"A Little Flesh We Offer You": The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France

Brett Rushforth

It is well known the advantage this colony would gain if its inhabitants could
securely purchase and import the Indians called Panis, whose country is far dis-
tant from this one. . . . The people of the Panis nation are as necessary to the
inhabitants of this country for farming and other tasks as are the Negroes to the
Islands. And, as these kinds of engagements are very important to this colony,
it is necessary to guarantee ownership to those who have bought or will buy
them. Therefore, according to his Majesty's good pleasure, we order that all the
Panis and Negroes who have been bought, and who shall be purchased here-
after, shall belong in full proprietorship to those who have purchased them as
their slaves.

—Jacques Raudot, intendant of New France, 1709

B ETWEEN 1660 and 1760, the colonists of New France pursued
two seemingly contradictory policies toward their Indian neigh-
bors. Through compromise, gift giving, and native-style diplo-
macy they negotiated the most far-reaching system of Indian alliances in
colonial North America. At the same time, they also developed an exten-
sive system of Indian slavery that transformed thousands of Indian men,
women, and children into commodities of colonial commerce in French
settlements. Although these slaves never constituted more than 5 percent
of the colony's total population, they performed essential labors in the
colonial economy as domestics, farmers, dock loaders, millers, and semi-
skilled hands in urban trades. They also interacted regularly with French
settlers at the market, in church, on village streets, and in their masters'
homes. In some areas, such as Montreal's commercial district around
Rue Saint-Paul and the Place du Marché, Indian slaves played an espe-
cially important role. There, fully half of all colonists who owned a
home in 1725 also owned an Indian slave.[1]

    [1] For the number of slaves, see Marcel Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves et de
leurs propriétaires au Canada français* (Ville LaSalle, Qué., 1990). Since Trudel counts

While early American historians have carefully studied the nature and significance of French-Indian alliances, there has been no comparable attention given to the topic of New France's Indian slave system. The only historical work to discuss it at length is Marcel Trudel's *L'esclavage au Canada français* (1960), a general history of African and Indian slavery in early Canada. Before Trudel, the slave system received a brief conference paper by James Cleland Hamilton in 1897 and less than one chapter in Almon Wheeler Lauber's 1913 survey of Indian slavery.[2] Still less have historians considered the relationship between the rising importance of French-Indian alliances and the origins of Indian slavery in New France. Instead, there has been a tendency to take Indian slavery for granted as an inevitable consequence of colonization. "As slavery was practiced in all the European colonies," Trudel characteristically con-

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only those slaves individually confirmed in surviving records, his estimates are highly conservative. Sixty-four of the 129 people (49.6%) with title to a lot on Rue Saint-Paul or Place du Marché in 1725 owned at least one Indian slave. This figure includes those cases in which the property owner was married to the slaveholder, but not those cases in which other immediate family members owned slaves. It also excludes institutions, such as the Hôtel-Dieu and the Sulpician Seminary, both of which employed slaves at one time or another. For those owning property, I relied on the *Adhémar* database of the Centre Canadien d'Architecture in Montreal, which contains data for every known lot in Montreal proper in 1725. The database is available online at http://www.cca.qc.ca/adhemar/; a physical copy is available at the Centre Canadien d'Architecture in Montreal. For slaveholders, see Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 267–430. For a more detailed analysis of the 18th-century slave population, see Brett Rushforth, "Savage Bonds: Indian Slavery and Alliance in New France" (Ph. D. diss., University of California, Davis, 2003), esp. chap. 2.

    [2] Lauber, *Indian Slavery in Colonial Times within the Present Limits of the United States*, Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, vol. 54, no. 3 (New York, 1913); Hamilton, "Panis." There are references to panis slavery scattered throughout the New France literature, but they draw almost exclusively on these 3 sources. For the English-language literature, see James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill, 2002), 15; James Axtell, *Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America* (New York, 2001), 154, 290; Winstanley Briggs, "Slavery in French Colonial Illinois," *Chicago History*, 18 (1989–1990), 66–81; Peter Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada—A Cultural History* (East Lansing, Mich., 2000), 109–10; Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800* (Cambridge, 1997), 16–17; Colin G. Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore, 1997), 102; W. J. Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier, 1534–1760*, rev. ed. (Albuquerque, 1983), 149–50; Cornelius J. Jaenen, *Friend and Foe: Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contact in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ottawa, 1976), 139; Mason Wade, "French Indian Policies," in Wilcomb E. Washburn, ed., *History of Indian-White Relations*, vol. 4 of William C. Sturtevant, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington D. C., 1978), 20–28; Allan Greer, *The People of New France* (Toronto, 1997), 85–91; and Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada: A History*, 2d ed. (Montréal, 1997), 1–23.

cluded, "one does not see why Canada would have escaped the interna-
tional practice of reducing blacks and natives to servitude."[3]

Yet New France's Indian slave system developed for reasons unique
to its time and place. In Louisiana and the Caribbean, for example,
France officially forbade the enslavement of Indians.[4] In the five years
preceding Jacques Raudot's ordinance legalizing Indian slavery in New
France, the French crown rejected at least three petitions by Louisiana
governor Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville to authorize the trade of
Indian slaves in his colony.[5] Thus, far from representing a general trend
in France's American colonies, Indian slavery in New France originated
in response to specific historical developments that shaped its character
for the rest of the eighteenth century.

Paradoxically, the enslavement of Indians succeeded in New France
because of, rather than despite, the growing importance of French-
Indian alliances. Between 1660 and 1710, cultural, diplomatic, and eco-
nomic forces within the growing alliance system converged to draw the
French and their native allies into the Indian slave trade. First, allied
Indians offered captives to French colonists as culturally powerful sym-
bols of their emerging partnership. Although French bureaucrats ini-
tially rejected captive exchange as a legitimate token of friendship, many
western traders embraced the practice as a means of strengthening trade
relations and securing valuable laborers. Second, following the Great
Peace of 1701, New France sought desperately to prevent warfare among
its Indian neighbors and to keep its native allies from defecting to the
English. French officials found that captive exchanges offered one of the
most effective means of stabilizing the precarious alliance created by the
new treaty. Captives therefore became increasingly available as their
exchange grew more central to the maintenance of the alliance system.
Finally, as Indian captives passed into New France in greater numbers—

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[3] Trudel, *L'esclavage au Canada Français: Histoire et Conditions de L'esclavage*
(Québec, 1960), 315.

[4] For Louisiana, see ordinance of Oct. 25, 1720, in Pierre Margry, ed.,
*Découvertes et Établissements des Français dans l'ouest et dans le sud de l'Amérique
Septentrionale (1614–1754)*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1876–1886), 6:316.

[5] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of
Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge, 1992), 57; Robert P.
Wiegers, "A Proposal for Indian Slave Trading in the Mississippi Valley and Its
Impact on the Osage," *Plains Anthropologist*, 33 (1988), 191. Clearly, the prohibition
of the Indian slave trade, especially in Louisiana, did not prevent French colonists
from acquiring and selling Indian slaves. See, for example, Hall, *Africans in Colonial
Louisiana*, 97, 115, 180; Daniel H. Usner, Jr., *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier
Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783* (Chapel Hill, 1992), esp.
46–51; and Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and
Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln, Neb., 1983),
35–36.

especially after 1701—a growing number of French families purchased them as laborers. To protect these investments and to put an end to disputes over the captives' legal status, colonial officials issued the 1709 ordinance legalizing Indian slavery.[6]

When the French began to colonize North America in earnest during the mid-seventeenth century, both they and the Indian societies they encountered practiced forms of human unfreedom that the French called slavery. Familiar with the plantation-based chattel slavery then developing in the European colonies, many French observers used the term *esclave,* or slave, to describe the status of Indian war captives. Although acknowledging the practice of captive adoption, which integrated captives as members of Indian families, French colonists still considered captives to live in misery, "groaning under a bondage more grievous than death."[7] Because the lives of Indian captives differed so markedly from those of chattel slaves, however, most modern scholars have resisted the French designation, describing Indians' captive-taking as an "adoption complex" to highlight the ceremonial incorporation of captives into Indian families.[8] The defining element of French chattel slavery, as explained in the seventeenth-century *Code Noir,* was a life of persistent, coerced, and degraded labor, enforced by laws that treated slaves as property and condemned their offspring to inherit slave status.[9] Unlike

    [6] "Ordonnance de Raudot concernant les Panis et les négres," Apr. 13, 1709, in Archives des colonies, Série C11A, Correspondance générale, Canada, vol. 30, fols. 342–43, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario (hereafter cited as C11A with appropriate vol. and fol.), published in *Arrêts et réglements du conseil supérieur de Québec, et ordonnances et jugements des intendants du Canada* (Québec, 1855), 271. The published version of the document is cited as Raudot, "Ordonnance concernant les Panis." All quotations from French language sources have been translated by the author unless otherwise noted. See also James Cleland Hamilton, "The Panis: An Historical Outline of Canadian Indian Slavery in the Eighteenth Century," *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute,* 1 (1897), 25. French record keepers spelled "panis" in many ways, including "pani," "pany," and "pana." Except in quotations, I adhere to the spelling given in the 1709 ordinance, which grew increasingly common until the English period, when "pani" regained favor. Where possible, persons' names are standardized according to David M. Hayne, ed., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1966–) (hereafter cited as *DCB*).
    [7] Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610–1791* (Cleveland, 1896–1901), 46:207 (hereafter cited as *Jesuit Relations*).
    [8] For the most complete discussion of Iroquoian captivity and adoption as slavery, as well as summaries of the controversy in the historical and anthropological literature, see William A. Starna and Ralph Watkins, "Northern Iroquoian Slavery," *Ethnohistory,* 38 (1991), 34–57, and Roland Viau, *Enfants du néant et mangeurs d'âmes: Guerre, culture et société en Iroquoisie ancienne* (Montréal, 1997), esp. 137–99. To date, no one has thoroughly analyzed the status of captives among the nations of the western Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi Valley.
    [9] The best annotated publication of the Code is Robert Chesnais, ed., *Le Code noir* (Paris, 1998), which includes both the 1685 code, intended for the Caribbean, and the 1724 version governing Louisiana.

the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, who did condemn their captives to a state of perpetual inherited slavery, northeastern Indians' captives often achieved a measure of social respectability and did not pass their status to their offspring.[10]

Yet if the French erred in equating Indian captives with chattel slaves, they accurately recognized the defining characteristic of Indian captivity, which was neither persistent oppression nor property in persons, but the violence and dishonor associated with capture itself. To shame and intimidate their enemies, all Indian peoples of the American Northeast initially treated their prisoners with great disrespect through symbolic acts of humiliation. Beginning with painful physical restraints employed on the journey home, continuing through torture and derision, and culminating in ceremonial killing or adoption, Indians designed their rituals of captivity to demonstrate their superiority over vanquished enemies and to secure the allegiance and passivity of those whom they would adopt.

Once warriors carried captives a safe distance away from a raided village, they bound them tightly with cords, usually around the hands and neck as they walked. Pierre Boucher, who lived among the Hurons and traded extensively with nations further west, described the common events of the captive-taking process in 1664:

> When [the Indians of New France] capture prisoners . . . they bind them by the arms and by the legs with cords; except when they are marching, they leave the legs free. In the evening, when they camp, they lay the prisoners with their backs against the ground, and they plant some small stakes in the earth next to the feet, the hands, the neck, and the head; then they bind the prisoner to these stakes so tightly that he cannot move, which is more painful than one can imagine.[11]

[10] For the Pacific Northwest, see Leland Donald, *Aboriginal Slavery on the Northwest Coast of North America* (Berkeley, 1997), esp. 69–102, 255–71.

[11] Pierre Boucher, *Histoire veritable et naturelle des moeurs and productions du pays de la Nouvelle France, vulgairement dite le Canada* (Paris, 1664), 123–24. For Boucher's life, see Raymond Douville, "Pierre Boucher," *DCB*, 2:82–87. For the Iroquois, see also Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 46:31–33, 51:79. For the Illinois, see ibid., 66:273–75, and "Memoir of De Gannes [Deliette] Concerning the Illinois Country," in Theodore Calvin Pease and Raymond C. Werner, eds., *The French Foundations, 1680–1693*, vol. 23 of *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library* (Springfield, Ill.,1934), 381 (hereafter cited as Deliette, *Memoir;* the *Collections* are cited as *Ill. Hist. Coll.* with identifying information about the document). Historians have generally accepted the contention, made by the editors of this volume, that the author of this memoir was Pierre Deliette, a French commander of the Illinois country in the 1720s and 1730s who lived among the Illinois in the 1680s. I follow this

This action served the obvious practical purpose of physical restraint, but it also symbolized the victim's powerlessness before a superior enemy.

During the journey, and especially upon arrival at the warriors' village, captives were mocked and forced to sing what the French described as *chansons de mort,* or death songs, "to afford entertainment to their executioners." The Illinois forced captives to sing at the entrance of each cabin that had lost a family member to the captive's people.[12] Captives then passed through a gantlet, where they experienced tortures that ranged from verbal assaults to near fatal cuts and beatings. Among the most degrading of the gantlet's many torments was the participation of women and children, whose tauntings fell with special poignancy on captured male warriors. "This reception is very cruel," wrote Sébastien Rale of the Illinois. "Some tear out the prisoners' nails, others cut off their fingers or ears; still others load them with blows from clubs."[13] Those disfigured by the gantlet bore permanent marks of their status as captive enemies, especially when such wounds occurred in conspicuous locations such as the face or hands. Maiming the hands also served another purpose: preventing escape or rebellion. Describing captives of the Iroquois, one Jesuit remarked that "they began by cutting off a thumb of each [captive], to make them unable to unbind themselves."[14] The resulting scarring and disfiguration were considered "marks of their captivity," which remained with living captives long after the trauma of initiation had passed.[15]

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tradition here, although there is a strong possibility that the author was Louis de Gannes, who also spent much of his early career among the Illinois. While the Illinois never constituted a single nation, I use the term "Illinois" throughout to signify the grouping of linguistically and culturally related villages that the French called the "Illinois confederacy." For the best summaries of divisions among the Illinois, see Charles Callender, *Social Organization of the Central Algonkian Indians,* Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in Anthropology no. 7 (Milwaukee, 1962); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst, Mass., 2001), 11–22; and Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires,* 10–11.

12 Deliette, *Memoir,* 383; and Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 45:183.

13 Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 67:173. Rale speculated that the Illinois adopted these cruelties only after their similar treatment as captives of the Iroquois: "It was the Iroquois who invented this frightful manner of death, and it is only by the law of retaliation that the Illinois, in their turn, treat these Iroquois prisoners with an equal cruelty." See ibid., 67:173–75. This statement should be assessed cautiously, however, as the French frequently minimized the violence of their allies and exaggerated that of the Iroquois. A report of 1660 describing French-allied Indians tearing out fingernails, cutting off fingers, and burning hands and feet at Quebec, for example, was dismissed by a French observer as "merely the game and diversion of children"; ibid., 46:85–101, quotation on 93.

14 Ibid., 50:39.

15 Ibid., 45:257–61. For the best description of Iroquoian disfiguration, see Viau, *Enfants du néant,* 172–86, and Starna and Watkins, "Northern Iroquoian Slavery," 43–45. For additional examples among the western Great Lakes nations, see Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 67:171–75.

Even if captives escaped mutilation, which many did, they still bore a verbal marker that set them apart from other members of the capturing village. By the seventeenth century almost every Iroquoian and Algonquian language contained a degrading term meaning "captive" or "slave." In the Mohawk and Onondaga languages, for example, *enaskwa* had the dual meaning of "captive" and "domesticated animal." According to early French observers, various forms of the word could mean "domesticated," "tamed," or "enslaved."[16] Western Algonquian speakers, such as the Ottawas, Ojibwas, and Crees, used *awahkân,* which had much the same meaning, designating both "captives" and "animals kept as pets."[17]

The earliest French lexicon of western Algonquian languages, recorded between 1672 and 1674 by Jesuit Father Louis Nicolas, included *aouakan,* meaning "slave or prisoner of war," as one of eight essential nouns for missionaries to know to teach western Indians effectively. When Claude Allouez, Nicolas's former traveling companion and fellow student of Algonquian languages, searched for a term to describe the devil to the region's Indians, he chose "slave," or "aouakan," to indicate that the devil was "worthless" and powerless before God. Indicating the extremely negative connotation of the term, a native woman at Green Bay responded to Allouez's insult, saying, "Thou hast no sense; thou angerest the Devil too much."[18] Although some early observers described these derogatory labels as permanent markers, many others suggested that captives who survived the torturous initiation process could attain respectability, and even social prominence, within the capturing village.[19]

Once the initial tortures subsided, families who had recently suffered a death determined whether to kill or spare the surviving captives. Heads of households, according to a French officer living among the Illinois, "assemble and decide what they will do with the prisoner who has been given to them, and whether they wish to give him his life."[20]

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[16] Viau, *Enfants du néant,* 150; Starna and Watkins, "Northern Iroquoian Slavery," 47–49.

[17] Frederic Baraga, *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language* (St. Paul, Minn., 1992), 1:232, 2:56; C. Douglas Ellis, *âtalôhkâna nêsta tipâcimôwina: Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay* (Winnipeg, 1995), 85, 159, 449. Variant spellings include "awakân" and "awahkaan."

[18] Diane Daviault, ed., *L'algonquin au XVIIe siècle: Une édition critique, analysée et commentée de la grammaire algonquine du Père Louis Nicolas* (Sainte-Foy, Qué., 1994), 5, 34, 106–07; Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 57:269, 279, 283, 289. For a corresponding Cherokee example, see Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540–1866* (Knoxville, 1979), 3–18.

[19] Alexander Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories between the Years 1760 and 1770* (New York, 1809), 307.

[20] Deliette, *Memoir,* 384. For a similar process among the Iroquois, see Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill, 1992), esp. 50–74.

The Ottawas, Ojibwas, and Hurons did much the same, granting life to some and subjecting others to a slow and painful death. Although the particular reasons for sparing captives varied from family to family and village to village, captives could be kept alive to augment population growth, replace a dead relative, or facilitate alliances through trade. Once the captive had been granted life, he or she was washed, clothed, and given a new name, often that of the deceased he or she was intended to replace.[21]

Seventeenth-century observers consistently noted that all Indian villages spared and adopted women and children more often than men. In addition to targeting the male warriors for revenge killings, this strategy maximized the demographic benefits of captive adoption, whereas increasing the number of adult males in a village would do little to change its reproductive capacity. During times of high mortality resulting from disease or warfare, female captives often represented the best hope for rapidly restoring lost population. Especially in polygynous societies like the Illinois, female captives integrated smoothly into present social structures as second or third wives of prominent men. Children were prized because of the relative ease with which they assimilated into the capturing society, learning new languages and customs much more quickly than older captives. This selection process left a surplus of male captives, who were frequently traded outside the village.[22]

Iroquoian and Algonquian peoples often adopted captives to "requicken" or "replace" village members lost to warfare or murder.[23] Such deaths reduced both the spiritual power and the productive capacity of bereaved families, threatening the entire village with future misfortune unless the dead could be symbolically revived. Captive adoption

[21] See Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse,* 50–74; Viau, *Enfants du néant,* 137–60; and Claude Charles Le Roy, Bacqueville de la Potherie, *History of the Savage People Who Are Allies of New France,* in Emma Helen Blair, ed. and trans., *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes . . .* (Lincoln, Neb., 1996), 2:36–43.

[22] Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse,* esp. 67–68, and Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Literature* (Chapel Hill, 1997), 248–304. For Illinois social structure, see Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men,* esp. 1–37, where she indicates the importance of women to the integration of outsiders into Illinois kin structures. For a similar captive selection process among the Indians of the Southwest, see Brooks, *Captives and Cousins,* esp. 1–40.

[23] The French used two words to describe the Indian practice of raising the dead: *ressusciter* and *remplacer*. Ressusciter meant to revive, to bring back to life, or to resurrect. French missionaries used this word to describe the ressurection of Jesus, and 17th-century French dictionaries indicate the latter meaning as the most common use of the word. *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (Paris, 1694), s.v. "ressusciter." The second, remplacer, merely meant to replace, indicating the practice of replacing a dead relative with a live captive.

could thus eliminate the need for future vengeance by restoring the dead to their proper place and re-establishing the possibility of peaceful relations between the antagonists. Through this process, the village appropriated the spiritual power and productive labor of the captives, forcing them to adopt the name, manners, and social responsibilities of the deceased.[24] When a raid or a murder occurred between allies, the offending village could often convince mourning relatives to accept valuable gifts in lieu of vengeance—to "cover the dead." Symbolically, these gifts would absolve the killers and restore the alliance between the two groups. Because of the strong cultural demand for revenge and the need to take captives, however, covering the grave rarely proved sufficient to prevent mourning wars against an enemy.[25] Yet a gift of captives had the potential to bring enemies together by serving both purposes at once: reviving the dead and establishing an alliance through gifts to cover their graves.

Because of their symbolic power to mitigate the effects of warfare or murder, captives became an important medium of exchange in the gift giving that characterized Indian diplomacy. Captives accompanied peace delegations as gifts ceremonially offered to allies or erstwhile enemies. "Usually, they are used to replace the dead," wrote Antoine Denis Raudot of captives in the western Great Lakes, "but often some are also given to other nations to oblige these nations to become their allies."[26] In one such exchange a Fox chief received two Iroquois captives from his "neighbors [who] took them prisoners and made me a present of them."[27] A gift of captives, even more powerfully than wampum or the calumet, signified the opposite of warfare, the giving rather than the taking of life. As living witnesses to the power and ferocity of their captors, captives also offered a subtle warning of the dangers one could face

[24] In general, see Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains*, 283–96. For the Iroquois, see Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 40 (1983), 533–37; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 30–74; and Starna and Watkins, "Northern Iroquoian Slavery," 38–40. For the Ottawa and other western nations, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge, 1991), esp. 75–82. For the Illinois, see Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 67:173, and Deliette, *Memoir*, 376.

[25] For the most detailed discussion of the distinctions between gifts to "cover the dead" and mourning wars to "raise up the dead," see White, *Middle Ground*, 75–82, quotations on 77. For "cover the graves" see Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 56:175, and Alan Taylor, "Covering the Grave: The Diplomacy of Murder in Upper Canada," paper presented at annual meeting, Society for Historians of the Early American Republic, Baltimore, July 2001.

[26] Antoine Denis Raudot, "Memoir Concerning the Different Indian Nations of North America," in W. Vernon Kinietz, ed., *The Indians of the Western Great Lakes* (Ann Arbor, 1965), 339–410, quotation on 360.

[27] Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 54:227.

as the captor's enemy. Employing the language of kinship, givers introduced captives by saying "Here is my son" or "I bring you my flesh" to represent the physical blending of familial interests between two previously disconnected groups.[28] In many cases, this gift proved sufficient to erase long periods of violence between two peoples, satisfying the demands of customary justice and symbolizing the possibility of true friendship.[29]

At other times, a gift of captives could persuade an ally to action against a third party. In 1665, for example, while Nicolas Perrot negotiated an alliance with the tribes around Green Bay, he noted that the Potawatomis offered a captive to the Miamis to persuade them not to enter into an alliance with the French.[30] When attacked by a Sioux war party in 1672, Perrot also observed, the Ottawa chief Sinagos fell into captivity. The Sioux, on discovering a "Panys" belonging to the Ottawa chief, sent Sinagos's captive "back to his own country that he might faithfully report what he had seen and the justice that had been administered." The Sioux chief hoped that by releasing a captive of another western nation, he could convince the captive's people to join him against the Ottawas.[31]

Captives' contributions to the receiving society also made them valuable as peacetime offerings accompanying trade. Adopted captives were expected to do the work of the person whom they replaced, thereby mitigating the social costs of that person's death.[32] Those captives not fully assimilated into Indian families performed a range of tasks from which the village benefited. In 1669, for example, a Seneca woman, who had "commanded more than twenty slaves," died. Her mother expressed her hope that one of these captives might accompany her daughter into the afterlife, because the deceased "knew not what it was to go to the

[28] For "here is my son," see ibid., 59:121; for "I bring you my flesh," see Dubuisson, "Official Report . . . 1712 . . . ," in Thwaites, ed., *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, 16 (1902), 282 (hereafter these collections cited as *Wis. Hist. Coll.* with identifying information about the document cited). For another example of captives given to forge an alliance, see Nicolas Perrot, *Mémoire sur les moeurs, coustumes et relligion des sauvages de l'Amérique Septentrionale*, in *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:30–31, and La Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique Septentrionale*, in *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:46.

[29] White, *Middle Ground*, 75–82.

[30] La Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique Septentrionale, in Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:46.

[31] Perrot, *Mémoire, in Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:30–31. More than anyone else, the Sioux seem to have released captives as a strategy of ingratiating themselves to potential allies. According to Antoine Denis Raudot, "They generally send back any prisoners they make, in hope of obtaining peace; and it is only after they have lost a great many of their men and are tired of sending back prisoners without obtaining the result hoped for, that they burn them. They never torture them"; Raudot, "Memoir," 378.

[32] Richter, "War and Culture," esp. 531.

forest to get wood, or to the River to draw water." Without these captives
in the world of spirits, the mother feared, "she could not take upon herself
the care of all that has to do with domestic duties."[33] In the 1680s, Louis-
Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron de Lahontan, noted that among the nations
of the western Great Lakes captives assisted in the hunt by carrying their
masters' baggage, tending to sled dogs, and preparing animal skins. He also
recorded that captives among the Sauks, Potawatomis, and Menominees
served food at ceremonial feasts for visitors.[34] French observers found
among the Illinois many "slaves in which these people are accustomed to
traffic and whom they compel to labor for them."[35]

Both practically valuable and symbolically potent, captives often
passed from village to village through overlapping systems of captive
exchange, journeying hundreds or even thousands of miles from their
birthplace. The Iroquois obtained and traded enemy Indians from the
Chesapeake to Lake Michigan.[36] The Illinois took captives from the
central and southern Plains and traded them into the Lake Superior
region.[37] And the Ottawas joined their Upper Mississippi Valley allies to
raid deep into the Southwest, then traded the captives far to the north-
east on Lake Nipissing. In 1669 Sulpician missionary François Dollier de
Casson described meeting a Nipissing chief who "had a slave the
Ottawas had presented to him in the preceding year, from a very remote
nation in the southwest."[38] The next year, Dollier received from the
Senecas a gift of two captives, one taken from the Ottawas near
Michilimackinac and one from the Shawnees. They were to serve as
guides and translators as Dollier and René-Robert Cavalier de La Salle
traveled through the Ohio River Valley.[39]

[33] Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 54:93–95.

[34] Louis Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron de Lahontan, *New Voyages to North
America* (London, 1703), 1:58, 62, 105, 2:51–53. Given Lahontan's stated intent to use
Indians' egalitarianism as a foil to criticize European hierarchy, his description of slav-
ery among western Algonquians is especially telling. If anything, such an admission
subverted his ideological agenda. For Lahontan's ideology and motives, see Paola
Basile, "Lahontan et l'évolution moderne du mythe du 'bon sauvage'" (M. A. thesis,
McGill University, 1997). For tasks assigned to slaves, see Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit
Relations,* 54:93–95, and Lahontan, *New Voyages to North America,* 1:53, 2:2, 24, 37, 46.

[35] "La Salle on the Illinois Country, 1680," *Ill. Hist. Coll.,* 23:10.

[36] Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 54:105, 60:185–87, 62:55–107.

[37] Ibid., 59:127, 67:171.

[38] "The Journey of Dollier and Galinée, 1669–1670," in Louise Phelps Kellogg,
ed., *Early Narratives of the Northwest, 1634–1699* (New York, 1917), 167. Kellogg uses
the word "tribe" instead of "nation" in her translation, but I have retained "nation"
from the French original ("d'une nation fort esloignée du Sud-Ouest"). See "Récit
de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable dans le voyage de MM. Dolleir et Gallinée
(1669–1670.)," in Margry, *Découvertes et établissements,* 1:112.

[39] "Journey of Dollier," 181–82, 190. Although Dollier, like many other French
observers, designated almost all Indian captives as "slaves," his description of these
particular captives indicates that they were not destined for adoption, but given as
tokens of alliance.

Like Dollier, many early French visitors to the West received captives from the Indian peoples they encountered. These offerings frequently signified the beginning of alliances that would endure throughout the French regime. In 1670, Jacques Marquette received an Indian captive as a token of friendship after caring for an ailing Kiskakon Ottawa man. "Saying that I had given him his life," wrote Marquette, "he gave me a present of a slave that had been brought to him from the Illinois, two or three months before." Explaining the captive's origin, Marquette wrote, "The Illinois are warriors and take a great many slaves, whom they trade with the Ottawas for muskets, powder, kettles, hatchets, and knives."[40] And four years later Marquette described the position of the Illinois in the captive and slave trade: "They are warlike, and make themselves dreaded by the Distant tribes to the south and west, whither they go to procure Slaves; these they barter, selling them at a high price to other Nations, in exchange for other Wares."[41] Marquette's experience indicates the dual nature of captive exchanges in Illinois and Ottawa society. Neither wholly economic nor exclusively symbolic, captives could signify friendship and secure valuable trade goods. Although the presence of French muskets and kettles among the Ottawas clearly had an effect on these early captive exchanges, they do not yet seem to have altered their fundamental meaning or function.

After establishing Fort St. Louis on the Illinois River in 1682, La Salle received as tokens from the Illinois two "pana slaves," an adult woman and a boy about fifteen years old, who "had been taken by the Panimaha, then by the Osages, who had given him to the Missouris, and they to the nation from which I have had him."[42] The elaborate route by which this unfortunate young man arrived in La Salle's hands indicates both the complexity and the ubiquity of captive exchanges on New France's western frontier. It also reveals the danger in assuming that "panis" slaves were primarily taken from the tribe known today as Pawnee. In the seventeenth century, names similar to "panis" actually referred to a great number of Plains nations, only some of which have clear modern equivalents. On a single map made in 1688, for example, French cartographer Jean-Baptiste-Louis Franquelin listed as separate nations the "Panimaha," "Panetoca," "Pana," "Paneake," and "Paneassa," any or all of whom could have suffered at the hands of Illinois raiders

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[40] Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 54:177, 191, translation modernized.

[41] Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet, *Voyage et découverte de quelques pays et nations de l'Amérique septentrionale* (Paris, 1681), 21. Translation from Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 59:127.

[42] Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, 2:324; cited in Mildred Mott Wedel, "The Identity of La Salle's Pana Slave," *Plains Anthropologist*, 18 (1973), 204.

(see Figure I). Of these groups, none can be said with any certainty to be ancestors to the modern Pawnees.[43] More important, when seventeenth-century French observers noted the source of Illinois slaves, they universally suggested multiple victims. Claude Charles Le Roy, Bacqueville de la Potherie, for example, recounted a captive-raiding expedition undertaken by the Illinois against "the Ozages and the Accances [Quapaw]."[44] Pierre Deliette noted that Missouri River nations "often come to trade among the Illinois," indicating that these captives may have come in trade from the various "panis" villages rather than by Illinois raids upon those groups.[45] And by analyzing the available documentation on La Salle's "pana slave," anthropologist Mildred Wedel concluded that the boy was most likely a Wichita, captured by the Skiri Pawnees, stolen by Osages, and traded to the Illinois via Missouri middlemen.[46]

Farther west, the Sioux also offered captives to French visitors as signs of friendship. In 1700, a Sioux chief held a feast to honor French trader Pierre Charles Le Sueur, offering him as gifts two powerful symbols of alliance: food and captives. Invoking the ceremonial language of kinship associated with captive exchanges, the Sioux chief pointed to his people and said to the French visitors, "No longer regard us as Sioux, but as Frenchmen." Le Sueur gratefully received the gift and invited the Sioux to abandon their nomadic lifestyle and settle near the French.[47]

During the 1670s, as the fur trade more thoroughly connected the St. Lawrence Valley with the upper country, captive exchanges formerly confined to the West began to take place between Indians and French merchants at Montreal. In 1678, for example, Ottawa traders brought three Indian captives to Daniel Greysolon Dulhut as part of the ritual gift exchanges routinely accompanying the fur trade. "They assured me of their friendship," wrote Dulhut, "and as proof gave me three slaves."[48] Although Dulhut did not pay for the captives, they proved invaluable on his journey west to initiate friendships with the Assiniboines and the Sioux.[49]

[43] Map reprinted in Kellogg, ed., *Early Narratives of the Northwest*, 342. The authoritative discussion of the etymology and historical usage of the term "Pawnee" is Douglas R. Parks, "Pawnee," in Raymond J. DeMallie, ed., *Plains*, vol. 13 of *Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington, D. C., 2001), pt. 1, 515–47, and William W. Newcomb, Jr., "Wichita," ibid., 548–66. I thank Douglas Parks for providing me with advance copies of these articles.
[44] La Potherie, *History*, in Blair, *Indian Tribes*, 2:36.
[45] Deliette, *Memoir*, 387.
[46] Wedel, "Identity of La Salle's *Pana* Slave," 204–205.
[47] "Le Sueur's Voyage up the Mississippi [1700]," *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:192, spelling modernized.
[48] Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 340. For quotation, see "Mémoire du sieur Greyselon Du Lhut adressé à Monsieur le Marquis de Seignelay [c. 1682]," in Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, 6:21.
[49] See Margry, *Découvertes et établissements*, 6:21, and Yves F. Zoltvany, "Daniel Greysolon Dulhut," *DCB*, 2:262. Dulhut also purchased one captive from the
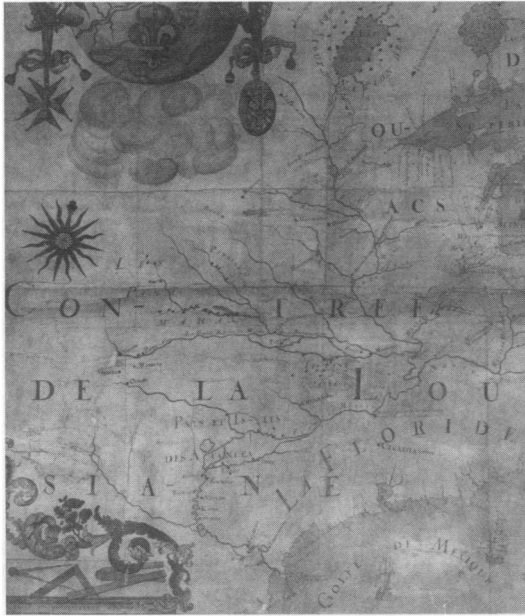
WILLIAM AND MARY QUARTERLY

FIGURE I

Jean-Baptiste-Louis Franquelin, 1688, detail of map of the territory from which many captive Indians were taken, submitted in response to the French court's request to establish the borders between New France and New England. Note the variations of *panis* in the region of Louisiane. Reproduced courtesy of the National Archives of Canada /Archives nationales du Canada, NMC44358.

Despite his willing participation in a ceremonial captive exchange, Dulhut rejected the cultural assumptions that motivated the Ottawas' gift. Rather than valuing these captives for their power to raise the dead or for their symbolic unification of French and Ottawa interests, Dulhut simply viewed them as "slaves" who would reduce the burdens of his pending journey to Lake Superior. The clearest example of Dulhut's rejection of Indian captive customs came in 1684 following the murder of two Frenchmen at Lake Superior. Upon learning of the death of his countrymen, Dulhut seized a group of Indian suspects and brought them to Michilimackinac for trial. According to custom, Dulhut wrote of the incident, the offending party offered a gift of "some slaves, which

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Miamis to serve as a guide and translator, though no record survives indicating the origin of the slave or the price Dulhut paid for him. See "Lettre du sieur Du Lhut à M. le Comte de Frontenac, le 5 Avril 1679," in Margry, *Découvertes et établissements,* 6:29.

was only meant to patch up the assassination committed upon the French." Dulhut's emissary "perceived their intention, and therefore would not allow it, telling them that a hundred slaves . . . could not make him traffic in the blood of his brothers." When the party met with Dulhut himself, he echoed the emissary's statement: "I said the same thing here in the councils, so that they [the Ottawas] might not in future believe that they could save by presents those who might commit similar acts."[50]

Dulhut demanded and carried out the execution of two Indians for the murder rather than allowing the customary exchange of captives. By ignoring Indian captive customs, Dulhut jeopardized the already precarious alliance in the western Great Lakes at a critical time of conflict. In 1684, rumors of Iroquois preparations for a massive assault on New France rang throughout the colony and across the Atlantic. The French began to mobilize a large army and sought to induce their native allies to join them against the Iroquois. Dulhut's actions alienated key western allies crucial to New France's ability to survive another war with the more powerful Iroquois. When the French asked the Indians at Michilimackinac to arm themselves for impending battle, the Ottawas demurred, secretly warning other tribes against participation. "The French invite us to go to war against the Iroquois," one of them said. "They wish to use us in order to make us their slaves. After we have aided in destroying the enemy, the French will do with us what they do with their cattle, which they put to the plow and make them cultivate the land. Let us leave them to act alone."[51] By killing the accused murderers in violation of Indian customs, the French underscored for the Indians their unwillingness to play by the rules of alliance. Ironically, Dulhut's refusal to accept a gift of slaves to raise the dead instilled the fear of enslavement in New France's Indian allies.

Having rejected the logic of Indian captive exchange, Dulhut also rejected his earlier practice of procuring captives to use as slaves.[52] He was not alone. Bureaucrats at Quebec and Paris likewise denied the viability of the Indian slave trade. They had learned that acquiring an

[50] Dulhut to Minister, Apr. 12, 1684, in *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:114–25, quotation on 123. For a complete discussion of the origins and outcome of this controversy, see White, *Middle Ground,* 77–80, although White underestimates the breach Dulhut's actions created within the alliance, treating the episode as an example of successful compromise on the middle ground.

[51] La Potherie, *History,* in Blair, *Indian Tribes,* 2:24. The comparison between the French enslaving Indians and domesticating cattle was linguistically apt, as the Ottawa used the same word for "slave" and "domesticated animal." See discussion of *awahkân* above.

[52] There is, at least, no record of Dulhut receiving, buying, or selling an Indian captive following the 1684 incident.

Indian slave meant much more than the purchase of a laborer, laden as it was with such deep significance in the formation and destruction of alliances. Thus, when issuing a decree authorizing the use of slaves for New France in 1689, Louis XIV rejected the viability of Indian slavery, authorizing only the use of African slaves in the colony.[53] Yet many French colonists continued to accept captives from the Indians of the Upper Mississippi and western Great Lakes, selling them extralegally as slaves into the St. Lawrence Valley.

During the 1690s, Indian slaves began to appear in the public records of Montreal and Quebec, indicating a small but growing acceptance of Indian slavery among New France's elite. In 1691, for example, Pierre Moreau dit Lataupine brought a young Indian slave boy to Quebec's Hôtel-Dieu, the local hospital, because of an illness. The hospital register says nothing of the boy's origins, but Moreau's background provides a likely explanation. In 1672, Moreau entered a partnership with Louis Jolliet and several others to create a fur trading company that would help fund Jolliet's exploration of the West. Through this company, and often illegally on his own, Moreau traded among the Ottawas at Michilimackinac. Moreau certainly had witnessed slave exchanges in the West, including Jolliet's receiving a slave as a gift in 1674. As they had so many times before, the Ottawas must have offered a slave to Moreau either in exchange for minor trade goods or as a gift accompanying their trade in furs.[54]

In 1700, Jean-Baptiste Bissot de Vinsenne brought an Indian slave to Montreal, where he baptized him Jean-René. The baptismal record indicates that Vinsenne acquired his slave "from the Iowa near the Arkansas [Quapaw]." Vinsenne, Jolliet's brother-in-law, spent the latter half of his life in the West as a military officer and trader. Considered the colony's foremost authority on the Miamis, he earned a post among them in 1696. While there, Vinsenne likely received his slave in negotiations with the Mascoutens or Illinois, both of whom frequently raided the Iowas.[55] In the same year, René-Claude Fézeret baptized a young

53 For the 1689 authorization, see La societé historique de Montréal, *Memoires et documents relatifs a l'histoire du Canada* (Montréal, 1859), 1–3.
54 See Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 127, and Raymond Douville, "François Provost," *DCB,* 2:532–33.
55 For baptism, see Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 65. For Vinsenne, see Zoltvany, "Jean-Baptiste Bissot de Vinsenne," *DCB,* 2:68; Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations,* 70:316n.40; "Letter of Count de Pontchartrain to Governor de Vaudreuil," June 9, 1706, *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:228, text and n. 2; and Edmond Mallet, *Le Sieur de Vincennes: Fondateur de l'Indiana* (Levis, 1897), 4–6. For consistency, I have used the spelling of the *DCB,* "Vinsenne," rather than the more widely recognized "Vincennes." On the Mascoutens raiding the Iowa, see La Potherie, *History,* in Blair, *Indian Tribes,* 2:89.

female slave who had served as a domestic in his home for several years as Marie-Joseph. Fézeret, Montreal's first gunsmith and a lifelong western merchant, traded firearms with the Ottawas for this slave while staying at Michilimackinac.[56] And in September 1700, the "panis" slave Jacques appeared in Montreal's baptismal register, "brought from Illinois by the Sieur Charles Lemaitre dit Auger."[57]

These examples provide a faint but clear documentary outline of the early Indian slave trade. The colony's Indian allies—especially the Ottawas and Illinois—acquired captives from their western enemies and then offered them as symbolic gifts to French merchants associated with the fur trade. Once in French hands, these captives often became slaves in Montreal and Quebec. Participating colonists understood that, like all aspects of the Indian trade, Indian slavery could serve French purposes if native customs governed their acquisition. The result was a modest but growing slave trade into Montreal and Quebec from about 1690 to 1709.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, significant changes in the French-Indian alliance system increased the importance of captive exchanges and made Indian captives more readily available to potential French buyers. In the summer of 1701, the French successfully negotiated the Great Peace of Montreal, a treaty by which the Iroquois promised to cease warfare against the French and their allies and to remain neutral in all conflicts between the French and the English. Yet reversing decades of French policy encouraging violence against the Iroquois proved challenging. The French strove, against barriers of their own making, to negotiate peace between their allies and the Iroquois, hoping to prevent small outbreaks of violence from erupting into general warfare. In the process, officials at Quebec would finally come to appreciate what most western traders and negotiators already understood—that the exchange of Indian captives, if conducted according to native customs, offered one of the most important available means of

[56] For Fézeret's trade with the Ottawa, see "Transport à René Fezeret . . . d'un conge . . . portant permission d'aller traiter aux Sauvages outaouais et autres nations," Sept. 10, 1694, Archives Nationales, MG 8, C 8, Congés et permis enregistrés à Montréal. See also Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 79.

[57] Baptism dated Sept. 19, 1700, in Gaëtan Morin, ed., *RAB du PRDH* (CD-Rom), record no. 42253 (hereafter cited as *RAB*, with identifying information about the record in question). This CD-Rom comprises more than 700,000 entries drawn from Catholic church and civic records of New France and early Canada before 1800. It is an improved and expanded version of an earlier printed collection, Programme de Recherche en Démographie Historique, *Répertoire des actes de baptême, mariage, sépulture, et des recensements du Québec ancien*, 47 vols. (Montréal, 1980–1990). The most efficient way to locate individual records on the CD-Rom is by "numéro," or record number, which I cite for the reader's convenience. I also cite the record type and date to facilitate location in the print version.

forging and maintaining alliances among Indian nations. This realiza-
tion would inspire them to rethink their policy on Indian slavery, not
only allowing but eventually promoting the trade in Indian slaves.[58]

A new test of French willingness to bend to allied captive customs
came in the early stages of the treaty negotiations. For months,
Governor-General Louis-Hector de Callière had been threatening the
Sauks with retribution for killing a French trader among the Sioux.
Speaking for his Sauk allies, the Potawatomi chief Onanguicé presented
to Callière a "small slave," saying: "Here is a little flesh we offer you; we
captured it in a country where people travel by horse. We wipe the mat
stained with the blood of that Frenchman by consecrating it to you. Do
with it as you please." Callière, eager to see the peace negotiations suc-
ceed, agreed to accept the captive, thereby pardoning the Sauks for the
murder. He only demanded that the Sauks and their allies return to the
Iroquois any prisoners taken from them in previous battles.[59]

Throughout the peace negotiations, nothing received more atten-
tion than the return of Iroquois captives, which was, according to one
French participant, "the most essential article of the peace."[60] The
Iroquois had demanded that New France's allies return all living
Iroquois prisoners, and many of the western allies had made reciprocal
demands of the Iroquois. At the conference, then, each delegation made
an accounting of the prisoners offered. Koutaoiliboe, chief of the
Kiskakon Ottawas, spoke first. "I did not want to fail, my father," he
assured Governor Callière, "having learned that you were asking me for
Iroquois prisoners, to bring them to you. Here are four that I present to
you to do with as you please." The other delegates spoke in similar

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[58] For the most comprehensive treatment of the 1701 treaty, see Gilles Havard,
*The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth
Century,* trans. Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Montréal, 2001). This is a trans-
lated and substantially revised version of Havard's earlier book, *La Grande Paix de
Montréal de 1701: les voies de la diplomatie franco-amérindienne* (Montréal, 1992). For
other studies of the 1701 peace conference, see J. A. Brandão and Starna, "The
Treaties of 1701: A Triumph of Iroquois Diplomacy," *Ethnohistory,* 43 (1996),
209–44; Daniel K. Richter, "Cultural Brokers and Intercultural Politics: New York-
Iroquois Relations, 1664–1701," *Journal of American History,* 75 (1988), 40–67;
Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Origins of Iroquois Neutrality: The Grand Settlement of
1701," *Pennsylvania History,* 24 (1957), 223–35; and a special issue of *Recherches
amérindiennes au Québec,* 31 (Spring 2001), commemorating the tercentennial of the
treaty. For the specific problems mentioned here, see also Richter, *Ordeal of the
Longhouse,* 214–35, and Brandão, *"Your fyre shall burn no more": Iroquois Policy
toward New France and its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln, Neb., 1997), 126–29.

[59] La Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale* (Paris, 1722), 4:209–10.
Portions of La Potherie's work appear in two English translations; see notes 21 and
28 above.

[60] Joseph Marest to La Mothe Cadillac, Oct. 8, 1701, in *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:207.

terms, but several noted that the Iroquois gave few prisoners in return. In all, French allies returned thirty-one Iroquois prisoners, a small fraction of the Iroquois captured during the previous war.[61]

In order to assuage Iroquois anger over the disappointing number of captives returned, French officials pledged to facilitate prisoner exchanges until all parties were satisfied. Accordingly, Calliére and Montreal's governor Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil pressed the Ottawas, especially, to return Iroquois captives. In 1705, growing impatient with the constant demands of the French, Ottawa warriors attacked a party of Iroquois who had come to trade at Fort Frontenac. As soon as the violence subsided, the French, fearing that Iroquois retaliation could escalate into full-scale war, demanded that the Ottawas and Iroquois join them to negotiate peace. At the conference, the Iroquois berated the Ottawas for attacking them and destroying the "great tree of peace" planted by the French at Montreal. Promising reprisals if no satisfaction could be made, the Iroquois nevertheless left the door open for peace. They demanded that, in addition to returning all Iroquois prisoners, the Ottawas provide them with non-Iroquois captives to replace those killed in the attack. In the interest of peace, the Ottawas agreed to "search among the Sioux" for "slaves . . . to replace their [Iroquois] dead."[62]

This new demand, familiar enough to the Ottawas as a legitimate means of restoring peace, again tested the limits of French accommodation. Up to this point, French officials had participated in something only too familiar in their own war culture: the return of an enemy's prisoners as a condition of peace. Now, however, the Iroquois were asking the French to facilitate the exchange of captives from an uninvolved third party to cover the Iroquois dead. However they felt about it, to maintain peace the French had to support the Iroquois request and oversee the acquisition of Sioux captives. Since war with England had resumed three years earlier, New France needed Iroquois neutrality more than ever to avoid costly losses on its southern frontier.

The Ottawas, however, did not deliver the captives the following summer as they had promised. Angry at this betrayal, the Iroquois approached Vaudreuil, now governor-general of the colony. "Abandon the Outaouas to us, and hold us back no longer," the Iroquois demanded. "Our warriors are all ready." They were grateful that the French had secured the return of the Iroquois prisoners, but without the promised Sioux captives to requicken their dead, they would surely attack the

[61] For an English translation of 1701 treaty text, see Havard, *Great Peace,* appendix 3, quotation on 211. For Callière demanding Iroquois prisoners of his allies, see La Potherie, *History,* in *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:201.
[62] "Paroles des Outaouais de Michilimackinac," Aug. 23, 1705, C11A, 22:255–55v.

Ottawas and seize their captives by force. Vaudreuil assured the Iroquois that he was doing all he could to ensure Ottawa compliance. The previous spring he had sent an envoy to Michilimackinac to bring back as many captives as he could for the Iroquois. There, the Ottawa chief Companissé had given the French four Sioux captives, promising "that he would bring me next year, without fail, the remainder of the slaves he had promised you." Vaudreuil then offered the captives to the Iroquois and vowed personally to deliver the balance owed them by the Ottawas. "I stay your axe as regards Michilimackinac," Vaudreuil concluded, "until they have had time to keep their word."[63]

One reason the French went to such great lengths to participate in these captive exchanges was their fear that a direct delivery from the Ottawas might draw them too close to the Iroquois. The French wanted peace between the two peoples, but they also wanted to prevent an Ottawa-Iroquois alliance. "It is not proper to have the Outaouas, Hurons, and other Indians friendly with the Iroquois," reads a margin note in Vaudreuil's 1703 report to France. "Some adroit effort must be made to prevent them becoming good friends."[64] Understanding the symbolic bonds created through captive exchange, the French intervened to prevent Iroquois-Ottawa rapprochement and to benefit from Iroquois gratitude. That way, were the Iroquois to re-establish a military alliance with the English, at least they would not take the Ottawas with them to the detriment of New France.

In addition to promoting the interests of the colony, Vaudreuil had personal incentives to deliver the captives and ensure peace. He had served in an army that retreated from the Iroquois in 1687, and he held great respect for the strength of their warriors.[65] Moreover, writing only three months before his meeting with the Iroquois, Vaudreuil's superior at Versailles reminded him, "You have nothing so important in the present state of affairs as the maintenance of peace with the Iroquois and other Indian nations." He then warned that, in the event of failure, "I shall not guarantee to you that his Majesty would be willing to allow you to occupy for any length of time your present post."[66]

During the next two years, Vaudreuil and other colonial officials worked persistently to ensure the transfer of captives from the Ottawas to the Iroquois. In 1706, Vaudreuil again pressured the Ottawas to pro-

[63] "Talk of Marquis de Vaudreuil with the Sonnontouans," Sept. 4, 1706, Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society, *Historical Collections,* 33 (Lansing, Mich., 1904), 285–87, spelling modernized.

[64] "Speeches of the Outaouaes of Misilimakinac," Sept. 27, 1703, *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:223.

[65] Zoltvany, "Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil," *DCB,* 2:565–74.

[66] "Letter of Count de Pontchartrain to Governor de Vaudreuil," June 9, 1706, *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:228–29.

vide "living slaves . . . to replace the Iroquois dead."[67] In 1707, he sent strict orders to the French at Michilimackinac to ensure that the Ottawas deliver to the Iroquois "the remaining slaves that they promised to provide."[68] He even arranged for a canoe to transport the slaves, a policy explicitly sanctioned by the crown, "it being of the utmost importance to the preservation of the Colony" to avert the pending war.[69] By 1708, when the Ottawas finally delivered the promised slaves to the French, Vaudreuil and his intendant, Jacques Raudot, had come to learn the power of Indian slavery. They concluded, in a joint letter to their superiors, that captive exchanges were the sole means of maintaining peace between their two most important Indian neighbors, the Ottawas and the Iroquois.[70] Informed with this new understanding, New France's officials grew increasingly reliant on the exchange of Indian captives in native diplomacy. When asked by Versailles in 1707 to buttress the French alliance with the Abenakis, for example, Vaudreuil promptly sent orders to Jean-Paul Legardeur de Saint-Pierre to buy "a young panis slave to be given to the Abenaki" as a token of friendship.[71]

The Abenakis also received Indian captives from the French in exchange for English prisoners. During the frontier raids of Queen Anne's War, the Abenakis and other allied Indians captured hundreds of English settlers and attempted to integrate them into their village as adoptive kin or, occasionally, as slaves. This outraged Joseph Dudley, governor of Massachusetts, who wrote to Vaudreuil, "I cannot allow that Christians should be slaves of those wretches." Dudley threatened that if the French did not secure the release of English captives among the Indians, he would turn over French prisoners at Boston to his Indian allies.[72] This threat, as well as the desire to exchange English for French prisoners, encouraged Vaudreuil and many others to purchase Indian captives from France's western allies to trade for English captives living among the Indians of the East, especially the Abenakis and the Kahnawake Iroquois.[73]

[67] "Lettre de Vaudreuil et Raudot au ministre," Apr. 28, 1706, C11A, 24:3–6.
[68] "Instructions de Vaudreuil à Jean-Paul Legardeur de Saint-Pierre," July 6, 1707, C11A, 26:65–68. For quotation, "Réponse de Vaudreuil aux Onontagués," Aug. 17, 1707, C11A, 26:87–93.
[69] "Louis XIV to M. de Vaudreuil," June 30, 1707, in E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York,* 15 vols. (Albany, 1853–1887), 9:808–09.
[70] "Lettre de Vaudreuil et des intendants Raudot au minister," Apr. 30, 1706, C11A, 24:8–9. For other efforts to obtain the promised slaves, see C11A, 24:3–6, and C11A, 28:212–16.
[71] "Letter of Count de Pontchartrain to Governor de Vaudreuil," June 9, 1706, *Wis. Hist. Coll.,* 16:229, for Versailles; "Instructions de Vaudreuil à Jean-Paul Legardeur de Saint-Pierre," July 6, 1707, C11A, 26:65–68 for quotation.
[72] For Dudley and Vaudreuil, see John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York, 1994), 79–99.
[73] For the best explanation of "redeeming" in this period, see Emma Lewis Coleman, *New England Captives Carried to Canada between 1677 and 1760 during the*

As colonial administrators increasingly relied on the exchange of
Indian captives to negotiate peace, strengthen friendships, and redeem
English prisoners, they also encountered western traders, prominent
merchants, and minor colonial officials who began to purchase Indian
captives to use as slaves. In 1702, at the death of François Provost, the
king's lieutenant in Quebec and governor of Trois-Rivières, his Indian
slave Louis passed to his widow, Geneviève. Provost likely had obtained
Louis in connection with his fur trading ventures, which began in 1697
when he established a company to export furs to France.[74] In 1703,
Marie-Françoise, an eighteen-year-old Indian slave of Pierre d'Ailleboust
d'Argenteuil, died in Montreal. D'Argenteuil, a prominent military offi-
cer and seigneur, had kept her as a domestic slave in his Montreal home
for several years.[75]

In 1706, Jacques Barbel, a well-known Montreal judge who used his
office to front an illegal fur trade operation, reclaimed a "panis" slave he
had "loaned" to a friend.[76] The same year, Jacques-Alexis Fleury
d'Eschambault, a member of Quebec's Superior Council and Jacques
Raudot's closest associate, baptized his Indian slave, Charles-Alexis, in
Montreal.[77] By 1706, Vaudreuil himself had obtained an Indian slave,
Jacques, who appeared that year in Quebec's hospital records. Given
Vaudreuil's interest in the illegal fur and musket trades at Montreal, he
likely had obtained Jacques there through his middleman, Pierre You de
La Découverte, who acquired his own Indian slaves from the Illinois.[78]

La Découverte's association with the Upper Mississippi Valley began
in the early 1680s and extended to the early eighteenth century.[79] While in

French and Indian Wars (Portland, Me., 1925), 1:69-129. For efforts to trade Indian
for English captives, see Demos, Unredeemed Captive, esp. 85–86.
   [74] Trudel, Dictionnaire des esclaves, 138, 402; Douville, "Provost," DCB,
2:532–33.
   [75] Trudel, Dictionnaire des esclaves, 78, 267.
   [76] Ibid., 274; André Vachon, "Jacques Barbel," DCB, 2:42–44.
   [77] Trudel, Dictionnaire des esclaves, 56–57, 327; "Liste apostillée des conseillers
au Conseil supérieur de Québec," CIIA, 125:322–24.
   [78] For Vaudreuil's slave, see Trudel, Dictionnaire des esclaves, 407; for
Vaudreuil's interest in the illegal fur trade, see "Summary of an Inspection of the
Posts of Detroit and Michilimackinac, by d'Aigremont," Nov. 14, 1708, Wis. Hist.
Coll., 16:259. For La Découverte, see Albertine Ferland-Angers, "Pierre You de la
Découverte," DCB, 2:672–73. For La Découverte's connection with the illegal fur
trade, see trial beginning Sept. 10, 1707, Jurisdiction of Montreal, Archives
Nationales du Québec-Montréal (ANQ-M), file 020-1047. The French Minister of
Marine labeled La Découverte an "arrant trader," accusing him of trading illegally in
the West and hinting that Vaudreuil had turned a blind eye to his dealings. See
"Letter of Count de Pontchartrain to Governor de Vaudreuil," June 9, 1706, Wis.
Hist. Coll., 16:231–32.
   [79] d'Youville's honorary title, "de La Découverte," signified his participation in
La Salle's discovery of the mouth of the Mississippi River. For his continued rela-

the upper country, La Découverte acquired an Indian slave he named Pascal. Born about 1690, Pascal had been captured, traded to the Miamis, and carried to Montreal with La Découverte by 1703. Pascal typified the slaves entering Montreal and Quebec during the first decade of the eighteenth century; 87 percent were male and, on average, aged fourteen. These slaves experienced traumatic childhoods before entering their permanent status as slaves in French settlements.[80]

From the Illinois country, however, Indian slaves did not always travel to the St. Lawrence. Instead, French and Indian traders there often sold slaves to the much more developed markets of English Carolina, where thousands of Indian slaves either labored on plantations or embarked for the Caribbean.[81] Between 1707 and 1708, the governors of New France and Louisiana learned that the French settlers "living among the Kaskaskia Illinois were inciting the savage nations in the environs of this settlement to make war upon one another and that the French-Canadians themselves were participating in order to get slaves that they afterwards sold to the English."[82] French *coureurs de bois* and their Miami and Illinois partners spent much of the first decade of the eighteenth century working with Carolina traders to bring slaves and furs from the western Ohio Valley to southeastern English ports.[83]

tionship with Tonty and La Forest, as well as his presence in the Illinois country, see "La Forest Sells Half-interest to Accault, April 19, 1693," *Ill. Hist. Coll.*, 23:264–66. In 1694, d'Youville fathered a child by a Miami woman, moving sometime before the end of the decade to Montreal; Ferland-Angers, "You de la Découverte," *DCB*, 2:672–73.

[80] *RAB*, 42745, 10 May 1704. Several Illinois, Miami, and Ottawa warriors banded together to raid the "Ozages and the Kanças" just before La Decouverte acquired Pascal, making his origin among one of those two peoples likely. See La Potherie, *History*, in *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:157.

[81] For the most complete treatment of the Carolina Indian slave trade, see Alan Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670–1717* (New Haven, 2002), esp. 288–314. Gallay estimates that from 1670 to 1715, as many as 51,000 Indian slaves passed through South Carolina, although this number does not include those arriving from the Illinois country. See Table 2, ibid., 299. See also James H. Merrell, *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (Chapel Hill, 1989), 36–37, and J. Leitch Wright Jr., *The Only Land They Knew: American Indians in the Old South* (Lincoln, Neb., 1999; orig. pub. 1981), esp. 126–50.

[82] Richebourg Gaillard McWilliams, ed. and trans., *Fleur de Lys and Calumet, Being the Pénicaut Narrative of French Adventure in Louisiana* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1988), 122–23, translation modernized. For similar charges a few years later, see "Letter of Ramezay and Bégon to French Minister; dated Nov. 7, 1715," *Wis. Hist. Coll.*, 16:331–32.

[83] For the best treatments of French trade into Carolina between 1700 and 1710, see Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 35; Verner W. Crane, "The Tennessee River as the Road to Carolina: The Beginnings of Exploration and Trade," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 3 (1916), 3–18; and Crane, "The Southern Frontier in Queen Anne's War," *American Historical Review*, 24 (1919), 379–95.

To officials at Quebec, the Carolina trade threatened not only a loss of revenues, but also a loss of military allies to a wartime enemy. One of the earliest lessons the French learned in native diplomacy was the inseparability of trade and alliance. They feared that if the Illinois and Miamis developed strong trade relationships with Carolina, the English would easily win the military alliance of these two large confederacies and overcome the French.[84] Thus, in 1708 Louisiana's governor, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, sent an emissary to Kaskaskia with presents for the Indians and stern words for the French meant to halt the slave trade. Bienville had built his most important alliances in Louisiana by protecting the victims of Carolina's slave raids, and he did not want to risk these alliances by allowing his own people to extend the slave market into a new quarter. In the end, however, French officials in Louisiana and Quebec understood the limits of their coercive power in the distant Illinois country.[85] The 1709 slave ordinance indicates a growing concern among Quebec officials about the potential of slave sales to weaken Illinois and Miami commitments to the French alliance. Raudot implied that it would be better for the French to sell Indian slaves in Montreal than to "trade them with the English of Carolina."[86] Once again, keeping allies in the West meant accepting Indian slaves into New France.

Yet in the 1709 ordinance legalizing Indian slavery, Raudot sought a more conventional justification for the colony's use of Indian slaves, suggesting that they were "as necessary to the inhabitants of this country for farming and other tasks as are the Negroes to the Islands." As Raudot and everyone else understood, however, Indian slavery in New France differed substantially from its African counterpart in the French Caribbean. Aside from the fur trade, New France produced no profitable exports, and it lacked both the capital and the climate to imitate the successful plantation economies of Martinique and Saint Domingue. Thus, while the islands organized their entire labor system around slavery, Canadians virtually ignored the institution. Despite the crown's 1689 authorization of black slave imports into New France, only eleven appear on the records between 1689 and 1709.[87] During the same period, the plantations of the French Caribbean absorbed more than fifty thousand slaves from across the Atlantic.[88]

[84] "Lettre de Callière et Beauharnois au ministre," Nov. 3, 1702, C11A, 20:56–78. See also Crane, "Road to Carolina," 16–17. For broader French involvement in the Carolina trade at this time, see Galley, *Indian Slave Trade,* 308–12.
[85] McWilliams, ed. and trans., *Fleur de Lys and Calumet,* 122–23.
[86] "Ordonnance concernant les Panis."
[87] Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves.*
[88] David Geggus, "The French Slave Trade: An Overview," *WMQ,* 3d Ser., 58 (2001), 119–38, esp. Table 1 on 135.

Still, New France did need laborers. From its inception, the colony struggled to find a sufficient number of workers to meet even its basic needs. Migration to New France, never high to begin with, dropped precipitously in the 1670s, stunting the colony's population growth. Among those who did come to Canada, more than two-thirds returned to France, resulting in a deficiency of free workers.[89] Despite tireless efforts to recruit unfree labor, the importation of engagés virtually ended in 1666, leaving French colonists and administrators chronically anxious about labor shortages.[90] In 1689, one French official lamented that "laborers and servants are scarce and extraordinarily expensive in Canada, which ruins everyone whose enterprise depends on them."[91] A generation later, the problem persisted, leading the governor and intendant to conclude in 1716, "The small number of inhabitants in Canada causes all enterprise to fail due to the difficulty of finding workers."[92]

Labor shortages plagued the colony's agricultural regions as well. According to Gédéon de Catalogne, who surveyed the seigneuries of the St. Lawrence Valley in 1712, "In relation to the great size of the settlement, there is not one-quarter of the workmen required to clear and cultivate the land."[93] As a result, French farmers were forced to clear their land piecemeal, often hiring themselves out for part of the year to provide for their family's needs before the land could produce crops. Much of their land simply remained uncleared.[94]

Many, like intendant Michel Bégon, hoped to solve the colony's labor shortages by importing African slaves. "The majority of Englishmen and Flemings of the government of New York, adjacent to that of Montreal, never labor in agriculture," Bégon wrote in a 1716 appeal for a shipment of slaves. "It is their Negroes that do all their work," he continued, "and that colony provides the grain necessary for the subsistence of the English islands."[95] Since slaves in the colony would not produce prof-

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[89] Peter N. Moogk, "Reluctant Exiles: Emigrants from France in Canada before 1760," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 46 (1989), 463–505. See also Moogk, *La Nouvelle France*, 87–120.

[90] See Gabriel Debien, "Engagés pour le Canada ou XVIIe siècle vus de La Rochelle," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 6 (1952–1953), 177–220.

[91] "Resumé des rapports du Canada avec les notes du ministre," 1689, in *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs a la Nouvelle-France* . . . (Québec, 1883–85), 1:476.

[92] "Mémoire de Messieurs Vaudreuil et Bégon au Ministre," Oct. 14, 1716, ibid., 3:21.

[93] "Mémoire de Gédéon de Catalogne sur le Canada," Nov. 7, 1712, CIIA, 33:210–36, quoted in Zoltvany, ed., *The French Tradition in America* (New York, 1969), 96.

[94] Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Montreal*, trans. Liana Vardi (Montréal, 1992), 152–54.

[95] "Vaudreuil et Bégon au Ministre," Oct. 14, 1716, in *Collection de manuscrits*, 3:21–22.

itable export goods, however, New France's colonists could not afford to pay the rising prices for African slaves traded on the Atlantic market. Nor did trade routes favor African slavery as a solution to New France's labor shortage, since ships traveling the well-known route of the "triangle trade" did not venture north to the St. Lawrence.[96]

The first decade of the eighteenth century witnessed New France's worst economic crisis since its founding, thus adding to the colony's inability to invest in African slave labor. Between 1700 and 1710, the glut of beaver pelts on the French market depressed prices by 75 percent, sinking to an all-time low around 1708.[97] With public finances strained beyond capacity by the war with England, official outlays to diversify the economy were out of the question. Yet precisely because of wartime expenses, colonial officials felt growing pressure from Versailles to increase self-sufficiency and to generate revenue for France. In 1707, Vaudreuil complained of the "deplorable state" of New France's economy but despaired of any solution.[98]

Individual merchants and farmers also experienced financial strain. Fur trade engagements dropped precipitously, with a corresponding decline in the quantity of trade goods merchants could profitably send west. A general monetary crisis decreased the availability of reliable currency and limited merchants' ability to extend credit. As French merchants began charging the colonists higher prices for essential textiles and manufactured goods, colonial wheat prices continued to fall, widening the gap between the income farmers earned and the expenses they incurred.[99] Because of Montreal's dependence on the fur trade and the relative immaturity of its agricultural development, its residents suffered more than most. Yet about 13 or 14 percent of Montreal's households claimed an Indian slave by 1709.[100]

Merchants' growing participation in the Indian slave trade may have been fueled, rather than hindered, by the economic crisis. Unable to profit from western trade with conventional cargoes, many merchants seem to have reduced their losses by selling Indian slaves acquired in the West during trade expeditions. Maurice Blondeau, for example, who

[96] Robert Louis Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century: An Old Regime Business* (Madison, 1979).

[97] Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, 67–76; for furs, see esp. Table 15.

[98] See "Lettre des sieurs Vaudreuil et Raudot au ministre," Nov. 15, 1707, C11A, 26:9–49.

[99] Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants*, 67–89, 296, appendix D.

[100] I obtained the figure on Montreal's households by comparing the number of Indian slaveholders in Montreal with the number of known households in 1704. For the number of households, I relied on the *Adhémar* database. The database documents between 248 and 261 households in the town in 1704. With 35 proprietors, this equals a range of 13.4% to 14.1%.

specialized in the western trade, partnered with Alphonse Tonty at Michilimackinac. Beginning in 1696, when all but a few merchants were banned from the western fur trade, Blondeau's business began to falter. He continued to trade illegally until, in 1698, the intendant Jean Bochart de Champigny ordered his goods and effects seized. The reopening of legal trade at Detroit in 1701 promised renewed profits, but if Blondeau's fortunes mirrored that of most merchants, little materialized.[101] Possibly as a result, in 1703 he began to carry a few Indian slaves on his return journeys to Montreal. In addition to the two slaves he acquired for himself during this period, he appears to have sold at least one to his friend and business partner François Lamoureux dit Saint-Germain. This proved to be the beginning of a long connection to the slave trade for the Blondeau family, which owned twenty-four Indian slaves during the eighteenth century and traded many more to other French colonists.[102]

Thus, the changing conditions of French-Indian diplomacy made captives readily available and relatively inexpensive at a time when French labor was scarce and costly. Even before their legal recognition as chattel, these slaves worked in many different capacities, contributing substantially to the wealth of slaveowners and to the productivity of the colony in general. Surviving documents yield few details about slaves' work before 1709, but a few telling examples show slaves working in the fur trade, agriculture, and domestic service. Because Indian slavery originated in western trade, exploration, and diplomacy, the slaves' first tasks were often associated with these activities. Trader and explorer Louis Jolliet, for example, used "a young slave, ten years old" to aid him on a journey from the upper country to Quebec. When their canoe capsized near Montreal, the slave drowned, causing Jolliet "much regret . . . [because] he was blessed with natural goodness, quick-wittedness, diligence, and obedience." Characteristic of many similar documents, Jolliet's letter gives no details about the specific tasks assigned to the boy. Jolliet wrote to encourage Bishop François de Laval-Montigny's commitment to western missions, knowing that strong church support would help his own ambitions in the region. Jolliet therefore emphasized the tractability of western Indians and their responsiveness to

[101] François Béland, "Maurice-Régis Blondeau," *DCB*, 5:89–90; "Liste de ceux qui sont montés à Michilimackinac avec Tonty," Oct. 23, 1697, C11A, 15:143; "Lettre de Champigny au ministre," Oct. 27, 1698, C11A, 16:130–38.

[102] For the Blondeau slaves, see Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 282–83. There is no surviving documentation of a slave sale from Blondeau to Lamoureux, but Blondeau seems the most likely supplier of Lamoureux's slave based on their business connections and Blondeau's other slave sales. For Lamoureux's slaves, see Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 358, and trial beginning Feb. 18, 1712, ANQ-M, file 025–1328.

Catholic teachings. "He spoke French," Jolliet concluded, and was "beginning to read and write."[103]

At Michilimackinac, Pierre Hubert dit Lacroix purchased in 1696 an Indian slave, also named Pierre, from the *voyageur* Ignace Durand. After using Pierre as a slave for five years, Hubert released him from slavery and hired him as an indentured servant, promising him fifty livres, a gun, and some wheat at the completion of a two-year contract. For less than three hundred livres, then, Hubert had compelled Pierre's services for seven years. Comparable French labor could have cost up to eight times as much. One of the reasons Hubert could purchase a slave for such a relative value was that Durand, the original proprietor, had received Pierre as a gift from Ottawa traders at Michilimackinac. As a result, Durand could part with his slave for much less than the value of his labor and still earn a substantial profit.[104]

When slaves passed from the West to the rural settlements of the St. Lawrence, they primarily worked as domestic and farm laborers. Especially before 1700, these slaves' activities come to us only in fragments. René Chartier, for example, owned an Indian slave in Lachine, a developing farming village near Montreal. When the Iroquois attacked and leveled the settlement in 1689, Chartier, most of his family, and his slave were killed. The mass burial record belatedly created in 1694 contains the only evidence remaining about Chartier's slave: "pani—slave of Rene Charrier [sic], killed by the Iroquois."[105] Chartier, like most of the seventy or so families settled in Lachine, worked hard to clear enough land to subsist. His young slave likely performed routine farming chores, freeing Chartier to clear additional land and improve the family's home. Unlike the domestic servants bound to other Lachine families, however, Chartier's slave could claim no contractual protection and would be at his master's mercy for release from servitude.[106]

Among the newcomers who moved to Lachine following the Iroquois raid was Guillaume de Lorimier de la Rivière, a captain in the colonial troops, who settled there sometime before 1696. Like many of his contemporaries, Lorimier used his position as a military officer to

[103] "Lettre de Jolliet à Monseigneur de Laval," Oct. 10, 1674, reproduced in Jean Delanglez, *Louis Jolliet: Vie et voyages (1645–1700)* (Montréal, 1950), 403.

[104] For Pierre's life, see Greffe Adhémar, Mar. 6, 1701, ANQ-M, and Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 84. In the 1690s, securing the services of a French laborer in the West cost voyageurs about 350 livres per year, plus provisions. See, for example, "Engagement of Simon to Tonti and La Forest September 13, 1693," *Ill. Hist. Coll.,* 23:283–85.

[105] Death of Aug. 5, 1689, *RAB,* 14543 ("extract from a note by Lachine's priest dated 28 Oct. 1694"); Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 23.

[106] For Lachine's population, see Eccles, *Canadian Frontier,* 120. For land clearing and servants, see Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants,* 152–68.

procure Indian slaves, by 1708 acquiring an adolescent he called Joseph. Because Joseph was several years older than the average Indian slave, he worked alongside Lorimier and his sons clearing, planting, and harvesting. Given Lorimier's frequent absences during Queen Anne's War, Joseph often worked the farm alone, and by 1708 he had developed sufficient skill to farm a separate plot of land. In addition to Joseph's agricultural work, Lorimier benefited from the domestic labor of Marie-Anne dit l'Anglais, an English captive taken in 1703 and held by Lorimier as a servant. Because there were no separate slave or servant quarters, Joseph and Marie-Anne lived in close proximity, and in 1708, Marie-Anne became pregnant with Joseph's child.[107]

Shortly after discovering the pregnancy, Lorimier granted them leave to marry and settle on an adjacent plot of land. Following the marriage, Marie-Anne continued to work as a servant, but Joseph's status is more difficult to determine. He appears in the records between 1708 and his death in 1720 as many things—"*habitant*," "*pany*," "*serviteur*," "*fermier*" (tenant farmer), and "*sauvage*"—but never "*esclave*." In 1716, Marie-Anne left Joseph to live a "scandalous life" with a neighboring Frenchman. When Joseph discovered them together, he unsuccessfully attacked them with a hatchet, landing both himself and Marie-Anne in a Montreal prison. Trying to justify her actions before the court, Marie-Anne suggested that she deserved better than a "sauvage" for a husband. Were Joseph still a slave, she almost certainly would have pointed to that status as another reason she could not stay with him. Thus, Joseph likely received his freedom from Lorimier at the time of his marriage, but he never fully recovered from his degraded status.[108]

Among the witnesses to Joseph's and Marie-Anne's wedding stood André Rapin dit Skaianis, another freed Indian slave who lived nearby.[109] As with Joseph, Skaianis's childhood status survives clearly enough—he was a slave, captured by allied Indians and traded in 1686 at Montreal to André Rapin dit Lamusette. But in 1699, the year Skaianis turned eighteen, his master died, willing to Skaianis a bull and a heifer "for the services he had rendered to the family he had joined at the age

[107] For Lorimier, see Moogk, "Guillaume de Lorimier de La Rivière," *DCB*, 2:445–46. The most complete record of Joseph's and Marie-Anne's lives is a Montreal court case from 1716. See trial beginning Apr. 9, 1716, ANQ-M, file 033–1893. For the pregnancy and subsequent marriage, see marriage of July 31, 1708, *RAB*, 14373, and Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 25.

[108] Trial beginning Apr. 9, 1716, ANQ-M, file 033–1893; Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves*, 25.

[109] Marriage of July 31, 1708, *RAB*, 14373. The name Skaianis appears with several variant spellings, including Kaianis, Scaianis, Scaiennis, Skaiennais, Skaiennis, Skayanis, and Skianis. I have chosen the spelling that appears most frequently.

of five."[110] Skaianis immediately began to cultivate his own land, and in 1706, he married a poor French widow, Anne Gourdon, a neighbor and longtime friend of his former master's family. Lachine's parish priest recorded Skaianis as the "adoptive son" of his former owner, André Rapin, an indicator of just how far Skaianis had traveled since his capture twenty years earlier. In 1723, after the death of his first wife, he contracted with Charles Nolan, a fur and slave trader, to run canoes loaded with trade goods to Michilimackinac and return with furs. After his contract expired, Skaianis returned to Lachine and settled on his farm, remarrying at the age of sixty-three to a well-established French widow.[111]

As these stories indicate, Indian slavery in New France before 1709 mirrored the fluidity and ambiguity found in the "charter generations" of many slaveholding societies.[112] Skaianis successfully integrated into French life, for example, owning livestock and a farm, taking a French wife, and freely contracting his labor. Joseph did not fare quite as well, but he still attained a measure of autonomy that slave status would have denied him. Although we do not know how typical these experiences were, the uncertain legal status of all Indian slaves mitigated the severity of their servitude and created paths to freedom. According to Jacques Raudot, many nonslaveholding colonists "inspire the slaves with ideas of liberty. Consequently, they almost always leave their masters, claiming that there are no slaves in France, which is not always true since there are colonies that depend upon slavery." No surviving documents indicate the source of these antislavery statements, but it is possible that friendships like the one between the former slave André Rapin dit Skaianis and his enslaved neighbor Joseph generated such conversations and encouraged Indian slaves to assert their freedom through flight.[113] While many slaveholders successfully recovered escaped slaves, others demanded official intervention to prevent the loss of the "considerable amounts of money" they had invested in slave property. Thus, all slaves were forbidden to leave their masters, and any colonist caught encouraging or assisting their escape would face a fine of fifty livres.[114] By for-

[110] Adhémar, Oct. 24, 1699, ANQ-M. Quoted in Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants,* 327n.28. See also Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 24.

[111] Marriage of Apr. 18, 1706, Lachine, *RAB,* 14366; Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 24; trial beginning Sept. 19,1715, ANQ-M, file 032–1777.

[112] The term "charter generations" comes from Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 15–92.

[113] Skaianis and Joseph appear on many of the same documents between 1708 and 1720, witnessing the baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and burials of family members and friends.

[114] Raudot, "Ordonnance concernant les Panis." For the best treatments of slavery in early modern France, see Sue Peabody, *"There Are No Slaves in France":*

malizing the legal status of Indian slaves, New France's civil officials sought to make Indian slavery in the colony more like the chattel slavery of the French Caribbean. Colonists would buy and sell slaves with enforceable contracts, and the weight of the colony's police power would fall on those seeking to interfere with slaveholders' property rights.

On June 15, 1709, Montreal notary Antoine Adhémar recorded the first Indian slave sale to occur since the legal recognition of Indian slavery two months earlier. Seigneur and military officer Pierre-Thomas Tarieu de La Pérade purchased Pascal, a nineteen-year-old Indian male, from Madeleine Just de La Découverte (the wife of Pascal's original owner) for 120 livres. The notarial record itself signified the new structures Raudot had erected to protect Indian slave property, carefully outlining the amount and method of payment and declaring the sale legally enforceable. Similar documents would be cited in court records throughout the eighteenth century to confirm the enslaved status of individual panis and to settle disputes over slaveholders' property.[115]

Pascal's life, too, represents both the origins of New France's Indian slave system and the transformation effected by its legalization. When he first entered the colony as the slave of Pierre You de La Découverte, Pascal had passed through a raid-and-trade network more dominated by Indian than French cultural norms. This captive exchange carried Pascal from his home on the Great Plains to a mixed French and Miami settlement in the Illinois country, where La Découverte lived with his Miami wife and *métis* child. As a slave of La Découverte, Pascal likely performed a combination of domestic chores and tasks associated with La Découverte's illegal fur and liquor trade on Montreal's Isle-aux-Tourtres.

La Pérade's motives for acquiring Pascal, however, marked an important point of departure for Pascal and many other French-owned Indian slaves. Pascal was the first of thirteen Indian slaves that La Pérade purchased between 1709 and 1751, and their labor on his seigneurial estate largely removed them from the world of French-Indian exchange that characterized much of the early slave experience.[116] La Pérade, described by one of his subordinates as "a furious man who is out of his mind," treated free laborers so harshly that he could not find anyone willing to work for him. His reliance on slaves reflected his desire to develop his seigneury into a respectable and lucrative enterprise, much more akin to his Caribbean counterparts than to La Découverte's ambitions related to Indian trade.[117]

The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime (New York, 1996), and Pierre H. Boulle, "In Defense of Slavery: Eighteenth-Century Opposition to Abolition and the Origins of a Racist Ideology in France," in Frederick Krantz, ed., *History from Below: Studies in Popular Protest and Popular Ideology* (New York, 1988), 219–46.

[115] Adhémar, June 15, 1709, ANQ-M.

[116] Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 419–20.

[117] André Vachon, "Marie-Madeleine Jarret de Verchères," *DCB,* 3:308–13. Large holdings like La Pérade's were not the norm, however. Most slaveholders in

As French colonists demanded a growing number of Indian slaves from their allies, Native American captive customs also evolved to meet the new realities of New France's slave market. Because the slave trade rewarded brutality with valuable goods, it encouraged the colony's allies to choose warfare over peace. As Jonathan Carver noted after touring the West in the 1760s, the French demand for slaves "caused the dissensions between the Indian nations to be carried on with a greater degree of violence, and with unremitted ardor."[118] The meanings of captive-taking and exchange also adjusted to the slave market, as Indian nations increasingly viewed captives as commodities of trade rather than as symbols of alliance, power, or spiritual renewal. Ironically, this caused the violent rituals of humiliation and torture to decline because the resulting injuries diminished a captive's value. "Fewer of the captives are tormented and put to death," Carver continued, "since these expectations of receiving so valuable a consideration for them have been excited."[119]

Yet New France's Indian slave system never fully escaped its origins in the diplomacy and gift exchange that first brought Indian captives into French hands as slaves. The colony's native allies in the upper country remained the suppliers of Indian slaves, and they continually demanded French accommodation to their customs. Moreover, shifts in the western alliance complicated New France's slave policies, especially when the colony wished to befriend nations, such as the Fox or Sioux, whose people they held as slaves. Often, slaveholders' claims on Indians as property clashed with the demands of an alliance that required a more fluid exchange of captives and slaves than French property law would allow.

By accepting "a little flesh" to stabilize their alliance with western Indians, the colonists of New France acknowledged the symbolic power of captive exchanges to build union and foster peace. Yet rather than willingly embracing their allies' captive customs, French officials only assented when natives demanded their participation. Ironically, then, Indian slavery originated as a partial defeat of New France's power over its Indian neighbors. From that defeat, however, the French built an exploitative labor system that redirected their impulse for control and domination onto distant Indian nations.

New France owned only one or two Indian slaves. See Trudel, *Dictionnaire des esclaves,* 265–430.

[118] Jonathan Carver, *Three Years Travels through the Interior Parts of North America . . .* (Philadelphia, 1789), 177. For the ramifications of the Indian slave trade for western Indians, see Rushforth, "Savage Bonds," chap. 3.

[119] Carver, *Three Years Travels,* 178. For the transformation of Indians' captive-taking practices, see Rushforth, "Savage Bonds," chap. 5.