁹Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:218, Helps, Conquerors and Bondsmen, 2:231.

³⁰Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:218.

Although the number of potentially dangerous black males remained constant, the black population would still outnumber the Spaniards. It is apparent that the crown felt that the increase in black females would provide a stabilizing effect on the black males.

As the colonization of the mainland began in earnest, island defenses were weakened, as many Spaniards emigrated to the new areas to share in the new riches. The island work force also suffered as the Spaniards took large numbers of slaves with them. To rectify the situation, the crown granted Cuba and Castilla del Oro in the Isthmus permission to import 1,000 black slaves into each area in 1527.³¹ The work force was increased, but so was the potential for cimarron problems. That same year, Dominican priests of Hispaniola petitioned the King to halt importation of Blacks of mala casta or troublesome nature. The mala casta Blacks, such as those of the Jelofe tribe, were believed to be the instigators of a revolt in 1527 in Puerto Rico.³² The situation quickly worsened so that by 1528 mala casta Blacks numbering 1500 were said to be stirring peaceful Blacks to revolt. When notified of the situation, the crown ordered that the troublesome Blacks be branded and transported to another area.³³ The solution had little lasting effect. Branding the slave inflamed slave hatred of the Spaniard.

³¹Ibid., 1:229

³²Díaz Soler, Historia de la Esclavitud, p. 203.

³³Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 8:260.

If a cimarron were executed, his cash value was lost. Rather than do this, the cimarrones were often transported and sold out of the area where they had caused trouble. This served to eliminate the problem from one area but transferred it to another. Since physical punishment and banishment to other areas did not prove to have the desired result, the crown issued orders similar to those of 1512. Slaves were to be forced to marry and were to be allowed to buy their freedom after serving a "certain time" and paying their masters at least twenty gold marks.³⁴ But as before, these royal orders had little success.

By 1528 the royal treasury had spent 20,000 ducats on the cimarron wars and an untold fortune was spent on privately financed expeditions.³⁵ Commerce was affected by the increase in prices because a tax levied on commercial transactions to pay for the cimarron campaigns.³⁶ The unsettled conditions also made the availability of trade goods difficult. Again the King vainly issued orders hoping to rectify the situation. He decreed that "500 persons of slothful and bad habits that were stirring

³⁴Vasco de Puga, Provisiones Cédulas Instrucciones para el Gobierno de la Nueva España in Colección de Incunables Americanos, vol. 3 (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1945), fol. 20.

³⁵Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 8:107.

³⁶Ibid.

up others who were peaceful to rebel, should be put in chains and transported from the islands."³⁷ The crown also ordered that no Blacks be taken to Cuba from Hispaniola because they would flee from there. As had been tried before, in hopes that marriage might pacify the Blacks, the presidente of the Audiencia of Santo Domingo ordered that all Blacks in Cuba be forced to marry.³⁸

The last year of the 1520s saw a continuation of black cimarron problems. In Santo Domingo, the treasurer Pasamonte now wrote to the King expressing fears of the black population. It was evident that the 1528 provisions for transporting troublesome slaves and allowing slaves to purchase their freedom was not having the pacifying effect expected. Pasamonte declared that he had written to the King a year and a half previously concerning the difficulties caused by ladino Blacks, but that nothing had been done. He went on to say that the problems had intensified because the continued shipments of Blacks caused the Spaniards to be greatly outnumbered by them.³⁹ The Spaniards were in a quandry. The Blacks were needed for the work force, but the small Spanish population lived in constant fear of the growing slave population.⁴⁰ The contradictory nature

³⁸Ibid., 7:377-378.

³⁹CDI, 40:440.

⁴⁰Rosenblatt, Población Indígena, 1:88, reports that in 1570 only 14% of the population of Hispaniola was white.

of the situation can be seen in the letters of Gil Gonzalez Davila, the contador of Hispaniola in the 1530s. In one letter he asks the crown to send Blacks from Castile,⁴¹ and in another points out the danger of having black slaves.⁴² He suggested that the danger could be minimized by adopting the Portuguese methods of preventing uprisings. Unfortunately, he does not explain what these are, but in all likelihood they were extremely repressive measures. This is shown by the previously mentioned methods used by Zuazo in 1518.⁴³

In 1532 Jelofe Blacks staged revolts in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands.⁴⁴ The crown re-issued its prohibition against their importation because of the Jelofe propensity to revolt. It must be noted that the prohibition carried its own weakness. Jelofes could be taken to the Indies if permission was obtained.⁴⁵ The continued involvement of Jelofes in revolts shows that permission was obtained because of the need for slave labor.

⁴¹CDI, 10:112.

⁴²CDI, 10:114.

⁴³CDI, 1:293.

⁴⁴Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 10:125; Díaz Soler, Historia, pp. 203-204.

⁴⁵Recopilación de leyes de los reynos de las Indias, mandadas imprimir y publicar por la Magestad Catolica del Rey don Carlos II, 4th ed. 3 vols. (Madrid, 1791; reprint ed., Madrid: Graficas Ultra, S.A., 1943) (Hereafter cited as Recopilacion), libro 9, titulo 26, ley 29.

Cuba was reported cleared of Indian cimarrones in 1530 and problems with the black slaves over. But in 1533, Blacks rebelled in the mines of Jobabo in Cueyba province. The fear caused by this revolt can be seen by the extreme measures taken by the governor. Although the rebels were only four in number, the governor, Manuel de Rojas, sent out two armed forces to subdue them. When they were finally cornered, the Blacks refused to surrender and fought to the death. Their corpses were taken to Bayamo and, as was done to others who committed crimes against the crown, they were quartered and each head placed on a tall pole and prominently displayed to serve as a warning to others.⁴⁶

The frequency with which black cimarron revolts occurred made this an expensive and difficult problem for colonial officials. In 1522 when the first large scale black revolt broke out, Spanish slave owners and citizens of the area took the revolt as a personal affront and saw this as a chance to prove their honor and bravery. As revolts happened with more frequency, the colonists lost interest in taking part in the cimarron campaigns.

⁴⁶ José Luciano Franco, La Presencia Negra en Nuevo Mundo (La Habana: Cuadernos Americanos de la Revista Casa de las Americas, 1968) (Hereafter cited as Franco, La Presencia, 1968), p.93

This situation caused problems for colonial officials who began having difficulty in obtaining volunteers to help put down the rebellious Blacks before the situation escalated into a problem of the scope of the Enriquillo war. Royal officials found themselves forced to draft men to fight. A war tax had been imposed on Hispaniola in 1527, but even this was not sufficient to provide for the expenses of defense forces. Doctor Beltrán, an official of the Audiencia, asked the crown to set up an Hermandad or constabulary similar to that used in parts of Spain. This constabulary was to be given the right to capture any Black or Indian fugitives, and would be paid by a tax on hides of cattle not butchered at the official slaughterhouses.⁴⁷ It is not known if his suggestions were followed, but when Gonzalo de Guzmán became governor of Cuba, he discovered that no one would set out after cimarrones except on a paid basis. For this reason, he organized an Hermandad paid for by the slave owners. Although it proved effective, once the immediate danger had passed, contributions fell off so that by the end of 1534 the successor to Guzman terminated at Hermandad.⁴⁸

Besides cimarron problems, attacks by foreign pirates began to trouble the Spaniards. In 1537 a

⁴⁷ CDI, 12:97.

⁴⁸ Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:258-259.

French pirate bombarded Havana and captured a Spanish ship near the city. The pirate added insult to injury by also capturing, looting, and burning three ships sent out to capture him.⁴⁹ Satisfied with his plunder, the pirate left the island waters. While the colonials were still gripped by fears of the return of the pirate, between twenty and thirty cimarrones attacked and burned the Church and houses of the town of Bavacoa. The cimarrones also tried to incite the indios mansos or peaceful Indians of the area to join them.⁵⁰ While the cimarrones were continuing their attacks, another French pirate attacked Havana. Although many of the Spanish inhabitants of the city fled to the countryside to escape the French, they were no safer there because of the cimarrones.

Hoping to pacify and safeguard the interior of the island against the cimarrones, a force of about thirty men was sent from Santiago and another from Bayamo by the officials of these cities. Despite the danger to their lives and property, many owners of Indian and black slaves refused to contribute slave manpower for the expedition against the cimarrones. This, as one official noted,

⁴⁹CDII, 4:426; 6:72-75.

⁵⁰Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, Colección de Don Juan Bautista Muñoz (hereafter cited as RAH), tomo 63, nº 997, fol. 121, 121v, Hernando de Castro and González Fernández to the King, May 27, 1538.

despite the fact that the cimarron problem had been caused by slave mistreatment by the owners.⁵¹ Bartolomé Ortíz, the alcalde mayor, organized various cuadrillas or small groups which he ordered out against the cimarrones. Ortíz felt that his efforts were so successful that by 1539 he reported the capture and execution of many cimarrones and that the island had been made safe.⁵² As other officials had done and others would during the colonial period, Ortíz told the King that "many" cimarrones had been captured. Seldom would the reports say that all had been eliminated. The immediate danger was gone, but now the cimarron problem was in a dormant period while the surviving fugitives regrouped themselves.

In 1542 Cuba suffered a large scale Indian cimarron revolt.⁵³ The revolt was crushed by large scale military action by the Spaniards. Although twenty-five Indians were killed, thirty captured and three executed, some cimarrones were able to escape. These fugitives became the nucleus of a renewed cimarron threat. The following year, in 1543, bands of combined black and Indian cimarrones,

⁵¹RAH, tomo 63, n^o 1.031, Bartolomé Ortiz to the Council of the Indies, March 30, 1519; Haring, Spanish Empire, p. 206, declares that the Blacks were in league with the French. From the documents available, it appears that this was not the case. The cimarrones were probably not cimarrones negros, but were cimarrones indios; Franco, Presencia Negra (1968), comes to the same conclusion.

⁵²Franco Presencia Negra (1968), p. 93.

⁵³RAH, tomo 63, fol. 1116, Lope Hurtado to the Emperor.

timing their activities with the beginning of the dry season, began to attack and pillage Spanish and Indian settlements. Although their number is not precisely known, they were reported to be less than the two hundred active at that time on Hispaniola.⁵⁴ In contradiction to this assessment of the numbers in Hispaniola, the arcedeano of Santo Domingo informed the Council of the Indies in March 1542 that two or three thousand cimarrones were operating around Cape San Nicolás, on the punta de Samaná and on Cape Iguay. Although he did not make clear whether these were Indians or Blacks, the arcedeano declared that the free and slave Blacks knew that the Spaniards were afraid to deal harshly or overly restrict them for fear that they would flee and join the cimarrones. For this reason, the Blacks had become very bold and uncontrollable. The arcedeano suggested that measures be taken to regulate the Blacks before the island was taken over by them from the outnumbered Spanish colonists.⁵⁵

The usual method employed by the individual slave owner to control his slaves was fear of physical punishment. The growth of the cimarron problem proved this ineffective.

⁵⁴ Ibid., tomo 65, fol. 1139, Vaca de Castro to the King, August 1543.

⁵⁵ Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:301-302.

Hoping to rectify the situation, restrictions were issued to curb excesses by Blacks. Regulations were issued against their having dealings with Indians,⁵⁶ becoming free by marriage to a free woman,⁵⁷ to go out alone at night, to carry weapons, to wear jewelry or fancy clothes,⁵⁸ to own a horse,⁵⁹ to gather in groups,⁶⁰

⁵⁶Recopilación, libro 6, título 2, ley 21, título 9, ley 5, título 15, ley 14, libro 7, título 3, ley 2; Related studies are found in Edgar F. Love, "Legal Restrictions on Afro-Indian Relations in Mexico," Journal of Negro History (Hereafter cited as JNH) 55(April 1970):131-139; Nicolás Leon, Las Castas del Mexico Colonial o Nueva España (México: Talleres Gráficos del Museo Nacional de Arquelogía, Historia y Etnografía, 1924) pp. 9-12; David M. Davidson, "Negro Slave Control and Resistance in Colonial Mexico," Hispanic American Historical Review (hereafter cited as HAHR) 44(August 1966): 235-253; William H. Dusenberry, "Discriminatory Aspects of Legislation on Colonial Mexico," JNH 32(July 1948):284-302; Irene Diggs, "Color in Colonial Spanish America," JNH 38(October 1953):403-428.

⁵⁷Recopilación, libro 7, título 5, ley 5. This had been previously guaranteed by partida 4, ley 5 of the Siete Partidas and Nahuatl law.

⁵⁸Recopilación, libro 5, título 12, ley 16 and libro 7, título 5, ley 4, 7, 15, 16, 18, and 23.

⁵⁹Eusebio Buenaventura Belaña, Recopilación Sumario de todos los acordados de la Real Audiencia y Sala del Crimen de Esta Nueva España y providencias de su Gobierno: de varias reales cédulas y órdenes que después de publicados la Recopilación de Indias han podido recogerse así de las dirigidas a la misma audiencia o gobierno, como de algunas otras por qu notables decisiones covendrá no ignorar (México: impreso por Don Felipe de Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1787), libro 2, auto 27, capítulo 56.

⁶⁰Ibid., libro 2, auto 83 and 84.

to buy wine,⁶¹ to become members of the clergy,⁶² or even hold certain occupations.⁶³

These restrictions failed in their purpose because, although the Blacks found their lives restricted, animosity toward the Spaniards was increased. Disrespect for the law was generated as both Blacks and some colonial officials often ignored the restrictions. These officials realized that if the restrictions were enforced rigidly, the Blacks would flee and become cimarrones.

By 1543 mining operations in Hispaniola were severely hampered by Indian cimarrones.⁶⁴ Using racial animosity between the Indians and the Blacks, some success

⁶¹Archivo General de la Nación (hereafter cited as AGN), Ordenanzas, tomo 2, fol. 170 and tomo 1, fol. 112; Charles Gibson, The Aztecs under Spanish Rule, A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1964) pp. 147-148; Carlos Federico Guillot, Negros Rebeldes y Negros Cimarrones: Pórfil Afroamericana en la Historia del Nuevo Mundo Durante el Siglo XVI (Buenos Aires: Fariña Editores, 1961), pp. 99-102; Norman F. Martín, Los Vagabundos en la Nueva España, Siglo XVI (Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1957) pp. 99-102.

⁶²León, México Colonial, pp. 5-6; Diggs, Color in Spanish America, p. 416.

⁶³Lucas Alamán, Historia de México desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año 1808 hasta la época presente 5 vols. (México: J.M. Lara, 1849-1852), 1:25; Manuel Carrera Stampa, Los Gremios Mexicanos, La Organización Gremial en Nueva España 1521-1861 (México: Ibero Americano de Publicaciones, S.A., 1954) 238-243. It appears that persons of Black African ancestry held many occupations from which they were excluded by law. See Silvio Zavala, Ordenanzas del Ordenanzas del Trabajo, Siglos XVI y XVII (Mexico: Editorial Elede, S.A., 1947) and Hector Humberto Samayoa Guevara, Los Gremios de Artesanos de la Ciudad de Guatemala 1524-1821 (Guatemala: Editorial Universitaria, 1962).

⁶⁴RAH, tomo 65, doc. 1176, fol. 212, Melchor de Castro to King, April 25, 1544.

was achieved against the Indian cimarrones by employing Blacks as cimarron hunters.⁶⁵ But the Indian cimarrones were relatively few, the greater threat was the black cimarrones.

Licenciado Cerrato reported in 1544 that he had sent out a force that had been able to defeat two separate groups of cimarrones. Many of the first group were either killed in combat, captured or had fled to their masters to escape their pursuers. Twenty-two of the second group were killed, although fifteen were able to escape. Cerrato declared that fear of the black cimarrones had become so extreme that whenever Blacks fled their owner, the Spaniards began to imagine that large scale revolts would soon follow. He believed the troublemakers were esclavos ladinos or acculturated slaves born on the island. Unlike the bozal or African born slaves, these were the most insolent and most likely to rebel or become the leaders of the cimarron groups. It was suggested that efforts to be made to have few slaves born on the island. The success of benevolent measures utilized in the pacification of Enriquillo prompted Cerrato to suggest that the cimarrones might be pacified by granting them freedom or possible transporting them once they had surrendered. According to Cerrato, well treated slaves did not revolt. For this reason, he hoped that

⁶⁵RAH, tomo 65, doc. 1176, fol 212. Lic. Cerrato to King, Feb. 27, 1554.

statutes could be approved by the King which would order good treatment for slaves.⁶⁶

Apparently Cerrato's request was approved because in 1549 laws were issued governing the treatment of Blacks. The laws stipulated that the slaves were to be well treated and not unduly punished or physically mutilated. Care was also to be taken to see to their religious well being. This was not done wholly from humanitarian ideals. It was done to lessen the causes of slave flight and have the slaves accept their burden on earth for which they would be rewarded in heaven. On the other hand, restrictions on slave life and punishments for infractions committed were outlined as a precautionary measure for those slaves who broke the law. Special attention was given to prevent flight. Any slave away from his master or overseer had to have on his person written proof that he was not a fugitive. Each evening overseers were to check the areas under their control to make sure that no Blacks were there without permission. Blacks were to stay off the roads at night and never aid any fugitive. Penalties for slave owners, overseers, or Blacks who did not carry out the laws were also outlined. It was noted that the laws had

⁶⁶RAH, tomo 65, doc. 1176, fol. 213, Lic. Cerrato to the King, Sept. 12, 1544.

been issued and were to be carried out to prevent the growth of the black cimarrones.⁶⁷

Like so many laws issued for the Indies, the letter of the law was respected, but not carried out. Slaves continued to be mistreated and became fugitives. This borne out by a report of 1570 to the Council of the Indies which declared that the black slaves of Hispaniola were living in a "barbarous state" in which they received no religious instructions, were naked and half starved and "compelled by hunger, go to the bush areas and steal whatever they can find and do other crimes, caused by the mistreatment of the masters."⁶⁸ The report went on to suggest that an oidor be sent to investigate the problem so that the situation could be remedied. Apparently, there was no change in the situation, since slave flight and cimarron problems continued.

Problems with the cimarrones intensified in January 1546. A fugitive, variously identified as

⁶⁷CDI, 11:82-87. An unsigned addenda to this undated document makes these laws appear spurious; Frederick P. Bowser, The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974), P. 149 and Miguel León-Portilla, Alfredo Vásquez, Luis González, Ernesto de la Torre, María del Carmen Velázquez, Historia Documental de México 2 vols. (México: Universidad Nacional Autonma de Mexico, 1964), 1:237-240, believe them to be genuine. Leon-Portilla, et al., declare them to be of the seventeenth century.

⁶⁸CDI, 11:69-70.

Diego de Guzmán, Diego de Campo, Diego de Ocampo or Dieguillo, who had eluded capture for ten years was the leader of the Blacks.⁶⁹ In January, he led an attack on San Juan de la Maguana, destroying sugar refineries.⁷⁰ Augmented by the slaves taken from the destroyed Spanish properties, the cimarrones continued their trail of destruction to within three leagues of Santo Domingo.⁷¹ A punitive expedition sent against the Blacks reportedly killed nineteen of the fugitives, including two of their leaders. Since this effort had not succeeded in eradicating the problem, a cavalry and an infantry force were organized and sent against the cimarrones. The leaders of the two groups were ordered not to return to Santo Domingo without having first exterminated the cimarrones.⁷² One of these expeditions attempted to come to terms with the fugitives. The Blacks were offered their own town with friars as the only whites allowed to enter their area. Inter-racial contacts were to be made only if the Blacks wished them.

⁶⁹RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 140, Cerrato to the King, February 2, 1546, and fol. 142, Cerrato to the King, July 29, 1546; Ibid., tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 140, Grageda to King, June 17, 1546.

⁷⁰RAH, tomo, 66, doc. 1204, fol. 69, The Justicia y Regimiento de Santo Domingo, February 10, 1545, The letter is believed to really be of 1546.

⁷¹RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 141, Cerrato to King, February 2, 1546 and tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 142v, Información sobre la Española hecha en Sevilla, June 17, 1546.

⁷²RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 140. Cerrato to the King, February 2, 1546.

Despite this effort, the negotiations met with failure. The Blacks rejected dealing with the Spaniards whom they accused of never keeping their word.⁷³ The attacks resumed and the Spaniards were forced to again resort to military action.

The economy of the island suffered as the cimarrones continued their attacks. Small settlements were abandoned as citizens moved to the safety of larger towns. Although gold production was reported to have declined, there are indications that this was caused by the transfer of black miners to Honduras and Colombia.⁷⁴ The situation was so serious that an inquiry was held in Seville in June 1546 to investigate the cimarron problems of Hispaniola. It was found that at the beginning of the difficulties in the

⁷³Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:5; M. Girolamo Benzoni, La Historia del Mundo Nuovo, trans. and annot. Marisa Vannini de Gerulewicz, prelim. study León Croizat, (Caracas: Italgráfica, C.A., 1967), p. 115; Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 90, does not believe such negotiation was conducted and attributes Benzoni's mention of this to his "imaginacion algo fantastico de italinano."; RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1232, fol. 141, Cerrato to King, 15 June 1546, reference is made to this peace attempt, and RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 142v, Informacion sobre la Española hecha en Sevilla, June 17, 1546, also refers to this negotiation; Aquiles Escalante, El Negro en Colombia (Bogotá: Universidad de Colombia, Facultad de Sociología, 1964), p. 6, reports that they were with Enriquillo. There is no indication that is correct.

⁷⁴RAH, tomo 65, doc. 1176, fol. 212, Melchor de Castro to King, April 25, 1544, *Ibid.*, tomo 66, doc. 1204, fol. 69, La Justicia y Regimiento de Santo Domingo to King, February 10, 1545; Juan Friede, Documentos Ineditos para la Historia de Colombia 10 vols. (Bogotá: Academia Colombiana de Historia, 1960), 8:doc. 1841.

previous year, there had been between 200 to 300 male and female Blacks in rebellion. The efforts to gain a negotiated peace was noted, and its failure was attributed to the intransigence of the Blacks. Although Spanish forces were scouring the countryside, the report pointed out that the areas outside the cities were too dangerous for lone Spaniards and the population was in a state of terror because it feared that the 12,000 peaceful Blacks might use this opportunity to become "insolent."⁷⁵

Unknown to the officials conducting the inquiry in Seville, Licenciado Cerrato was writing from Santo Domingo that Spanish efforts were finally having success. The cimarrones were defeated in a battle after which the captives were hanged, burned or had their feet cut off. The leader, Diego de Ocampo, was cornered in the house of a Spaniard in Puerto Plata. There, the trapped cimarron negotiated with his Spanish pursuers, promising to become a cimarron hunter if his life was spared. Happy to get the service of someone who would know the area where the cimarrones were most likely to hide, his offer was accepted.

⁷⁵RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 142v. Información Sobre la Espanola hecha en Sevilla, June 17, 1546; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, reports that they were with Enriquillo. The documents seen present no evidence of this, although they were operating in the Cacique's area.

Ocampo was pardoned and quickly gained fame for his anti-cimarron activities. Cerrato declared that "having him on our side, everyone feels safe."⁷⁶

Despite the aid of Diego, slave owners did not quite feel at ease with their black slaves. Slave owners were so afraid of revolt that they were treating their slaves "very mildly", for this reason, the situation was reported to have improved.⁷⁷ Although the situation seemed to be improving, cimarrones in the cattle ranching areas were still so sure of themselves that they openly rode around on horseback.⁷⁸ The status of law and order and the finances of the island were severely strained by the cimarrones. The campaigns against the cimarrones had caused the Audiencia to expend between seven and eight thousand reales of royal funds.⁷⁹ Taxes imposed to pay for the campaigns caused a hardship on the inhabitants because of the increase in prices, while production was decreasing. Ill will was also created when it became common

⁷⁶RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 140, Cerrato to King, June 15, 1546 and Ibid., tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 141, Lic. Grageda to King, July 28, 1546, reported that he had become pacified along with another leader, Sebastian Demba, and three or four more fugitives; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 2:7, says the letter is of July 11, 1546.

⁷⁷RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 141, Licenciados Cerrato and Grageda to King, July 29, 1546; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 2:5.

⁷⁸RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 141, Grageda to King, July 28, 1545.

⁷⁹RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 141, Cerrato to King, June 15, 1546.

knowledge that the priests of the island were trying to avoid paying the cimarron campaign tax.⁸⁰

Notwithstanding the problems confronting the island because of the black cimarron problems, the officials of Santo Domingo petitioned the crown in October 1546 for a general license for the importation of more black slaves. The petition was rejected for good reason.⁸¹ Although the reformed cimarron Diego de Ocampo was having success against the rebels, the problem had not been eliminated. Rumor set the number of fugitives as high as 1,000, but licenciado Cerrato declared the number was more like twenty-five or thirty thousand. Despite his attempt at playing down the number, he did note that the increase in cimarron problems had caused many of the vecinos or landowners to emigrate to new areas.⁸²

In December of 1547, Cerrato reported to the King that, except for a few rebellious Blacks around Bahoruco, the island of Hispaniola was at peace.⁸³ This same line was repeated by him in his acceptance letter of the governorship of Los Confines (Honduras) in March 1548.

⁸⁰Ibid.; Díaz Soler, Historia de la Esclavitud, p. 158, reports that the slaves that were owned by the Council of the Indies and assigned to Puerto Rico as cimarron hunters were instead used by the Governor in shipbuilding in the 1560s.

⁸¹RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 141v, La ciudad de Santo Domingo to King, October 15, 1546.

⁸²RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1231, fol. 142, Cerrato to King, November 16, 1546.

⁸³RAH, tomo 66, doc. 1254, fol. 213v. Cerrato to King, December 18, 1547.

He confidently reported that, through his efforts, the situation had changed and that everything was now safe.⁸⁴ Apparently, Cerrato was not altogether candid. His successor, Licenciado Grageda, reported to the King, in May, that two groups of cimarrones had been especially troublesome. One group in Higuey province had been engaged in battle, defeated, and its leader captured and quartered. The second group, led by Lemba, numbering as many as 140 fighting men, was finally located. In the ensuing combat, Lemba and most of his men were killed, captured, or executed. Six or seven escaped, and within a week these cimarrones had more than doubled their number.⁸⁵

The procurador general of Havana, don Pedro de Oñate, fearful of reports of large scale cimarron revolts in Mexico went before the governor of Cuba on March 9, 1609 with an interrogatoria or survey concerning black slave problems in the island. Oñate recommended that severe punishment be inflicted on the cimarrones before a revolt occurred on the island, as was happening in other areas of the Indies.⁸⁶ He pointed out that although cimarron

⁸⁴RAH, tomo 67, doc. 1281, fol. 41v, Cerrato to King, March 7, 1548.

⁸⁵RAH, tomo 67, doc. 1281, fol. 42 and 42v, Grageda to King, May 27, 1548.

⁸⁶"Papers bearing on the Negroes of Cuba in the Seventeenth Century" JNH 12 (January 1927):85, 90. Juan de la Barreda, mayordomo de los propios y rentas feared that a revolt of the scope of that in Mexico could occur in Havana.

ordinances had been written in 1591, this had been done when both the vecino and black population was low. Where there had been less than 50 vecionos and twenty Blacks in 1591, in 1609 there were more than 800 vecionos and 5,000 Blacks. The increase in the Black slave population made their control so difficult that many Blacks were known to have been cimarrones for between three and six years.⁸⁷

The original cimarron ordenanzas has been approved by a cabildo abierto held in Havana on June 6, 1591 but were not published until July 22, 1600. Under the ordenanzas a treasury was set up for the money to be collected from the vecinos and used to pay for the apprehension of the cimarrones. A tax of twelve reales for each black male or female between the ages of eight and fifty was levied on the slave owners. This tax was charged on those slaves brought in after the date of the publication of the ordenanzas but not on the children of those slaves then on the island. An additional charge of twenty-five ducats was placed on Blacks hired for the livestock areas. Each livestock raising establishment was to have a cepo or punishment stock provided with a lock and key. Cargadores de negros who entered Havana were to be charged according to the rate set for fugitives. Fines were set for the operators of livestock establishments who hid fugitives in order to use them as workers, for slave owners who did

⁸⁷Ibid.

not notify the authorities of missing slaves, and rancheadores were appointed to search out cimarrones and apprehend fugitive Blacks. If an apprehended Black had been a fugitive for a few days and it was a first offense, he was to be given fifty lashes. Second offenders were to receive two hundred lashes and be transported. Captured leaders of armed cimarron bands were to be hanged and the owner paid two-thirds of his value.⁸⁸

As can be seen by the last articles of the ordenanzas, the owners were more interested in their investment than in the cimarron danger. Cimarrones were captured, physically punished, returned to the owner, or transported from the island. When the slave was transported, the slave owner recouped his investment. If the slave was executed or killed while being apprehended, the owner still received two-thirds of his investment. This is apparent in the interrogatorio presented by Oñate in 1609. Witnesses questioned by Oñate declared that the owners prevented physical punishment being given to their slaves.⁸⁹ There can be no doubt that the slave owners did not wish their slaves to be lashed. A beaten slave would have been scarred. This would have lowered his market value in two ways. The decrease caused by scarring is obvious. Of equal importance was that scares would indicate to a buyer that the slave had to be harshly punished for some offense.

⁸⁸Ibid., 75-85. Fifty six vecinos approved the original ordenanzas.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 85-86, 88, 94.

For this reason slave owners preferred to punish slaves themselves. By 1609 the slave owners no longer wished to pay into the cimarron treasury and used as an excuse for their refusal to contribute, the fact that the Audiencia of Santo Domingo had never confirmed the ordenzas. They ignored the fact that the danger from cimarron revolt had greatly increased since 1591. Witnesses who testified before Oñate declared that Havana had been saved from serious revolt only because of its presidio, but there was nothing to safeguard the countryside.

Despite the evidence supplied by Oñate's interrogatorio, the crown did not remedy the situation immediately. In 1611, officials of Havana petitioned the crown for approval and enforcement of the 1591 ordneazas.⁹⁰ Although no documentary evidence that this was done had come to light, by 1623, rancheadores are actively hunting cimarrones in the countryside.⁹¹ It must be noted that these rancheadores overstepped their authority by commandeering supplies, horses and pack animals from the Blacks living in the countryside. The free Blacks complained directly to the crown against the illegal search and seizure and were vindicated. Rather

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 75

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 60-61, 65.

than alienate these peaceful Blacks and have them actively aid the cimarrones, the crown issued orders that the rancheadores were to cease such actions.⁹²

The difficulties in eradicating cimarrones militarily were readily apparent to many colonial officials. Unless the cimarrones formed palenques and settled in one area, military confrontation could not be effected. Most of the cimarron activity was guerrilla-style attacks made by small bands of fugitives. On the other hand, even if the Spaniards were able to locate and eliminate the palenques or the small bands of fugitives, other slaves fled and began their activities. For this reason, the use of capitulaciones as a means of pacifying cimarrones was becoming recognized. The Marqués de Varinas, in 1677, proposed to the crown that Blacks living in the palenques in Hispaniola be granted capitulaciones to get them to return to a peaceful life.⁹³ Capitulaciones had proven their value in the Antilles and the mainland as a means of pacifying cimarrones. Unfortunately, it is not known how much importance the crown gave to the suggestion of the Marques.

⁹²Ibid., p. 65.

⁹³CDI, 19:270-273. These proposals made by the Marqués in 1677 entailed an end to slavery. This undoubtedly met with opposition.

Except for rare instance, foreigners were not allowed trading rights in the Spanish Indies.⁹⁴ This exclusiveness caused envy and anger that the flow of precious metals and commodities were reserved only for Spain. Many foreigners retaliated by clandestine contraband trade, pirating Spanish trading vessels, and attacking coastal cities during the sixteenth century. During the seventeenth century foreigners actively challenged Spanish claims to the West Indies and began taking control of some of the islands. One of the most important of these lost to the English was Jamaica.

Although the English had attacked and plundered the island for almost two months in 1597, they did not attempt to maintain possession.⁹⁵ In 1655 Jamaica was reinvaded in order that permanent control could be effected.⁹⁶ The Spaniards put up a brave defense but were quickly defeated. Despite the loss of control of the harbors and coastal cities, some of the Spaniards fled inland and began a guerrilla war against the invaders.

⁹⁴Haring, Spanish Empire, pp. 293-296, 304.

⁹⁵W.J. Gardner, A History of Jamaica, from its Discovery by Christopher Columbus to the Year 1872 (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909), p. 12.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 12; Waldemar Westergaard, "Account of the Negro Rebellion on St. Croix, Danish West Indies, 1759," JNH, 11 (January 1926): 53, declares that the Spanish governor of Jamaica was killed by cimarrones in 1655.

In these attacks against the English, some of the cimarrones of the island aided the Spaniards. Fearful that this alliance might prove formidable, the English distributed leaflets throughout the countryside offering safe conduct off the island for the Spaniards and freedom to the Blacks.⁹⁷ The Spanish crown countered this attempt to split the defenders by promising the cimarrones a life "full of peace, confort and rest" once the invaders were expelled from the island.⁹⁸

Weighing both offers, some of the cimarrones sided with the more successful invaders. Fearful of the cimarron alliance with the English, the Spaniards infiltrated a mulatto among the cimarrones to learn their plans. The mulatto was discovered to be a spy and to save his life led a combined English-cimarron attack on the last hidden position of the Spaniards. With little hope of relief from the Spanish crown, with English control of the coasts, and with turncoat cimarron control of the interior, the survivors surrendered.⁹⁹

The Spaniards were ousted from Jamaica, but the English did not gain a complete peace. Cimarrones would

⁹⁷ Francisco Morales Padrón, Jamaica Española (Sevilla; Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1952), p. 383.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 275.

⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 375-377.

trouble the new European owners of the island for the next 140 years.¹⁰⁰ The problem became so critical in 1720 that Mosquito Indians were imported in a vain effort to eradicate the cimarrones. When even this did not succeed, the English granted the cimarrones a treaty similar to the capitulaciones employed by the Spaniards. In return for peace the cimarrones were given title to their lands and guarantees of freedom.¹⁰¹ But peace was an ephemeral commodity which new cimarrones would ignore. In 1795 the English turned to the Spaniards for aid against cimarrones. The Captain General of Cuba sent rancheadores and packs of hunting dogs, but an English request for more aid the following year was turned down.¹⁰²

The cimarron problem during the eighteen century was somewhat different from that of the preceding two centuries. Previously, revolts had been numerous and for

¹⁰⁰Gardner, History of Jamaica, pp. 37, 39; Lionel Wafer, A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America...with Wafer's Secret Report (1698) and Davis Expedition to the Gold Mines(1704) edited L.E. Elliot Joyce (Oxford: The Hakluyt Society, 1934), pp.xv,xxv, reports that whites enslaved and brought to Jamaica after the battle of Sedgemoor in Monmouth's Rebellion of 1685 often fled their masters and joined the black cimarrones.

¹⁰¹Westergaard, "Negro Rebellion" p. 53. This was granted by the English in 1738.

¹⁰²Jose L. Franco, Documentos para la Historia de Venezuela Existentes en el Archivo Nacional de Cuba (La Habana: Talleres del Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1960), p. xii.

the most part, were located within close proximity to colonial towns or roads. In this manner the Blacks could easily acquire necessities, not available in the bush area, by raiding the towns or travelers on the roads. During the last century of colonial rule, large scale cimarron revolts and the formation of palenques seem to have occurred with less frequency. This is suggested by the lack of evidence that revolts occurred. By this period, the great numbers of free Blacks living in the urban and rural areas facilitated amalgamation of cimarrones into the population with relatively little danger of detection by the authorities. The ease with which this was done was noted as early as the late sixteenth century by the English private Francis Drake. In his voyage to the Indies (1585-1586) Drake successfully infiltrated six spies in the area around Cartagena.¹⁰³

Another reason for the decrease in Black unrest was that avenues for political and economic advancement were open to Blacks as never before. Political advancement was made possible as Blacks became part of the military establishment in the militia or regular army units.

¹⁰³ Irene A. Wright, Further English Voyages to Spanish America, 1583-1594, Documents from the Archives of the Indies at Seville Illustrating English Voyages to the Caribbean, The Spanish Main, Florida and Virginia (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1951), pp. 226.227.

Persons of African ancestry had played an irregular but at times illustrious role in the defense of the colonies during the sixteenth century. By the seventeenth century they were allowed to form units to aid in the defense of the Spanish empire, receive royal protection, and came under the fuero militar.¹⁰⁴ The units were usually formed in coastal areas or where there was a significant black population. In Mexico, Puerto Rico and the Isthmus these units played a significant role in the colonial defense mechanism.¹⁰⁵

In the economic sector, attempts to exclude the Blacks from various craft guilds had little success. Some Blacks became master craftsmen and even shopowners.¹⁰⁶ The advancement in their economic level caused some to seek high educational advantages for their children.

¹⁰⁴Recopilación, libro 7, titulo 5, ley 10 and ley 11, codified the rights of black military men; Lyle N. Mc Alister, The "Fuero Militar" in New Spain, 1764-1800 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1957). Chapter 4 presents an account of the privileges accorded to the Blacks under the fuero militar.

¹⁰⁵Mc Alister, Fuero Militar, pp. 2-3. Chapter four is devoted to the privileges of the black military men.

¹⁰⁶Samayoa Guevara, Gremios de Artesanos, pp. 139-163, 280.

Despite efforts to prohibit their entrance into establishments of higher learning, some Blacks were to receive the education which their funds would allow.¹⁰⁷

Avenues to social advancement were opened with the promulgation by the crown of the gracias al sacar law.¹⁰⁸ This law granted those persons of African ancestry who could fulfill certain prerequisites and pay certain tariffs to change their caste classification. Once the caste was legally changed, obstacles to social, economic and political advancement were removed, permitting the person of Black African ancestry to have all the privileges accorded to the white European class. In this manner persons of Black ancestry with potential leadership qualities were allowed to fulfill their expectations for advancement within the framework of colonial society. This lessened the potential for alienation, which might cause these persons to become the focus of unrest within this sector of the colonial society, made them defenders of their position and, at the same time, the Spanish colonial empire.

¹⁰⁷ John Lanning Tate, "The Case of Jose Ponseano de Ayarza: A Document on the Negro in Higher Education," Hispanic American Historical Review (Hereafter cited as HAHR), 24(August 1944): 432-451. A related study is found in James F. King, "The Case of Jose Ponciano de Ayarza: A Document on Gracias Al Sacar," HAHR, 31(November 1951): 641-647; Samayoa Guevara, Gremios de Artesanos, 135.

¹⁰⁸Tate, Jose Ponseano, pp. 432-451; King, Jose Ponciano, pp. 641-647.

Difficulties with the black population were not exclusive to those areas of the Antilles controlled by the Spaniards. During the sixteenth and seventeenth century Indians and members of the castes living in the more inaccessible western regions of Hispaniola had clandestinely supplied meat and carried on a contraband trade with pirates who infested the Caribbean. The French slowly gained ascendancy over the pirates and the western part of the island. They too found themselves faced with the problem of cimarron attacks. As early as 1705 efforts were made to prohibit slave gatherings in a vain effort to prevent organization or revolts or mass flight.¹⁰⁹ The effort met with little success as the Blacks, led by Michel, set up palenques in the mountains of Bahoruco in 1719 and under Polydor at Trou in 1734.¹¹⁰ But while these and other cimarron activities in the French controlled area of Hispaniola were troublesome, none caused greater fear than that led by Francois Macandal around Lenormand de Mezí. Using voodoo as a means of controlling his followers, Macandal was able to organize the household slaves and field hands into a widespread conspiracy by which white families and livestock were killed by poisoning food and water supplies. But his

¹⁰⁹ Franco, Presencia Negra (1968), p. 76

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

total control over his followers and the fear he had instilled in the French caused him to become overconfident. Macandal openly attended a Black celebration and was arrested. He was tried, condemned, and publicly burned at the stake. His hold was so strong on the black population that it was believed that one day he would return to destroy the whites.¹¹¹ Although this belief was never realized, by the end of the century new black leaders would lead a successful war to the death against the whites in Western Hispaniola.¹¹²

Cuba continued having minor cimarron problems until 1731, when Blacks and mulattoes of the copper mines near the city of Santiago declared themselves free. The rebellious miners then formed alliances with the cimarrones scattered throughout the bush area surrounding the mines. One cimarron leader promised to back the revolt with three hundred fifty cimarrones.¹¹³ When efforts to quell the revolt militarily failed, don Pedro Morel de Santa Cruz, the canon of the cathedral of Santiago de Cuba, personally went to the mines to meet with the rebellious miners.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 77-79; Alfred Metraux, "Orígenes e historia de las cultos vodú," Casa de las Américas, 6 (May-August 1966):55-56; A fictionalized account of the Macandal activities is presented in Alejo Carpentier, The Kingdom of This World, trans. Harriet de Onis (New York: Collier Books, 1970).

¹¹²See Thomas O. Ott, The Haitian Revolution, 1789-1804 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1973) for this period of Haitian history.

¹¹³Franco, Presencia Negra (1968), p. 98.

After protracted negotiations, Morel de Santa Cruz was able to arrange a peace settlement. The Spaniards promised the Blacks an increase in wages and improved living conditions if they returned to nominal Spanish control.¹¹⁴ Although the terms were accepted, the peace proved to be shortlived. Within a short time the Spaniards began going back on the promises made. When the Blacks received no satisfaction to their growing complaints, they again rebelled, fled into the bush area and set up palenques from which they effectively controlled the roads leading to the mining center of Santiago del Prado del Cobre, and severely hampering exploitation of the mines. Efforts to defeat the rebellion militarily only served to scatter the cimarrones, but communications were again opened between Santiago del Prado del Cobre and other island cities, but many cimarrones continued at large.¹¹⁵ The revolt was settled half a century later, but only after many cimarron attacks, and with great expenditures from the royal treasury. Little information is available regarding the resolution of the problem, but finally on April 7, 1800 a negotiated peace settlement was made and approved by royal decree. Under the terms, the Blacks agreed to live in peace and in return were guaranteed their freedom.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 98-99.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 99.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 99-100.

Besides the problems with the cimarrones around Santiago del Prado del Cobre, the rest of the island was also troubled by cimarrones. A military force located a palenque in the Cape Cruz peninsula near Bayamo in 1749. After the Blacks were defeated, it was discovered that of the eleven adults captured, the average time they had been fugitives was 9.6 years. One of these did not belong to the captured palenque but had been apprehended while on a visit from his own cimarron settlement.¹¹⁷ Two years later, forty three more cimarrones were captured by an expedition from Bayamo, but "many more" escaped into the bush.¹¹⁸

Numerous petitions for commissions as military leader of expeditionary forces or suggestions for the eradication of the cimarrones in Cuba were put forward in the eighteenth century. Don Juan de Zequeira y Palma, regidor honorario of the cabildo of Havana, requested in 1791 authorization from the King to capture and return fugitives to their owners.¹¹⁹ The Governor of Havana in

¹¹⁷Herbert S. Klein, Slavery in the Americas, A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 72

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹"Digest of Documents in the Archives of the Indies, Seville, Spain, Bearing on the Negroes in Cuba and especially those employed in the Minas de Cobre," JNH 14 (January 1929): 65.

1793 sought permission to name capitanes de partido to capture fugitives and other criminals.¹²⁰ While it is not known if de Zequeira y Palma or the governor were favored in their requests, cimarron problems continued unabated.

There is an indication that in the 1790s some success against the cimarrones was obtained in the western part of the island. In 1797 cimarron control was removed from the jurisdiction of governmental officials and taken over by the consulado or local commercial guild on a trial basis. Within a year, 569 cimarrones were reported captured in the western part of the island.¹²¹ Despite the success of the consulado effort, cimarron problems did not end.

In 1798 two slaves were hanged in the city of Trinidad, Cuba for having plotted the extermination of all the whites in the area.¹²² Two years previously, a revolt occurred on the Boca-Nigua ingenio three leagues from Havana.¹²³ In both cases, prompt action, capture, and execution of the culprits prevented an extension of the problem, but the cimarron problem continued.

Palenques had been set up in the mountains of

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Klein, Slavery in the Americas, p. 157.

¹²²Digest of Documents, pp. 65-66.

¹²³Ibid., p.66.

Jaruco near Havana before 1788 and continued their existence into the next century.¹²⁴ Concurrently in Sibarimar "on the northeast coast of Havana province," other palenques were known to exist. Although an expedition went into this area, only four blacks were captured while many others escaped.¹²⁵

Little information concerning cimarron activities is available for Puerto Rico during the last half of the eighteenth century. On the other hand there are indications that the cimarrones were causing difficulties. The Directorio General, or handbook for war time, written by don Miguel de Mueasas, ordered that Blacks or mulattoes who aided or abetted cimarrones were to be placed in irons for one year and work as day-laborers for the length of time the aided cimarron was free. If the person who aided the cimarron was from a city other than San Juan, they were to be fined twenty five pesos and the work days absent by the cimarron. De Mueasas also ordered that care should be taken that the fugitive not be killed.¹²⁶

¹²⁴Franco, Presencia Negra(1968), pp. 100-101; Alejandro Humboldt, Ensayo Político Sobre la Isla de Cuba Jorge Quintana, ed. (La Habana: Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1960), p. 290n.

¹²⁵Franco, Presencia Negra(1968), p. 101 points out that between "December 20, 1796 until the end of 1815," 14, 982 cimarrones were captured in the jurisdictional area of Havana province.

¹²⁶Díaz Soler, Historia de la Esclavitud, p. 207.

About thirty years later, in 1783 Governor Daban y Noguera is reported having reaffirmed the de Mueas orders, except that now punishment was left to the descretion of the authorities involved.¹²⁷ As can be seen, the authorities were more interested in protecting the owners property than in cimarron eradication. A dead slave profited no one.

Although there is no evidence that capitulaciones were granted to cimarrones in Florida, the peninsula did have a town inhabited by fugitives slaves. These were not cimarrones in the true sense, but rather slaves who fled from the English colonies in hopes of finding sanctuary among the Spaniards. The first of these fugitives appear to have arrived in San Agustin in 1688.¹²⁸ Although these early arrivals seem to have been returned to the English, later arrivals were not. This was established by a royal decree of October 29, 1733, which granted protection to fugitive Blacks from English colonies. The decree ordered that a settlement be formed for them in a community to be called Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mosé about a half league from San Agustín. By 1739 Governor Miguel

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Irene A. Wright, ed., "Dispatches of Spanish Officials Bearing on the Free Negro Settlement of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mosé, Florida," JNH, 9 (April 1924): 145.

Montiana informed the King that the Black community had become an important defensive buffer between the English Spanish colonies. According to the governor, the Blacks were invaluable as a disruptive influence on the English colonies because their example caused other "English slaves to revolt or flee their masters."¹²⁹

Not only were the Blacks a disruptive factor for the peace and tranquility of the English colonies, but they served as a vital part of the defenses of San Agustín. Jealous of their freedom, the black community members were the sworn enemies of any invasion force which might attack the Spanish colony and attempt reenslaving them. In a letter to the King in 1738, spokesmen for the Blacks promised that they would always be "the cruelest enemies of the English and dedicate their lives to the last drop of blood to defend the crown of Spain and the Faith."¹³⁰

When hostilities broke out between Spain and England, in 1739, the inhabitants of the community, on orders from the governor, were moved into San Agustín to strengthen the defense force of the city removing them from their rather exposed location. Although the move was mutually beneficial to the Spaniards and the Blacks, once hostilities had ceased, the people of Mose refused to return to their town.

¹²⁹Ibid., pp. 176-177.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 175.

They based their refusal on the belief that the English could easily wipe them out in the original location. The governor discounted this claim and declared that the Blacks wished to live in the capital "con toda libertad".¹³¹ He then ordered two of the most vocal opponents against the return to Mosé punished and cowed the rest by the threat of more severe measures. Eventually the Blacks were escorted back to Mosé under the care of four Spanish cavalrymen and a cabo or non-commissioned officer.¹³² These soldiers, ostensibly assigned to the village as reinforcements against English attack, in reality served to prevent the Blacks from abandoning the community and returning to San Agustin.

The Mosé community was the first free black settlement in the area which later became the United States, but the settlement did not endure into the period of the American take over. When Florida was captured by the English in 1763 the Blacks were moved to Cuba.¹³³ At this time, no information has appeared concerning the relocation of the free Blacks.

There were innumerable black cimarron revolts in the Antilles between 1503 and 1800. The authorities were able to suppress many of these militarily, but the problem

¹³¹Ibid., p. 182.

¹³²Ibid., p. 187.

¹³³Ibid., p. 145; Browning, Negro Companions, p. 18.

was so widespread and the terrain so difficult to police that some Blacks spent most of their lives as fugitives in the bush areas. These Blacks posed a threat to the safety and tranquility of their area. At times they took part in criminal activities which threatened Spanish control of these areas. Crown officials then attempted their elimination by means of restrictive legislation, bounty hunters, and armed confrontation. If none of these methods proved successful, mutually beneficial terms or capitulaciones were agreed upon between the cimarrones and the crown. This pattern of cimarron pacification was established with Enriquillo's Indian cimarron war between 1519 and 1533. Capitulaciones were offered by the Spaniards but rejected by black cimarrones in Hispaniola in 1546 and Jamaica in 1655. The Marques de Varinas suggested they be implemented in Hispaniola in 1677, although it is not known if his suggestion was followed. The cimarrones at Santiago del Cobre, Cuba were pacified by capitulaciones in 1731, but when the Spaniards did not fulfill the terms, the revolt was renewed. The revolt continued until 1800 when the crown issued capitulaciones for the cimarrones.

Although capitulaciones were not always successful in pacifying rebellious elements of society, their success more than justified their implementation. By

using capitulaciones, the Spaniards were able to remove a danger to the peace and prosperity of the colonies. This dangerous element, once pacified by this method, became peaceful citizens and staunch defenders of the realm.

CHAPTER IV

Cimarron Revolts And Pacification In New Spain: Mexico And Central America

The dubious honor of being the first criminals executed by the Spaniards in Mexico is held by two Blacks. During the early Conquest period, Cortes ordered that none of his men were to disturb the property of the Indians whom he was trying to gain as allies. Two of his black slaves disobey the order and stole two chickens and some cloth from the Indians. The Blacks were summarily executed for their crime.¹ These were not cimarrones, but soon, this problem appeared to plague the Spaniards.

Although the crown issued a cédula on September 6, 1521 prohibiting Blacks on explorations and conquest because "they fled and were prejudicial to the Indians," as was so often the case, the law was ignored.² In 1523, when the Mixtec and Zapotec Indians revolted, many Blacks used the unsettled conditions to escape. Although they tried

¹CDI, 20:215.

²Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:288-289; Fugitive black slaves were often sold with the buyer taking the risk of apprehending them himself. Examples can be found in Agustín Millares Carlo and J.I. Mantecón, Indice y Extractos de los Protocolos del Archivo de Notarias de Mexico, D.F. 3 vols. (Mexico: El Colegio de Mexico, 1945), 3; doc. 1472, sale of September 9, 1528 and 2:doc. 2019, of November 2, 1536. In the former the seller promised to return the money if the slave was not captured.

to live among the Zapotecs, the Blacks were too acculturated to Spanish life to stay among the Indians. An aspect of their acculturation is shown by their having erected crosses in the areas to which they fled in thanksgiving to God for having granted them their freedom. But their freedom was short lived because, "tired of living away from subjection, little by little they gave themselves up and returned to their masters."³ Unfortunately, there is no record of how these self-reformed cimarrones were received by the Spaniards.

In 1536, Blacks attempted to incite the Indians to revolt or riot against the Spanish imposition of the use of coinage. The Spaniards had gladly welcomed the new coins hoping that the barter system used in Mexico would end. The Indians, on the other hand, tried to ignore this foreign intrusion of their culture.⁴

Organizing themselves to circulate among the Indians, the Blacks planned to use the Indian dislike for the coins to incite riots or rebellion. In this manner, the confusion created by the Indian problem would give the Blacks the opportunity to gain their own freedom. While the plan

³Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 7:59

⁴Haring, Spanish Empire, p. 289; Gibson, Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, pp. 3349, 352-358.

might have worked, it failed as the Indians reacted passively rather than actively to the imposition of the coinage.⁵ Among themselves, the Indians continued using barter and the cacao bean as the medium of exchange and only used the new Spanish coin when forced to do so.⁶

The apathetic reaction of the Indians to revolt did not deter the Mexican Blacks. On September 24, 1537, don Antonio de Mendoza, the viceroy, was notified by a black informant that the Blacks had elected a king and were plotting to kill all the Spaniards and take over the area with the help of the Indians. Sceptical of the information, the viceroy sent spies among the conspirators to corroborate or refute the charge. When his spies returned, the viceroy learned that the information was only partially right. There were to be simultaneous

⁵Gibson, Aztecs under Spanish Rule, pp. 137-158, reports that the Indians disliked the copper coins so, that they were known to throw them into the lake waters surrounding the city. On the other hand, the Indians are reported having begun manufacture of counterfeit reales by 1537.

⁶Haring, Spanish Empire, p. 289, reports that the first copper coins of two and four maravedi denominations first struck in 1542 found no acceptance among the Indians who continued using cacao beans; William Dampier, A New Voyage Round the World, introd. Sir Albert Gray, and a new introd. Percy G. Adams (New York: Dover Publication, 1968), p. 52, declares that he found the cacao bean used as money in 1682 around the Bay of Campeche; Gibson, Aztecs under Spanish Rule, p. 158, points out that the value ratio of the cacao bean to a Spanish real varied from 200 to 1 during the sixteenth century to as low as 50 to 1 in the seventeenth century. At the close of the colonial period the ratio was 80 to 1.

revolts in Mexico City and in the mines of Amatepec, led by the elected king. Moving quickly, the viceroy had the black king and many of the leaders of the Mexico City conspiracy captured, executed and quartered. A military force under Francisco Vázquez de Coronado was sent to the mines of Amatepec, where twenty four of the black conspirators were captured and quartered. The viceroy also ordered some Indian rancheadores to apprehend fugitive Blacks.⁷ The rancheadores quickly captured and killed four fugitive black men and a fugitive black woman. Wishing to prove their loyalty, the Indians salted the corpse to prevent decomposition and sent the bodies to the viceroy.⁸

By quickly using military force and Indian slave hunters against the Blacks, the viceroy was able to prevent a large scale revolt. But as Mendoza pointed

⁷These fugitive hunters or trackers were also called capitanes, capitanes de monte, capitanes de partido or rancheadores.

⁸CDI, 2:196-200; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:279-282, presents Mendoza's report to the crown; Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, pp. 122-124; Luis González Obregón, Rebelliones Indígenas y Precursores de la Independencia Mexicana en los siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII (Mexico: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1952). PP. 331-336, Diego Muñoz Camargo, Historia de Tlaxcala (México: Publicaciones del Ateneo Nacional de Ciencias y Artes de México, 1947), 2nd ed., p. 279; Artemio de Valle Arizpe, Cuadros de Mexico (México: Editorial Jus, 1943), pp. 246-247; CDII, 6:494, presents Mendoza's state of the viceroyalty message to his successor Luis de Velasco. Mendoza declared that the Blacks had tried to rebel in the city and mines twice.

out to the King in his report, the Spaniards were in a numerically weak position in the colony. The Blacks, the report continued, although outnumbered by the Indians, greatly outnumbered the Spaniards and were pathological liars and trouble makers who would take any opportunity to cause sedition in the viceroyalty.⁹

Paradoxically, although Mendoza mistrusted Blacks in general, he, like other Spanish slave owners, often trusted his own slaves, but not those of others. The Black who initially reported the revolt was not believed by Mendoza until verification had been obtained by his own household slaves whom he sent out to spy on the conspirators. This contradictory attitude towards Blacks constituted a weakness in the colonial defense. Spanish slave owners freely discussed problems of the empire before their slaves. In this manner, difficulties within the empire became general knowledge among the black population. Mendoza himself pointed out to the King that Blacks and Indians were aware of the problems of the empire because reports coming from Spain and other areas were openly discussed in detail. Another problem was that communication between the overseas kingdoms and the mother country was difficult to maintain. Mendoza declared that the black revolt might have been triggered by the credence given to statements made by a friar who had been saying

⁹CDI, 2:197.

that the Mexican colony was cut off from Spain and that no ships would come from the peninsula for at least ten years. To remedy this problem and to act as a deterrent to future rebellions, Mendoza suggested that ships make regular stops at viceregal ports to make the ties with the empire strong. He also asked that his previous request for increases in slave shipments be disregarded and that weapons shipments be made to Mexico, since its supply had been seriously depleted because of having sent most of them to aid in the conquest of Peru. The viceroy also reported that he had mustered all the weaponry and men available for the defense of the kingdom and found them woefully deficient. For this reason, he had shored up city defenses, issued new stringent slave restrictions and prepared Mexico City against attack.¹⁰ What the viceroy did not seem to understand was that, although the city was now prepared to withstand an attack from without, the enemy was within.

Information dealing with black revolts in Guatemala is scanty. The earliest known problem occurred in late 1546 or early 1547.¹¹ In January of the latter

¹⁰CDI, 2:198-200.

¹¹Francisco de Paula García Pelaez, Memorias parp la Historia del Antiguo Reino de Guatemala 3 vols. in 1 (Guatemala, 1943), 1:78.

year the numbers of black fugitives was so large that the Cabildo offered rewards of between three and six pesos to any person who might apprehend them. It is not known whether this measure met with any success.

Licenciado Cerrato, newly appointed governor of Honduras, found on his arrival, in 1547, a black slave revolt in San Pedro del Puerto de Caballos. The Audiencia sent out an armed expedition which defeated the cimarrones and hanged their leader.¹² Unfortunately, no other information is available concerning this revolt.

The discovery of silver in the lands of the Zacatecas Indians in 1546 resulted in a tremendous influx of Spaniards and black miners into this Mexican area.¹³ While no major revolts broke out, minor problems with fugitives did arise. The most serious occurred in the mines of Guanajuato ten years later. The Indians of the area resisted the Spanish intrusion by beginning a guerrilla war which continued for fifty years. Their

¹²Hubert Howe Bancroft, The History of Central America 3 vols. (San Francisco, 1875-1890), 2:160; Garcia Pelaez, Memorias para la Historia, 1:134, 214, reported they were also around "el volcán Cosigüina."

¹³Phillip Wayne Powell, Soliders, Indians and Silver, The Northward Advance of New Spain, 1550-1600 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 10; Haring, Spanish Empire, p. 244, declares it to be 1548; Browning, Negro Companions, p. 19 reports revolts occurred in Mexico in 1542 and 1546, but no details are given.

numbers were increased by many Blacks who fled from the Spaniards to join them in their raids. The boldness of these attacks caused the viceroy, don Luis de Velasco (1550-1565), to petition the Crown, in 1553, for alcaldes letrados (magistrates learned in law) and oidores to help implement justice against criminals. Velasco also asked that they have the same powers as the officials of the Santa Hermandad in Andalucia.¹⁴ This was a court and a constabulary force similar to that established by Ferdinand and Isabela in Spain and in the 1530s in Cuba.

In 1543, the Crown had given alcaldes ordinarios of the Indies the powers of the alcaldes of the Santa Hermandad to bring criminals to justice. This decree did not establish the Hermandad throughout the Indies, it merely allowed the extension of the Hermandad punishments to Spaniards and Blacks who committed crimes in rural areas.¹⁵ But the alcaldes ordinarios did not provide prompt enough action against these criminals. Velasco pointed out in his request of 1553, that crimes were forgotten or the prisoner died in jail before coming to trial.

¹⁴Cartas de Indias (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1877), p. 265-266.

¹⁵Barbara Gilbreath Montgomery, The Evolution of Rural Justice in New Spain, Culminating in the Acordada, and Attempts by the Spanish Crown to Institute the Tribunal in Peru (Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago), p. 8.

For that reason he wanted *alcaldes letrados*.¹⁶

Apparently, *alcaldes ordinarios* were remiss in carrying out the duties ordered by the decree of 1543, because in 1554 Velasco wrote the King to inform him that "all newly appointed *alcaldes ordinarios* had been notified of their additional duties as acting judges of the *Hermandad*." He also reported the establishment of armed bands of horsemen who were to pursue criminals. The viceroy declared that since *Hermandad* punishments were instituted, there had been a decrease in felonies.¹⁷

Velasco's optimism was short lived. By 1560 there were bands of blacks numbering between fifteen and twenty who caused such havoc around Guanajuato, Pénjamo, and San Miguel that expeditions of Spanish fighting men and Indian warriors from outside the area were sent by the viceroy to stop the attacks by any means possible.¹⁸ Similar orders were given to forces sent out simultaneously against *cimarrones* operating around Pachuca, Atotonilco, and from a palenque located in a cave near the town of Tornacustla and

¹⁶Cartas de Indias, p. 266.

¹⁷Montgomery, Evolution of Rural Justice, p. 9. Among the punishments were execution of arrows, mutilation and lashing.

¹⁸Powell, Soldiers, Indians and Silver, pp. 62, 168; Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 124; Martín, Los Vagabundos, p. 121.

against others attacking sugar plantations, haciendas and travelers around Orizaba.¹⁹ The following year the viceroy again issued orders for the suppression of the cimarrones around the mines of Zacatecas, the San Martin mines and in the province of Panuco.²⁰ A special commission was issued in June 1561 to Diego Holguin to capture black cimarrones, but despite these efforts nothing proved successful.

By 1564 Velasco realized that more action was necessary. He wrote to remind the King that his requests for alcaldes del crimen had not been answered.²¹ The viceroy did not seem to understand that fear of a severe system of justice was not enough to deter the cimarrones.

The town of Leon was harrassed in 1576 from a palenque located in a rugged area so controlled by the cimarrones that it was locally known as the Cañada de los Negros.²² A Spanish attack launched on the area only served to split the cimarrones into small groups which fled to the areas around Celaya, Yuriria, Pátzcuaro and parts of Nueva Galicia. In this manner, the cimarrones were not destroyed and instead spread the problems into new areas. Guadalajara

¹⁹Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 124; Martin, Los Vagabundos, pp. 121-122.

²⁰Martin, Los Vagabundos, p. 122.

²¹Cartas de Indias, p. 277

²²Martin, Los Vagabundos, p. 123; Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 124.

became so menaced by raids of Indians and vagabundos (renegade Spaniards and castizos) that in 1579 the Dean and Cabildo of the cathedral wrote directly to the King to complain.²³ But complaints did not remove the problem as cimarrones threatened to cut off Veracruz and the port of Guatulco from the interior and isolate Oaxaca in 1579. They also boldly attacked the large haciendas of Talcotalpa, Chichimecas and Almeria despite the large numbers of men working at these places and available to defend them. In retaliation, in November of that year, the viceroy, Martín Enríquez, issued a decree ordering that 11 black fugitives captured were to be summarily castrated, even though they had committed no other crime other than having fled the service of their master. After castration, they were to be punished as required by law.²⁴ The practice of castration as a means of taming recalcitrant slaves was often used in the Indies, although the crown had prohibited the practice in 1540.²⁵ The prohibition had been ordered for humanitarian reasons and because of the loss in value of a castrated slave.

²³Powell, Soldiers, Indians and Silver, p. 172.

²⁴Martin, Los Vagabundos, p. 123; Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 125

²⁵Recopilación, libro 7, titulo 5, ley 23 and Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 13:311-312.

Despite this prohibition, local governments continued castrating cimarrones in a vain effort to pacify them.²⁶ These local governments could not seem to understand that harsh measures only served to heighten problems between the races and cause Blacks to become fugitives.

As if problems caused by the Blacks were not enough, a new fear arose. This was the possibility of alliance between cimarrones and foreigners. The problem came to light when William Collins, a captured English pirate awaiting trial before the Inquisition in Mexico City, in 1573, boasted to a Spanish cellmate that Spanish control of Mexico could at any moment be wrested away if an Anglo-French alliance were effected. His cellmate countered that the Spaniards, using Blacks and Indians as auxiliaries, could easily repel any such attack. Collins ridiculed this statement, declaring that before his incarceration, he had held meetings with Blacks and Indians and he knew how much they hated the Spaniards. He went on to say that the Indians, to rid themselves of their

²⁶Francisco Del Paso y Troncoso, Epistolario de Nueva España, 1505-1818 16 vols. (Mexico: Antigua Librería Robredo José Porrúa e Hijos, 1939-1942) 15:65. In an undated letter, the Archbishop and bishops of Mexico complained to the King that fugitive Blacks were castrated; Martin, Los Vagabundos, p. 123, declares the letter to be of 1565; William F. Sater, The Black Experience in Chile, ed. Brent Toplin, Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974), p. 30, reports that governor Melchor Calderon, in Chile, ordered that third time female black cimarrones have their breasts removed.

tribute payments and the Blacks their enslavement, would gladly help any invasion which would oust their Spanish overlords.²⁷

Although the conversation between the two was reported to the officials of the Inquisition, its significance was probably not at first understood. Collins' words took on more meaning when it was learned that Francis Drake was allied with black cimarrones in the Isthmus and was attacking the Spaniards. When these facts were ascertained, the King and viceregal authorities quickly reacted by reiterating old slave legislation and issuing new decrees that, it was hoped, would sufficiently hold down the Blacks and prevent their aiding invasions from without and prevent revolts within the empire.

The laws covered most aspects of the cimarron problem, with an emphasis on restriction of Black life. All Blacks and mulattoes, whether free or slave, were ordered to live with their employers. No one of black ancestry could carry weapons. Any Black absenting himself from his master's or employer's service for four days was to be given fifty lashes and left hanging on the pillory until sunset. If he was absent for eight days and had traveled a league from

²⁷AGN, Corsarios Franceses e Ingleses en la Inquisición de la Nueva España, Siglo XVI (Mexico: Imprenta Universitaria, 1945), pp. 339-340.

his master's residence, he would receive one hundred lashes and have a twelve pound weight placed around his ankle for twelve days. The first time any Black absented himself for at least four months, he would be given two hundred lashes. The second time it occurred, he would be transported from the viceroyalty. Should the Black have been with the cimarrones he would be given three hundred lashes. The penalty for having been with the cimarrones for six months was death by hanging. Anyone not reporting unauthorized absences of Blacks was to receive a heavy fine.²⁸ Cimarrones turning themselves in during a period of grace set by the authorities could be pardoned.²⁹ A slave or Black who had been with the cimarrones for four months became the property of any white, free mulatto or Black who caught him.³⁰ If he so chose, the captor could turn the cimarron over to the authorities and receive fifty pesos in silver. Other rewards given were commensurate to the amount of time the captive had been a fugitive. Cimarrones who surrendered to the authorities and also brought in other captive cimarrones would receive their freedom and twenty pesos for each captive if the captors had not been fugitives for more than four months.

²⁸Recopilación, libro 7, titulo 5, ley 21.

²⁹Ibid., libro 7, titulo 5, ley 24.

³⁰Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, pp. 63-65, 93.

Persons giving information leading to the capture of a cimarron would receive one-third of the usual reward. The death penalty was ordered for any Black or mulatto who instigated another Black to become a fugitive so that later the fugitive could be betrayed and turned in for the reward. Any mulatto or Black, whether free or slave, who aided the cimarrones, would receive the punishment of a cimarron and lose half of his property. Any Spaniard committing the same crime was to be exiled from the Indies. No slave was to leave the service of his master under the pretense of going to capture cimarrones, unless special permission was obtained from both the master and the authorities. Slaves could be rewarded for any cimarron captured during their work. Blacks who joined the cimarrones for four months and then betrayed, made prisoners of their companions and tried to turn them in to the authorities for the reward were denied any reward and were to be punished for having left the service of his master.³¹ No one could aid deserters from the forces sent against the cimarrones. All unemployed Spaniards, mulattoes, mestizos, Blacks and zambos (persons of Indian and Black parentage) had to serve in the cimarron campaigns. Any Spaniard or horro (free Black) who hid a cimarron or deserter from these campaigns would be fined fifty pesos

³¹Recopilación, libro 7, título 5, ley 22.

the first time, one hundred the second, and exiled from the Indies the third time.³²

The restrictive legislation worked to a degree. Cimarrones hoping to obtain their freedom turned in their compatriots. Black slaves wanting to earn their purchase price betrayed the cimarrones. The division caused by this system of rewards put those Blacks who were rebelliously inclined and the cimarrones on the defensive. Fearing betrayal, they became suspicious of unknown Blacks. But once they learned to ferret out those who would betray them, cimarron problems began again.

Martín Enríquez, the viceroy when Collins had made his statements concerning the weakness of the viceregal defenses, could not shake his fear of the cimarrones. When relieved of his post in 1580, he warned his successor against the growing population of mixed bloods, free Blacks and quantities of slaves being brought into the kingdom.³³ His successor, the Conde de Coruna, soon found himself troubled by the cimarrones. In 1582 and 1583 he issued orders for the capture and punishment of Blacks, but little success was achieved.³⁴ In 1591 large numbers of

³²Ibid., libro 7, título 5, ley 25; Valle Arizpe, Cuadros de México, pp. 257-259.

³³Instrucciones que los Vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus Sucesores (México: Imprenta Imperial, 1867), p. 248.

³⁴Martin, Los Vagabundos, p. 124.

Blacks revolted on the estancia of Juan de Valdés near Cuitzeo. The Justicia of Cuitzeo and inhabitants of the area were ordered by the viceroy to apprehend the Blacks.³⁵ The success, if any, is not known.

Spain was also having problems with rebels similar to those of the Indies. In 1580 Seville was shaken by the discovery of a revolt planned by united Moriscos, many of whom were Black, in Ecija, Cordoba and other cities. The conspirators planned to stage a general uprising in which they would take over Seville and the surrounding areas. The rebels planned to take control of Andalucia with the aid of Turks and North Africans. The similarity between this plot and black conspiracies of the Indies was not lost on the Crown. The fears were heightened during the English attack on Cadiz in 1596. Fearing an English-Morisco take over, the officials of Seville ordered armed men to the Morisco district and imposed a curfew on its inhabitants.³⁶ Seville's large slave population and the danger of revolt were likened to those in the Indies by Alfonso Messia in a memorial to don Luis de Velasco sometime between 1596 and 1607 when he was viceroy of Peru.

³⁵Luis Chávez Orozco, Indice del Ramo de Indios del Archivo General de la Nación 2 vols. (México: Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1951),, 1:45.

³⁶Pike, Aristocrats and Traders, p. 166.

Messia pointed out that the problem of black revolt had already caused Lima and Seville many problems. The increase in black population in Peru would open Callao to the threat of an English-Black take over. The writer showed how problems of the mother country affected or were used to affect the colonies. Here Messia plainly wished Velasco to halt the implementation of royal decrees limiting the use of Indian labor. The writer wanted to use Indian labor rather than invest in Black slaves.³⁷

Sagacious administrator that he was, Velasco saw through the artifice of Messia, but he needed no warning about the danger from black revolt. Velasco served two terms as viceroy of New Spain (1590-1595, 1607-1611). While in Mexico in 1590, he ordered punishments for fugitives and cimarrones more drastic than those called for by crown decrees. His frustration at not being able to control cimarrones caused him to place an emphasis on corporal punishment, severe mutilation or death. Where previously the foot was cut off, now the leg and both ears could be lost.³⁸ That his efforts met with no success is shown by his appointment in 1591 of don Carlos Samano to exterminate the cimarrones in the Coatzacoalcos and Papaloapan River areas.³⁹ The impossibility

³⁷CDI, 6:120-121.

³⁸Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 125.

³⁹Ibid., p. 126.

of the task can be understood in light of the vast and difficult geographic areas Samano was order to pacify. Fear of the cimarrones caused many rumors to circulate about their numbers and the location of their palenques. In the early 1600s an "island of Blacks" was rumored to be located northwest of Mazatlán and a second stronghold was said to be located near Puerto Maldonado.⁴⁰ Whether these were actual palenques or figments of imagination of a frightened citizenry is not certain, since no other information concerning them is available. On the other hand, more immediate and actual danger was occurring.

When don Luis de Velasco returned to Mexico in 1607 to begin his second term as viceroy, he found great numbers of cimarrones around Veracruz. During the late sixteenth century the fugitives had been active around Pachuca, Guanajuato, Huaspatepec, Alvarado, Coatzacoalcos, Misantla, Jalapa, Huatulco, Tlaxcoyán, Tlacotalpán, Zongolica, Rinconada, Huatuco, Orizaba, Rio Blanco, Antón Lizardo, Medillín, Cuernavaca,⁴¹ Totula, Tatolinga, Palmilla, Tumba Carretas, and around the Blanco and Papaloapán Rivers.⁴²

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 52

⁴¹Alguirre Beltrán, Población Negra, p. 207.

⁴²Octaviano Corró R., Los Cimarrones en Veracruz y la Fundación de Amapa (Veracruz: Imprenta Comercial, 1951), pp. 10-11, 17. There is a suspicion that most of these attacks were done by one group.

Since much of the activity centered in the Veracruz area the viceroy focused his attention on the rebels operating in this area, to prevent communications and commerce from being cut off between the capital and the coastal region.

Hoping to avoid a military confrontation, the viceroy sent Jesuit missionaries into the area in hopes that they might pacify the cimarrones by peaceful means. The priests were partially successful and were able to convince the Blacks that a negotiated peace might be effected with the crown. They informed the viceroy that the fugitives would become pacified if they were guaranteed their freedom and granted lands for themselves. The offer was considered by Velasco, although he appears to have hoped that they would voluntarily surrender before concessions would have to be granted them. On March 9, 1608 Velasco wrote the King promising that, if they had not surrendered by the arrival of the fleet, their defeat would be attempted by ordering a general call to arms and using troops assigned to the armada.⁴³

The terms the cimarrones demanded reached officials in Veracruz on March 24, 1608. The conditions they demanded for peace were

1. Any Black who had fled from his master before the previous September would be free. Any who fled after that date would be returned to his master,

⁴³Newbery Library, Ayer Collections, "Transcripts of the Archivo de Indias, Seville," number 58-3-16, Velasco to the King, March 9, 1608.

2. They should have a justicia mayor who was a Spanish layman and not a mestizo or creole.
3. No Spaniard would be allowed in their town except for Monday and Thursday on market day.
4. They should have their own magistrates and municipal council.
5. Their leader Yanga, his children and descendants would rule them.
6. They promised to capture all fugitive slaves and return them to their owner for a fee of twelve pesos. If the black captor should decide to keep the fugitive, he would return to the owner another slave or pay the market value of the captured fugitive.
7. Within a year and a half they be granted these concessions or they would return to their previous state [of war].
8. They be allowed to build their town between Rio Blanco and the lands of Rivadeneira.
9. They would pay tribute to his majesty as do all the rest of the free Blacks and mulattoes of the Indies.
10. Franciscan friars be sent to minister to them and the cost of the church ornaments be borne by the King.⁴⁴

Two months later, on June 23, Velasco reported to the King that negotiations were continuing, but that opposition from slave owners was causing problems.

⁴⁴AGN, Inquisición, vol. 283, fol. 186-187, "Copia de los Conciertos que piden los Cimarrones"; Miguel Angel Díaz and Fructuoso Cadeza Balderas, "La Evolución de la America y el Pensamiento del Negro Yanga," (Unpublished manuscript). No page numbers are cited because the authors were reluctant to permit anyone to handle the manuscript. They did allow notes to be taken in answer to specific questions, by reading from the text; Various spellings are given for Yanga's name. AGN, Inquisición, vol. 283, fol. 186-187, Na'ga; Ibid., vol. 284, fol. 715v, Nanga; Andres Pérez de Rivas, Crónica y Historia Religiosa de la Provincia de Jesús en Nueva España 2 vols. (México: Imprenta del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, 1896), 1:285, Yanga; Cabrera, El Monte, p. 118, reports that a Nganga was an Afro-cuban term for zombie; Joyce Leeson, "Traditional Medicine: Still plenty to offer," Africa Report, 15(October 1970): 24, reports a ng'anga in present Zambia is a "traditional practitioner, a witch doctor, or herbalist." Yanga is known to have used rituals.

Slave owners feared that acceding to the demands of the cimarrones might incite other slaves to follow the same course of action and that the free Black settlement might serve as a center for covert cimarron activity. Despite these misgivings, the cost of suppressing the Blacks militarily made granting the demands the more attractive alternative. On the other hand, the viceroy planned for the eventuality of a breakdown in negotiations. He informed the cimarrones that he was sending members of the clergy to see to their spiritual welfare. The priests were told to discover the location of the palenque and the numbers of cimarrones living there and return as soon as possible with the information. It was hoped that if the Blacks did not surrender or negotiations broke down, with this information, the viceroy could send a military expedition against the Blacks. But the plan failed when the priests reported that the Blacks were divided into various groups scattered over a large area. Distrustful of the Spaniards, the Blacks would allow none of the priest to visit the largest of the palenques. On the other hand, one priest, who had spent thirty days among the fugitives, met Yanga, the leader of the Blacks.

According to the priest, the black leader was an "hombre de razón."⁴⁵

Although no peace settlement had been agreed upon by December 1608, the Christianization of the fugitives had proceeded to the point that they requested the viceroy to have a priest permanently assigned them. The request was granted, and like the priests sent before him, the friar was ordered to see to their spiritual well being and spy on the cimarrones. The viceroy reported to the King that this was done so that the Spaniards could "understand better the means that are appropriate to surpressing them."⁴⁶

Despite the truce and lack of attacks on Spanish property between March and December 1608 during the negotiation period, the Spaniards still feared a renewal of cimarron violence. The fears were finally realized

⁴⁵Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 127; AGN, Inquisición, vol. 284, tomo 20, no. 33, fol. 715v (March 24, 1609) is a report by Fray Alonso de Benavides to the Inquisition reporting the heresies uttered by the cimarrones during his stay among them. One of these, Francisco Ansoló also known as Francisco de la Matosa, was Yanga's chief military strategist. This cimarron explained to the priest that the marriage customs among the Blacks centered around the abduction of the female partner by her husband to be; AGN, Historia, vol. 31, fol. 49-50, reports Francisco's name as Angola; Francisco Javier Alegre, S.J., Historia de la Provincia de la Compania de Jesús de Nueva España annot, Ernest J. Burrus, S.J. and Feliz Zubillaga, S.H., vols. (Roma: Institutum Historicum S.J., 1960), 2:176, declares the name to be Francisco de la Motosa; Pérez de Rivas, Corónica, 1:285, gives the name as Francisco de la Matiza.

⁴⁶Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 127.

on December 2 when cimarrones attacked a group of carts transporting goods from Veracruz to Mexico City. Bishop Mota y Escobar, who hurried to the scene shortly after the attack, reported to the viceroy that a boy had been ritually murdered, two women and a baby kidnapped and the carts ransacked.⁴⁷

Three weeks after the attack on the carts, Francisco de Loya, a free mulatto employee of the viceroy reported to his employer that at a party held by free Blacks and mulattos on Christmas Eve, the Blacks elected a king and queen and lesser nobles. The purpose of the party was said to be "to organize an uprising." The mulatto reported that when the assembled Blacks shouted "long live the king," one nonconformist who shouted "long live King Philip III," was slashed in the face and roughed up by the crowd. Then the gathering calmed down and celebrated the occasion.⁴⁸

The viceroy reacted to the information by arresting twenty four of the males and seven females who had attended the gathering. Nineteen others who had not participated in the affair were implicated in the conspiracy.

⁴⁷Pérez de Rivas Coronica, 1:283-284, presents a somewhat garbled version of the attack reported by Bishop Mota y Escobar in Corró R., Cimarrones en Veracruz, pp. 10-11: David R. Ringrose, "Carting in the Hispanic World," HÁHR, 50 (February 1970): 44-49, provides an interesting description of the carts and the importance of the Mexico City-Veracruz road.

⁴⁸Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, pp. 135-136,

Two of these were Spaniards. Some masters of those accused and arrested ridiculed the escalation of the incident into a conspiracy by declaring that kings were often chosen by Blacks for festive occasions and that in this instance they were also drunk. The Alcalde del crimen, don Luis López de Azoca, took a more alarmist view and tried to hold the slaves culpable for the crime of treason. Although it is not certain if anything was done to the implicated Blacks, a series of restrictions were issued against the black population. But since Spanish hysteria continued to mount, the viceroy tried to allay the growing panic by having scapegoats chosen from the arrested Blacks taken from their cells and publicly lashed.⁴⁹

On January 2, 1609 Blacks were prohibited from holding assemblies or dance anywhere but in the plaza pública of the city. These dances were to be held only on holidays from noon until six in the evening. When the fiesta ended, the Blacks were ordered to return to their

⁴⁹Mariano Picón Salas, De La Conquista a la Independencia (México: Fondo de la Cultura Económica, 1944), p. 111, declares that the revolt was caused by prohibitions placed on the wearing apparel of the Blacks. This is doubtful since these restrictions were notoriously not enforced; Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana, 1:759, declares the conspiracy had no basis in fact; González Obregón, Rebelliones Indígenas, p. 336, believes that there was a widespread conspiracy; Vicente Riva Palacio, México a Través de los Siglos 5 vols. (Mexico: Balleca y Comp., 1887-1887), 2:549, also believed in the conspiracy; Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, pp. 135-138, provides the only information about the "Christmas Eve Plot." The others make no mention of it. On the other hand, Palmer makes no mention of the punishment of the scapegoats.

homes under penalty of being jailed, given two hundred lashes or fined four gold pesos.⁵⁰ In January a bando ordered all Blacks and mulattoes having licenses to carry weapons to present them to the authorities within six days.⁵¹ It was hoped that the prohibitions would calm the fear of Spaniards of massed groups of Blacks and prevent any plots from being organized.

Military preparations begun by the viceroy in 1608 as a precaution against a breakdown in the negotiations which had resulted in the preliminary capitulaciones of March 24, 1608 were speeded up. Don Pedro González de Herrera, captain of the Alabarderos of Puebla had requested and received the appointment as the leader of the military force because his fiancée had been abducted in 1697 by Francisco de la Matosa, the military strategist of the Yanga cimarrones. Preparations had been held up when González de Herrera was hurt in a training exercise. Now that he had recovered and the cimarrones had attacked the carts on the road from Veracruz causing rising tensions, the viceroy decided to crush the cimarrones militarily.⁵²

⁵⁰Gabriel Saldivar and Eliso Osorio Bolio, Historia de la Música de México (México: Secretaria de Educación Pública, Publicaciones del Departamento de Bellas Artes, 1934) pp. 220-221.

⁵¹AGN, Ordenanzas, tomo 1, fol. 126v. n^o 136.

⁵²Fructuoso Cadeza Balderas, Letter, July, 1971.

The Jesuit priests Juan Laurencio and Juan Pérez were added to the expedition to care for the spiritual well-being of the Spaniards. Of equal importance was the aid they could render the expedition because of the linguistic skills and work of the Jesuits among the Blacks and castes. It was hoped that the priests might prove helpful in direct dealings with the cimarrones. Now, with the final preparations completed, the largest troop movement since the Conquest, comprising 150 Indian bowmen, 100 Spanish soldiers, 100 "adventurers" and 200 members of the castas, set out from Mexico City on January 26, 1609, in search of the cimarron palenque.⁵³

⁵³The only written account of the expedition extant is that of Father Juan Laurencio. This in turn was paraphrased by Andres Pérez de Rivas in his Corónica. A manuscript copy of the Corónica is in the AGN, Historia, vol. 31, fols. 47-55 and a microfilm of a typewritten transcript of the Coronica is located in the microfilm collection of the Pius XII Memorial Library, St. Louis, Missouri. The original transcript is located in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Of particular importance are the 1841 Bustamente and 1960 Burrus and Zubillaga editions of Alegre's Historia. The Burrus and Zubillaga annotations of this work are of great value. Other sources cited concerning the expedition used either the Bustamente edition of Alegre or Riva Palacio's version of the Bustamente work: AGN, Historia, vol. 31, fol. 4, reports that a force of 150 Indian bowmen, 100 Spanish soldiers and 100 adventurers and 200 members of the casta set out on January 26, 1609 from Mexico City; Pérez de Rivas, Córonica, 1:285, gives the figures as 150 Indian bowmen, 100 royal soldiers and an undetermined number of estancieros and herdsmen among whom were included Blacks, mulattoes and mestizos; Corró R., Los Cimarrones, p. 12, reports the departure date as January 26, 1609, from Puebla; Antonio Carrión, Historia de la Ciudad de Puebla de los Angeles 2nd ed. 2 vols. (Puebla: Editorial José M. Cajica Jr., S.A., 1970), 2:21, declares the total number of men was 550 and states that they left Puebla on February 26, 1609; Riva Palacio, Mexico Através de los Siglos, 2:549, reports that the expedition was "composed of 200 men. . . among them Spaniards and mestizos."

Worried that the cimarrones would be warned that a force was proceeding against them, an edict was issued before the troop movement began. It prohibited all morenos, under pain of death, from leaving the city. The precaution proved useless. Yanga received word from the horros, or free Blacks, that the army was on the move. The cimarron leader ordered out a scouting party to gather information about the army from Spaniards living and working in the area. The cimarron patrol attacked and burned an estancia, but were unable to capture any of its fleeing inhabitants. They were more successful at a pastoria where two Spaniards and some Indian women were captured. Angered by the lack of information the captives could give, one of the Spaniards was ritually murdered and scalped and the survivor taken to the main palenque.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Although there appears to be no precedent for scalp taking by cimarrones, this was a common practice among the Chichimec Indians. The question arises, did the cimarron who took the scalp commit the deed in the heat of the moment, or did he learn the technique while a member of the cimarron bands who raided in the Gran Chichimeca area pacified by Velasco during his first administration?

At the stronghold Yanga, who was reported to be of African royalty, made his appearance with great ceremony.⁵⁵ The frightened Spanish captive was ordered to take down a letter which he was to deliver to Gonzalez de Herrera. The letter was a protest against enslavement and mistreatment by the Spaniards and a challenge to follow the bearer of the letter back to a military confrontation with the cimarrones. The Spaniard was then shown the general direction towards the viceregal army and set free.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Cimarron leaders appear to have often been of African nobility. Roger Bastide, Las Américas Negras, Las Civilizaciones africanas en el Nuevo Mundo (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, S.A., 1969), p. 170, declares that the custom of electing kings and queens and their court was an "old luso-hispanic custom (in the Iberian Peninsula it only filled a religious function) that was used principally by black cofradías imported into Europe." On the other hand, the author declares that it could be traced also to the Congo and was used in Latin America as a means of slave control. If this is the case, one wonders why the election of kings and queens by the Blacks caused such fear in so many colonial Spaniards; Cabrera, El Monte, p. 24, reports that peaceful Blacks usually organized themselves into quasi-governments and elected leaders and queens because those chosen had been royalty in Africa; Gardner, History of Jamaica, pp. 132, 135, reports a black woman named Cuba, who dressed in "what were supposed to be royal garments," was a leader in a widespread revolt in Kingston in 1760. Six hundred Blacks involved in the plot were transported and sold to logwood cutters in the Bay of Honduras. Although Cuba was also transported, where she sent is not known; Díaz Soler, Historia de la Esclavitud, pp. 19-20, states that a bozal Black about twenty five years old, was noticed being treated with great respect by other Blacks. On interrogation, the Blacks declared that he had been a prince in Africa. Reportedly, the slave refused an offer to be returned to Africa.

⁵⁶Alegre, Historia de la Provincia, 2:177; Pérez de Rivas, Corónica, 1:285, paraphrases the letter making Yanga appear a boastful braggart.

Within a short time, guided by the former cimarron captive, González de Herrera and his force attacked the palenque. A fierce bloody battle ensued and the palenque was taken. But Yanga and most of his followers escaped. Although the Spanish expedition had victoriously taken the palenque, they soon found that they were trapped within its walls as the cimarrones began shooting flaming arrows into their midst. Reacting quickly, the Spaniards counterattacked and routed the cimarrones, but a complete victory was still far off.⁵⁷

During the next two weeks the Spaniards alternately pursued the cimarrones or tried to negotiate a surrender. Instead of gaining a peace, a prolonged guerrilla war of attrition ensued. Yanga hoped to conduct a delaying action to enable his survivors to move southward to the Mixtec Indian area. The climate, casualties, lack of supplies, and difficulties controlling the rowdy adventurer element of the army finally forced the Spaniards to seek a negotiated peace. The cimarron leader agreed, on the condition that the peace settlement receive crown sanction, and that the

⁵⁷Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, pp. 52-53, reports the palenque had 500 residents at its peak; Pérez de Rivas, Corónica, 1:289 and Alegre, Historia de la Provincia, 2:180, report that the palenque had more than seventy houses.

demands listed in the preliminary capitulaciones of March 1608 were granted.⁵⁸

The military solution had failed in destroying the Yanga cimarrones in Veracruz. In May, three hundred other cimarrones were operating around Acapulco.⁵⁹ Thus communication between the capital and its two seaports were imperilled. Faced by a menace on both coasts, Velasco requested advice from the King on May 24, 1609. Apparently, the viceroy was hoping to speed up the finalization of the royal decree needed for acceptance of the Yanga capitulaciones. Sometime between May and September, it appears that the decree arrived, for at this time the Blacks were settled on their lands. Gonzalez de Herrera took his army to Puebla, where it arrived and was disbanded on September 20, 1609.⁶⁰

Yanga and his people settled peacefully in the area allotted them. Although living in peace, their settlement

⁵⁸Davidson, Negro Slave Control, pp. 249-250. f. 74, declares that the date of March 24, 1608 on AGN, Inquisición, vol. 283, fol. 186-187, should read March 24, 1609. He bases this assumption on the fact that this was the capitulation eventually granted for peace. Actually, the date on the document is correct. In 1609 Velasco granted the previously discussed terms.

⁵⁹Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 128

⁶⁰Carrión, Historia de la Ciudad de Puebla, 2:24; Cadeza Balderas, Letter, declares that González de Herrera did not try to seek total vengeance against the abductor of his fiancée because the woman requested she be allowed to remain with the cimarrones with her mulatto child born during her captivity.

could not officially be designated a town until they fulfilled royal regulations which required each villa to have a church, town hall, streets and roads, a plaza de armas and regular collection of taxes. In 1612, Yanga, against the advice of his councilors who distrusted the Spaniards, went to Mexico City to petition the viceregal authorities for official recognition of their settlement, which came to be called San Lorenzo de los Negros. He arrived in the capital during a time when a black conspiracy had been discovered and the capital was in turmoil. Soldiers, suspecting him to be involved in the conspiracy tried to arrest him. The black leader was able to escape to the house of a Spanish nobleman. But there, rather than surrender, he hanged himself with his ceremonial sash. The soldiers finally broke into the room where he had barricaded himself, dragged the body to the Plaza Mayor where the corpse was quartered, decapitated and the skull placed on a spike for public display.⁶¹

When the report of his death reached his followers, bitterness was great, but it was decided to continue carrying out the peace agreement. Their frustrations were taken out on the Indians of the area in revenge for their help to the Spaniards in the capture of the original cimarron palenque.

⁶¹ Díaz and Cadeza Balderas, Evolución de la América.

Except for their hatred of the Indians, the Blacks lived as good citizens and peaceful farmers.⁶² Although the Blacks lived in peace with the Spaniards, the Spanish land owners of the area distrusted the San Lorenzo Blacks. Fearing that the town would become the center of covert cimarron activity, citizens of San Antonio Huatusco founded a new town named Córdoba on April 26, 1618, near the black settlement. It was hoped that the proximity of this new town would deter the Blacks from law breaking. Instead the mutual suspicion between the two towns would develop animosities that would continue into the late twentieth century.⁶³

Despite the fear and suspicion the Spaniards felt toward the Blacks, there was little to fear. In 1698 John Francis Gemelli Careri, the noted Italian traveler, spent some time in the town of San Lorenzo de los Negros and

⁶²John Francis Gemelli Carreri, A Voyage Round the World, A Collection of Voyages and Travels 3rd ed. (London: Awnsham Churchill, 1745), 4:520; Manuel Orozco y Berra, Historia de la dominación Española en México (México: Antigua Librería Robredo de José Porrúa e Hijos, 1938), p. 93.

⁶³Díaz and Cadeza Balderas, Evolución de la América, The interviewees were bitter of efforts by the townspeople of Córdoba to obtain a federal grant to raise a monument to Yanga in their town. In this manner, benefits would accrue to the historical enemies of the San Lorenzo Blacks.

and described the place as "inhabited by Blacks, looks like some part of Guinea." He went on to say that the people were "handsome and apply themselves to husbandry." He also noted that they religiously observed the peace agreement and even restored fugitive slaves to their masters.⁶⁴ The same sentiments were echoed by Father Francisco Ajofrín in 1766. Ajofrin also pointed out that Spanish merchants as well as Indians resided in the town.⁶⁵ Within almost one hundred and sixty years, the Blacks were becoming amalgamated into Mexican society.

The aforementioned 1612 Black conspiracy that had frightened the capital and caused the death of Yanga had been occasioned by the mistreatment and death of a slave by her owner and overreaction by Blacks and Spaniards. The members of a black cofradia, or social and religious brotherhood, incensed over the death of one of their

⁶⁴Gemelli Careri, Voyage Round the World, 4:520; Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 130 maintains that the offer made by the Yanga Blacks "to return future runaways was an empty gesture, impossible to enforce and doubtless designed to placate the Spaniards." This seems in error since their help in capturing fugitives is known and other cimarrones pacified by capitulaciones were a great aid in maintaining peace.

⁶⁵Francisco Ajofrín, Diario del Viage que por orden de la Sagrada Congregación de Propaganda Fide Hizo a la América Septrional en el Siglo XVIII 2 vols. (Madrid: Real Academia de Historia, 1959), 2:33, reports the town was founded for the Blacks in the area who obtained their freedom. He does not elaborate on this, but since he only stayed overnight, his observations are superficial; William B. Taylor, "Documents: The Foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapá," The Americas, 26 (April 1970): 440.

female members staged a demonstration before the viceregal palace and attempted to storm the home of the accused slave killer. The viceroy reacted by having the mayor of the cofradia and other Blacks arrested, beaten and transported.⁶⁶

The Blacks viewed this as intolerably unfair because the Spaniard who had killed his slave had not been punished. Blacks of the brotherhood began meeting secretly with other cofradias of the capital to plot their revenge. A king and queen were chosen and plans were made to revolt on Christmas Day 1611.⁶⁷

The appointed day came and passed without incident, as black leaders postponed action until four companies of infantry bound for service in the Philippines landed at Veracruz and made their way over land to Acapulco for reembarcation. While the postponement of the revolt seemed the most practical course, it proved to be the undoing of the plot. During the postponement the Spaniards discovered the conspiracy. This occurred when authorities were notified of the conspiracy by two Portuguese slave dealers who overheard and understood Blacks conversing about the plot in the Angola language.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, pp. 127-128, 145-146, the cofradia had 1,500 members.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 128, 130, 148.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 128, 131, 148.

The Portuguese reported to the authorities that the revolt was rescheduled for Holy Week 1612, when a generalized massacre of the Spanish population was to begin. This information was corroborated by Fray Juan de Tobar who reported to the dean of the Audiencia that the revolt was to begin on Holy Thursday when the churches were full.⁶⁹ The Audiencia reacted by ordering all the churches of Puebla and Mexico City closed on Holy Thursday and that no religious processions be allowed.⁷⁰ Under the pretext that the cofradias had not held memorial services in honor of the death of the Queen of Spain, leaders of the cofradias were arrested and spies were placed among the Blacks to ferret out information about the plot.⁷¹

Tensions mounted to the point that a herd of rutting swine that ran through the city one night caused the people to believe that the running feet, wild squeals and loud grunts of the mating pigs were cimarrones attacking the city. Afraid to unlock their doors and

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 128-132, 148-194.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 132-133, 148-149; Valle Arize, Cuadros de México, pp. 252-253; Pedro López de Villaseñor, Cartilla Vieja de la Nobilísima Ciudad de Puebla (1781) (México: Imprenta Universitaria, 1961), pp. 79-82, describes the fear generated in Puebla and the precautions taken by the Audiencia.

⁷¹Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, p. 150.

shutters to verify the situation, the population spent a frightened, prayer-filled, sleepless night. Although the truth was discovered at dawn, it did little to reassure the frightened populace.⁷² For this reason, the Audiencia ordered that all unemployed Blacks and mulattoes were to obtain employment. They were also prohibited from being self-employed, from using gold, silver, pearls or luxury items, and from gathering in groups numbering more than three persons. All cofradías were disbanded and licenses for Blacks to carry weapons were suspended.⁷³

The authorities became even more alarmed when spies reported that a black brujo y hechicero or witch-doctor was planning to use witchcraft and poison on the Spanish food and water supplies. Information was also received that two Spanish women had overheard Blacks discussing plans to attack the jail to free the prisoners and contingency plans if the jailbreak was unsuccessful.⁷⁴

⁷²González Obregón, Rebelliones Indígenas, p. 340; Valle Arizpe, Cuadros de México, pp. 252-253; Irving A. Leonard, Baroque Times in Old Mexico (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966), p. 19; Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, p. 129.

⁷³AGN, Ordenanzas, tomo 1, fol. 146, nos. 163 and 164; Belena, Recopilación Sumario, libro 2, auto 83-4-6 and autos 135 and 137.

⁷⁴Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, p. 150.

The arrest of the plotters of the jailbreak and additional reports that the rebellious mood of the Blacks was gaining strength caused the Audiencia to move to smash the plot once and for all. Moving quickly, the Audiencia ordered that no Blacks or mulattoes could gather in any size group, be sold weapons or more than two accompany any Spaniard at any time.⁷⁵ A curfew between 8 P.M. and 5 A.M. was imposed on Blacks and mulattoes.⁷⁶ When these measures seemed insufficient to placate the populace, all Blacks and mulattoes were ordered to turn over their weapons to the Corregidor.⁷⁷ Spaniards were forbidden from being accompanied by or to leave unattended armed slaves.⁷⁸

The jailed leaders of the plot were tortured to discover the location of the stores of munition and weapons, then they were sentenced to death and their property confiscated. On May 2, 1612,

⁷⁵AGN, Ordenanzas, tomo 1, fol. 147, no. 167.

⁷⁶Ibid., tomo 1, fol. 148, no. 168.

⁷⁷Ibid., tomo 1, fol. 149, no. 171.

⁷⁸Ibid., tomo 1, fol. 149v, no. 172.

thirty five Blacks and mulattoes were hanged in the Plaza Mayor of Mexico City.⁷⁹ After hanging overnight in the Plaza, the corpses were quartered and the pieces placed on the main roads leading into the city as a warning to the rest of the black population.⁸⁰ Others implicated in the plot were exiled from the viceroyalty and all neighboring islands. Martial law was declared and all churches were ordered to close their doors at nightfall and cancel all Holy Week services both in Mexico City and Puebla, for fear of being trapped by a renewal of the plot.

Don Fernando Altamirano y Velasco, the grandson of the viceroy who had pacified the cimarrones in 1609

⁷⁹Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, p. 135. Among those hanged were seven women; Riva Palacio, México A través de los Siglos, 2:256, reports that twenty-nine black males and four black females were hanged; Valle Arizpe, Cuadros de Mexico, p. 253, declares that twenty-six black males and seven black females were executed; Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana, tomo 1, libro 5, capítulo 74, asserts that twenty-nine male and seven females were hanged; Carrión, Historia de la Ciudad de Puebla, p. 24, states that twenty-four males and four females were hanged on gallows especially constructed for the occasion. He also notes that some "un-named historian" declared the numbers to be nine males and seven females.

⁸⁰Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, pp. 135, 152, does not describe the disposition of the pieces of the cadavers. He does indicate that the other decapitated bodies were buried; Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana, tomo 1, libro 5, capítulo 74 indicates that the heads were left hanging until the stench became unbearable; Valle Arizpe, Cuadros de Mexico, p. 254, and Riva Palacio, México A Través de los Siglos, 2:562, echo Torquemada.

was named commander of one of the two military units organized to guard and patrol the capital.⁸¹ The patrols and the restrictions helped calm the Spanish population, but the Spaniards did not seem to realize that transporting of the conspirators only served to transfer problem Blacks to other areas and spread the danger of revolts.

Although the urban 1612 conspiracy was eliminated with no harm befalling the Spaniards, the rural areas were dangerous because of the cimarrones. The Marqués de Guadalcázar, viceroy of New Spain, noted on March 3, 1618 that one Spaniard was killed and twelve Indian women abducted by cimarrones.⁸² Other cimarrones were reported by the Audiencia as operating around Rio Blanco and Orizaba.⁸³ By October more than three hundred were said to be living in about one hundred houses in the Rio Blanco area. An attack was launched against them in which the leader and thirty five of the "most belicose" fugitives were captured.⁸⁴

This success is less than impressive when one notes that no mention is made of the other two hundred sixty fugitives of the area.

⁸¹Querol y Roso, Negros y Mulatos, pp. 136, 153.

⁸²Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, p. 130.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 141.

Revolts of varying importance occurred in the viceroyalty of New Spain throughout much of the first half of the seventeenth century. Durango suffered an uprising in 1616.⁸⁵ A revolt planned for Holy Week, in 1626, involving 2,000 Blacks in San Salvador was quickly put down.⁸⁶ The Marqués de Cerralvo reported in March 1636 that large numbers of cimarrones had been active, but that they had been pacified by "instilling fear in them" by sending armed forces into the affected area. Cerralvo declared that he had resettled cimarrones in towns under ciertas ordenanzas approved by the King. These ordenanzas or capitulaciones, declared by the Marques as having a beneficial effect on the Blacks, was granted sometime between 1630 and 1635. The town was named San Lorenzo Cerralvo in honor of the Marqués and was established "a considerable distance" from Cordoba, Veracruz.⁸⁷

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 141.

⁸⁶Rosenblatt, Población Indígena, 1:223.

⁸⁷Mariano Cuevas, ed., Descripción de la Nueva España en el Siglo XVII, por el Padre Fray Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa y otros Documentos del Siglo XVII (México: Editorial Patria, 1944), p. 230; It appears that this referred to the final disposition of the Yanga Cimarrones. Taylor, Foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, pp. 440, 442, declares that the cimarron problems continued because some of the fugitives refused to settle there; Eugenio del Hoyo, Índice del Ramo de Causas Criminales del Archivo Municipal de Monterrey (1621-1834), (Monterrey: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores, 1963), tomo 1, exp. 6(1627), Contra Gaspar Francisco, Mulato, tomo 6, exp. 86(1653) Contra Dionisio López, esclavo, legajo A. exp. 966(1709) Contra Pascual, mulato, report what appear to be cimarron crimes.

Besides the generalized cimarron problem during the seventeenth century, there were innumerable conspiracies or incidents involving Blacks and mulattoes which endangered the peace of the colonies. The Inquisition played a major role in investigating some of these. This does not mean that the Inquisition was used as an instrument of slave control, but rather as an adjunct to the political structure with an emphasis on the religious welfare of the colonial population. As the religious guardian of the population, the Inquisition recorded many instances of Black and mulatto laxity in religious matters. But in the course of some of these investigations, conspiracies and simple cases of desire to flee from Spanish control was noted. An example of the latter is seen in the 1652 investigation of a slave accused of making a pact with the devil to help him escape from his master.⁸⁸ An investigation of much greater importance was that conducted on the conspiracy of don Guillen de Lampart in the 1640s. In essence, de Lampart conceived a grandiose plan to revolt against Spain and take over control of Mexico. This was to have been accomplished by gathering the disaffected members of the castes under his banner. De Lampart

⁸⁸Clevy Lloyd Strout, A Catalog of Hispanic Documents in the Thomas Gilcrease Institute (Tulsa: The Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, 1962), p. 18, doc. 44.

hoped to attract the castes by abolition of slavery, removal of tribute payments, and opening of all viceregal political offices to the mixed races.⁸⁹ He was so sure of his ties to the cimarrones that, despite having been imprisoned by the Inquisition, de Lampart counted on the Blacks to provide sanctuary for him after a planned escape. He believed he would be safe if he reached a certain Pueblo de San Antonio, a center of Black rebellion located between the capital and Veracruz. Although the plan did not succeed, the grandiose plans and threat of a race war caused concern all the way to the throne of Spain itself.⁹⁰

Social discontent of the mixed races manifested again in 1665. An investigation by the Inquisition showed that the Blacks and mulattoes had organized a conspiracy which planned to take over the viceroyalty in 1666.⁹¹ Unfortunately, little information is available as to its resolution or the fate of the conspirators apprehended.

⁸⁹León Portilla, et al, Historia documental, 1:260-261; González Obregón, Rebelliones Indigenas, pp. 241-242, 246; Richard Boyer, "Mexico in the Seventeenth Century," HAHR 57(August 1977):474-475.

⁹⁰Gonzalez Obregon, Rebelliones Indigenas, pp. 294-295.

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 350-365.

In 1646 Blacks in the infantry companies of Veracruz were involved in a race riot,⁹² and a revolt is mentioned as having threatened San Salvador in 1688.⁹³

The threat of an alliance between foreigners and cimarrones was a possibility which frightened the Spaniards, but except for rare instances, these alliances did not occur or were of relatively short duration. It must be noted that Blacks and mulattoes did join in Morgan's attack on Panama (1671),⁹⁴ and the sack of Veracruz (1683) by Nicolas Grammont and Lorenzo Jacomé.⁹⁵ But these and similar acts were isolated occurrences committed solely to gain plunder or revenge themselves on the Spaniards. A more worrisome problem developed in the area called Mosquitia on the northern coasts of Nicaragua and Honduras. Large numbers of Blacks fled to this area and either set up their own palenques or mixed with the unconquered Indians living there. The unions between these races developed a new group called the Zambos Mosquitos.⁹⁶ This cimarron

⁹²Palmer, Blacks in Mexico, pp. 141-142.

⁹³Boletín del Archivo General del Gobierno (Hereafter cited as BAGG), Indice del Archivo General del Gobierno (Guatemala) cifra Al, 1, leg, 25, exped.

⁹⁴Bancroft, History of Central America, 2:493.

⁹⁵Agustin de Vetancurt, Teatro Mexicano (Madrid: Jose Porrua Turanzas, 1961), pp. 191-192.

⁹⁶Serrano y Sanz, Relaciones Históricas, 8:pp. xxxii, xxxiv; Rosenblat, Población Indígena, 2:168.

racially mixed group was actively courted by the English to provide an ally for their designs on Central America.⁹⁷ On the other hand, since this area is worthy of many studies in itself, it will suffice to mention that the threat of an Anglo-Zambo Mosquito alliance would trouble the Spanish in the succeeding centuries of colonial life.

Cimarron problems flared up in the Veracruz province of Mexico with large scale uprisings in 1725, 1735, 1748, and 1750. Led by two Blacks, José Pérez and José Carpintero, and Miguel de Salamanca, a mulatto, the cimarrones took over the hacienda of Omealca and quickly attracted great numbers of new recruits, as slaves working in the area fled their captivity to join them. Area slave owners organized small groups of fighting men to engage the cimarrones and minor skirmishes resulted which had little effect on the uprising. Finally a six-hundred man force was able to engage the cimarrones, defeat and kill the leaders. But the victory was not a complete success. The cimarron war cost 19,000 pesos in military expenditures alone.⁹⁸ This loss in life, private property and revenues is not known.

⁹⁷Bancroft, History of Central America, 2:600-630.

⁹⁸Corró, R., Cimarrones en Veracruz, pp. 19-20.

Some were able to escape, regroup themselves, and renew their attacks of Spanish holdings. Despite the unrest in the area, the Blacks at San Lorenzo de los Negros remained at peace and aided the authorities by sending men to fight against the cimarrones.⁹⁹

The continued cimarron problems prompted the alcalde mayor of Teutila, don Andrés Fernández de Otáñez to try pacifying the cimarrones by means of capitulaciones as had been done with the San Lorenzo Blacks. Negotiations were initiated with the cimarrones but inaction by the viceroy and a treacherous attack on the truce meeting by Spanish slave owners caused the peace effort to fail.¹⁰⁰ Little success was achieved in pacifying the fugitives until 1760 when the Blacks split into opposing factions. The opponents of peace were led by a Black called Captain Macute. His chief lieutenant, Fernando Manuel, headed the group which sought to gain peace with the Spaniards. Tensions between the factions led to armed conflict which resulted in the capture of Captain Macute and eighteen of his followers by the supporters of Fernando Manuel. The peace seeking cimarrones then turned the dissidents over to the authorities in an effort to show good intentions. They then established three settlements

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 19-22.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 22-23.

on the Rivadeneyra hacienda and set up palenques in a rugged area away from the settlements to be used if the Spaniards broke the truce.¹⁰¹

Although the reformed cimarrones lived in peace, they received no capitulaciones nor did they receive official sanction or protection for their communities. When the English attacked Veracruz in 1762, they again tried to show their loyalty by offering to fight the invaders. The offer was accepted and they were incorporated into the lancer corp of Veracruz. When the peace returned, the Blacks went back to their settlements only to find that the trapicheros or sugar mill owners of the area were attempting to eliminate the communities through the courts and reestablish the Blacks on their own haciendas. Although the case was rejected by the authorities, tensions were aggravated between the Blacks and the Spaniards.¹⁰²

In 1787 the Blacks petitioned Fernandez de Otañez, the Alcalde Mayor of Teutila, to renew his previously unsuccessful effort to gain legal recognition for them. Despite his previously mentioned unsuccessful attempt to pacify this group by the implementation of capitulaciones, his efforts were finally rewarded. On January 12, 1768,

¹⁰¹Taylor, Foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, p. 442.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 444.

capitulaciones between the Blacks and viceregal authorities were established. These were

1. The protection from reenslavement.
2. The exemption from tribute payments.
3. The right to establish in a town at Amapa.
4. The right to appoint their own alcaldes and regidores.
5. The destruction of the cimarron palenques at Mazateapan.
6. The bearing of arms in the service of the King and the country.
7. The capture of fugitive slaves for a bounty of twenty five pesos per captive.
8. The prevention of the establishment of new palenques.
9. The living under the jurisdiction of Teutila.¹⁰³

Despite the official sanction for the town, the slave owners of the area continued in their attempts to place obstacles in the path of the pacification endeavor of Fernandez de Otañez. On May 21, a writ obtained from the alcalde of Cordoba force the Blacks to give up their town and move to a new area. Although the Blacks relocated themselves peacefully, the trapicheros were not satisfied. They were hoping that the Blacks would revolt so that they might be reenslaved. But the Blacks did not respond with force and instead followed legal channels. In the legal struggle which followed, the Audiencia, sided with the Blacks and declared that they were to be accorded privileges under the fuero militar since they were soldiers,

¹⁰³Corró, R., Cimarrones en Veracruz, p. 26, reports the location of the palenques as Mazateapán; Taylor, Foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, p. 445, declares it to be Mazateopam. Those exempted from tribute payments were listed by name. It is uncertain if their descendents were also to be included.

had fought in the war against the English, and were defenders of the realm.¹⁰⁴ Finally the Blacks received their rights. The town, named Amapá, was officially established in September 1768.¹⁰⁵

Father José Antonio Navarro, the celebrant of the first Mass in the town, noted in an introduction to the church baptismal record that with the establishment of the town, cimarron problems of the area ceased.¹⁰⁶ The usefulness of capitulaciones as a medium for peace was again proven. On the other hand, there were still many revolts in the viceroyalty which were put down without capitulaciones.

In 1610, seven leagues from the city of Guatemala in the corregimiento of Esquintepeque was a town of free Blacks and mulatos who chose their own alcaldes and regidores from among their own ranks. These Blacks were responsible for the administration and peace of the area and captured and returned fugitive Blacks for a bounty. Since these Blacks parallel the type of situation set up by capitulaciones with cimarrones in other areas,

¹⁰⁴Taylor, Foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, pp. 440, 444

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 446.

¹⁰⁶Ibid

it is probable that they also were reformed cimarrones.¹⁰⁷

The cabildo of Guatemala noted on April 29, 1617 that large numbers of fugitive Blacks were living in the area around the road to the "Golfo."¹⁰⁸ Four thousand thirty tostones were reported having been spent by August 27, 1627 on expeditions against the cimarrones.¹⁰⁹ No information regarding success is mentioned, although Miguel de los Rios reported in 1649 that shortly before that date, he led and paid for an expedition that destroyed three black cimarron towns on Cosiguina mountain. De los Rios may have had success, but more often than not the cimarron problem was not resolved.¹¹⁰

In the early 1700s the mulattoes of Chipilapa in Guatemala revolted over what they believed to be political wrongs. An expedition sent by the Audiencia was completely routed. The reasons for the revolt and the methods used to pacify the mulattoes are sketchy. But it is reported that success was achieved by using harsh measures and eventual

¹⁰⁷Vázquez de Espinosa, Compendio y Descripción, n^o. 639; García Pelaez, Memorias para la Historia, 1:215, mentions a town called Gomara founded in 1611 for mulattoes and Spaniards. This does not seem to be the one mentioned by Vazquez de Espinosa.

¹⁰⁸García Pelaez, Memorias para la Historia, 2:27. It is unsure whether this refers to the Gulf of Honduras or the Gulf of Fonseca.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

pardon with some "light punishment" given to those who accepted the peace.¹¹¹

Two free Blacks of Costa Rica were accused in 1755 of trying to foment rebellion among bozal or recently imported slaves. The Blacks were said to have planned to capture the royal weapons depot and set up a palenque in the mountains. At their trial, the accused leaders were found innocent because of lack of evidence. Apparently the authorities were not completely satisfied with the decision. As a precaution against their further involvement in plots, the Blacks were separated and exiled from the city of Cartago.¹¹²

A revolt of the militia company of Pardos of Nicaragua was feared in 1741. Although the Blacks were involved in minor civil disturbances, the problem proved to be political rather than racial.¹¹³ In this instance as so often happened, armed Blacks serving as colonial law or peace officers were suspected of seeking to overthrow Spanish control. During civil disturbances in Guatemala in November 1766, these suspicions flared. Mulattoes were armed to serve in patrols

¹¹¹Fray Francisco Ximénez, Historia de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala de la Orden de Predicadores 3 vols. (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1929-1931), 3:340.

¹¹²"Indice de la Sección Colonial," Revista de los Archivos Nacionales (San José, Costa Rica), documento n^o 6231, fol. 28.

¹¹³"Suplemento," Revista Conservadora del Pensamiento Centroamericano (Managua, Nicaragua) 5(January 1963): 1:100-110.

to keep order in the capital and were continued into the New Year because of unstable conditions in the city. During the first few days of the New Year, the mulattoes were accused of planning to use the weapons given them to revolt. Although an investigation was conducted, no result is known.¹¹⁴

The area encompassing Mexico and Central America suffered innumerable revolts by Blacks between 1503 and 1800. Because these revolts were a threat to the safety and tranquility of these areas, colonial authorities tried to suppress the revolts by means of restrictive legislation, bounty hunters, armed confrontation and missionary work by the clergy. If none of these methods proved successful, on occasion, mutually beneficial terms or capitulaciones were agreed upon between the cimarrones and the crown. The paradigm for cimarron pacification by these methods was the Enriquillo Indian cimarron war in Hispaniola between 1519 and 1533. By 1800 black cimarrones were pacified by the implementation of capitulaciones on two occasions in the area encompassing Mexico and Central America. These were Yanga (Mexico 1609) and Amapá (Mexico 1768). Although colonial officials saw the value in the implementation of capitulaciones, they were not applied indiscriminately. The emphasis was on the eradication by force of arms. On the

¹¹⁴"Indice del Archivo General del Gobierno," BAGG, cifra A1, l. leg. 1975, exped. 13429.

other hand, capitulaciones had proven their value as a medium of pacification and in making unconquerable cimarrones peaceful citizens and staunch defenders of the empire.

CHAPTER V

Cimarron Revolts And Cimarron Pacification In The Isthmus of Panama

The first known revolt of black slaves in the isthmus occurred in the city of Panama in 1525. Although the revolt was suppressed and the cimarrones executed, the danger was not eliminated.¹ Where ever there was a black slave population, the potential for cimarron problems were present. The next serious slave uprising occurred in the town of Acla in 1530. The fugitives fled to the abandoned town of Santa Maria la Antigua where they established a palenque and began attacking Spanish settlements in the surrounding area. The problem continued until 1532 when a Spanish expedition attacked and destroyed the palenque. Many cimarrones were killed, others captured and punished, but some survivors escaped to the jungle.² There they regrouped and increased their numbers as more Blacks fled to join them.

While the colonists at Acla were having their problems, don Antonio de la Gama, the governor of Panama in 1531, was

¹Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 136.

²Ibid., p. 137.

able to prevent a large scale revolt by issuing ordenanzas which mitigated slave life.³ As a precaution, he also ordered increased security measures. It was hoped that the mitigating ordenanzas could make the slave more readily accept his status in society. If these did not prove effective, the security measures would protect the Spaniards. The crown also tried to lessen the slave problems by ordering that no white, Black loro or mulato slaves be allowed to go to the Indies from Europe without permission of the Casa de Contratación.⁴ It was feared that these European slaves would be more troublesome than bozal or unacculturated Blacks brought straight from Africa to the Indies. Other prohibitions were issued to prevent slaves merchants from going to the Moslem controlled area of Sardinia, Mallorca and Minorca where slaves were relatively inexpensive.⁵

Their lower cost was outweighed by the potentially dangerous cultural or religious beliefs which they might

³Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 9:297-298. This may be the revolt reported by Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 1:242-243; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 112, reports that Panama was in a continual state of fear of cimarrones long in a continual state of fear of cimarrones long before 1530.

⁴Rafael Guevara Bazán, "La inmigración musulmana a la America Española en los primeros años de la colonización," Boletín Histórico, 10(1966): 41; Recopilación, libro 9, título 26, ley 29; Rosenblat, Población Indígena, 2:179n, believes that a loro was a mulatto or person of Black ancestry; Martin Delgado and Cruz Santos, Historia Extensa, 2:163, declare the loros were descendents of the Guanches, the indigenous population of the Canary Islands.

⁵Guevara Bazán, Inmigración Musulmana, p. 46, law of 1550.

carry from the Moslem areas and spread among the Blacks and Indians of the New World. Despite these efforts by the crown, fulfillment of its orders was another matter. Various prohibitions were issued but their reiteration shows that they were little obeyed.⁶

Taxes to pay for the suppression of the cimarrones were imposed in Nombre de Dios in 1537.⁷ Although the tax had been levied in Hispaniola almost ten years before, neither area was able to apply the money collected in such a manner that the cimarrones were eliminated. The eradication of the cimarrones in Hispaniola was important for the development of the island, but in the Isthmus it was vital. The isthmus was the essential link between the Caribbean and the Pacific coast colonies of western South America. The development of this area and the exploitation of the wealth of Perú involved the shipment of large numbers of Blacks to both the Isthmian and the Pacific coastal areas. As their numbers increased, the cimarron problems grew accordingly. Although Mexico and the Caribbean islands were important, the loss of control of the Isthmus to the cimarrones meant that traffic and communications would be cut off with the rich Peruvian area. Efforts were made to eliminate the growing numbers of cimarrones but little success was achieved. The problem intensified with the

⁶Ibid., p. 46; Recopilación, libro 9, título 26, leyes 18 and 19.

⁷Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 2:10

revolt of the black slave divers in the Pearl Islands of the Gulf of Panama in 1549. Under the leadership of a Black named Felipillo, the Blacks set up a palenque on the Gulf of San Miguel which attracted many fugitives from Panama and the surrounding area. Fearful because so many slaves were fleeing to join Felipillo, the Spaniards sent a force to destroy the cimarron stronghold. After a fierce battle, Felipillo was captured and the palenque destroyed. The cimarron leader was taken to Panama where Governor Clavijo had him publicly quartered and the rest of the captured cimarrones resold into slavery.⁸

The defeat of the Felipillo cimarrones did not signal the end of the problems in the Isthmus. Fear of the cimarrones had caused so much of the population of the town of Acla to move to the larger cities that by 1552 it had been reduced to three or four vecinos. This prompted the governor of Nombre de Dios to request permission from the King to abandon the site.⁹ The following year, Nombre de Dios was having serious difficulties. Eight hundred black cimarrones, along with some Indian allies, attacked traffic with impunity on the roads between Nombre de Dios and Panama and boat traffic on the Chagres River.¹⁰

⁸Guillott, Negros Rebeldes, p. 139, reports that the profits of the sale were kept by Governor Clavijo; Fray Pedro de Aguado, Historia de Venezuela annot. Jerónimo Beker, 2 vols. (Madrid: Imprenta y Editorial Maestre, 1950), 1:195 makes no mention of the sale nor identifies those quartered.

⁹Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:30.

¹⁰ Ibid., 4:31

Since three Spanish military expeditions sent out against the cimarrones proved unsuccessful, the governor of Nombre de Dios suggested that the crown assign fifty or sixty men to live in a fortified settlement to be built in the area of greatest cimarron concentration. Half of these men were to be trusted black slaves who would be promised their freedom if they fought against the cimarrones.¹¹ Apparently, this suggestion, made in early 1555, met with no success. On the other hand, the governor had not completely failed in his attempts to put down the cimarrones. One force sent out by him was able to launch a surprise attack on the palenque of the cimarron leader named Ballano.¹² During the battle, Ballano, of Black African royalty, was captured. He was taken before the governor who signed a peace pact with the cimarron leader in hopes that he would return to the cimarron area and pacify his followers.

¹¹RAH, tomo 69, doc. 1499, fol. 40.331; Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 144, reports that the Black slaves were to be the "most bellicose," who once they reached the area, ran away to join the cimarrones; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:31-32, declares them to be "negros de confianza."; Lucas Fernández Piedrahita, Historia General del Nuevo Reino de Granada 4 vols. (Bogotá: Biblioteca Popular de Cultura Colombina, 1942), 4:174, states that there were "more than six hundred Blacks."

¹²Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:167, 174, 194, reports the name as Bayamo, Vayamo and Bayano; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:33-35; Bowser, African Slave, p. 178 and CDI, 9:111, 119-120, declare it to be Ballano. This last is the accepted modern spelling.

Instead, Ballano rejoined his people and led them in greater attacks against the Spaniards.¹³

Complaints soon reached the King in late 1555 that cimarrones freely entered Nombre de Dios under cover of night. These complaints were accompanied by a suggestion that a general call up of all male citizens of Uraba, Cartagena and Panama be made. Once men and supplies were gathered, an all out war could be conducted against the Blacks and remove forever the Isthmian cimarrones.¹⁴ These suggestions had merit, but the war plan was never carried out. Apparently, this was because attention was drawn to French pirates who began attacking shipping and coastal settlements on the Isthmus and in northern South America.¹⁵

Although the King would continually receive complaints about the Isthmian cimarrones, the problems did not really receive attention until 1556. At that time the Marqués de Cañete, Andrés Hurtado de Mendoza arrived in the Isthmus on his way to assume the office of viceroy of Peru. When he was made aware of the danger to his safe passage across the Isthmus, cimarron disruption of commerce and

¹³Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:195n

¹⁴RAH, tomo 69, doc. 1499, fol. 333, Francisco de Pradanos to King, December 22, 1555; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:32-33.

¹⁵RAH, tomo 69, doc. 1499, fol. 333-333v. Dn. de Peñalosa, report, December 25, 1555.

communication and the lack of control, the Marques decided to seek a resolution of the problem rather than allow the matter to rest in the hands of the officials of the affected areas. He appointed an experienced soldier, don Pedro de Ursua to command a military campaign to make an all out effort to eradicate the Isthmian cimarrones. Seasoned soldiers were recruited when the Marques granted pardons to all those guilty of taking part in the Peruvian civil wars if they would serve in the Campaign.¹⁶ The necessary supplies were gathered and the search began for the stronghold of the cimarrones.

Information about Ballano is sketchy. Since he was known only a non-Christian name, he was probably brought to the Indies as a bozal slave. On the other hand, many of his followers were ladino or acculturated Christian Blacks. This is apparent from the frequent use by them of the Spanish battle cry of Santiago when they clashed with Spanish expeditionary forces.¹⁷ Ballano was able to attract both ladino and bozal Blacks by virtue of his royal African descent.¹⁸ The ladino cimarrones were of particular value

¹⁶Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:33, declares he received his commission from the viceroy; Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:157, reports that it was the merchants.

¹⁷Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:160, 163.

¹⁸Ibid., 1:170.

to Ballano since they often served as spies by slipping into the cities and port areas to mix with the great numbers of free Blacks. In this manner, they gathered information which served to warn Ballano of any military expeditions which might be organized against him. Despite the warnings from followers spying on the preparations of the Ursua expedition, Ballano was unprepared for the new campaign of the Spaniards. The first encounters between the opposing sides found the Spaniards winning some minor skirmishes, but travelers on the roads continued coming under cimarron attack. The situation seemed to be developing into a war of attrition when Ursúa decided to use any means, fair or foul, to end the war quickly.¹⁹ Emissaries were sent to convince Ballano that the Spaniards wished to discuss a negotiated peace settlement. Once the suspicions of the cimarrones had been allayed, gifts were sent to the cimarrones as a sign of good faith and a banquet was organized. At the banquet, the Spaniards poisoned or stabbed to death most of the leadership of the cimarrones, and Ballano was captured. In this manner the principal chieftains were captured or killed, but many cimarrones escaped to the bush.²⁰

¹⁹Fernández Piedrahita, Historia General, 4:174, states the war lasted two years with great losses to the cimarrones.

²⁰Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 1:144-185, declares that any means was justified to return them to the slavery, "a que están obligados y ellos antes tenían."

The Spaniards realized that once the cimarrones had reorganized themselves, the problem would begin again. It was then decided to spare Ballano's life if he could convince his people to give their belligerent status and live in peace in a town of their own under Spanish supervision. The cimarron leader agreed to the proposal and, after a period of negotiation, capitulaciones were made with the comarrones.

Under the terms of the capitulaciones

1. Blacks who had been fugitives before a specific date would be considered free.
2. Blacks who became fugitives after that day would be captured by the Ballano cimarrones and returned to their masters. If the cimarrones did not wish to return the fugitives captured, the Ballano cimarrones would pay the original price.
3. All black slaves who were mistreated by their masters could buy their freedom upon paying their original price.
4. The followers of Ballano were to live in towns that were to be established as free "natives" of the area and no longer live scattered through the bush areas.²¹

Since the peace agreement treated the cimarrones lightly rather than harshly, Ballano thought that he also would be pardoned. Ursua had kept him as a hostage during the early period of resettlement of the cimarrones, but had given the black leader the run of the Spanish garrison area.

²¹Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:33; Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 1:193, reports that the fugitives captured were returned to their masters, but makes no mention of their being sold. He also states that the Blacks were to sell supplies to travelers and pack trains, when requested.

When Ursua was ordered back to Nombre de Dios, Ballano was also taken along. There the cimarron leader was put in chains and taken before the viceroy in Lima. Once he arrived there, the viceroy ordered his chains struck off and the cimarron leader heaped with honors. Although he was honored as a worthy opponent and brave warrior, the Spaniards deemed it prudent to keep Ballano in custody.²² He was then taken to Panama and from there sent to Spain.²³ In Seville he was granted a royal pension and lived out his life.²⁴

The followers of Ballano, although without their leader, settled in peace on the land allotted them near the Francisca river, but not all cimarrones joined them.²⁵

²²Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:193, 195n-196n; CDII, 4:215, makes it appear that when Ursua went to Peru to lead the expedition of the Marañon River, he took the black leader with him as a captive; Vazquez de Espinosa, Compendio y Descripción, cap. 1214, quotes an account written by a survivor of the ill-fated expedition. No mention of Ballano is made, but 500 Black and Indian piezas de servicio were reported to have lost their lives; Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 60, declares that Ballano had been promised his life, freedom, and rank as a king if he convinced the cimarrones to become peaceful.

²³Fernández Piedrahita, Historia General, 4:174; Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:19n, 196n; CDII, 4:215.

²⁴Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:195n, 196n; Garcilaso de la Vega, Royal Commentaries, 2:1422.

²⁵Garcilaso de la Vega, Royal Commentaries, 2:1422, declares he was taken to Spain where he died; Aguado, Historia de Venezuela, 2:196n.

By 1562 other Blacks began an uprising in the same area.²⁶ While it was said that this was a "very dangerous war", the followers of Ballano continued living in peace. They were assigned a Spanish juez to watch over them. They continued fulfilling their part of the original Ballano capitulaciones and aided in capturing cimarrones who ventured into their territory.²⁷ Despite their aid, the cimarron problem was not completely eliminated. An agreement was signed between viceroy Toledo and a Spaniard who promised to eliminate the black cimarrones, again causing destruction around Nombre de Dios and Panama.²⁸ The following year, Toledo wrote to the King requesting a copy of a capitulacion the crown had made with an unnamed soldier who also promised to rid Tierra Firme of black cimarrones.²⁹ Apparently the campaign was never carried out or met with failure because in the spring of 1572 the viceroy again wrote to the King complaining of the large numbers of cimarrones in Tierra Firme committing robberies and attacking traffic on the roads. He asked for permission from the King to

²⁶CDII, 9:104.

²⁷Vázquez de Espinosa, Compéndio, capítulo 896, CDI, 9:111; Wafer, New Voyage, pp. 14, 200, declares the town was located fifteen miles up the Chepo River and that there was another town up the Yavisa.

²⁸Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 165, Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 112, reports that in 1569, of the thousands of Blacks imported, 300 or more became fugitives,

²⁹Zavala, Instituciones Jurídicas, p. 476.

mobilize the manpower in the affected areas so that the cimarrones could be eliminated.³⁰ Whether permission was received is not known, but an even greater problem arose in the fall of 1572.

Francis Drake led a group of pirates into the Caribbean in the late fall of 1572 to revenge his losses at Veracruz during the John Hawkins defeat by the Spaniards in 1567. On the Isthmus, Drake captured an anchored ship being loaded with lumber by slaves. One of these Blacks informed Drake that the cimarrones would gladly aid any enemy of the Spaniards. Convinced that the cimarrones would be of inestimable value, Drake accepted the suggestion of an English-cimarron alliance. He sent the Black as go-between to arrange a meeting with the cimarrones and eventually made a pact of mutual assistance with Pedro, the chief of the cimarrones. This pact gave the pirates unexpected help when it was discovered that Pedro could put 1,700 men on the field of battle if necessary.³¹

³⁰Guillot, Negros Reblides, p. 166.

³¹Anderson, Old Panama, pp. 344-350, 353-357; Bancroft, History of Central America, 2:410; Francis Drake, Sir Francis Drake Revived Voyages and Travels Ancient and Modern, The Harvard Classic (New York: P.F. Collier and Son Corp., 1960), pp. xxxii, pp. 134-170; Julian S. Corbett, Drake and the Tudor Navy, with a History of the Rise of England as a Maritime Power 2 vols. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1967), reports that the Ballano town was set up after the Blacks had allied themselves with Drake; Guillermo Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops of Panama, trans. and ed. T.T. McDonald, C.M. (Panama: Imprenta de la Academia, 1929), p. 17, reports that armed female black slaves were instrumental in the battle against Drake's pirates.

Drake acted quickly. A base of operations was set up at a place he named Port Pheasant. From here, the allies attacked shipping, raided Nombre de Dios and captured a mule train loaded with Peruvian silver.³² The Blacks proved to be invaluable in protecting the pirate headquarters and acted as spies by freely entering the surrounding towns and cities and obtaining information from peaceful slaves.³³

When spring came, Drake broke camp and returned to England, with the information that cimarrones would willingly help foreign intruders. Although Drake's alliance lasted a short time, other buccaneers would soon return, and try to use the cimarrones in their raids. The Spaniards were now confronted by an even more dangerous menace, that of internal plus external enemies working in concert. For this reason, the Church tried to help stem the growing danger of the cimarrones.

During the term of office of don Manuel de Mercado Alderete, bishop of Panama (1577-1580), priests were sent out to try to pacify some of the cimarrones of the area.³⁴ Although some success was achieved, the treacherous defeat of Ballano caused some cimarrones to become intransigent in their attitudes toward the Spaniards. They rejected all

³²Drake, Sir Francis Drake, pp. 131. 174-176.

³³Ibid., pp. 165-166, 169, 172.

³⁴Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, pp. 19-20.

overtures from the priests, and refused to allow them near their palenques. They also accused the priests of being spies and renewed their resistance to the Spaniards.³⁵ The cimarrones also rejected a general amnesty issued by the King in January 1574. The amnesty had been granted on the recommendation of the Procurador General of Tierra Firme who thought that this would lure the cimarrones out of the jungle.³⁶ That same year, Panama was granted a royal exemption from paying duties on all flour and supplies imported from Peru because of its efforts in the campaigns against the cimarrones.³⁷ It would appear that Panama's reward had been given for its efforts rather than for results, since the cimarrones were still active.

John Oxenham, Francis Drake's lieutenant during the 1572-1573 cimarron alliance returned, in 1575, to the Isthmus to renew the pirate-cimarron friendship. Guided by Blacks, Oxenham and his men made their way overland to the Pacific. A boat was built and the allies began raiding and the unsuspecting towns of the Pacific coast.³⁸ After many

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 191.

³⁷Serrano y Sanz, Relaciones Historicas, p. 162

³⁸Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, p. 20; Garcia Pelaez, Memorias para la Historia, 1:190n, reports a boat able to carry seventy men was built.

misadventures and some successes, the pirates and the cimarrones had a falling out. The difficulties between the pirates and the cimarrones arose because Oxenham would not turn over a captured Spanish female. This was done despite an agreement that all prisoners were to be given to the Blacks. For this reason, the cimarrones abandoned the pirates.³⁹ Deprived of their black allies, Oxenham and his men were captured and taken to Lima where all except five ship's boys were executed.⁴⁰

If Oxenham's Pacific raid was not enough to worry the Spaniards, the French pirate Silvestre attacked the mines in the province of Veraguas not far from Panama during the same period.⁴¹ In 1576 Andrew Barker, a pirate out of Bristol, landed near the mouth of the Chagres River. He made an unsuccessful search for friendly cimarrones and eventually continued up the coast to raid the Honduras area.⁴² His fruitless attempt at linking up with the cimarrones may have been caused by the breakdown of the pirate-cimarron relations during the Oxenham fiasco. On the other hand,

³⁹Peter Gebhard, Pirates on the West Coast of New Spain, 1575-1742 (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1960), p. 57; Anderson, Old Panama, pp. 351-352, states that the chief difficulty was over booty. He mentions a "little maid" accompanied them, but does not elaborate.

⁴⁰Gebhard, Pirates on the West Coast, p. 60.

⁴¹Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, p. 20.

⁴²Anderson, Old Panama, p. 395.

the Spaniards were aware of the attempts at renewal of cimarron-pirate alliances. Confronted by the pirates and the cimarrones in the Caribbean and the previously safe Pacific, the Spanish authorities went into a frenzy of activity. Don Cristobal de Erasco, General of the Armada de la Guarda Costa de las Indias, led an expedition which destroyed a large cimarron palenque on the Atlantic coast in 1577.⁴³ Two hundred large houses were burned and farms and orchards were destroyed. A large number of Blacks were killed and three or four English sailors living with the cimarrones were captured.⁴⁴ The capture of the Englishmen served to prove that foreign pirates were aiding and abetting the cimarrones and increased the fear of the black element of the colonial society. For this reason royal decrees were issued ordering that the problem be ended by a war of extermination of the cimarrones.⁴⁵ Don Pedro de Ortega Valencia was appointed as captain general to marshal all available men of the Isthmian provinces of Castilla del Oro.

⁴³Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, pp. 181, 191-192.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 181.

⁴⁵CDI, 17:496-497, Cédula Real of May 23, 1578; Bowser, African Slave, pp. 201, 369.

To them were added men sent from Peru and 120 veteran soldiers from Spain.⁴⁶ Unfortunately the result of this military call up is not known.

Alarming news also reached the King from the Spanish ambassador in London. He reported the Drake was sailing with four ships to renew his cimarron alliance.⁴⁷ More royal decrees were issued in an attempt to stave off this danger, and another war against the cimarrones was begun.⁴⁸ The renewal of the alliance did not take place, but it was not due to the measures taken by the Spaniards. Drake was not planning simple raids of the Spanish colonies. Instead, he was setting out to circumnavigate the globe. Although the Spaniards were relieved that the pirates and the Blacks did not renew their alliance, efforts to wipe out the cimarrones militarily had mixed results. More successful were the efforts of Fray Manuel de Mercado Alderete, Bishop of Panama. ///

Not all the cimarrones who had followed Ballano accepted the peace made with the Spaniards. The Bishop

⁴⁶CDI, 17:498-501; Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, "Guerra contra los negros cimarrones y nombramiento de Pedro de Ortega Valencia para Capitán General de la misma, May 23, 1578, vol. 2932, doc. 167, fol. 217 and Ibid., vol. 2932, doc. 168, fol. 219.

⁴⁷Corbett, Drake and the Tudor Navy, p. 238. In reality he was setting out on his circumnavigation of the globe.

⁴⁸CDI, 17:475-476, 522-523, 553-554.

was finally able to gain the confidence of some of these bellicose cimarrones and begin negotiations. The Blacks were guaranteed their freedom by royal decree in 1574 and granted capitulaciones in 1579.⁴⁹ By the capitulaciones, the Blacks were

1. Given their freedom.
2. Possession of lands claimed by them.
3. Guaranteed that they would not be molested.
4. To promise to keep the peace.
5. To live in one area.
6. To aid in capturing other cimarrones and fugitives.
7. To choose their civil officials from their own ranks.
8. Assigned a garrison under the command of a Spanish officer to work with the chosen civil officials.
9. Assigned a priest to care for their spiritual welfare.⁵⁰

The two hundred cimarrones pacified by the Bishop formed a new settlement, which was named Santiago del Principe, two leagues from Panama.⁵¹ Later, the town was relocated near Nombre de Dios so that the Blacks could better aid in the defense of the city.⁵² When the population of Nombre

⁴⁹Ibid., 9:119-120.

⁵⁰Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, p. 21; CDI, 9:111, 119-120, the population of the town also included the Bayano Blacks; Anderson, Old Panama, p. 291; Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, pp. 191-192, reports that Dr. Alonso Criado de Castilla reduced and pacified a palenque on the Cerro de Cabra near Panama in 1578. This appears to be the Santiago del Principe group.

⁵¹Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, p. 21.

⁵²CDI, 9:120.

de Dios was established at Portobelo, the Blacks also made the move in 1585 to continue serving as part of the city defense.⁵³

Reformed cimarrones became an important element in the defense of the area. The former Ballano cimarrones were locally known as soldados moqillones or irregular soldiers.⁵⁴ During the Drake attack on the Isthmus in 1595, thirty eight black Ballano bowmen distinguished themselves in the defense of Nombre de Dios.⁵⁵ Despite this demonstration of loyalty to the crown, the former cimarrones were still viewed with suspicion by the Spaniards. One year after their aid against Drake, the Ballano Blacks were ordered to close a road which they had opened between the Chagres River and Venta de Cruces. It was feared that the pirates coming up the Chagres could use the road to attack Venta de Cruces, a station for overland traffic from Peru.⁵⁶ Since the cimarrones were operating in the area, the crown also suspected that some of the Ballano Blacks were involved and their town used as a sanctuary by the fugitives. Apparently the threat of execution for anyone

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Vásquez de Espinosa, Compendio, capítulo 896, reports that the Blacks were "brave and loyal in his Majesty's service"; CDI, 9:111, reports that the Blacks were called soldados moqillones.

⁵⁵CDI, 17:366-368.

⁵⁶Ibid., 17:363-364.

using the road ended the problem and the road apparently fell into disrepair and was swallowed up by the tropical undergrowth. This did not mean that the cimarron problems ceased.

In the region formerly controlled by Ballano, a group numbering three hundred, led by a Black named Anton Mandinga began operations which again endangered the area.⁵⁷ Through the efforts of Bishop Bartolomé Ledesma, negotiations were undertaken to pacify this group by offering them capitulaciones. In 1581 the negotiations were completed and received royal approval. The capitulaciones

1. Freed the fugitives.
2. Gave them the lands they claimed as their own.
3. Ordered that officials be appointed to govern them.
4. Assigned a parish priest to see to their spiritual welfare.
5. Ordered that livestock, seeds and tools, paid for by the royal funds, be provided to enable the Blacks to set up their farms.
6. Provided that a town be established at Pacora, three leagues from Panama.⁵⁸

Another group of Black cimarrones were reported to have been pacified and allowed to set up a town know as Santa Cruz la Real de los Negros Cimarrones. The site was on the banks of a large river one league up the coast near Puerto de Pericos, about one and one-half leagues from Panama.

⁵⁷Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, p. 23; Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 191, calls him Antonio Mandinga.

⁵⁸Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 191; Rojas y Arrieta, History of the Bishops, p. 23, reports that it was "not very far from Panama."

Details concerning this group are sketchy, but they were reported having settled in peace "in the service of the King."⁵⁹

Although the followers of Ballano, Antón Mandinga, and those of the towns of Santiago del Principe and Santa Cruz la Real were settled in peace by the use of capitulaciones, and many others were eliminated by military action during the sixteenth century, the cimarrones continued to trouble the Isthmus. A 1607 study reported that there were ninety-four cimarrones in the area around Panama that were causing great difficulties. The cimarrones had small farm plots throughout the bush areas but had set up no palenques. In this manner they were able to move quickly, escape pursuit, but always have food supplies readily available. For this reason, the Hermandad organized for Panama had no success in eliminating them. Since they had no central location for their homes, the Blacks were able to move from one farm plot to another for their supplies and elude capture. The 1697 study suggested that the failure to eliminate these cimarrones was partly attributable to Hermandad inaction.⁶⁰

Despite the lack of success by the city of Panama, Portobelo organized and paid for expeditions against the cimarrones. These expeditions were composed of Spanish and loyal Black fighting men. Their supplies were brought

⁵⁹Guillot, Negros Rebeldes, p. 191.

⁶⁰Serrano y Sanz, Relaciones Históricas, pp. 201-202.

to them by convoys of black slaves who were donated by their owners for the campaign. Although total success was not achieved at first, continued pressure by the Portobelan forces put the cimarrones on the defensive and eventually led to victory over the fugitives of the area.⁶¹

The success of the Portobelan punitive expedition was not repeated in Panama. The constant problems with the fugitives put a severe strain on the royal treasury of the Audiencia of Panama. For this reason, the governor of the Audiencia attempted to institute a collection of money from the vecinos in 1637. Strong resistance to this tax caused the governor to complain to the King and ask that a decree be issued so that a cimarron tax could be collected as was being done in Mexico City, Cartagena and Havana.⁶² The King acceded to the request and decreed on November 3, 1639, that a caja de cimarrones or cimarron treasury be set up for the collection of money from the slave owners.⁶³ How successfully the funds were utilized is not known, but an even greater threat to Spanish control of the Isthmus was begun by a foreign intrusion into the area.

Scottish merchants and politicians, hoping to obtain

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²CDI, 17:212 and 21:80.

⁶³Ibid.

some of the economic gains achieved by the English in the Indies, organized the Darien Company. The main objective of the Company was the establishment of a trading colony on the Isthmus of Panama. Almost immediately upon arrival in the area in 1698, leaders of the colony made a treaty of alliance with five cimarron Indian chieftains. One of these had led about three thousand warriors in attacks on the Spaniards for over a year. Another, who used the French name of Corbet, was an ally of French pirates.⁶⁴ The Scots hoped that the Indian alliance and Spanish problems with black cimarrones would serve as a safeguard for their colonizing attempt. They were aware that up to 1500 black cimarrones, supplied with ammunition and weapons by foreign traders, had seriously threatened Portobelo. No information is available about these Blacks other than the Spaniards were able to eliminate the danger, in early 1698, by granting them independence in return for peace. A Scottish member of the Darien Company reported that by November 1698, "hundreds of them [the former black cimarrones] might been [seen in] Porto Bello strutting

⁶⁴Francis Russel Hart, The Disaster of Darien, The Story of the Scots Settlement and the Causes of its Failure, 1699-1701 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), pp 199, 204. The author quotes liberally from the "Journal" of a Mr. Rose, a member of the colony.

and taking the right hand of their Master, who dared not say it was ill done."⁶⁵ With the danger from the black cimarrones gone, the Spaniards turned their attention to the Scots and the Indian cimarrones.

The viceroy of New Spain, don Sarmiento de Valladares, alerted the commander of the fleet of the danger and noted that precautions should be taken to see that the Isthmus not fall into the hands of foreigners. If this occurred, the viceroy declared, the Blacks and mulattoes of the Pacific ports might join them in overthrowing Spanish control.⁶⁶ To prevent such an event, the Council of the Indies recommended to the crown that the Indian cimarrones be attracted to the Spaniards by granting them capitulaciones. In this manner, the Council hoped that the Indians would be of assistance in expelling the Scots.⁶⁷

While there is little evidence of prolonged or substantial cimarron-Scot military cooperation, In February 1699, Chief Pedro led his Indian cimarrones and one hundred Scots in repelling a Spanish attack.⁶⁸ Despite this success of the allies, problems developed as the Scots began to

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 212.

⁶⁶Ibid., appendix xv, p. 258

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 115n, 9 May 1699.

⁶⁸Ibid., 85-86; Anderson, Old Panama, p. 495, declares the force consisted of forty Indians and two hundred Scots.

feel the effects of life in the tropics and lack of support from Scotland. Supplies were not sent and within a short time, goods used to keep the friendship of the cimarrones were exhausted, as were European goods needed for their own health and upkeep. Finally in early 1700 Spanish naval and land forces attacked the colony. Weakened physically and without their allies, the Scots quickly surrendered.⁶⁹ One century ended and another began with the elimination of danger from foreign and cimarron collusion.

No information concerning cimarron revolts in the Isthmus during the eighteenth century has appeared. This does not mean that problems controlling fugitive slaves did not trouble the Isthmus. Where there was a slave population, inevitably there were fugitives.

It must be noted that the Isthmian free Blacks received special recognition from the crown for their aid in defending the area. The King ordered all Spaniards to treat the free Blacks well and ordered royal officials to protect the rights granted them because of their aid in the defense of the Isthmus.⁷⁰ Free Blacks served in regular army and militia units. Many of these were

⁶⁹Hart, Disaster of Darien, pp. 138-139, reports the land force consisted of Spaniards, Blacks, Indians and "a few Frenchmen."

⁷⁰Recopilación, libro 7, título 5, leyes 10 and 11.

former cimarrones or the descendents of those pacified by the implementation of capitulaciones.

The pacification methods used by the Spaniards in the Isthmus of Panama were the same as those used in other areas of the Indies. Owners of the fugitives, bounty hunters, respective legislation and the clergy were used, but the emphasis was on force of arms which, at times, necessitated large scale military movements. If none of these methods succeeded, capitulaciones were used.

Capitulaciones were successfully used to pacify cimarrones five times in the Isthmus. Ballano was twice offered capitulaciones. Although the first attempt ended in failure, they were successful the second time. They were also used to establish the pacified cimarron towns of Santiago del Principe, Pacora, Santa Cruz la Real de los Negros Cimarrones and pacifying the Blacks at Portobelo during the Darien Company fiasco.

The value of capitulaciones as a means of eliminating cimarrones was recognized by officials in the Indies and in Spain. As has been pointed out, various officials suggested the implementation of capitulaciones to pacify cimarrones. But it must be remembered, that despite the success of this method, capitulaciones never became the primary means of Black or Indian cimarron pacification. They were used when all else failed.

CHAPTER VI

Cimarron Revolts And Cimarron Pacification In Colonial Colombia

The first known outbreak of cimarron violence in the territory comprising the modern nation of Colombia occurred on February 26, 1531. The fugitives banded together at a palenque known as la Ramada. When their strength had increased sufficiently to enable them to attack populated areas, they launched a night assault against Santa Marta. Under cover of darkness, the cimarrones set fire to the city. At day-break, the only house left standing was that belonging to the governor. This building survived because it was the only one constructed of stone rather than of wood, as the others were. Oddly, there are no reports that the cimarrones pillaged the town during the confusion caused by the fire. Although the inhabitants of Santa Marta began rebuilding immediately, no information is available concerning any reprisal action taken against the cimarrones.¹

Cartagena, the chief seaport for northern South America, received great numbers of black slaves destined for other areas of the continent. Control of the large numbers of slaves and the free black population was a problem from the early years of the sixteenth century.

¹Herrera y Tordesillas, Historia General, 7:331-332; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 117, reports that it occurred in 1529.

This engendered the development of the cimarron problems, but little success was realized in suppressing the cimarrones militarily. The officials of the city, therefore, suggested to the King that the fugitives might be persuaded to live in peace if they were granted a royal pardon for their crimes.²

The King acknowledged their suggestion in 1540, telling them that on recommendation of the Council of the Indies, the governor of Cartagena could begin negotiations with the cimarrones. The King ordered that the pardon be made known throughout the area so that the free and slave Blacks would pass on the terms to the cimarrones.³ The terms consisted of a pardon for any black fugitive who returned to work for his former master and a pardon for any crime committed prior to the publication of the decree.⁴ The absurdity of the plan appears to have been lost on the Spaniards. They seemed to believe that all cimarrones would rather give up their free, albeit fugitive life, in exchange for a life of slavery.

It is not known if any fugitives surrendered. However, it appears unlikely, since many cimarrones were active the following year. For this reason, the governor

²Friede, Documentos Inéditos, 6:27-28, King to the Governor of Cartagena, September 6, 1540.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

of Cartagena issued an ordenanza, in June 1541, giving the Indians the right to capture, dead or alive, any fugitive Black they might encounter. Those captured were to be brought to Cartagena for which the Indians were to receive a bounty of ten pesos.⁵ While no success is reported for the bounty plan, the antagonism between the Blacks and the Indians was heightened and helped lessen the threat of an alliance between the two groups which might lead to an overthrow of Spanish rule.

Miguel Díez Armendáriz, the Juez de Residencia in Cartagena, reported to the King that one group of Blacks had eluded capture for nine years. During that time, they killed many Spaniards and abducted countless Indians. He went on to say that a punitive force was sent out to defeat the cimarrones at the palenque located four leagues from Santiago de Tolú.⁶ Apparently, the expedition was sent out because the threat had become more than the usual problem of black fugitives. Four Blacks led forty Indians in an attack on the town of Tofeme, where the cimarrones killed more than twenty peaceful Indians and took 250 or 300 captives to their stronghold.⁷

⁵Ibid., 6:174-175. Ordenanzas, June 21, 1541.

⁶Ibid., 8:68-69, Díez de Armendáriz to King, July 24, 1545.

⁷Ibid.

In view of the ratio between the captives and the captors the situation is not difficult to understand. It is likely that some of these were not unwilling captives. No doubt Díez de Armendáriz knew this. Fearing the spread of an alliance between Blacks and Indians, he ordered out a twenty-five man expedition, to return to Cartagena only after having captured or destroyed the cimarrones. He also promised rewards for those who killed cimarrones and even greater rewards for those captured, "so that they might be put to better use."⁸ Unfortunately, no record of the success or failure of the mission is available, although the leader of the Spanish expedition appears to have survived and later become the focus of royal lawsuits.⁹

As indicated earlier, by late 1555 cimarrones were causing so many problems around Cartagena, Panama and Uraba that an official of Nombre de Dios wrote to the King suggesting a general call up of all male citizens of the three affected cities.¹⁰ There can be no doubt that this problem was part of that engendered by the cimarron revolt of Ballano in the Isthmus, but it is not known if this recommendation was acted upon. It must be noted that a

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., 7:186, Real Cédula.

¹⁰RAH, tomo 69, doc. 1499, fol. 333, Francisco de Pradanos to King, December 22, 1555; Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:32-33.

general call up was soon issued by the Marqués de Cañete, which would lead to the previously mentioned defeat and pacification of the Ballano cimarrones in the Isthmus.¹¹

Large numbers of black slaves were used to work in the gold mines in what is now Colombia. The rich Zaragoza mines suffered a catastrophic revolt in 1598.¹² The Blacks killed all Spaniards who fell into their hands, fled the mines, and established a palenque. Juan Meléndez de Valdés was appointed Captain General of a punitive expedition to destroy the rebels. Under his leadership the palenque was located and completely destroyed in 1599. The leaders were executed and the captured survivors were reenslaved.¹³ The revolt was destroyed; but, by reenslaving the survivors, the seeds of discontent were spread among other slaves who had never been cimarrones.

The development of settlements in the seventeenth century did not lessen the cimarron problems. In fact, bureaucratic problems prevented the destruction of a palenque located on the banks of the Madalena River not far from Cartagena. The palenque had been known to be in the area for fifty years. But jurisdictional problems between

¹¹Saco, Esclavitud de la Raza Africana, 4:33.

¹²Vázquez de Espinosa, Compendio, capítulos 1027, 1028; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, pp. 118-123, declares the revolt was put down with tropas reales.

¹³Vázquez de Espinosa, Compendio, capítulos 1027, 1028; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, pp. 118-123.

the governor of Santa Marta and Cartagena prevented the destruction of the black stronghold.¹⁴ Finally, over the protestations of the governor of Santa Marta, an expedition was sent from Cartagena which conquered the Blacks. Other than knowing that the area was pacified and the cimarrones baptized, no other information is available.¹⁵

The first large scale uprising of the seventeenth century was caused by slave mistreatment by their owner Juan Gomez, a resident of Cartagena. In 1600, Domingo Bicho, a slave of Black African royalty, fled the Gomez property with three black males and four females. The fugitives fled to an area near Tolu and established a settlement.¹⁶ Gomez organized an expedition to recapture his slaves,

¹⁴Martinez Delgado and Cruz Santos, Historia Extensa, 3:libro 4, p. 49 and libro 2, p. 60, report a revolt of 1603 in which forty cimarrones were given lands and their freedom in exchange for settling peacefully, but no other information is available.

¹⁵Ibid., 3:libro 4, p. 49.

¹⁶Ibid., 3:libro 1, p. 387, give the name as Domingo Bicho; Aquiles Escalante, Palenques in Colombia in Richard Price ed., Maroon Societies: Rebel Communities in the Americas (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1973), pp. 76-77, reports that he belonged to a merchant Juan de Palacios. His escape was made with thirty black men and women who set up a palenque in "the forests and marshy areas of Matuna (south of the town of Tolú"; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 114, repeats the numbers of fugitives, and declares that he was known as Domingo Bioho and Domingo el Rey Benkos; Angel Valtierra, El Santo que liberto una raza, San Pedro Claver, Esclavo de los esclavos negros, Su vida y su epoca (1580-1654) Bogotá: imprenta Nacional, 1954), p. 175 declares his name was Benkos Biojo.

but in the ensuing battle the slave owner was killed and the Spaniards routed.¹⁷ As news of the victory spread, large numbers of cimarrones, scattered throughout the area, joined the band led by Domingo. Within a short time, the cimarron group had become so numerous that they were forced to move to an area farther south from the Spanish controlled areas to a densely wooded mountainside. The Blacks set up a palenque and their leader discarded the name imposed on him by his Spanish master and took the title of King Benkos.¹⁸

Under their leader, with their stronghold established, the cimarrones began attacking the areas around Mompox, Tolu, and Tenerife. King Benkos placed spies in Spanish settlements throughout the countryside surrounding the palenque to prevent a surprise attack by the Spaniards. The preparations were justified. Spies of the Cimarrones warned that an expedition led by Diego Hernández Calvo, the alcalde of the Hermandad, had set out in search of the fugitives.¹⁹

When the two opposing forces finally met in combat,

¹⁷Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 114; Escalante, Palenques en Colombia, p. 78.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

the Spanish expedition was quickly defeated and Hernández de Calvo's second in command, Francisco de Campos was captured.²⁰

Tradition has it that de Campos had been romantically involved with Benko's daughter, Princess Orika, during the time that she, her mother and brother had been his property. When Orika was reunited with the captive de Campos, she attempted to help him escape the palenque. Discovered by the other cimarrones, de Campos was killed and Orika executed.²¹

Efforts by the Spaniards to eliminate the fugitives had little effect, the cimarrones attacked Spanish holdings for about thirteen years. Even black work crews that ventured out of the safety of the cities were not immune. Efforts to defeat the cimarrones militarily cost more than 36,612 pesos.²² With no end in sight to the problem and prompted by the prospect of continued expenditures, the governor, don Diego Fernández de Velasco, decided to try and negotiate a peace settlement. The negotiations

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Escalante, Palenques en Colombia, p. 78.

²²Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 115; Martínez Delgado and Cruz Santos, Historia Extensa, 3:book I, p. 387, reports it to be 36,612 pesos 3 reales.

were successful and the cimarrones were granted capitulaciones in which the Blacks were

1. Guaranteed their freedom.
2. Permitted to enter Cartagena freely.
3. Given title to their fram lands.
4. Permitted to establish a settlement which was named in San Basilio del Palenque.
5. Promised to live in peace.

At royal request, Benkos agreed to no longer use the title Rey del Arcabuco or King of the Woods.²³

The peace was shortlived. In 1619 Benkos was implicated in a plot to throw off Spanish control. He was captured and hanged.²⁴ Although they had lost their leader, Benkos' subjects remained at peace. But in 1696, descendents of the original cimarrones attempted a revolt which was summarily put down.²⁵ A third revolt took place during the years of 1713 and 1717. This revolt was ended when Bishop Antonio Maria Casiani of Congregation of San Basilio with the aid of Francisco Baloco Leigrave, governor of Cartagena negotiated capitulaciones with the Blacks.²⁶ The capitulaciones were that

1. All the rebels were declared free.

²³Martínez Delgado and Cruz Santos, Historia Extensa, 3: libro 1, p. 387, declares that the cimarrones sought peace because they were tired of a life of pillage; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 115; Escalante, Palenques Colombia, p. 78.

²⁴Escalante, Palenques en Colombia, p. 79.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

2. A general pardon was issued for all crimes they had committed.
3. The Blacks were given the power to choose their political leader, military leader and alcalde from among themselves.
4. The Blacks promised to live in peace.
5. The Blacks promised to allow no fugitives to live among them.²⁷

Although it would appear that the Blacks had attained self-government, this was not the case. All officials chosen were subject to approval of the governor of Cartagena. But the agreement was satisfactory to both sides, and the Blacks settled in peace.²⁸

In 1774 Captain Antonio de la Torre Miranda was commissioned to explore the interior of the viceroyalty and resettle scattered groups of persons living there. De La Torre is reported having resettled the San Balilio Blacks and gained their aid in building a road to open communications between Cartagena and Tolú. The Blacks exchanged their aid for more capitulaciones. They were granted in 1774,

1. The right, in perpetuity, to chose their own leader.
2. The right to exclude all whites, except for a priest, from living among them.²⁹

While the first Benkos revolt was occurring,

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., p. 80.

²⁹José Manuel Groot, Historia Eclesiastica y Civil de Nueva Granada, tomada de la 2ª edición de Medardo Rivas, Bogotá, 1889, 3 vols. (Bogota; Biblioteca de Autores Colombianos) 2:293: Escalante, Palenques en Colombia, P. 80.

the slaves in the mining city of Remedios revolted, fled to the hills, and became cimarrones. Attacking from strongholds they formed in the mountains, they began strangling the lines of commerce and communications between Remedios and the rest of the viceroyalty. Their successes served to attract other cimarrones and caused peaceful slaves to run away and join them.³⁰

Fearing that the Remedios and Benkos rebels might join forces, a large expeditionary force was sent out by the Presidente of the Audiencia of Santa Fe de Bogota. In the battle, the cimarrones were defeated, their leaders captured, returned to Remedios and executed. The survivors were reenslaved and divided among the mines to provide labor.³¹ The King was so pleased with the resolution of the problem, that he sent personal congratulations to the Presidente. The Crown then ordered that, thereafter, rebellious Blacks were to be condemned to serve in the galleys and sent to Cartagena.³²

Cartagena could have done without the captured rebellious Blacks. The Procurador General of the Jesuits

³⁰Martínez Delgado and Cruz Santos, Historia Extensa, 3: libro 1, p. 388.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

in the Cartagena estimated in 1630 that the city annually received eight to nine thousand slaves.³³ Many of these stayed in the viceroyalty rather than being shipped to other areas of the continent. Despite a high mortality rate, the black population greatly outnumbered the whites. The racial imbalance served to increase Spanish fears of cimarron revolts. These fears were realized in 1634, when 500 Blacks of the palenques of Limon, Polini, and Sanaguare joined forces and retreated to isolated mountain valleys. There they chose Leonor as their queen and declared themselves independent from Spanish rule.³⁴

The Spaniards were especially frightened, since there were at least two thousand slaves working in the area. Panic set in when the Blacks, from their main palenque at Menon, attacked and destroyed some isolated estancias killing fifty Spaniards and slaughtering great numbers of Indians. Hoping to prevent a generalized uprising among slaves, a punitive expedition of 500 veteran fighting men was mustered by the authorities. After a forced march, the Spaniards were able to make their way undetected to the cimarron stronghold. The palenque was encircled, stormed and, after a fierce battle, the Blacks routed.

³³Ibid., 3:libro 2, p. 108

³⁴Ibid., 3:libro 2, p. 60.

Many cimarrones were killed, three hundred and thirteen were taken prisoner and returned to Cartagena where twenty three were executed. The survivors were reenslaved.³⁵ But as so often happened, the problem had not been eradicated. Some cimarrones were able to elude capture and escape to the bush.³⁶ The reenslaved cimarrones took their resentment of the Spaniards into new areas so that the revolutionary process would eventually recur,

Little information concerning the pacification of the cimarrones during the last half of the seventeenth century has come to light. This does not mean that cimarron activity ceased. Cannibal cimarrones reportedly ate at least one Spaniard near Cartagena sometime after 1683.³⁷ One group of Blacks from the Cartagena area is reported having fled into the province of Santa Marta to escape harsh treatment at the hands of the Justicias around 1650. Don Pedro de Zapata, the governor of Cartagena sent troops, defeated these cimarrones and returned them to their original area.³⁸ No indication is given of the final disposition of the recaptured cimarrones.

³⁵Ibid.,

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Groot, Historia Eclesiástica, 1:capitulo 20, p.595.

³⁸Martínez Delgado and Cruz Santos, Historia Extensa, 3 libro 4, p. 49. Paradoxically, in 3:libro 2, p. 322, it is reported that they began the revolt within the province of Santa Marta. Despite the pacification of the cimarrones, litigation ensued because of what the governor of Santa Marta saw as an invasion of his jurisdictional prerogatives.

Palenques of varying sizes were scattered throughout Colombia by 1703. Two of the larger ones were located in the Sierra Nevada and at Santa Cruz de Masinga. Fray Andrés Pico, a missionary in these remote areas was able to gain their confidence and worked among the Christian and non-Christian cimarrones for an extended period. When he reported the receptiveness of the fugitives to his ministrations, the Franciscan Provincial commissioned him special missionary to the palenques.³⁹ He was also commissioned to act as the representative of the colonial government by don Alonso Valero Caballero, the governor of Santa Marta. The governor instructed Father Pico to offer the Blacks their freedom and the lands on which they lived, and to hear any proposals they might make, in order that "they reduce themselves to live in a Christian manner under royal authority."⁴⁰

Within a month after having returned to the palenques, Father Pico was able to return to Santa Marta with a delegation of the leaders of the cimarrones. The prospect

³⁹Groot, Historia Eclesiástica, 1: capitulo 21, pp. 661-663, declares these to be the first granted their freedom by royal authority; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 117, reports the reduced cimarrones were those of the Sierra Nevada.

⁴⁰Ibid.

of the pacification of the cimarrones prompted the citizens of the city to respond to the event by honoring and providing lodging for the Blacks. Two days after their arrival in the city, on March 14, 1704, at ceremonies attended by all the important dignitaries of the city, the Blacks were solemnly baptized. In this manner group of fugitives was brought under Spanish control by capitulaciones.⁴¹

Cimarron revolts occurred in 1706 at Girardota, Marinilla, and Rio Negro. The authorities followed the pattern of Father Pico, and pacified these cimarrones with capitulaciones. The Blacks were established in a town named Ure, thirty kilometers northeast of the city of Cáceres.⁴² Unfortunately, no other information is available.

Forty Blacks revolted at Tado in 1728. The leaders were tricked into a meeting by the authorities, captured and executed. Although it seems doubtful, it is reported that the survivors who were able to escape to the bush "posed no immediate threat to Spanish domination."⁴³

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 118.

⁴³William F. Sharp, Manumission, Libres and Black Resistance: The Colombian Choco, 1680-1810 in Toplin, Slavery and Race Relations, p. 103.

Military campaigns were unsuccessful against a strongly defended palenque called el Castillo, located on the eastern end of the Patia Valley in the gobernación of Popayán. The Audiencia of Quito was able to gain a truce with the cimarrones in 1732, by offering guarantees of freedom and that they would be allowed to live in peace if the Blacks promised to allow no new fugitives to join them. The terms were accepted, but the agreement was soon broken when the Blacks began harboring fugitives and attacking Spanish properties. Negotiations and small scale military expeditions proved unsuccessful until 1745 when a one hundred man expedition attacked, defeated and scattered the cimarrones. Fears that the survivors would regroup and renew the problems prompted Father Jose Joaquín de Barrutiete to seek out the survivors. The priest was able to overcome their suspicions and persuade the fugitives to surrender. In this manner, the danger from these cimarrones was finally eliminated.⁴⁴

The effectiveness of the clergy in the pacification of cimarrones can not be overstated. Both Indian and Black cimarrones, at times, sought the protective umbrella of the Church against the lay Spanish population. This is borne out again by the success of the Agustinian, Fray

⁴⁴Escalante, Negro en Colombia, p. 117

Francisco Javier de la Paz, who was able to pacify and relocate two hundred Indians and a number of fugitive Blacks at two settlements in Mocoa during 1739.⁴⁵ The pacification effort of Father de la Paz was supported by the governor of Popayán, who saw this as a means of easily pacifying the cimarrones.

Large numbers of black cimarrones were known to be living scattered throughout the southern part of Cartagena province by the 1780s. The viceroy-archbishop, Antonio Caballero y Góngora, commissioned Father Joseph Palacios de la Vega to minister to the religious well being of the Indians and cimarrones in the unsettled region. The priest entered the region and fearlessly confronted Indians, Blacks and castizos who were not always ready to accept his teaching. He was able to overcome their fear of the Spaniards, problems with jealous witch doctors and was able to baptize untold numbers of these people. He also destroyed palenques at Guamal and Palizada, with the help of his converts and aides.⁴⁶ Despite his success, his commission was not renewed upon expiration. Palacios de la Vega had not cleared the area of scattered bands. He reported that

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 118; Escalante, Palenques en Colombia, p. 75, reports the date as 1793.

⁴⁶p. Joseph Palacios de la Vega, Diario de Viaje entre los Indios y Negros de la Provincia de Cartagena en el Nuevo Reino de Granada, 1787-1788 Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, ed., (Bogota: Editorial ABC, 1955), pp. 95-105.

many of those living in the area were involved in contraband trade and scattered over such a vast territory that he had not been able to complete his commission.⁴⁷ What the hard working priest did not seem to understand was that he had been given a task which could never be completed until the root of the problem was removed. Cimarrones would continue until slavery itself was abolished.

The methods employed in pacifying the black cimarrones in the area comprising the modern nation of Colombia were similar to those utilized in the viceroyalty of New Spain and the Isthmus of Panama. Punitive expeditions, bounty hunters, repressive legislation and capitulaciones were used to suppress the cimarrones. The available sources indicate that members of the clergy played a greater role in cimarron pacification in colonial Colombia than in the other areas studied.⁴⁸ Since Cartagena was the chief port of entry for Blacks into South America, this is an important factor for the missionary work of the clergy. Members of

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 105; Sharp, "Manumission", in Toplin, Slavery and Race Relations, p. 98, declares that free Blacks joined the cimarrones because avenues for political, social and economic advancement were close to them.

⁴⁸Escalante, "Palenques in Colombia", in Price, Maroon Societies, pp. 75, 79; Groot, Historia Eclesiastica, 1:capítulo 21, pp. 661-663; Escalante, Negro en Colombia, pp. 117-118.

many orders were able to gain the confidence of the cimarrones and effect their pacification by acting as intermediaries with colonial officials. The clergy, especially members of the Jesuit order did much work among the Blacks in colonial Colombia.

Two of the most outstanding of these were Father Alonso de Sandoval and Saint Peter Claver.⁴⁹ Sandoval stands out for his monumental work, Naturaliza, policia sagrada y profana, costumbres y rito, disciplina y catecismo evangelico de los etiofes. The work studied the location of the world black populations, their enslavement and Christianization. It was also a methodology and admonition to the Jesuits to care for the spiritual well-being of the enslaved Blacks.⁵⁰ The work was not an anti-slavery tract and should be considered in its historical context and not from the twentieth century perspective.

Saint Peter Claver actively participated in the Christianization of the black slaves and dedicated his life to alleviating their condition. Claver left no historical document of importance as did Sandoval, but instead left his imprint on the work of the Jesuits among the Blacks. His

⁴⁹Valtierra, Santo que liberto, presents a well researched, though at times emotional, biography of Claver.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 795-812, presents a brief description of the chapters and sometimes emotional analysis of the Sandoval work.

unselfish dedication to the Blacks and the example he set undoubtedly helped in the pacification of the Blacks as well as in saving their bodies and their souls.

Although neither Claver nor Sandoval were prominent in obtaining cimarron pacification by capitulaciones, special attention must be given to this method. Between 1540, when the crown offered an amnesty to cimarrones in colonial Colombia, and 1745 when a capitulacion was given to the fugitives at the El Castillo palenque, peace by negotiation was effected eight times. Although this method did not always prove effective, the majority of times the Blacks were pacified or gained rights from the crown. Capitulaciones brought the fugitives into the mainstream of colonial life rather than allowing them to remain a dangerous fringe element, made them participants and defenders of the Spanish empire.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusions

The activities of black cimarrones began in the Indies in 1503 and continued through the Independence period. The elimination of the cimarrones followed a progression of methods. Initially, the owners of the fugitives attempted the recapture and re-enslavement of the fugitives. If this proved unsuccessful, bounty hunters known as rancheadores or capitanes de monte attempted to locate the cimarrones and procure their recapture. At times, if they had been organized, Hermandades or constabularies were employed. If success was still not attained, large scale punitive expeditions sought to locate and destroy the cimarrones. Members of the clergy were also utilized to pacify or act as mediators for peace. At times, when none of the aforementioned proved successful, the fugitives were pacified by the implementation of capitulaciones or peace terms. The prototype of these settlements was the capitulacion negotiated, in 1533, between the Indian cimarron cacique Enriquillo in Hispaniola and the crown.

Capitulaciones were an integral part of Spanish law by which the crown or its agents granted concessions to a private party for a specific enterprise of public service.

The pact between the crown and Enriquillo was the first application with someone other than a European. The capitulaciones granted to Enquillo and black cimarrones brought fugitives under Spanish control and made them useful citizens and defenders of the empire.

The role of the clergy in pacifying cimarrones has never been fully explored, but its importance cannot be overstated. Blacks saw the priests as offering the protective umbrella of the Church against the cruelty of the slave owners and colonial officials. For this reason, priests were able to negotiate with fugitives and gain their confidence when the members of the laity could not.

Capitulaciones, whether offered through clerics or members of the laity, were the most useful method of pacifying the cimarrones. Under this procedure, Blacks were guaranteed their freedom from reenslavement, given lands, the right to choose their own officials, and at times, equipment to begin a new life in semi-autonomous communities. In return, the cimarrones agreed to keep the peace, prohibited other fugitive slaves from joining them and became professional fugitive hunters for the colonial authorities. In this manner, the former fugitives used their knowledge of the cimarron psychology and warfare techniques to become an important adjunct of the colonial peace keeping apparatus, and served as a deterrent to black slave revolts. The crown recognized the importance

of obtaining and maintaining the peace and permitted the establishment of at least ten communities of former cimarrones. These were Enriquillo (Hispaniola, 1533), San Lorenzo de los Negros-Yanga (Mexico, 1609), Amapá (Mexico, 1768), Ballano (Panama, 1550s), Santiago del Principe (Panama, 1579), Santa Cruz la Real de los Negros Cimarrones (Panama, 1580s), San Basilio del Palenque (Colombia, 1600s), Santa Cruz de Masinga (Colombia, 1704), Uré (Colombia, 1706), El Castillo (Colombia, 1732). Capitulaciones allowed these reformed cimarrones a degree of social mobility by becoming officials within these communities, landowners and small businessmen. As productive members of the colonial society these Blacks often became staunch supporters of the crown, since they believed that their status was owed to the King who protected them from the machinations of the colonials. As the colonial period progressed, the crown took note of this and actively sought to build closer ties with those of black African ancestry. This was especially true during the Bourbon period.

During the period of Bourbon reforms, a Black Code was issued for the Spanish colonies in 1789. The Code was a manifestation of an humanitarian view of slavery and attempt at organizing and regulating slave life. Its provisions served to regulate colonial authorities, slave owners, and slaves. The code also formulated the legal status of the slaves, which had become difficult to

understand because of the great quantity of legislation promulgated by the crown and various colonial governmental bodies. Although the Black Code was a forward step for the slaves, it was issued at an inopportune time. The French Revolution, black revolts in Haiti and British held Jamaica served to fuel denunciations of the Code by its opponents who saw it as a weakening of slave control. Fearful of repercussions from a vocal and increasingly rebellious creole element, the Black Code was suspended in 1794.¹ The Blacks did not see the lack of enforcement of the Code as a betrayal by the crown. Instead, the members of the race saw their enemies to be the creoles. This was reinforced by repeated creole attempts to prevent social mobility and to impose restriction of privilege relative to those of African ancestry.

The growth of the population of mixed races saw some of these persons rise to such affluence that they were able to petition the King for dispensations from certain restrictions and even allow their release from the classification of "colored" to that of a white. The

¹Mellafe, Rolando, Negro Slavery in Latin America, trans. S.W.S. Judge, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp 107-108; Saco, Esclavitud la Raza Africana, 3:8-16.

great numbers of petitions caused the crown to formulate the Gracias al sacar law which allowed this change of classification.² Promulgated in 1795, the law set the schedule of prerequisites which had to be fulfilled and the tariffs to be charged before the change could be recognized. The law met with stiff opposition from the creoles. The monarch ignored the creole opposition and strong efforts to have the law rescinded or suppressed, and instead, issued a more far reaching Gracias al Sacar in 1801

The efforts made by the crown to provide avenues of social mobility, slave protection, and the granting of capitulaciones with their resultant free Black communities, bore fruit in the nineteenth century. When the wars of Independence began, those of African ancestry were often those who were the greatest partisans of the monarch.³ Thus it was that capitulaciones, originally granted to indominable black fugitives fighting against the interest of the crown, served to make them productive citizens and loyal defenders of the King.

²Related studies can be found in the previously cited King, Jose Ponciano and Tate, Jose Ponseano.

³Related studies are found in Jose M. Capdequí, "The Impact of the Wars of Independence on the Institutional life of the New Kingdom of Granada" The Americas 17(January 1961), pp. 111-222; Juan Bosch, Bolivar y la Guerra Social (Buneos Aires: Editorial J. Alvarez, 1966); Germán Carrera Damas, Boves, Aspectos Socio-Económico (Caracas: Ministerio de Educación, dirección técnica, departamento de Publicaciones, 1968); James F. King, "A Royalist View of the Colored Castes in the Venezuelan War of Independence" HADR 33(November 1953), pp. 527-537.

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Glossary

- Adelanto or adelantado mayor: the governor of a large district having military, judicial and administrative powers.
- Alabarda: a halberd or combination spear and battle-axe
- Alabardero: soldier assigned to use a halberd
- Alcabala: sales tax
- Alcalde or alcalde ordinario: official having immediate superintendency of a town or city and having knowledge of judicial matters.
- Alcalde del crimen: judge of criminal cases
- Alcalde mayor: chief judge in a municipality having several alcaldes.
- Alferez real: a royal second lieutenant
- Alguacil: a bailiff or constable
- Alguacil mayor: chief constable or high sheriff who also led municipal levies in war.
- Almojarifazgo: import tax
- Arcabús: an early type of firearm
- Arcabucero: soldier assigned to use an arcabus
- Asentista: contractor
- Asiento: a contract
- Audiencia: royal court having supreme jurisdiction over a kingdom.
- Auto: a judicial decree or sentence
- Ayuntamiento: local council of property owners and heads of important families who elected the cabildo.
- Bando: an edict or proclamation
- Bisoño: a new soldier or fresh recruit

- Caballería: the amount of land given to a cavalryman measuring 600 by 14,00 pasos or about 174 acres.
- Caballero: a knight, gentleman, or member of the lesser nobility
- Cabildo: a town government
- Cabo: a corporal or non-commissioned officer
- Capitán de monte: expert tracker or bounty hunter
- Capitulaciones: agreements between the crown and a private party for a specific undertaking.
- Carga: a load of about two fanegas
- Cargadores de negros: slave shippers
- Carro: a cart
- Casas reales: principal political buildings of a town
- Castas: the castes or persons of mixed racial ancestry
- Castizo: a member of the castes
- Cepo: a punishment stock
- Cima: a mount top or summit
- Cimarrón: a term to describe something wild, untamed or unruly, applied to geographic areas, animals or fugitive Indians and Blacks.
- Cofradía: a sodality, religious brotherhood, or mutual aid society
- Colono: a planter
- Consulado: a commercial guild for development of trade
- Corregidor: a magistrate having civil and jurisdiction over a given area.
- Corregimiento: jurisdictional area of a corregidor.
- Cuadrilla: a work crew or gang or armed men
- Dean: the presiding official of a cathedral
- Dias de fiesta: holidays

Días feriados: days when the courts or tribunals were not held

Escudero: squire

Estancia: a farm, ranch or stock raising establishment

Estanciero: an estancia owner.

Explotación: an exploitation, operation or factory

Fanega: a grain measure of about 1.5 bushels or a land measure of about 1.6 acres.

Fiscal: prosecuting officer

Flota: the annual fleet from Spain to Veracruz

Fuero: a charter, constitution or code of laws or privileges granted by the crown in a group or area.

Gente de servicio: common laborers

Gobernación: a political area

Grumete: ships boys or cabin boys

Hacendados: owners of haciendas

Hacienda: finance, landed property or ranch

Hombre de casta: see castizo

Horro: free Black

Iglesia de visita: subordinate church visited by non-resident clergy.

Ingenio: a sugar mill

Interrogatorio: a survey

Juez de apelacion: an appeal judge

Juez de residencia: judicial review judge

Justicia: a magistrate

Justicia Mayor: a chief magistrate

Ladino: an hispanicized Black or Indian

Legua: 4.18 kilometers

- Letrado: a lawyer, legist, person learned in law
- Libra: a unit of money in fourteenth century Castile
- Maese de Campo: second in command, person usually in charge of supplies and tactics.
- Mayoral: a type of leader, spokesman, or overseer
- Mestizo: a person of Spanish and Indian ancestry
- Monte: mountain, hill, woods or forest
- Moreno: brown, brown skinned person, or free born Black
- Municipio: township
- Nostalgia Banzo: melancholy state when slaves seemed to simply stop living and die for no apparent reason.
- Obraje: textile factory
- Oidor: magistrate of an Audiencia
- Ordenanza: ordinance or law
- Oro de Tipuzque: gold debased with copper used by the Aztecs
- Palenque: palisade, fortress, or stronghold
- Pastoría: a group of shepherds or livestock camp
- Pechero: a taxpayer
- Peon: a footsoldier or peasant
- Peonía: the amount of land given to a peon, about half that of a caballería.
- Pesquisidor: a special judge
- Plaza de Armas: the garrison or parade ground of a city
- Plaza pública: the market place or public square
- Portero de Cámara: a chamberlain
- Presidente: a presiding officer
- Presidio: garrison
- Procurador: the chief deputy to a town or city assembly

Provisión Real: a royal decree

Rancheador: an expert tracker or bounty hunter

Ranchería: a settlement

Rancho: a ranch, small settlement or camp

Recontería: a form of extortion

Regidor: a councilman

Síndico Procurador: an official of the municipal council,
enforcer of city ordinances, or chief city attorney

Tostón: a coin

Trapiche: a sugar mill smaller than an ingenio

Trapichero: a Trapiche owner

Vagabundo: renegade Spaniards and castizos

Vecino: a head of family, householder or property owner

Veragua: Costa Rica

Ventre Libre: a principle of the Siete Partidas whereby
a child of a slave father and a free mother was born
free.

Villa: a town

Zambo: a person of Negro and Indian ancestry

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Frederick Rodroquez has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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