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The suppression of the slave trade and slave departures from Angola, 1830s-1860s

A supressão do tráfico de escravos em Angola (ca. 1830-ca. 1860)

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Resumo. Este artigo trata do processo de abolição do tráfico atlântico de escravos em Angola na primeira metade do século XIX. O artigo considera as diferenças e dinâmicas regionais do tráfico em Luanda, Benguela e o chamado “norte de Angola” (Cabinda e Ambriz). Argumenta que para entender o impacto das políticas abolicionistas em Angola, é preciso primeiro analisar questões como o provimento de escravos para a costa angolana, a participação das elites locais no tráfico e os laços estreitos entre Angola e Brasil. O artigo demonstra que as políticas abolicionistas só se tornaram efetivas quando Portugal aderiu à causa abolicionista na década de 1840 e com as operações navais que terminaram com os embarques de escravos em Luanda, o maior porto do tráfico de escravos em Angola. Como consequência do fim do tráfico em Luanda, os riscos associados com o tráfico aumentaram e o tráfico de escravos se tornou ainda mais concentrado em regiões fora do controle Português em Cabinda e Ambriz.

Palavras-chave: Angola, Tráfico de Escravos, Abolicionismo, Atlântico.

Abstract. This article deals with the process of abolishing the transatlantic slave trade in Angola in the first half of the nineteenth century. It breaks down the Angolan slave trade into three macro-regions: Luanda, Benguela, and “northern Angola” (Cabinda and Ambriz). It argues that in order to understand the impact of abolitionism on the ground, scholars need to take into account local conditions, such as the supply of slaves to the coast, the participation of local elites in the business of slaving, and Angola’s close ties to Brazil. The article demonstrates that abolitionism policies only became effective with the participation of Portugal in the 1840s and the naval operations that ended shipments of slaves from Luanda, the largest slave port in Angola. This development significantly increased risks associated with the Angolan slave trade and provided further momentum to the process of spread of shipments of slaves to other parts of the Angolan coast.

Key words: Angola, Slave Trade, Abolitionism, Atlantic.

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Introduction

Approximately one million three hundred thousand Africans were taken to the Americas between the 1830s and the 1860s – the last three decades of the slave trade. By then most of the slave trade focused on Central Africa and the number of African regions shipping significant numbers of slaves to the Americas was fewer than it had been in the eighteenth century. Embarkations of slaves from Senegambia were already relatively small and decreased further in the last decades of the slave trade. On the Gold Coast, the British withdrawal from Atlantic slaving, in 1807, had an immediate impact on slave exports. In the Bight of Benin and the Bight of Biafra, exports continued until the 1840s and 1850s, but were significantly affected by the rise of attempts to suppress the trade. Unsurprisingly, by the mid-nineteenth century, Angola and Kongo accounted for approximately 50 percent of all enslaved Africans taken across the Atlantic (Eltis, 2001, p. 24).

The changes sketched out above have been primarily related to influences external to Africa – particularly efforts to halt the trade (Lovejoy and Richardson, 1995). In Luanda, suppressive measures clearly comprised a paramount force behind the drive to halt shipments of slaves in the 1840s. It was a key development in the struggle to end the Angolan slave trade because of the pivotal role that Luanda played not only as a slave port but also as logistical hub for shipments from other Angolan ports. More recently, David Eltis has pointed out that further understanding of the end of the slave trade necessitates a more comprehensive analysis of local factors, such as geography, internal African politics and the specific conditions of commerce on coastal Africa. In northern Angola, for example, an unfriendly business environment and competition from African traders had a greater impact than British naval patrols on the demise of slave shipments (Ferreira, 1996).

This chapter focuses on regional variations in Angola to analyze how external and local forces shaped the shipments of slaves between the 1830s and the 1860s. It combines evidence from the new Transatlantic Slave Trade Dataset (henceforth TSTD2) and a wide variety of archival data to reconstruct local conditions in which the trade was operated in different Angolan regions. The chapter examines how differences in the dynamics of the coastal trade in the three Angolan slaving regions – northern Angola, Luanda and Benguela – influenced the supply of slaves from the interior. Special attention is given to the understudied slave trade in Benguela in order to redress a Luanda-centered imbalance in the current literature on the Angolan trade. The chapter argues that a combination of internal and external factors shaped the last decades of the Angolan trade and ultimately led to its demise.

Background

Two cautionary notes are in order before delving into the analysis of the Angolan trade during the illegal period. First, the slave trade in Portuguese territories in Africa was formally outlawed only in 1836. However, the passing in Brazil of a law that banned imports of slaves, in 1831, threw the Angolan trade into a state of effective illegality. The impact on Angola of the Brazilian law was a function of the tight commercial ties between the two regions, since Angola was the primary supplier of slaves to Brazil. Scholars of Brazil have long downplayed the importance of the 1831 legislation by arguing that it was not fully enforced (Bethell, 1976). Yet a closer look reveals that it led to a dramatic, albeit brief, reduction in imports of slaves, which in turn affected slave demography in Brazil. In the interior of São Paulo, for example, the number of Africa-born slaves dropped from 55% in 1829 to 21% in 1835 (Luna and Klein, 2004, p. 131). In Rio de Janeiro, “the slave market in Rio de Janeiro changed substantially with the ‘legal’ prohibition on slave imports” (Frank, 2004, p. 20–21).

Furthermore, the law reverberated across the Atlantic and altered the ways that the trade was conducted in Angola (Ferreira, 1996). First, it added further momentum to a process of decentralization of shipments of slaves away from Luanda and towards northern Angola that had been underway since early nineteenth century when the British dropped out of slaving. Second, it marked the beginning of more intense, if initially utterly failed, anti-slave trade measures geared towards the slave trade across the southern Atlantic (Ferreira, 1996). Although the reduction of shipments of slaves in Luanda and Benguela was brief, the law seems to have led to a spurt of suppressive measures that forced slave dealers to devise new organizational strategies to conduct the trade. These were so effective as to allow the continuation of shipments of slaves for several decades and to in effect hold the rising tide of abolitionism at bay. In this paper, thus, the Brazilian law is considered as the actual threshold to the beginning of the illegality of the Angolan trade.

Secondly, most of the scholarship takes a Luanda-centric approach to the Angolan trade, despite the existence of an entrenched three-pronged commercial structure (northern Angola, Luanda and Benguela) since the late seventeenth century (Miller, 1988). In the sixteenth century, the trade was concentrated in northern Angola, but it expanded southward in the final decades of the century due to diminishing Portuguese control and the rising importance of creolized groups from São Tomé and Kongo (Thornton, 1998, p. 61–62). The southward expansion grew out of Portuguese plans to strengthen state control and

led to the foundation of Luanda in 1576 (Miller, 1976). In Benguela, after an early attempt to develop slaving failed in the first half of the seventeenth century, exports of slaves increased towards the end of the century and became a full-fledged independent operation in the first decades of the eighteenth century (Ferreira, 2003).

Northern Angola, Luanda and Benguela each had distinct patterns of internal and coastal commerce. In northern Angola, for example, the internal trading networks were dominated by Vili merchants from Loango and extended into Kongo territory and southward to central Angola. Unlike trading networks supplying slaves to coastal Luanda, they were not monopolized by states or bureaucratic structures, and displayed a high degree of decentralization that made them better suited to respond to the rise in demand for forced labor emanating from the Atlantic world in the late seventeenth century. These networks contributed significantly to key transformations in the enslavement of Africans, which made Angolan slaving move away from military techniques towards a variety of non-military methods to acquire slaves. As a result of the growth of decentralized Vili trading networks, the supply of slaves to northern Angola was more reliable than to Luanda. The advantages of this structure became clear in the late seventeenth century when ships that would otherwise conduct slaving in Luanda began tapping into northern Angola slaving to compensate for difficulties to embark slaves in Luanda (Ferreira, 2003).

In Luanda, David Eltis has suggested that the existence of a European coastal stronghold might have created a more reliable supply of slaves. In fact, Luanda's commercial relationships with internal regions providing slaves was marked by strong dependency on the Kassanje and, secondarily, Matamba kingdoms. These two kingdoms were located in the Luanda hinterland and played a pivotal role in the internal slave trade in that region. Their rulers prevented agents operating on behalf of Luanda merchants from tapping into slave markets east of the Kwango River and they effectively held a grip over the internal trade. Since the Luanda government was largely dependent on Kassanje for soldiers and protection, the relationship was tinged by political and military considerations, limiting attempts to diversify internal sources of slaves to Luanda. Kassanje's leverage and semi-monopolistic control over the internal commerce seriously undermined Luanda's capacity to respond to demands for labor throughout the Atlantic. This was particularly clear at the end of the seventeenth century when Luanda failed to adequately respond to the rising demand for slaves in the wake of the discovery of gold mines in Brazil (Ferreira, 2003).

In addition to the internal supply of slaves, the regulatory bureaucracy on the coast also affected ship-

ment of slaves. While northern Angola was by far the least regulated region, merchants operating out of Luanda and, to a lesser extent, Benguela dealt with corrupt-riddled administrations that at times posed serious impediments to their capacity to conduct business. The lack of regulatory bureaucracy in northern Angola in no way meant full freedom to conduct trade. In reality, African authorities exerted tight control over coastal trade and were highly conscious of the benefits of commercial independence. They firmly rejected European attempts to encroach on their territories. This was particularly clear when African forces frustrated a British attempt to build a fort in Cabinda in 1721. Another example of African control over the coastal trade was revealed when Africans defeated an expedition sent by the Portuguese to cut off African commercial links with the French in Cabinda in the 1780s. Indeed, for most of the eighteenth century, northern Angola was outside Portuguese influence altogether.

In the seventeenth century, the three Angolan regions providing slaves for the Atlantic were relatively integrated. For example, approximately thirty percent of Africans exported from Luanda in the 1680s came from Benguela. In northern Angola, the Dutch held an upper hand in the coastal trade in the second half of the seventeenth century, but ships from Brazil and Luanda were still allowed to embark slaves. However, trade in the three regions gradually diversified in the eighteenth century, signaling the growing commercialization of the Angolan trade. By the 1730s, for example, instead of complying with the mandatory stop over in Luanda to pay duties on slaves, most of the slavers bound from Benguela sailed directly to Brazil (Ferreira, 2003). In northern Angola, as the Dutch and the Portuguese lost ground to the British and the French in the eighteenth century, the trade became even more international and links with Luanda faded. In the early nineteenth century, the introduction of measures to abolish the slave trade changed this dynamic significantly by triggering tighter integration between northern Angola and Luanda. As will be explored in the next section, Benguela, however, stood in sharp contrast to the other regions, as it held closer ties with Rio de Janeiro than with any other city in the Atlantic.

Benguela

Recent estimates indicate that Benguela was second only to Luanda in terms of shipments of slaves between the 1830s and 1860s. However, reconstructing patterns of trade in Benguela remains a problem, due to the shadowy nature of the slaving business in that region and lack of documentation. Since the early eighteenth century, Benguela served as a safe haven for outcasts

seeking to conduct slaving away from Luanda officials. Largely independent from Luanda, the city gravitated towards Brazil, receiving capital and experiencing economic influence by merchants from Rio de Janeiro. In the nineteenth century, several Benguelan merchants, many of whom had either been born or lived in Rio de Janeiro, still held tight ties with that Brazilian city. Unsurprisingly, the Benguelan economy was more closely linked to Brazil than to Portugal. As late as 1837, for example, Benguela imports of Brazilian rum – one of the main commodities used in the internal slave trade – stood at 1,000 *pipas* a year, half of the amount of Brazilian rum imported by the primary Angolan slave port at Luanda.²

The domination of slaver dealers over local politics was a key dimension of the continuation of shipments of slaves in Benguela, and several dealers actually held the position of governor of Benguela. In 1836, for example, Justiniano José dos Réis, a Brazil-born individual with deep links with the slave trade since the 1820s, was the governor of Benguela.³ In 1841, another merchant with clear connections with the slave trade assumed the position of governor.⁴ Two years later, the position was taken up by Manoel Joaquim Teixeira, then one of the main actors in the slave trade.⁵ Teixeira held close contacts with Brazil and left for Rio in 1844. He continued to exert influence in Benguela until his return to the city in the early 1850s when he was accused by the British of seeking to revive the slave trade.⁶ As late as 1850, British authorities argued that years of efforts to halt the trade were undermined by a governor sympathetic to slave dealers.⁷

Furthermore, local politics were driven by attempts to ban the trade and the animosity that mulattoes – a group comprised of mixed-race individuals, blacks and locally-born white individuals – held towards Portugal. In 1835, for example, racially-driven tensions surfaced during an aborted revolt against the Benguela administration.⁸ Mulattoes played a pivotal role in the local bureaucracy. In 1842, for example, while the official in charge of administering the customs house in Benguela was a black man, his immediate subordinate was a mixed-

race official.⁹ With their close connections with African chiefs in the interior, mulattoes framed the struggle against the slave trade as a European attempt to take away their power. Invariably, they used the influential positions they held in the local administration to undermine attempts to enforce anti-slave trade measures. In 1850, authorities stated that “mulattoes from this district (Benguela) have become offensive and restive, being particularly bitter towards Portuguese individuals who they pejoratively called *galegos*, in addition to stating publicly that Benguela will only calm down when *galegos* are expelled from positions they have come to hold in the administration”.¹⁰

In anticipation of the expected end of the importation of slaves in Brazil in 1830, the Lisbon government ordered the Benguela governor to seek to reorient the local economy to a post-slave trade scenario in 1827.¹¹ One year later, in an early sign of anti-slave trade sentiment in Brazil, the Luanda administration reported that ships bound from Luanda were facing difficulties entering Brazil because of British pressure on the Brazilian authorities.¹² Despite the pressures, shipments of slaves in Benguela were still significant in 1830.¹³ In that year ten ships recorded in the TSTD2 picked up 3,926 Africans from Benguela and took them across the Atlantic to Rio de Janeiro. The end of the legal slave trade in Brazil dealt a significant blow to the Benguela trade. As demonstrated by TSTD2, while an average twelve annual voyages originated in the city during the legal trade in the 1820s, only one voyage was registered between 1831 and 1835.

Between 1836 and 1839, the number of voyages entered a decidedly upward spiral and the Benguela trade seems to have surpassed 1820s levels. Although TSTD2 identifies only three ships leaving Benguela in 1836, the number of ships that actually sailed in that year might have been higher. This is suggested by the number of applications for state licenses to leave Benguela submitted by ship captains. Fourteen ships received licenses that year, and although none of the ships declared that they were carrying slaves, the fact that all presented fabricated routes – usually including Mozambique and Uruguay – strongly

² “Carta de Manoel da Cruz” on October, 20, 1837, Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa (thereafter BNL), cód. 600.

³ “Ordem do Governador de Benguela” on June 12, 1836 (AHNA, cód. 521, fls. 34-34v).

⁴ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on July 20, 1841 (AHNA, cód. 15, fls. 60-60v).

⁵ “Ofício do Governador de Benguela” on March 26, 1844 (AHNA, cód. 455, fl. 51).

⁶ In 1846, three years after leaving Benguela on the grounds of seeking medical care in Brazil, Teixeira was still in Rio. See “Ofício do Secretário de Governo de Benguela” on July 24, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 461). For Teixeira’s return to Benguela, see “Ofício do Governador de Benguela” on December 5, 1853 (AHNA, cód. 459, fls. 22v-25v).

⁷ “Portaria do Ministério da Marinha e Ultramar” on September 27, 1850 (AHNA, cód. 263, fl. 177). See Draft of Dispatch to the British Consul in Lisbon on October 30, 1850 (PRO, FO 84, 799, fls. 33-33v). The British successfully pushed for the dismissal of the official. See Draft of Dispatch to the British Consul in Lisbon on December 14, 1850 (PRO, FO 84, 799, fls. 77-77v).

⁸ “Carta para o Juiz do Crime Interino e Relator da Alçada” on August 11, 1835 (AHNA, cód. 163, fls. 10-10v).

⁹ “Portaria da Secretaria de Governo da Marinha e Ultramar” on September 6, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 261, fls. 38v-39).

¹⁰ “Ofício do Governador de Benguela” on September 9, 1850 (AHNA, cód. 459, fls. 16v-17).

¹¹ “Ofício de Antonio Manoel de Noronha” on April 7, 1827 (AHNA, cód. 7183, fl. 58v).

¹² “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on March 31, 1828 (AHU, Angola, cx. 158, doc. 58).

¹³ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on December 14, 1830 (AHNA, cód. 12, fls. 51v-55).

suggests implication in the trade in slaves (AHNA, cód. 521). In the following years, both the TSTD2 and the license applications suggest that shipments of slaves grew further. In 1837, for example, TSTD2 indicates that eight ships left Benguela, but since the number of licenses stood at 25, the number might have been even higher (AHNA, cód. 521). Documentation from Portuguese archives shows that nine ships from Benguela were apprehended in Rio de Janeiro in the first half of 1837 alone, which seems to further evidence that the overall number of slavers picking up slaves in Benguela was higher than registered in TSTD2.¹⁴ In 1838, according to the German traveler George Tams, approximately 20,000 slaves were embarked from Benguela (Tams, 1850, p. 110).

Unprecedented British and Portuguese actions against the slave trade provide further, yet indirect, evidence of the surge in shipments of slaves in the following years. In 1839, for example, in order to avoid embarkations of slaves in the vicinity of Benguela, the Luanda government decreed that no ships could leave the city after five in the afternoon.¹⁵ As indicated by TSTD2, these measures were largely unsuccessful, with fourteen ships leaving in that year alone. As British forces zeroed in on Benguela, however, anti-slave trade repression was bolstered and seems to have yielded more favorable results.¹⁶ Backed by a controversial and short-lived convention signed by the Governor of Angola, Antonio Manoel de Noronha - an anti-slave trade official who held a short tenure in Luanda - , the British received far more legal and practical freedom to interfere with Portuguese property and citizens than the Portuguese government was prepared to concede at the time.¹⁷ The British actions were short-lived but sufficient to reduce the number of ships sailing to only seven in 1840.¹⁸

Thereafter, British attempts to suppress the trade lost a lot of momentum as Luanda merchants - most of them deeply engaged in the slave trade - led a campaign to overturn the anti-slave trade legislation. This development seems to have spurred an immediate growth in shipments of slaves in 1841 and 1842.¹⁹ As shown by TSTD2, fifteen

ships left Benguela both years, with five of them clearing out in a single month of 1841.²⁰ British demands for the cessation of shipments of slaves continued but were ignored by Luanda officials who argued that shipments per se were not the most crucial element of the trade and that these took place outside the city. Two reports written in 1841 hint at the magnitude of shipments of slaves from Benguela. The first mentions 8,000 slaves and the second refers to 5,000 Africans held for embarkation in Benguela.²¹ Although these numbers do not provide direct evidence of shipment, they strongly suggest that Benguela was, at the very least, a significant entrepot for slaving operations conducted in the region.

To cope with continued efforts to restrict the traffic, slave dealers relied on several strategies, including the extensive use of bribes to the few local officials that might have opposed the slave trade. This is reflected in a sequence of investigations at the time. In 1840, for example, British demands forced the Luanda government to launch an investigation into widespread corruption.²² One year later, a governor of Benguela fled to Pernambuco in northeastern Brazil after being charged with participating in the slave trade.²³ In 1843, Lisbon ordered a full-scale investigation of Benguela officials following British detention of a Brazilian slave ship.²⁴ As late as 1849, a governor of Benguela was accused of receiving bribes in exchange for turning a blind-eye to slave shipments.²⁵

In contrast to Luanda, where by the early 1840s Portuguese legislation had had a serious impact on the trade, the primary threat to the Benguelan slave dealers came from British cruisers. To circumvent them, slave traders declared their vessels to be sailing to ports other than Brazil. Thus, twenty-nine out of the forty-six ships that received licenses to clear out between 1835 and 1837 declared the Portuguese colony of Mozambique, not Brazil, as the final destination (AHNA, cód. 521). By so doing, they took advantage of the clause of the Portuguese anti-slave trade decree from 1836 that allowed the transport of slaves between different Portuguese colonies. In case ships were apprehended by the British,

¹⁴ "Ofício de Sá da Bandeira" in 1837 (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 824).

¹⁵ "Bando do Governador de Benguela" on May 11, 1839 (AHNA, cód. 522, fl. 7v).

¹⁶ At least one ship was apprehended in 1840. See "Ofício do Governador de Angola" on April 22, 1840 (AHNA, cód. 15, fl. 1).

¹⁷ "Carta do comandante do Navio Urania" on October 10, 1839 (PRO, FO 84, 322, fls. 135-136v).

¹⁸ Documentation that indicates that 30 ships left Benguela with slaves in 1841 seems to be a clear exaggeration. See "Apontamento sobre Angola" on May 27, 1841 (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 827).

¹⁹ The British did apprehend two ships loaded with slaves, in 1841 and 1842, but that did little to reign in slave dealers. See "Portaria do Governador de Benguela" on July 1, 1841 (AHNA, cód. 522, fl. 114); "Edital do Governador Interino de Benguela" on May 25, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 522, fls. 172 v.-174).

²⁰ "Portaria da Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e Ultramar" on May 26, 1841 (AHNA, cód. 260, fls. 53v-54v).

²¹ "Apontamento sobre Angola" on May 27, 1841 (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 827); "Apontamento de Pedro Alexandrino da Cunha" on August 6, 1841 (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 827).

²² "Portaria do Governador de Benguela" on July 7, 1840 (AHNA, cód. 522, fls. 63-63v).

²³ "Decreto Real" on March 2, 1841 (AHNA, cód. 260, fls. 17v-18); "Ofício do Governador de Angola" on June 12, 1841, (AHNA, cód. 15, fls. 55-55v).

²⁴ "Portaria da Secretaria de Governo da Marinha e Ultramar" on May 20, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 261, fls. 12-12v).

²⁵ "Relatório do Juiz de Direito da Comarca de Luanda" on December 18, 1849 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 16).

the loophole allowed them to provide justification for carrying enslaved Africans. This strategy was part of a deception that began in Brazil, where ships would obtain documents declaring Montevideo as the final destination and places like Benguela and Ambriz as stopovers on the way to Uruguay (AHI, Coleções Especiais, lata 25, maço 4, pasta 1, Pacote do Sul, 1833-34). In fact, the majority of the ships calling into Benguela in the 1830s were vessels that sailed to Angola to pick up slaves before returning to Brazil. Between May and July 1837, for example, nine Portuguese slave vessels seized in Rio de Janeiro were said to have sailed out of Benguela.²⁶

Another strategy that slave traders used to continue the transatlantic traffic in slaves was to move embarkations of slaves away from Benguela to nearby regions. Although not on the same scale as the decentralization of the Luanda trade following the end of imports of slaves in Brazil in 1831, this helped slave dealers to circumvent the growth of anti-slave trade measures by British cruisers in the mid-1840s. Slaves were sometimes loaded in regions such as Kikombo and Novo Redondo (a *presídio* created by the Luanda administration in the late eighteenth century to prevent smuggling), but slave dealers seem to have favored closer places south of Benguela, such as Egito and Baía Farta.²⁷ In 1850, a British commander declared, "I have ascertained the existence of barracoons or shacks at Bahia Farta (six miles to the southward and westward of Benguela) and at point of Salinas, and I believe these barracoons may contain between 800 and 100 slaves each".²⁸ As late as the mid-1850s, slave dealers would circumvent efforts to suppress the trade by setting up farms where Africans were put to work in "licit" activities such as picking orchella gum. Once ships ventured into the region, these slaves were sold into Atlantic slaving.²⁹

Despite these strategies, TSTD2 demonstrates that slave shipments from Benguela declined to an average of just six a year between 1843 and 1849. This development grew out of a Portuguese push to strengthen metropolitan sway over Benguela which damaged local slaving networks and by particularly intense military operations carried out by British and Portuguese cruisers. The latter included,

for example, a British cruiser inspecting ships sitting in the Benguela port to ensure that they were not holding slaves.³⁰ More importantly, it led to the destruction by British and Portuguese cruisers of several entrepôts (*barracons*) used by dealers to hold slaves along the Benguela coast.³¹ These measures were combined with a crackdown that led to the imprisonment of individuals involved in shipping slaves.³²

Second, and undoubtedly more important, the local slaving network was undermined by a colonial push by Portugal to establish more rigid control over Benguela. Mullatoes and local merchants were those most affected by the measures. José Ferreira Gomes is a case in point of the damage suffered by slave trade networks managed by local elites. Gomes was the son of Francisco Ferreira Gomes, who was born in Rio de Janeiro and became a wealthy slave dealer in Benguela in the 1820s. In 1834, Francisco Ferreira Gomes returned to Rio de Janeiro, where he continued to be involved in the slave trade and assigned his son, José Ferreira Gomes, with the task of overseeing his business in Benguela. Married to the daughter of a local traditional leader (*soba*) from nearby Catumbela, the son had tight links with Africa and was reputed to be one of the two primary merchants in Benguela in 1835. In the late 1840s, the arrest of José Ferreira Gomes and his associates from Benguela and Catumbela dealt a significant blow to the Benguela trade.³³

Luanda

The case of the Luanda trade illustrates how a combination of external and local forces shaped the slave trade in Angola. The local forces are perhaps best represented by the changes in the supply of slaves to Luanda. Traditionally, Luanda relied on the Mbundu kingdoms of Kasanje and Kassanje for slaves, but that changed significantly as internal trading networks were further fragmented in the nineteenth century. More than ever, *pumbeiros* (internal merchants) and *sertanejos* (also internal merchants but with more resources) became key suppliers of slaves to Luanda and Benguela. In 1846, for example,

²⁶ "Ofício de Sá da Bandeira" in 1837, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, thereafter AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 824.

²⁷ "Ofício para o Comandante do Brigue Audaz" on August 4, 1842 (AHNA, cód. 452, fl. 165v.); "Ofício do Governador de Benguela" on October 26, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 7183, fls. 109v.-110v.); "Ordens e Instruções" on December 24, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 1178, fls. 1-1v.); "Ofício do Governador de Benguela" on November 27, 1848 (AHNA, cód. 459, fls. 2v.-3v.).

²⁸ "Carta de Hastings" on March 4, 1850 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 16^a).

²⁹ "Circular aos Negociantes de Benguela" on March 19, 1850 (AHNA, cód. 461, fls. 22v.-23v.); "Ofício do Secretário do Governo de Angola" on April 24, 1850 (AHNA, cód. 511, fls. 218-218v.); Dispatch by Gabriel and Jackson on February 20, 1854 (PRO, FO 84, 932, fls. 42-43v.). "Ofício do Governador de Benguela" on March 11, 1854 (AHNA, cód. 467, fls. 153-155); "Ofício da Estação Naval" on April 17, 1854 (Arquivo Geral da Marinha (thereafter AGM), cx. 319).

³⁰ "Edital do Governador Interino de Benguela" on May 25, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 522, fls. 172 v.-174); "Ofício do Secretário do Governo de Benguela" on October 18, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 454, fls. 76-76v.).

³¹ "Ofício do Governador de Angola" on February 17, 1846 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 10 A); "Ofício do Governador de Benguela" on October 26, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 7183, fls. 109v.-110v.); "Edital do Governo de Benguela" on October 31, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 523, fls. 16-16v.).

³² "Registros da Cadeia Pública de Benguela" on March 12, 1846 (AHNA, caixa 145).

³³ "Ofício do Governador de Benguela" on November 27, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 455, fls. 251v.); "Ofício do Governador de Benguela" on December 25, 1848 (AHNA, cx. 5426).

three subjects of the Matamba kingdom – acting in their capacity of *pumbeiros* – arrived at Luanda with a number of slaves to sell.³⁴ Meanwhile, the Luanda administration escalated pressures on the Kasanje ruler to comply with demands by Luanda merchants for better access to slave markets.³⁵ While Kasanje and Matamba relied on the east Lunda Empire for slaves, *pumbeiros* and *sertanejos* tapped into sources of slaves in regions that were closer to the coast and under more direct influence of the Luanda government. The decentralization of the internal trade made access to slaves easier than in the past, thus making it particularly difficult to bring the coastal trade to an end.

Local forces were also reflected by the slave dealers' hegemonic position in Luanda politics. As in Benguela, the Luanda elite was comprised of an amalgam of Brazilian and locally-born merchants who had little, if any, commitment to Portuguese plans to turn the Angolan economy away from the slave trade. In 1840, for example, one of the key aides to the governor of Angola was José Botelho Sampaio, a Luanda-born official.³⁶ By holding key government positions and exerting pressure on the Luanda administration, slave dealers successfully undermined efforts to enforce anti-slave trade legislation. The backlash caused by an agreement signed by Governor Noronha with British forces is particularly illuminating. The agreement resulted in the apprehension of several slave vessels and eventually led to the resignation of Governor Noronha.³⁷ Unsurprisingly, an Angolan governor argued that if he “enforced anti slave-trade legislation, his closest aides would resign and he would be left with an unleashed unrest to deal with”.³⁸ Furthermore, though not as intensely as in Benguela, Luanda politics was also driven by racial tension.³⁹

Brazilian nationals intimately involved in the slave trade played a significant role in Luanda politics. Francisco Teixeira Miranda is a case in point. One of the wealthiest slave dealers in Luanda in the 1840s, Miranda provided part of the soldiers and horses used by the Luanda administration to vanquish the Tala Mugongo outpost,

thus effectively helping to expand the borders of regions under legal Portuguese influence.⁴⁰ Another example is provided by the case of Francisco Antonio Flores, who went to Luanda in the 1840s as a local representative of a Rio de Janeiro commercial house and became the paramount Brazilian investor in Angola until the early 1860s. Despite being deported from Angola in the 1850s, Flores had tight links with Governors and even British officials serving on the Court of Mixed Commission established in Luanda. In the late 1840s, even while shipments of slaves were subsiding, the number of Brazilians – most of them involved in slaving in northern Angola – applying for licenses to live in Angola far surpassed the number of applications by individuals of any other nationality. In the first semester of 1848, for example, approximately 25 Brazilian nationals requested licenses to live in Luanda (AHNA, códs. 167, 168, and 171).

Close links with Brazil and the advent of international efforts to suppress the slave trade are examples of external forces that shaped the shipment of slaves from Angola. Even after serious Portuguese efforts to undercut Angolan ties with Brazil, most of the imports in Luanda still originated in Rio de Janeiro.⁴¹ In fact, according to a Portuguese consul in Rio, the volume of exports from Rio de Janeiro to Luanda and Benguela in 1843 was as large as Rio's exports to Portugal.⁴² Unsurprisingly, the trade was seriously disrupted when British demands forced Brazil to ban imports of slaves in 1831. The decline is clearly reflected in TSTD2, which indicates that only five ships left Luanda in 1832, a sharp drop from the number of ships leaving in the previous years. As a result, prices of slaves decreased dramatically, severely affecting Luanda's economy.⁴³ According to the Luanda government chamber, financial losses caused by the end of shipments of slaves were “incalculable”.⁴⁴ Slave dealers responded to prohibition by relocating to northern Angola, where they had been investing since the British withdrawal from Atlantic slaving in 1807 (Getz, 2004, p. 38; Law, 2004, p. 157-158; Strickrodt, 2002, p. 238).

³⁴ “Ofício do Secretário do Governo de Angola” on August 5, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 105, fls. 87-87v.).

³⁵ “Portaria do Governador de Angola” on March 2, 1838 (AHNA, cód. 101, fl. 19v.).

³⁶ “Mapa Demonstrativo dos Oficiais do Estado Maior da Província em junho de 1840” (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 3 C).

³⁷ “Representação da Câmara Municipal de Luanda” on October 9, 1839 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 5); “Representação da Câmara de Luanda” on December 2, 1839 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 5); “Protesto de José da Lomba, Capitão do Patacho Português Treze de Junho” on June 30, 1840 (PRO, FO 84, 322); “Representação do Tenente Ananias Xavier” on August 7, 1840 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 4 B); “Portaria do Governador de Benguela” on July 1, 1841 (AHNA, cód. 522, fl. 114); “Ofício do Conselho de Governo de Angola” on September 4, 1842 (AHNA, cód. 15, fls. 157v.-158); “Ofício do Secretário de Governo” on May 20, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 102, fl. 98); “Edital do Governador Interino de Benguela” on May 25, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 522, fls. 172 v.-174); “Ofício do Secretário de Governo” on October 18, 1843 (AHNA, cód. 454, fls. 76-76v.). See also Stamm (1971, p. 159).

³⁸ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on May 17, 1843 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 6 A).

³⁹ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on December 6, 1837 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 2); “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on June 5, 1840 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 3 C).

⁴⁰ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on January 19, 1841 (AHNA, cód. 15, fls. 36-36v.). Miranda had been living in Luanda for seven years and dealing in slaves on behalf of a commercial house in Rio de Janeiro. See “Ofício confidencial do Juiz de Direito de Luanda” on January 20, 1842 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pastas 5 A e 5 B).

⁴¹ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on April 8, 1836 (AHNA, cód. 13, fls. 1-3).

⁴² “Ofício do Vice-Cônsul Português no Rio de Janeiro” on April 24, 1843 (AHNA, caixa 1479).

⁴³ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on April 8, 1836 (AHNA, cód. 13, fls. 10v.-12v.).

⁴⁴ “Representação da Câmara de Luanda” on October 5, 1833 (AHU, cx. 177. Doc. 15).

The resumption of the Luanda trade paralleled the revival of imports of slaves in Brazil in the mid-1830s. In 1835, for example, TSTD2 indicates that 15 ships left Luanda. However, shipments of slaves might have been greater, as according to Portuguese authorities 45 ships might have left that year.⁴⁵ In that same year, a British commander reported “thirty-two Portuguese vessels of all types and one Spaniard, trading for slaves”.⁴⁶ In 1836, although TSTD2 indicates that the number of slave ships sailing reached 27, an Italian traveler and a newly-arrived Governor estimated thirty five.⁴⁷ In 1838 and 1839, Portuguese assessments put the annual number of ships leaving Luanda at around forty ships.⁴⁸ However, TSTD2 indicates that the actual number stood at 49.

As in Benguela, slave dealers had to develop new methods to conduct the trade in Luanda. An Italian traveler reported that governors charged a fee for each ship leaving Luanda.⁴⁹ In addition, records of ship sales in Luanda demonstrate that Brazilian merchants would fictitiously sell their ships to Portuguese nationals to avoid British cruisers by sailing under the Portuguese flag. In 1832, for example, Remígio Luiz dos Santos, a Brazilian merchant based in Angola, sold a ship to Luiz Gomes Ribeiro, a Luanda-born Portuguese and one of the most prominent slave dealers in Luanda.⁵⁰ Despite the strategy, authorities estimated that most of the ships sailing under the Portuguese flag were in fact owned by Brazilian merchants or by Portuguese nationals based in Brazil.⁵¹ The practice of using the Portuguese flag became so common that a British commander reported that “although under Portuguese colors, I have every reason to suppose they were Brazilian property, as more than two thirds of them belonged to ports in the Brazils (sic) and were bound for there”.⁵²

In the early 1840s, as reported by the German traveler George Tams, shipments of slaves in Luanda were conducted at night due to the need to avoid heightened repression (Tams, 1850, p. 212). In 1841, the number of ships leaving Luanda dropped forty percent, with only eighteen vessels clearing out of the city. As demonstrated by TSTD2, shipments rose again during the following two

years, but they never returned to the levels reached in the late 1830s. In fact, the downward trend was consolidated from 1845 to 1850, when the average number of ships leaving Luanda annually was less than one tenth the number of the late 1830s when the illegal trade peaked.

As in Benguela, the downfall of the Luanda trade was a function of a variety of anti-slave trade measures by Portuguese authorities and intensifying naval operations by British and Portuguese cruisers. The anti-slave trade measures were reflected in criminal cases prosecuted between 1845 and 1848, approximately 20 percent of which were related to the slave trade.⁵³ The crackdown on slave dealers in Luanda bore a clear resemblance to what was then taking place in Benguela. Furthermore, special measures were taken to deal with the large number of Brazilian nationals who lived in Luanda while carrying out activities related to the slave trade. For example, Brazilians living in Angola were prohibited from freely circulating and were required to register with the administration.⁵⁴

Anti-slave trade measures were also reflected in more intense naval patrolling along the Angolan coast. The Portuguese squadron established headquarters in Luanda, and French and American warships joined British and Portuguese cruisers to control slaving activities. French and American actions vis-à-vis Brazil and Portugal were seriously limited by the absence of anti-slave treaties with these countries, which meant that they could only suppress French and American activities. In 1846, British authorities stated, “The number of vessels engaged or supposed to be engaged in the slave traffic which have been captured or destroyed by these respective squadrons (British, French, Portuguese and American squadrons) so far as our information demonstrates amounts to 61 and is as follows: captured by the British: 37; by the French: 11; by the Portuguese: 5; by the Americans: 2; destroyed by the British: 3; by the French: 1; by the Portuguese: 2”.⁵⁵ In 1847, the British requested permission for their troops to land in territories under Portuguese control so that they could destroy barracoons where slaves were held for the slave trade.⁵⁶ Between 1847 and 1852, a military ship entered or left the Luanda

⁴⁵ “Carta de Luanda” on May 24, 1835 (AHU, pápeis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 2922).

⁴⁶ “Relatório do Comandante do Brigue Charybolis” on September 6, 1835 (AGM, cx. 311).

⁴⁷ “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on April 8, 1836 (AHNA, cód. 13, fls. 5-10v).

⁴⁸ “Apontamento do Tenente Lima” in 1838 (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 827).

⁴⁹ “Ofício de Feliciano Antônio Pereira” on June 18, 1838 (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 824).

⁵⁰ “Biblioteca Municipal de Luanda”, thereafter BML, (cód. 37, fl. 124v).

⁵¹ “Ofício do Cônsul Português no Rio de Janeiro” on June 16, 1834 (AHNA, Luanda, avulsos, cx. 1465).

⁵² “Relatório do Comandante do Brigue Charybolis” on September 6, 1835 (AGM, cx. 311).

⁵³ “Boletim oficial do Governo Geral da Província de Angola” on July 31, 1847; “Boletim oficial do Governo Geral da Província de Angola” on January 1, 1848; “Boletim oficial do Governo Geral da Província de Angola” on October 1, 1848. See also Ferreira, “Dos Sertões ao Atlântico”.

⁵⁴ “Ofício do Secretário de Governo de Angola” on November 14, 1845 (AHNA, cód. 104, fl. 65); “Ofício do Secretário de Governo” on January 17, 1846 (AHNA, cód. 104, fls. 132-132v).

⁵⁵ Report on the Slave Trade by Edmond Gabriel and George Jackson on February 18, 1847 (PRO, FO 84, 671, 1847, fls. 99-11).

⁵⁶ Dispatch by the British Consul in Lisbon on May 17, 1847 (PRO, FO 84, 676, fls. 30-33); “Ofício do Ministério da Marinha e Ultramar” on May 22, 1847 (AGM, cx. 311).

port every three days and the number of cruisers far surpassed the number of ships seeking to conduct legal trade with Luanda (Ferreira, 1996).

Northern Angola

In this period, the region called northern Angola stretching from Ambriz to Cabinda was the focal point of the illegal slave trade in Angola. In addition to coastal geographic features that greatly benefited shipments of slaves, the dynamics of the trade in that region was distinctly different from that in Benguela and, principally, Luanda. By any standards, northern Angola was the most international of the three Angolan regions shipping slaves to the Atlantic. In Cabinda, the Portuguese and the Dutch took the lead in developing the trade, and the French and the British were quick to join. To highlight British lack of interest in the northern Angola trade, David Eltis has pointed out that the Royal British Company rejected plans to establish a permanent outpost in Kongo in the 1680s (Eltis, 2001). Between 1681 and 1720, however, as demonstrated by TSTD2, ten British ships were conducting business in Cabinda, as compared with only eight French ships.

Since the mid-seventeenth century, growing Dutch trade in northern Angola took a toll on Portuguese influence in northern Angola. Despite their dominance, the Dutch would still allow ships from Luanda to pick up slaves in Cabinda. The advance of British and French business, taking a far less compromising stand towards ships sailing under Portuguese flag, dealt a serious blow to the already declining Portuguese influence. In addition to pushing prices upward, the French and British used violence to drive Portuguese ships away (Ferreira, 2003). Writing in the early nineteenth century, Angolan Governor António Miguel Mello dated the beginning of British and French trade to the 1760s, but by then they had been participating in the trade for some time.⁵⁷ Although the British trade suffered a sharp decline after a military setback in 1721 when they sought to build a fortress in Cabinda, it soon resumed its expansion. From the 1720s to 1750s, as indicated by TSTD2, while forty-six British ships traded in Cabinda, forty-two French ships slaved in the region. In the second half of the eighteenth century, French domination in Cabinda was almost incontestable,

as TSTD2 demonstrates that number of French ships (88) embarking slaves there was four times higher than the number of British ships (20) doing so.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, only three Portuguese ships participated in slaving activities in northern Angola – a testimony to the several failed Portuguese attempts to break the British and French grip in Cabinda. In the 1760s, for example, Luanda authorities sought to provide incentives for the city's merchants to engage in trade in that region.⁵⁸ In Rio, authorities also sought to convince merchants that trade in the region was worthwhile.⁵⁹ In Luanda, however, the return of six ships that had not been able to purchase slaves in Cabinda made it clear that competition by foreigners was not easy to overcome.⁶⁰ In fact, Portuguese trade between Cabinda and Luanda was strengthened only after diplomatic overtures by the Luanda government to African rulers in the nineteenth century (Carreira, 1969, p. 274). In 1803, for example, approximately one thousand Muxicongo slaves from Ambriz were sold in Luanda in a single month.⁶¹ The volume of the trade with northern Angola might even have increased when Mdembo Muene Damba Mangombe sent a large, yet not specified, number of slaves to Luanda merchants in 1804. Authorities then sent him gifts and reassured him that they would seek to guarantee favorable prices for slaves if he continued shipping slaves to Luanda.⁶²

The British withdrawal from slaving in 1807 profoundly altered the dynamic of the northern Angolan trade by creating a vacuum that was quickly filled by Luanda and Brazilian merchants. The TSTD2 shows that ships sailing under the Portuguese flag – most of them actually outfitted in Brazil – moved into Cabinda right after the British withdrawal. Although some funding for the trade came from Luanda, the center of gravity of the trade between Angola and Brazil shifted to Brazil. Brazilian participation soon led to unprecedented levels of trade. By 1814, ships would still stop in Luanda on their way to Cabinda, but they soon stopped doing so and the Brazilian-dominated northern Angola trade developed into an independent operation.⁶³ Between 1808 and 1822, for example, all but one of the approximately 255 ships leaving the area sailed under the Portuguese flag.

Although northern Angola *muxicongo* Africans would still be sent to Luanda via land, they were by all standards a minority and most of the Africans enslaved

⁵⁷ "Carta do Governador de Angola" on January 3, 1801 (AHU, Angola, cx. 98, doc. 6).

⁵⁸ "Ofício do Governador de Angola" on November 25, 1768 (AHNA, cód. 3, fl. 261-261v.).

⁵⁹ "Ofício de Luiz de Vasconcellos e Silva" on June 30, 1783 (AHU, Rio de Janeiro, cx. 131, doc. 85).

⁶⁰ "Ofício do Governador de Angola" on December 31, 1794 (AHNA, cód. 246, fls. 53-55).

⁶¹ The problem was that this occasional trade was via land and failed to evolve into long-term commercial relations. See "Ofício do Governador de Angola" on July 30, 1803 (AHNA, cód. 9, fls. 37v.-38).

⁶² See "Carta do Governador de Angola" on August 14, 1804 (AHNA, cód. 240, fls. 29-29v.).

⁶³ "Portaria do Governo de Angola" on September 6, 1814 (AHNA, cód. 277, fls. 148-148v.).

in northern Angola were shipped from loading points in the region itself.⁶⁴ The existence of more efficient routes for transporting slaves – in comparison to the routes leading to Luanda – lay at the heart of the growth of slaving in Cabinda. While the trade in Luanda was hindered by excessive reliance on the kingdom of Kassanje, Cabinda trading networks were highly decentralized and reached far into Central Africa. Second, as opposed to ships operating out of Luanda, ships bound from Cabinda had a good chance of avoiding taxes for slaves shipped to Brazil.⁶⁵ At any rate, after independence from Portugal in 1822, Brazilian domination further increased, with 185 Brazilian ships embarking slaves in Cabinda from 1823 to 1831. The first ship under a Brazilian flag recorded by TSTD2 showed up in Cabinda in 1826, and it is certain that the trade in that region was controlled by merchants from Rio de Janeiro.

Around the River Loje, just north of Luanda, the dynamic was not significantly different. The British first developed the trade and the region became known by the name they used to refer to it – Ambriz. According to the TSTD2, however, although a British ship was the first to embark slaves in Ambriz in 1786, they lagged well behind the French until the early 1790s – when war and the St Domingue Revolution dealt a huge blow to the French slave trade. From 1786 to 1792, for example, there were eleven French ships while the number of British ships was only seven. Soon thereafter, British ships dominated the trade until the British withdrew from slaving in 1807. Between 1793 and 1807, 27 British ships picked up slaves in Ambriz, but the number might actually have been higher. In 1793, for example, TSTD2 indicates only two slave voyages by British ships, yet authorities in Luanda indicated that eleven British ships were slaving in Ambriz.⁶⁶

In contrast to Cabinda, where TSTD2 shows that shipments of slaves continued seamlessly in the aftermath of the 1807 British withdrawal from slaving, the trade in Ambriz seems to have been significantly disrupted by the end of the British trade. In fact, slave embarkations in Cabinda only resumed in 1815, with nine ships recorded from 1815 to 1822, the year of Brazilian independence.

Between 1823 and 1832, however, the number rose dramatically as 91 ships embarked slaves in Ambriz. Brazilian investors were responsible for the rise of shipments in Ambriz, as acknowledged by the Luanda administration in 1826.⁶⁷ In contrast to the situation in Cabinda, however, several nations were involved in Ambriz. The TSTD2 shows that the Spanish were already operating in Ambriz in 1809, and they seem to have intensified their trade in that region by the early 1830s. A British commander calculated that 4,000 slaves were boarded on Spanish ships annually.⁶⁸ However, the fact that the French, the Americans and the British owned factories in Ambriz in 1845 provides a solid indication of the international nature of the Ambriz trade.⁶⁹

Both Cabinda and Ambriz offered extremely propitious conditions for the slave trade (Herlin, 2004, p. 261–285). In the 1840s, for example, several barracoons to hold enslaved Africans existed five miles inland from the coast of Ambriz.⁷⁰ According to Portuguese and British authorities, “there were at that time several hundred slaves in barracoons near Ambriz ready for shipment”.⁷¹ Furthermore, ships operating out of Ambriz and Cabinda could count on a local network of seasoned Cabindan sailors to help with the trade. In addition, Cabindans were deeply involved in the trade, either through slave trading or controlling coastal trade in northern Angola.⁷² Powerful Cabindan families held tight links not only with Luanda but also with Brazil, where they often sent their children to be educated (AHU, papéis de Sá da Bandeira, maço 827. Documento de 23 de agosto de 1840).

Conclusion

Although shipments of slaves in nineteenth-century Angola were directly affected by external forces, such as international efforts to suppress the slave trade and the tight economic links with Brazil, the supply of slaves for the coast and local politics were also key factors in the continuation of the trade during illegality. External forces – represented by partial abolition of the slave trade – affected first northern Angola, and only much

⁶⁴ “Registro de Ofício do Governador de Angola” on June 18, 1825 (BML, cód. 44, fls. 99v.-100v.).

⁶⁵ Indeed, seemingly aware of looming fiscal losses, the Luanda administration unsuccessfully attempted to establish a fixed place for the trade to take place so that it could levy taxes on the business. See “Carta do Governador de Angola” on November 14, 1819 (AHNA, cód. 240, fl. 128); “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on September 4, 1824 (AHU, Angola, cx. 145).

⁶⁶ AHU, cód. 1633. Arrival of enslaved Africans in the Americas provides further evidence of what seems to have been a more intense British trade. For example, while the TSTD indicates that 1,596 slaves from Ambriz arrived in the Americas in 1799, Luanda authorities claimed that the annual number of shipments by British ships was 6,000 slaves that year. See “Ofício para o Governador de Angola” on March 8, 1800 (AHNA, cód. 254, fls. 144-144v.).

⁶⁷ “Relatório do Governador de Angola” on March 5, 1826 (AHU, Angola, cx. 151).

⁶⁸ “Relatório do Comandante do Brigue Charybolis” on September 6, 1835 (AGM, cx. 311).

⁶⁹ “Ofício de Joaquim Xavier Bressane Leite” on August 31, 1845 (AHNA, cód. 16, fls. 125v.-126).

⁷⁰ “Portaria da Secretaria de Governo da Marinha e Ultramar” on April 27, 1844 (AHNA, cód. 261, fls. 145-145v.).

⁷¹ Draft of Letter by Palmerston on November 11, 1846 (PRO, FO 84, 630, 1846, fls. 99-101). See also “Ofício do Governador de Angola” on February 17, 1846 (AHU, segunda seção de Angola, pasta 10 A).

⁷² Dispatch by the British Representative in the Mixed Commission in Luanda on March 30, 1844 (FO 84, 517, 1844, fls. 40-41).

later took a toll on the trade in Luanda and Benguela. In Luanda and Benguela, Brazilian and local investors held tight grip over shipments of slaves, in addition to dominating local politics and crippling early attempts to ban the trade. It is not surprising, therefore, that slave trading continued until the mid-1840s. The geography of the northern Angolan coast and Congo River ensured an almost daunting number of potential slave-embarkation points and there was no local Portuguese administration present to either help or hinder shipments of slaves. The region thus provided a safe haven for slave dealers when pressure on the traffic built up in Luanda and Benguela.

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