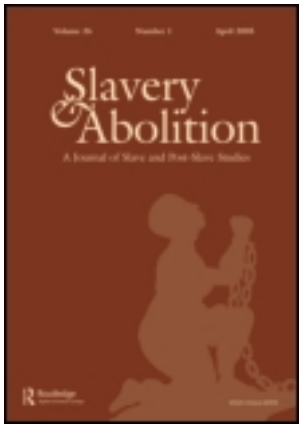

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Ana Lucia Araujo

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Dahomey, Portugal and Bahia: King Adandozan and the Atlantic Slave Trade

Ana Lucia Araujo

This article examines the correspondence between the Portuguese rulers and Dahomean kings, in particular King Adandozan (r. 1797–1818). The letters provide us with new elements to understand West African-European reciprocal perceptions and relations. In describing the main political and military conflicts of Adandozan's reign, the letters also reveal to what extent West African rulers were aware of the Napoleonic Wars. The correspondence sheds light on the impact European conflicts had on Dahomey's economy and how those events contributed to the decline of the Atlantic slave trade in West African ports such as Ouidah, giving clues about the motivations that eventually led to Adandozan's deposition.

During the era of the Atlantic slave trade, the Kingdom of Dahomey sent at least five embassies to Brazil and Portugal, in the years 1750, 1795, 1805, 1811 and 1818.[1] These missions, which were aimed at negotiating the terms of the Atlantic slave trade, generated an extensive official correspondence between the Dahomean kings and the Portuguese rulers. The Dahomean letters sent with the embassies of 1805 and 1811, despite being written in Portuguese by poorly educated Portuguese subjects, most of whom were made prisoners in Abomey, provide us with information about the aspirations and tastes of King Adandozan (r. 1797–1818). They are among the few known written documents which allow us to listen to his voice. They give us clues that not only help us to understand how the Portuguese rulers and officials perceived Adandozan and his emissaries, but also shed light on the main political and military conflicts that occurred during his reign. The letters also reveal to what extent West African rulers were aware of the Napoleonic Wars, shedding light on the impact of the French revolutionary era on Dahomey's economy, and on how these events contributed to the decline of the Atlantic slave trade in West African ports such as Ouidah. Some of these letters, describing the gifts sent to the Portuguese

Ana Lucia Araujo is Associate Professor in the Department of History, Howard University, 2441 6th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20059, USA. Email: aaraujo@howard.edu

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Regent, help us to better understand the impact of the introduction of new goods such as alcohol, tobacco, guns and textiles into Dahomean daily life, and how the ruling elites appropriated and transformed these goods into marks of symbolic distinction in order to obtain political and religious prestige. The correspondence allows us to follow the extent of the Atlantic slave trade crisis under Adandozan, giving us clues about the possible main motivations that led to his deposition.

Dahomean embassies in Bahia

In 1721, the Portuguese founded the fort São João Batista da Ajuda at Ouidah, which led Portuguese and Brazilian slave merchants to settle at the slave ports of the Bight of Benin.[2] In 1727, the Kingdom of Dahomey conquered the Kingdom of Hueda, seized Ouidah and gained direct access to the coast. Indeed, since the reign of King Agaja (r. *c.*1716–1740), Dahomey largely relied on the import of firearms, which was crucial to the kingdom's expansion.[3] Between 1770 and 1850, most Africans sent into slavery to the port of Salvador da Bahia (Brazil) were embarked from various ports of the Bight of Benin such as Ouidah, Lagos, Little Popo and Porto-Novo.[4] At the time, the Brazilian slave trade did not follow the traditional model of triangular voyages. Luso-Brazilian slave merchants travelled directly to the Bight of Benin to sell third-rate tobacco produced in Bahia (and several other products such as gold, gunpowder and textiles) and to buy slaves.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Atlantic slave trade underwent a period of crisis, due to English pressures and repressive measures to stop the slave trade in the ports of Africa and the Americas. After the signing of the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of 1815, slave trading north of the equator, including the port of Ouidah, was declared illegal.[5] In addition, during this same period, the port of Lagos (Onim) became a strong competitor to Ouidah. These events had a considerable impact on the Atlantic slave trade in West Africa and seriously disturbed the commercial activities of the Kingdom of Dahomey.

The Dahomean embassies sent to Brazil and Portugal generated an extensive correspondence that included narrative descriptions of events on both sides of the Atlantic. As official representatives of their kingdoms, West African emissaries stayed in colonial official buildings, and the Portuguese Crown paid all their travel and accommodation expenses. Very often, because their arrival coincided with local commemorations and religious festivities, the emissaries participated in these celebrations. Usually, the ambassadors stayed for several months in Salvador (Bahia), from which Ouidah's Portuguese fort was administrated.[6] Only after meeting Portuguese and Brazilian officials were the ambassadors allowed to travel to Lisbon to meet the King of Portugal.

In 1743, during the armed conflicts that followed the conquest of Ouidah, the Dahomean army destroyed the Portuguese fort.[7] In 1750, in order to renew relations with Portugal and Brazil, King Tegbesu sent an embassy to Brazil.[8] This mission – the first diplomatic act on Brazilian soil and, presumably, the first Dahomean/African diplomatic contact – was documented in a short, detailed account written by José Freire de Montarroyos Mascarenhas, the first professional journalist writing in the

Portuguese language.[9] In his account, Mascarenhas referred to King Tegbesu as 'Kiay Chiri Broncom', who 'was a lover [of] the Portuguese nation'.[10] Also according to the account, the Dahomean embassy was led by a man named Churumá Nadir, who was accompanied by two other individuals, Grijocome Santolo and Nenin Radix Grytonxom, and one interpreter. The group embarked for Bahia and arrived in Salvador in September 1750. In Salvador, the ambassador stayed in a room at the College of the Jesuits, described in detail by Mascarenhas:

> the ceiling was covered with precious counterpanes, and the floor with refined mats. A chair with a magnificent back, and cushioned stools, everything decorated with fringes. A rich bedroom, with a bed adorned with ivory and turtle shell, was prepared for him; Netherlands sheets, alternated and decorated with refined laces from Flanders; covered with fringed red fabric, and rich tassels, and everything beautifully covered with a gauze veil.[11]

According to Mascarenhas, the Dahomean ambassador was wearing on this occasion a 'gown similar to that of a High Court judge and a nacreous velvet coat', and was followed by a number of servants and four 10-year-old girls, who were 'naked according to their homeland style'.[12] While waiting for his appointment with the Viceroy of Brazil, the ambassador visited the city, which was celebrating the birthday of the King of Portugal.[13] The first audience between Churumá Nadir and the Viceroy of Brazil, Luís Pedro Peregrino de Carvalho Meneses de Ataíde (the Count of Atouguia), was held on 22 October 1750. The Portuguese authorities had offered the Dahomean emissaries luxurious Portuguese clothes for the day of the audience, but they rejected the offer and decided to wear their own garments, which Mascarenhas also described in detail. On the day of the audience, the Portuguese officials gathered and paraded in front of the church of the College of Jesuits. In his speech during the audience, the Dahomean ambassador said:

> the higher Lord, who, with no doubt, created this Globe, and the firmament's immensity, which is presented to our eyes, does not prevent either the communication between those who live under different laws, or the peace and the good friendship that is so useful for the trade of living beings. He desires this friendship with the Portuguese Crown, and promises with the King's word, to loyally observe, and in the absence of his person, to leave it recommended to his successors.[14]

Then, the Dahomean ambassador gave gifts to the King of Portugal and the Count of Atouguia: two large boxes covered in iron with ornate locks, in addition to the four Dahomean female children who accompanied the embassy.[15] Except for one girl who became blind after arriving in Bahia, all the other 'gifts' were sent to Lisbon.[16] The embassy returned to the Bight of Benin on 12 April 1751, on board the vessel *Bom Jesus d'Alem, Nossa Senhora da Esperança*. It left Salvador with a cargo of 8101 rolls of tobacco and arrived back from West Africa on 27 June 1752 carrying 834 enslaved persons.[17]

The ascension to power of King Agonglo (r. 1789–1797) coincided with a period of great instability in western Europe. France, Portugal, Spain and Britain were deeply affected by the Atlantic conflicts that followed the French Revolution and led to the

Napoleonic Wars. In fact, the rise of the Haitian Revolution and the abolition of slavery by the French Convention in 1794 greatly contributed to the decline of the slave trade in Ouidah. As Robin Law explains, despite the re-establishment of French slavery and the slave trade in 1802 by Napoleon, few French slave ships traded in Ouidah after 1794.[18] The effects of the decline of the Atlantic slave trade in Ouidah are visible in Agonglo's correspondence with the Portuguese rulers.

In May 1795, a new embassy sent by King Agonglo arrived in Bahia. This embassy aimed to transform the port of Ouidah into the exclusive source of slave exports to Brazil, and was composed of two representatives of the Dahomean king, who were accompanied by an interpreter named Luiz Caetano de Assumpção. The interpreter was identified as 'my white' in Agonglo's letter of 20 March 1795. Actually, he was an enslaved mulatto who had escaped from his master, Francisco Antônio da Fonseca e Aragão, the administrator of the Portuguese fort, and put himself under the protection of the King of Dahomey.[19] Indeed, the Portuguese Lieutenant Francisco Xavier Alvarez do Amaral, who was in conflict with Aragão, persuaded Agonglo to send the embassy to Bahia without Aragão's consent. According to Pierre Verger, Amaral wrote Agonglo's letters to Queen Maria of Portugal.[20]

In an official letter dated 20 March 1795, King Agonglo complained about the weight of the tobacco rolls imported from Bahia. The king also requested that the governor of Bahia, Dom Fernando José of Portugal, send him other goods such as silks, carved gold and silver. In addition, the king requested Ouidah to be the exclusive source of supply of slaves from the Bight of Benin to Brazil, and the Portuguese vessels to be forbidden to trade at the neighbouring ports.[21] But the governor rejected the proposal, explaining that the monopoly would not only increase the price of slaves, but also prevent the captains from being free to choose the slaves.[22] The letter reinforces what other historians have already demonstrated: products such as firearms, gunpowder, alcohol and tobacco were the main African imports during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The introduction of these goods transformed Dahomean local customs and daily life.[23] In the eighteenth century, Dahomeans employed various kinds of firearms in military campaigns as well as in hunting and defence. European travellers reported that at their arrival in Abomey, they were saluted with gunfire that was also employed in different ceremonies.[24]

Although it is difficult to determine the extent of Dahomean consumption of luxury goods, the alcohol and tobacco imports were destined for both the ruling class and mass consumption. Whereas tobacco was a native plant from the Americas, drinking alcohol was adapted to pre-existing consumption habits. European accounts of the late eighteenth century show that in addition to the consumption of palm wine and a local beer called *pitto*, Europeans introduced several kinds of brandy, wine and beer.[25] During various audiences and welcome receptions, travellers drank the king's health with small glasses of brandy. At the same time, in Dahomey there was a long-standing local weaving tradition, and imported cloths such as silk were probably intended for local elites seeking to publicly display their wealth.[26] For example, during a visit to the Dahomean court in 1772, Robert Norris brought 'a few pieces of silk for presents' and, later, the king received him 'dressed in a silk night-gown'.[27] Norris also attended a

parade in which women wore 'rich silks, silver bracelets, and other ornaments, coral and a profusion of other valuable beads'.[28]

From Bahia, Agonglo's ambassadors embarked for Lisbon, where they received the same answer to the Dahomean proposal of exclusivity. Also in Lisbon, the two ambassadors were baptised: the first as João Carlos de Bragança, with Prince Dom João as his godfather, and the second as Dom Manoel Constantino Carlos Luiz. In a letter replying to King Agonglo, Queen Maria explained that during Dom Manoel's stay in Portugal, he had 'a small constipation and his condition suddenly aggravated' and caused his death on 19 February 1796.[29] The ambassador was buried at the Church of Francezinhas in Lisbon; the Portuguese Crown paid all the expenses related to his funeral. Later, in a letter sent in 1810, King Adandozan (Agonglo's son) expressed his gratitude to the Prince Regent Dom João Carlos de Bragança for the good treatment granted to his father's ambassadors.[30]

In the same letter announcing the death of the ambassador Dom Manoel, Dona Maria informed Agonglo that before his return to Dahomey, the second ambassador, Dom João Carlos de Bragança, was embarking for Bahia.[31] Another letter from the Secretary of State, Luiz Pinto de Souza, informed the governor of Bahia that in his voyage back to the Bight of Benin, a Catholic mission that was intended to 'evangelise and convert the King to Christianity' would accompany the Dahomean ambassador.[32] The mission comprised the priests Cypriano Pires Sardinha and Vicente Ferreira Pires, and was expected to remain in Dahomey for two years.[33] In another letter, the Secretary of State ordered the governor to give the Dahomean ambassador the Hábito da Ordem de Cristo (Habit of the Order of Christ) and the interpreter the royal military order of Santiago da Espada (Saint James of the Sword).[34] The ambassador and the two priests left Bahia in December 1796 and, after spending some days in Elmina, they arrived in Ouidah in April 1797.[35] In his audience with the priests, King Agonglo may have informed them that he 'was ready to be instructed and baptised in the Catholic faith'.[36] Then the rumours about the king's conversion spread and the descendants of the defeated candidates to the throne who were opponents of King Agonglo, including a prince named Dogan, took the opportunity to defend their interests. According to Akinjogbin, on 1 May 1797, 'one of the women resident in the palace called "Nai-Wangerie" (Na Wanjile) shot and killed Agonglo'.[37] But Edna G. Bay, who relied on Paul Hazoumé and on the account of Vicente Ferreira Pires, argues that the king was poisoned 'through a plot led by Dogan, one of his brothers, who conspired with a woman kin to the king'.[38] Pierre Verger, relying on Pires and on a report written by Denyau de la Garenne, the last governor of the French fort, confirms this last version.[39] Verger also mentions that Garenne's report stated that the king was killed in 1797 by one of his wives, and the new enthroned king 'does not have twenty years, and will be surely more compliant than his father, whose tyranny made his neighbours and subjects detest him'.[40] Like his father, the new ruler, King Adandozan – whose motto was 'I have "unrolled my mat" and "only cowardice can roll it up again"' – would quickly gain the reputation of the cruellest king in Dahomean history.[41]

Pierre Verger maintained that, except under Adandozan, never in the history of the kingdom had a Dahomean king sold into slavery a Dahomean from Abomey.[42] Relying

on Le Hérissé, Robin Law contends that Dahomean tradition, established by King Wegbaja, strongly prevented the sale of individuals born within the kingdom, 'contravention being a capital offence; in principle this rule was enforced so rigorously as to prohibit the sale even of female captives who became pregnant while in transit through Dahomey'.[43] Although Adandozan is the only one to be remembered for sending members of the royal family into slavery, evidence of Dahomeans who were sold and sent into slavery to the Americas can be identified much earlier.

Actually, there was no consensus on who had the power to choose the new king. Some contemporary observers attributed the authority of choosing the king's successor to a council of ministers, others to the *migan* (prime minister or chief executioner) and *mehu* (second minister).[44] Thus, the choice could come from the king himself, who entrusted his last intentions to his wives, who would have the right to proclaim the king's successor. As a result, the periods of succession were characterised by great chaos and instability, and gave rise to plots involving the mothers and brothers of the aspirant successors. Consequently, when the new king was eventually chosen, it was not surprising that the members of the opposed factions could be sold and sent into slavery.[45]

In 1797, when King Adandozan was enstooled, he punished all opponents who to some extent participated in the events related to his father's assassination. According to Akinjogbin, 'many princes, chiefs and war leaders who had supported the losing side must have been either executed or sold into slavery'.[46] Na Agontime, one of the several wives of King Agonglo and putative mother of Prince Gakpe, who would later become King Gezo (r. 1818–1858), was probably among these opponents and became the most well-known victim of Adandozan's cruelties. Edna G. Bay explains that when Adandozan came to power, several women from the palace were made prisoners and sold into slavery.[47] Indeed, although many elements of Adandozan's government remain unclear, including the composition of the regency that may have governed Dahomey during his minority from 1797 to 1804, it is difficult to argue that the new king was solely responsible for the persecution of his father's opponents.

King Adandozan

Elsewhere, I have contended that the reign of King Adandozan was a period of political and economic crisis in the Kingdom of Dahomey.[48] The slave trade, its most important source of revenue, was declining significantly. As Robin Law demonstrates and the letters sent by Adandozan to the Portuguese rulers confirm, the causes of this decline cannot be attributed to a deliberate anti-slave-trade policy led by Adandozan.[49] Indeed, Adandozan was unsuccessful in fighting wars with the Mahi and the Kingdom of Oyo.[50] During his rule, the supremacy of Oyo was usually represented by an anecdote. Tired of paying tributes, Adandozan sent the King of Oyo a parasol on which an appliqué depicted a baboon holding an ear of corn and gorging himself. According to tradition, Oyo's ruler sent back to the Dahomean king a hoe in order to encourage him to cultivate the land and pay the tributes. Adandozan then reacted by saying that 'our fathers cultivated, but with rifles, not with hoes.

The Dahomey kings only cultivate war.'[51] However, because after his dismissal Adandozan and all his symbols were suppressed from the Dahomey dynasty list, today the image of the baboon holding an ear of corn is associated with King Gezo, who, according to tradition, was able to expand Dahomey and liberate the kingdom from paying tributes to Oyo.[52] Indeed, Gezo took advantage of the Yoruba civil wars and gradually regained the Dahomean territories under Oyo's control.

As a consequence of the Napoleonic Wars, in the same year Adandozan came to power, the French fortress was abandoned. Then, in 1807 and 1812, the Portuguese and English forts, respectively, were evacuated. By this time, the increasing importance of the port of Lagos (Onim) was threatening Ouidah's predominance as the most important West African slave port. The crisis of the Atlantic slave trade is not only visible through the decline of slave exports from Ouidah, but in the various letters Adandozan exchanged with the Portuguese rulers and Brazilian officials during his reign.

Under Adandozan, a new embassy was sent to Bahia, and in February 1805, the representatives of Dahomey arrived in Salvador on board the vessel *Lepus*. The diplomatic mission comprised two ambassadors and one Brazilian interpreter, named Innocencio Marques de Santa Anna. Marques de Santa Anna had remained prisoner for many years in Abomey because, unlike the French and the English, the governor of the Portuguese fortress did not pay ransoms for the release of Portuguese subjects made captives during the Dahomean campaigns in Porto-Novo and Badagry. In one letter brought by the ambassadors, Adandozan complained that the storekeeper of the Portuguese fort was adding water to the barrels of *aguardente* with which he bought Dahomey's captives. In the same letter, Adandozan also complained that the storekeeper and the new director of the fortress were stealing and lowering the price of captives: 'what is worth one ounce, he buys for one head, whereas the captives that cost thirteen ounces he pays five, and men, and women who cost eight, he pays three'.[53] Adandozan was worried because the captains of the Portuguese fort were providing misleading information about him. According to him:

> God granted memory and talent to the White to know how to read and write, and he gave memory to us only to remember what is done in the present; we have the elders to remind us what we forget.[54]

For the Dahomean king, although Africans were illiterate, they were able to keep their word, whereas Europeans were not trustworthy. In the letter, he also made a series of complaints about the Portuguese merchants who used counterfeit gold and silver in buying captives. According to him, these merchants falsified the weight of *fazendas* (goods) and also bought captives with fake pieces of silk and velvet. Such complaints could help corroborate Walter Rodney's idea, contested by some historians, that European articles sold to Africans were 'of the worst quality even as consumer goods – cheap gin, cheap gunpowder, pots and kettles full of holes, beads and other assorted rubbish'.[55]

Affected by the decline of slave exports in his port, Adandozan insisted on his request that the Portuguese should trade exclusively at Ouidah. In order to justify his demand, he warned the Prince Regent Dom João Carlos de Bragança of the hostilities against the

Portuguese at other neighbouring ports. According to him, the King of Badagry agreed with the murder of whites and even used the head of a white as a *couco de beber agoa* (calabash for drinking water). Then, the king enumerated the atrocities committed by his neighbours: an English captain killed in his house in Onim (Lagos); a sailor who killed his captain, Manoel Vicente, in Porto-Novo; and the captain João Pedro, also killed in Ekpè. In conclusion, Adandozan drew up a list requesting several goods, including gunpowder, rifles, *aguardente*, silks, pipes and glass.[56]

In another letter addressed to Dom João Carlos de Bragança sent with the embassy of 1805, Adandozan narrated how he captured the Portuguese subject Innocencio Marques de Santa Anna.[57] As human sacrifice was a traditional practice in Dahomey, the king also mentioned he sacrificed 11 men to report on Santa Anna's good services to his deceased father. After this exercise in intimidation, Adandozan expressed his wish to discuss with the Prince Regent the opening of Dahomean gold mines that were 'still kept secret', certainly a strategy to encourage Portuguese interest in valuable natural resources. In the letter, Adandozan also explained that after the death of the Dahomey sovereign, his successor was not able to rule before the performance of several rituals. Having just attained his majority, he was now able to rule and was informed about present and past government matters. This explanation was an attempt to exempt him from responsibility in a recent incident, in which his soldiers captured two governors of Ouidah's Portuguese fort. In addition, Adandozan requested the Prince Regent to give Ouidah the monopoly of the Luso-Brazilian slave trade in the Bight of Benin. At the end of his letter, he asked the Portuguese Regent to send him someone 'who knows how to manufacture pieces [of cannon], guns, powder and other things necessary to make war', as well as 30 big hats in different colours with great plumes and 20 pieces of silk.[58] These requests suggest that Adandozan was also concerned with the imports of luxury goods such as textiles and hats. Indeed, several illustrations of European travelogues depict Dahomean kings wearing big colourful hats decorated with huge plumes.[59]

From Bahia, Adandozan's ambassadors were sent to Lisbon and from there back again to Bahia. In October 1805, the embassy left Bahia for Dahomey on board the vessel *Aurora*. In a letter addressed to Francisco da Cunha de Menezes (minister for the Navy and Overseas), the Secretary of State, Viscount of Anadia, explained that due to the excessive expenses incurred by the Dahomean ambassadors in 1795, the costs of this visit must be restricted to the minimum. Despite these restrictions, Anadia added that the emissaries were accommodated in an excellent residence and, prior to leaving Bahia, they received an amount of money and a case with six pieces of 'the best silk of our [royal] manufacture'.[60] In a letter to Adandozan, Anadia also wrote that maintaining Portuguese in captivity was against the laws of humanity and society and would harm the precious friendship between him and the Portuguese monarch.[61] He also underlined that Adandozan's demands would be answered only if the Portuguese prisoners were released.

Britain increased its pressure on Portugal to suppress the Brazilian slave trade after the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, and especially after 1808, when the Portuguese royal family moved to Rio de Janeiro. The royal family did so with the support

of the British Navy in order to escape the army of Napoleon Bonaparte, who had decreed a continental blockade against Britain. Between 1810 and 1826, Britain and Brazil signed several bilateral agreements aimed at abolishing the Brazilian slave trade. Although there were humanitarian reasons to justify the British pressure, Britain's first goal was stopping the production of Brazilian sugar cane altogether. It was crucial to prevent Brazil from importing an inexpensive African workforce, because the sugar produced in Brazil was sold at a lower price than the sugar produced in the British West Indies.[62]

In this new context, Adandozan sent his last embassy to Brazil. The four ambassadors arrived in Bahia in January 1811 with a gift and a slave girl to offer to the Prince Regent. They returned to Dahomey only in October 1812.[63] Since the Portuguese court had relocated to Rio de Janeiro in 1808, the ambassadors no longer needed to travel to Lisbon. However, the Prince Regent Dom João Carlos de Bragança no longer authorised the Dahomean ambassadors to come to Rio de Janeiro.

In a long and detailed letter sent with the embassy of 1811 and dated 9 October 1810, Adandozan showed surprise at the events that forced the transfer of the Portuguese royal court to Brazil. Moreover, he regretted not being able to assist the Portuguese royal family in the fight against the French:

> Soon the news that Your Royal Majesty and all the Royal family were made prisoners of the French, who took Lisbon, as well as the King of Spain, started arriving. Some time passed and another vessel came and brought other news that Your Royal Majesty and Our Sovereign Mother Queen of Portugal had left for the City of Bahia, under the protection of the English and the Portuguese Navy. Then more time passed and another vessel brought news that you have moved to Rio de Janeiro, where we know that the Duke of Cadaval deceased, for which I feel sorry and give you my condolences . . . what I feel the most is to no longer be the neighbour of Our Majesty, and not being able to walk on firm land to give you a help with my arm, so my wish is big, as here I have also fought many wars in the backlands.[64]

In this same letter, Adandozan narrated in detail his incursions into the Mahi country as well as the kingdoms of Porto-Novo and Oyo. He reported that in response to the death of his soldiers in a battle at Abomey-Calavi, the prisoners of the War of 'Adangogi' were decapitated at Abomey's market. Furthermore, in order to intimidate his enemies and discourage them from provoking him again, he sold all the other prisoners. Adandozan also explained that after the death of his mother, his father's enemies started plotting against him. He then captured the mother of his father's enemy King 'Sakpe Maquino', probably the king of the Mahi country.[65] According to Adandozan, when this king learned about the death of Adandozan's mother, he married a woman and gave her the name 'Aoecama', which meant the pain the Mahi king had because of his mother's death was the same pain the Dahomean king had: 'he groaned as the Dahomean king will groan'. According to the letter, the King of Mahi moved to a land called 'Aê', which meant 'land where no war can arrive'.[66] After learning the news, Adandozan waged war against the Mahi king, an episode he narrated in detail in his letter:

> destroyed the land and killed and burned the King and brought his sons and grandsons and brothers and the woman who had the above-mentioned name [Aoecama],

> and killed all his people, and took off the jaws of all his generation to display at the doors of my house, and nailed them to wood sticks and the above-mentioned Sakpé's woman is groaning in my hand and will groan until she dies. I give all this news because we are far away, give me also news about the Wars, and also give me news about the wars with the French nation and the others, it will make me happy to know about it.[67]

Adandozan's letter sheds light on how West Africans were following the Napoleonic Wars, not only out of curiosity but also because these events impacted the slave markets in the Americas and the Atlantic slave trade in West African ports. After this account, which demonstrated how powerful the Dahomean army was compared to the cowardice of the Portuguese ruler and army, who were forced to escape from Napoleon Bonaparte, Adandozan presented his complaints and requests. First, he asked the Portuguese Prince Regent to send a governor, a priest and a surgeon to the Portuguese fort. Then, he added that he was aware that the Prince Regent was not allowing West African ambassadors to travel to Rio de Janeiro, where the royal court was settled. In this same passage, he also listed his grievances against the Brazilian slave merchant Francisco Félix de Souza (1754–1849), referred to as the 'clerk' of the Portuguese fort:

> Now I report to Your Royal Majesty the good government the Portuguese having been doing here. Because a Brother, even if fighting against his brother, will always be on good terms with him. Thus, I learned the news that there is an instruction stating that my ambassadors will not be able to go beyond Bahia, and will have to return to my country. When I learned this news, I could not believe, it could not be true, because the King of Portugal never returned back the ambassadors who came to his royal presence. I wish also to inform that the clerk of the fort Francisco Félix does not provide any service to this fort. He is wasting the pay of Your Royal Majesty. He lives in Popo where he has a business and instructs all captains not to sail to my port, making a signal with the fortress's flag to warn the vessels not to anchor at my port. Indeed, he wants to bring with him the soldiers of the fortress to sell them in Popo … because I confronted him, and asked him not to travel anymore to Popo, he started instructing the captains not to buy my captives, because they are all old and defective. As soon as a vessel arrives in Popo, this clerk starts walking around and gathering all the captives to sell. Then the captain jumps out and the clerk is the first to sell the captives and to open the market. He prevents the native people from doing business with these same captives. He allows them to receive only half of the amount, and he does not pay the rest. When I asked this clerk why did he do that when the vessels come to my port and why did he not allow me and my merchants to do our business, he answered me that this instruction came from Bahia, the Navy and the General, and if I wanted to know more, I should go asking in Bahia … He has been harming me in order to make me lose the friendship of my Brother.[68]

Adandozan's long description of the trading activities of the Brazilian slave merchant Francisco Félix de Souza helps to illuminate their later disagreements, which led to de Souza's imprisonment in Abomey. Indeed, some years later, the Brazilian slave merchant played a key role in Gezo's coup d'état that deposed Adandozan. When Gezo was enstooled, he invited de Souza to settle in Ouidah to occupy the position of the

king's representative in the commercial businesses. From then on, the history of Gezo and de Souza became deeply connected.

In this same letter, Adandozan mentioned that the last Dahomean embassy sent to Bahia in 1805 brought 24 captives to be sold in exchange for various orders 'from the land of the white. All these captives arrived alive in Bahia, but until today I did not receive the amount of a needle or a pin.'[69] After thanking Dom João for the good treatment received by his father's ambassadors and his own ambassadors, who arrived in Bahia in 1795 and 1805, respectively, Adandozan made new requests:

> Now I will entertain my Brother with the orders I will make: send me four water pumps to extinguish the fire on time. My Brother, Your Majesty as a Great Christian King, will certainly enjoy what I will ask you; I want to follow the Law of God, because this is the Law you believe. I also want to live according to it. I know the Law of God is faithful, and to accomplish this intent I want in all brevity two priests and all the Images to decorate a chapel, and as well as its ornaments, two bells for the towers and two bricklayers to build the above-mentioned chapel, because I want to please my Brother by founding a Church allowing all the whites who come to my land to know that I am your faithful brother. I also request you to send me wood to build this chapel, and paintings of several kinds. Finally, as my Brother, Your Royal Majesty will know better than me how I should compose this chapel very well. I ask from you several relics for the protection of the Body, to be protected from the enemy when I go to the wars.[70]

The idea of building a chapel in Abomey was an important symbolic mark of distinction that could attract European travellers and merchants, helping to improve the relations between Dahomey and European powers. At the same time, Adandozan's wish to convert to Christianity was probably a strategy to gain attention from the Prince Regent and have his ambassadors received in Rio de Janeiro, and it is also probably an indication of how desperate he was to increase the presence of Luso-Brazilian vessels in Ouidah.

Still in this same letter, Adandozan reported the growing human mortality rate that was affecting his reign. The increasing death rate was a result of sudden deaths, pain in the hips and smallpox. Apparently, these events were causing many disturbances and probably increasing political instability. Adandozan's request for guns and luxury goods suggests the economic, political and cultural impact of the Atlantic slave trade on his reign. The growing dependency on European goods, such as alcohol and other exotic products, increased the need for waging wars to produce more captives. At the same time, it was necessary to continue performing human sacrifices to protect the kingdom from enemies and disease:

> I also ask for some Colubrinas rifles . . . that do not break when shooting. The ones I buy here break when shooting. Then when I will manipulate the rifles, I will say 'that thing came from the hand of my Brother'. There will be twenty-four guns of this kind, and also white and red wine, as well as the Kingdom's *aguardente* of the same kind that comes to Brazil, and liqueurs of several kinds. I also ask my brother for some pipes of wine of different kinds and some furry lap puppies . . . I ask more to my Brother: some peacock pairs, and other kinds of beautiful birds such as geese and some pairs of Lisbon chickens.[71]

Adandozan did not conceal the fact that all these luxury products were marks of symbolic distinction, intended to impress the members of his court, among whom his popularity was in decline:

> I am asking you, because I want to have all these things to cause admiration in my people, for them to say to themselves: my King does not know how to read and write, but how does he own so many beautiful things of the white.[72]

Adandozan also gave a detailed description of other luxury objects his ancestors had received from other Portuguese rulers and that were still in his possession. He asked Dom João to send him large porcelain or wooden figures depicting two lions and two dogs, a flag with a lion in the middle and another flag with the symbol of the House of Bragança, 'for when I will go out, I will bring them in front of me'. Finally, Adandozan described the gifts he was sending to the Portuguese king:

> two bandoleers, for the gold of your pants. I send one more chair from my country, and a box to put your pipe in, which is mine, and three smaller ones for the servants who accompany your Majesty. Both of them will conserve the pipes and prevent them from breaking … I also send you a flag showing the wars I waged, the people I caught, and the heads I cut, for my Brother to see and to carry in front of him when going outside for a walk.[73]

In the same letter, Adandozan mentioned that his embassy comprised six persons, including female and male children he was sending to the king as gifts, 'the female to dust your room … the male to clean your shoes'.[74]

Traditionally, Adandozan is depicted as a cruel ruler and his reign as a period of great terror.[75] His name was banned from Dahomey official history and does not figure on the list of kings. Although historians do not agree on the causes of Adandozan's dismissal, the decline of the Atlantic slave trade provoked by British pressures and also by the French revolutionary era played a significant role in his eventual deposition.[76] Indeed, the tradition which usually depicts Adandozan as the evil king also omits that when Gezo took power, he may have killed Adandozan's children and sold several of Adandozan's relatives and supporters.[77]

Usually, historians have perceived Gezo's reign as a period of transition from the illegal slave trade to the legitimate trade of palm oil.[78] However, in the early years of his reign, Gezo continued to contend that the slave trade was a central part of the kingdom's revenue. Despite the British attempts to curtail the slave trade, during Gezo's reign the total volume of the slave trade from Ouidah was higher than during Adandozan's rule, and the annual averages of slave exports were very similar.[79] In 1848, in a letter addressed to Queen Victoria, Gezo continued to demand, exactly as his predecessors had done, the monopoly of the slave trade to Ouidah:

> The King also begs the Queen to make a law to prevent ships to trade at any place near his dominions lower down the coast than Whydah, as by means of trading vessels the people are getting rich, and withstanding his authority. He wishes all factories for palm oil removed from Badagry, Porto-Novo, Agado and Lagos, as the trade that is now done at these places can be done at Whydah, and the King

> would then receive his duties … He hopes the Queen will send him some good Tower guns and blunderbusses, and plenty of them, to enable him to make war. He also uses many cowries, and wishes the Queen's subjects to bring plenty of them to Whydah to make trade.[80]

Several details related to the transmission of power from Adandozan to Gezo remain vague. However, Adandozan may have continued to live in a house in Abomey.[81] Richard Burton, who was visiting Abomey in 1864, observed that Adandozan 'was put down, and still, I believe, survives, a state prisoner'.[82] These facts show that Gezo was not strong enough to eliminate his predecessor.[83] As Robin Law contended, by 1825, Gezo probably faced opposition and became 'unpopular' for selling Dahomean subjects. In order to solve the political problems, he may have offered 'to reinstate Adandozan on the throne'.[84] Gezo's weakness could then justify the largest propaganda enterprise developed against Adandozan.

In 1818, Gezo sent an embassy to Brazil. The ambassadors disembarked in Bahia and, once again, remained awaiting transportation to travel to Rio de Janeiro, but from there they returned to Dahomey without being able to arrive at the court.[85] In Gezo's letter sent with the embassy to King Dom João Carlos de Bragança, he mentioned Francisco Félix de Souza:

> I, Gezo, King of da Gomé, come to the throne of Your Majesty represented by my ambassador Amufoú, my legitimate son, accompanied by four Portuguese vassals of Your Majesty who have been prisoners for eighteen years in my domains by the officers of my brother Adanduzam and as now I am governing this kingdom because of the cruelties and tyrannies of my brother and was informed that Your Majesty had asked these Portuguese and the first did not give attention to it, and also just after I took care of the reign, your vassal Francisco Félix de Souza, who was the clerk of the fort of Your Majesty came and offered to send the said Portuguese along with my ambassador to Brazil … since I took control of my reign, the one who has been helping my people is the so-called Francisco Felis [sic] de Souza, seeking vessels for my port, Portuguese as well as from other nations, thus I granted to Francisco Felis de Souza the whole domain I had with the whites who came and come to make business, because the above-mentioned is talented and the vessels regard him highly. Honoured King, I do not have anything to send you to confirm our friendship except for two slave girls and one piece of cloth made in a factory, and I beg Your Majesty to accept it, the skies keep you for many years. I am Your Brother and Friend. King of DAgomé.[86]

Unlike Adandozan, who complained about de Souza, the content of this letter does not leave any doubt about how much de Souza was valued by King Gezo and how he was perceived as an actor of great political importance, not only in Dahomean society, but also by the European visitors.[87]

Because Adandozan was erased from Dahomey's official history, the Abomey Historical Museum no longer contains any objects that belonged to him. However, Adandozan's heritage was preserved on the other side of the Atlantic. Pierre Verger found in the Museu Nacional (the former Museu Real) in Rio de Janeiro a royal throne of Dahomey (dating probably to 1797), which may have belonged to Adandozan (see Figure 1).[88] Verger suggested that King Adandozan offered the wooden carved

Figure 1. Adandozan's throne, courtesy of the Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Photograph: Ana Lucia Araujo, 2009 (all rights reserved).

throne to the Portuguese Prince Regent Dom João Carlos de Bragança by sending this gift along with the embassy of 1811. This hypothesis was also based on an entry in Maria Graham's personal journal, dated 14 August 1823. She wrote that she visited a museum in Rio de Janeiro in which she saw an African collection, including a wooden carved throne of an African prince.[89] If, until recently, scholars have not found any written evidence confirming the origin of this throne, the letter of 1810 sent with the last Adandozan embassy to Brazil and examined in this article confirms that he sent as gifts to the Prince Regent not only a 'chair', but also a flag depicting his wars and a 'box' to hold a large pipe (see Figure 2). Today, these three objects are part of the collection of the Museu Nacional.

Conclusion

The official correspondence examined in this article allows us to better understand the diplomatic, political, economic and cultural relations connecting Dahomey, Portugal and Brazil during the era of the Atlantic slave trade. In a period of frequent wars and instability, the letters describing the gifts exchanged between the two monarchs bring to light the growing importance of imported and luxury goods such as alcohol, silk,

Figure 2. Pipe holder, courtesy of the Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Photograph: Ana Lucia Araujo, 2009 (all rights reserved).

porcelain and tobacco, indicating how much these items shaped Dahomean daily life and how indispensable they became. Adandozan's long and detailed descriptions of the wars Dahomey waged against the neighbouring kingdoms were intended to impress and to intimidate the Portuguese officials in order to negotiate better terms for the Atlantic slave trade with the Portuguese and to transform Ouidah into the exclusive source of supply of slaves from the Bight of Benin to Brazil.

Adandozan's deposition and later suppression from the official history of Dahomey tells us much about the political uses of history to support those who won the struggle for power. Indeed, there are significant connections between the crisis of the Atlantic slave trade – and, in particular, the decline of the slave exports from Ouidah – during Adandozan's reign and Gezo's coup d'état against him. The letters suggest that this decrease in trade and the consequent opposition faced by Adandozan was not only a consequence of Dahomean internal affairs or caused by the king's 'evil' nature, but also the result of a larger Atlantic context in which the transformations provoked by the Napoleonic Wars were crucial.

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Notes

[1] The embassies were sent during the reigns of kings Tegbesu, Agonglo, Adandozan and Gezo. The years correspond to the arrival dates of the embassies, even though the Dahomean letters sometimes contain the date of the previous year, when they were written. Other kingdoms of the Bight of Benin sent embassies to Brazil as well. Porto-Novo (Ardra) sent an embassy to Bahia in 1810; Lagos (Onim) sent embassies to Brazil in 1770, 1807 and 1823.

[2] See Pierre Verger, *Flux et reflux de la traite des nègres entre le Golfe de Bénin et Bahia de Todos os Santos, du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Mouton, 1969), 132.

[3] See Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550–1750: The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on an African Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 203.

[4] See Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a Slave 'Port' 1727–1892* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004), 156; Pierre Verger, *Fluxo e refluxo do tráfico de escravos entre o Golfo do Benin e a Bahia de Todos os Santos* (Rio de Janeiro: Corrupio, 1987), 27. According to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Voyages, 336,800 of a total of 551,800 enslaved Africans who were embarked in ports of the Bight of Benin between 1770 and 1850 were sent to Brazil. Of the individuals sent to Brazil, about 90 per cent disembarked in Salvador da Bahia. See http://www.slavevoyages.org.

[5] The Brazilian slave trade was officially abolished in 1831, but the illegal slave trade continued until 1850.

[6] When the Brazilian capital moved from Salvador to Rio de Janeiro in 1763, the Portuguese fort in Ouidah continued under the authority of Bahia's provincial governor. See Law, *Ouidah*, 34.

[7] Law, *Ouidah*, 60.

[8] See Verger, *Fluxo e refluxo*, 279–287; Silvia Hunold Lara, *Fragmentos setecentistas: escravidão, cultura e poder na América portuguesa* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2007), 194; Ana Lucia Araujo, 'Images, Artefacts and Myths: Reconstructing the Connections between Brazil and the Kingdom of Dahomey', in *Living History: Encountering the Memory of the Heirs of Slavery*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 180–202.

[9] *Relaçam da Embayxada, que o poderoso Rey de Angome Kiayy Chiri Broncom, Senhor dos dilatadissimos Sertões de Guiné mandou ao Illustrissimo e Excellentissimo Senhor D. Luiz Peregrino de Ataide, Conde de Atouguia, Senhor das Villas de Atouguia, Peniche, Cernache, Monforte, Vilhaens, Lomba, e Paço da Ilha Dezerta, Cõmendador das Cõmendas de Santa Maria de Adaufe, e Villa velha de Rodam, na Ordem de Christo, do Conselho de Sua Magestade, Governador, e Capitão General, que foy do Reyno de Algarve & actualmente Vice-Rey do Estado do Brasil: pedindo a amizade, e aliança do muito alto; e poderoso Senhor Rey de Portugal Nosso Senhor / escrita por J. F. M. M.* (Lisboa: Na Officina de Francisco da Silva, anno de 1751).

[10] Ibid., 4. All transcriptions and translations from Portuguese are mine.
[11] Ibid., 5.
[12] Ibid.
[13] King Dom João V died on 31 July 1750, but the news of his death took a long time to reach Brazil.
[14] *Relaçam da Embayxada*, 10.
[15] Ibid., 11.
[16] Verger, *Fluxo e refluxo*, 285.
[17] Ibid., 308n13. This voyage, this vessel and this captain are absent from the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Voyages because, according to its editors, the database comprises only 'the vessels for which the documentation survived in 1994'. See David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, and David Richardson, 'National Participation in the Transatlantic Slave Trade: New Evidence', in *Africa and the Americas: Interconnections during the Slave Trade*, ed. José C. Curto and Renée Soulodre-La France (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2005), 22. However, scholars such as Lisa Earl Castillo found in the Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia numerous records related to voyages that do not appear in the online database.
[18] Law, *Ouidah*, 156.
[19] 'Ofício do Rei de Dahomey a D. Fernando José de Portugal enviando um branco chamado Luís Caetano e dois embaixadores para serem enviados a El-Rei e falando sôbre a ida de navios a seu pôrto, Abome, 20 de março de 1795', Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (hereafter BN-RJ): II–34, 2, 10, Doc. 551, f. 1, 20 March 1795.
[20] Verger, *Fluxo e refluxo*, 287.
[21] 'Ofício do Rei de Dahomey'.
[22] Verger, *Fluxo e refluxo*, 287.
[23] See Law, *Slave Coast*, 202–204; David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 81.
[24] Robert Norris, 'A Journey to the Court of Bossa Ahadee, King of Dahomey, in the Year of 1772', in *The History of Dahomy: An Inland Kingdom of Africa*, by Archibald Dalzel (1793; London: Elibron Classics, 2005), 119.
[25] Archibald Dalzel, *The History of Dahomy: An Inland Kingdom of Africa* (1793; London: Elibron Classics, 2005), 31; Norris, 'Journey', 112.
[26] Norris, 'Journey', 119; Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, 87.
[27] Norris, 'Journey', 107, 132.
[28] Ibid., 138.
[29] BN-RJ: II–34, 2, 20, Doc. 563, f. 9, 19 February 1796.
[30] Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro (hereafter IHGB): Lata 137, Pasta 62, Doc. 3, f. 4v, Rio de Janeiro, 9 October 1810.
[31] BN-RJ: II–34, 2, 20, Doc. 563, f. 9, 19 February 1796.
[32] Ibid., f. 1, 7 April 1796.
[33] Pires published an account of the years spent in Dahomey. See Vicente Ferreira Pires, *Viagem de África em o Reino de Dahomé escrita pelo Padre Vicente Ferreira Pires no ano de 1800 et até o presente inédita* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1957).
[34] BN-RJ: II–34, 2, 20, Doc. 563, f. 2, 7 April 1796.
[35] Pires, *Viagem de África*, 7.
[36] I.A. Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 185.
[37] Ibid., 186.
[38] Edna G. Bay, *Wives of the Leopard: Gender, Politics and Culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), 155. See Paul Hazoumé, *Le Pacte de sang au Dahomey* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1956); Pires, *Viagem de África.*
[39] Verger, *Flux et reflux*, 231.

[40] Denyau de la Garenne, 'Rapport écrit à Paris, le 25 nivôse [according to the Republic calendar, 21 or 22 December, or 20 or 22 January], de l'an VII (1799)', Archives Nationales, col . C6/27, quoted in Verger, *Flux et reflux*, 249n72.
[41] See Judith Gleason, *Agōtime: Her Legend* (New York: Viking Compass Books, 1970), 58.
[42] Pierre Verger, *Os libertos: sete caminhos na liberdade de escravos da Bahia no século XIX* (Salvador: Currupio, 1992), 71.
[43] Law, *Ouidah*, 149. See A. Le Hérissé, *L'Ancien Royaume du Dahomey: moeurs, religion, histoire* (Paris: Emile Larose, 1911), 56.
[44] Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 87.
[45] See Robin Law, 'The Politics of Commercial Transition: Factional Conflict in Dahomey in the Context of the Ending of the Atlantic Slave Trade', *Journal of African History* 38, no. 2 (1997): 213.
[46] Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbors*, 186.
[47] Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 162.
[48] Araujo, 'Images, Artefacts and Myths'.
[49] Law, 'Politics of Commercial Transition', 218–219.
[50] Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbors*, 187–188.
[51] See Le Hérissé, *L'Ancien Royaume du Dahomey*, 313, quoted in Law, *Ouidah*, 87. See also Francesca Piqué and Leslie Rainer, *Wall Sculptures of Abomey* (London: J. Paul Getty Trust, Thames and Hudson, 1999), 73.
[52] In Benin, the image of the baboon is also present in Abomey bas-reliefs and the monuments situated along Ouidah's slave route. See Ana Lucia Araujo, *Public Memory of Slavery: Victims and Perpetrators in the South Atlantic* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010), chap. 4.
[53] IHGB: Lata 137, Pasta 62, Doc. 1, ff. 3–3v, n.d. This letter is not dated, but was probably written in 1804 and sent with the embassy of 1805.
[54] Ibid., f. 6, n.d.
[55] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1981), 102. Among the historians who contested Rodney's statement is Northrup, *Africa's Discovery*, 81.
[56] IHGB: Lata 137, Pasta 62, Doc. 1, ff. 6v, 7, n.d.
[57] BN-RJ: II–24, 5, 4, f. 1, Doc. 124, 20 November 1804.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Among these travelogues, see Dalzel, *History of Dahomy*; Frederick E. Forbes, *Dahomey and the Dahomans: Being the Journals of Two Missions to the King of Dahomey, and Residence at his Capital* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1851).
[60] BN-RJ: II–24, 5, 4, Doc. 126, f. 1, 31 July 1805.
[61] Ibid., Doc. 138, f. 1v, 30 July 180.
[62] Alberto da Costa e Silva, *Um rio chamado Atlântico: a África no Brasil e o Brasil na África* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2003), 15.
[63] See Verger, *Os libertos*, 81; Verger, *Flux et reflux*, 273.
[64] IHGB: Lata 137, Pasta 62, Doc. 2, f. 1, 9 October 1810.
[65] The Mahi country was located north of Abomey.
[66] IHGB: Lata 137, Pasta 62, Doc. 2, f. 3, 9 October 1810.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid., f. 4, 9 October 1810.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid., f. 5, 9 October 1810.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid., f. 5v, 9 October 1810.
[73] Ibid., f. 7v, 9 October 1810.
[74] Ibid., f. 7, 9 October 1810.

[75] See Elisée Soumonni, 'The Compatibility of the Slave and Palm Oil Trades in Dahomey, 1818–1858', in *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa*, ed. Robin Law (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 79.

[76] Ibid., 80; Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbors*, 201.

[77] See Maurice Ahanhanzo Glèlè, *Le Danxome: du pouvoir aja à la nation fon* (Paris: Nubia, 1974), 120; Costa e Silva, *Francisco Félix de Souza*, mercedor de escravos (Rio de Janeiro: MINC/BN, Departmento Nacional do Livro, 2002), 87; Hazoumé, *Le Pacte de sang*, 5–6. It is difficult to establish whether Adandozan's relatives were sold and sent into slavery to the Americas or if they were sent to neighbouring areas in the Bight of Benin.

[78] Soumonni, 'Compatibility', 78–92.

[79] Based on the data provided by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, during Adandozan's reign (1797–1818) about 16,502 enslaved Africans were embarked in Ouidah, whereas during Gezo's reign (1818–1858) about 30,378 enslaved Africans were embarked in the same port. The annual average of slave exports during Adandozan's reign is 785.8, whereas the annual average of 759.46 during Gezo's reign is only slightly smaller.

[80] 'Enclosure 2: Letter from the King of Dahomey to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, alluded to in the preceding, Abomey, November 3, 1848', in *King Guezo of Dahomey, 1850–52*: *The Abolition of the Slave Trade on the West Coast of Africa*, ed. Tim Coates (London: Stationery Office, 2001), 12–13.

[81] See Glèlè, *Le Danxome*, 120; Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 174.

[82] Richard Burton, *A Mission to Gelele, King of Dahome*, vol. 2 (London, 1893), 293. See also Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbors*, 200.

[83] Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*, 174.

[84] Law, 'Politics of Commercial Transition', 216.

[85] Verger, *Os libertos*, 70.

[86] IHGB: Lata 137, Pasta 62, Doc. 6, f. 1v, n.d. The letter is undated and although the 'folder' (*pasta*) indicates that the letters were archived before 1811, this letter was certainly sent after 1811, as Gezo took power only in 1818.

[87] For a discussion about the political importance of de Souza, see Ana Lucia Araujo, 'Enjeux politiques de la mémoire de l'esclavage dans l'Atlantique Sud: la reconstruction de la biographie de Francisco Félix de Souza', *Lusotopie* 14, no. 2 (2009): 107–131; Ana Lucia Araujo, 'Forgetting and Remembering the Atlantic Slave Trade: The Legacy of the Brazilian Slave Merchant Francisco Felix de Souza', in *Crossing Memories: Slavery and African Diaspora*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo, Mariana P. Candido, and Paul Lovejoy (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011), 79–103.

[88] The Museu Real was established in 1818.

[89] Maria [Graham] Callcot, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence there during 1821, 1822, 1823* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1824). This may be found at Project Gutenberg, http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/21201 (accessed 12 December 2008).