
Alcohol under the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade

The Case of Benguela and its Hinterland (Angola)

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“[T]he use of liquor to attract followers from one's immediate group *may have* fed into the existing slave trade. The acknowledged economic connection between the liquor trade and the slave trade had important sociopolitical and spiritual dimensions. An Asante aristocrat or wealthy trader bought slaves among peoples he considered peripheral in the northern markets. As Asantehene Kwaku Dua I informed the Wesleyan missionary Freeman in 1841: ‘The small tribes in the interior [...] fight with each other, take prisoners and sell them for slaves; and as I know nothing about them, I allow my people to buy and sell them as they please [...]’ The Asante aristocrat or trader sold these slaves on the coast for European liquor (among other things), and paradoxically distributed these drinks to those within his social group to secure Asante clientele. The choice of liquor was crucial for it bound recipients socially and spiritually to its giver. It was a complex manipulation of the concept of wealth in people” (Akyeampong 1996a: 42-43)¹.

- 1 The history of alcohol in Africa has, since the early 1990s, gained a certain distinction within the field of African Studies as historians and other historically minded social scientists have brought the topic increasingly under their scrutiny. This recent outpouring, however, remains largely stuck within the chronological framework that has always plagued the study of alcohol in Africa². The colonial and post-colonial eras continue as the overwhelming preference of temporal analysis³, with scholarly production on earlier periods lagging far behind (Gordon 1996; Curto 1999, 2001, 2004; Ambler 2003; Reese 2004)⁴. According to one reviewer of this literature, its “trajectory [...] has very much followed that of African history generally: beginning with a focus on the colonialism itself; then moving to an exploration of African ‘resistance’; and then into studies of the post-colonial state and approaches which have emphasized the importance of cultural continuity, and African agency” (Willis 2005: 1). As a result, much of the recent discourse on alcohol in Africa continues in ignorance of the more distant past.

- 2 Yet, during the era of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, alcoholic beverages developed into relatively significant imports throughout western Africa to acquire exportable captives. It has been estimated that the liquor imported into West Africa accounted for 5 to 10% of the region's overall export slave trade (Ambler 2003: 75). At Luanda, the capital of the Portuguese colony of Angola, the weight of alcohol imports in its export slave trade was even higher: of the nearly 1.2 million captives shipped from this port town during 1710-1830 alone, 33% have been estimated as purchased through the importation of alcoholic drinks (Curto 2004: 185). Their relative weight in the acquisition of exportable slaves notwithstanding, alcohol imports also came to play of myriad of other roles. These not only underpinned the Atlantic slaving economy but equally, if not more importantly, also transformed alcohol consumption patterns in those parts of western Africa involved in the commerce. The objective of this contribution is to shed further light on this particular aspect of the more distant past of alcohol in Africa by exploring the introduction of foreign drinks, the various systems through which they were delivered to consumers, and their impact upon patterns of consumption at Benguela and its hinterland, a major supply region of the Atlantic slave trade that has hitherto received little attention. As we will see, a veritable "Atlantic creole" drinking culture⁵ not only emerged in Benguela under the context of the commerce in human beings, but the alcohol consumptions patterns of Africans further inland were also thereby transformed.
- 3 Alcohol in Central Angola During Early Contact With Europeans
- 4 On May 17, 1617, some 250 men led by Manuel Cerveira Pereira arrived in the *Baía das Vacas* or Cattle Bay, immediately south of the Katumbela River, to found the port town of Benguela. From this base, they soon began to carve out the *Reino* or Kingdom of Benguela, as central Angola became known to the Portuguese, and then to tap the inland trade of the densely populated highlands dominated by the emerging constellation of polities that would later become known as the Ovimbundu states. As had occurred earlier in the Kingdom of Kongo and the hinterland of Luanda to the north, the Portuguese did not encounter populations who lacked alcohol. Indeed, by then, societies throughout central Angola already had a long association with locally produced intoxicating drinks.
- 5 When Pereira and his henchmen set foot in the *Baía das Vacas*, the Umbundu speakers inhabiting central Angola could draw upon five different local alcoholic beverages with which, if nothing else, to quench their thirst. One of these was *mingundi* (also *mingundo*, *ekundi*, and *ingundi*), a fermented mix of water and honey. The first report on this intoxicant comes from the later 1790s (Pinheiro de Lacerda 1845: 490). But at least one historian of West Central Africa considers it to be the oldest alcoholic beverage known to humanity (Vellut 1979: 96). Another alcoholic fluid was *kimbombo* (also *ocimbombo*), beer made from millet and sorghum, two of the most widely cultivated grains in central Angola. This beverage shows up in a few oral traditions on Ovimbundu genesis, as well as reports from the later eighteenth century⁶. *Hèla* (also *hella*), a beer made exclusively from sorghum, constituted a third alcoholic drink, the most appreciated throughout the plateau according to reports from the late 1700s (da Silva 1813: 52; Pinheiro de Lacerda 1845: 490). A fourth alcoholic drink, combined longstanding apicultural and agricultural traditions in central Angola. This was *ochasa* (also *quiaça*), a mixture of *mingundi* and *kimbombo*, a beverage first reported in the late 1700s that is surely as ancient as the liquids that constituted it (Pinheiro de Lacerda 1845: 490; Vellut 1979:

96). Palm wine was unavailable throughout most of central Angola. On the plateau, rising some 2,000 to 3,000 metres above sea level, raphia palms were non-extant. These trees thrived only along the coastal lowland river valleys surrounding the plateau, as the English sailor Andrew Battell witnessed when he met up with the Imbangala near the Kuvo River in 1601⁷. Nevertheless, this does not seem to have stopped the highland populations from occasionally satisfying their thirst with one of the preferred drinks consumed throughout West Central Africa. Periodically, bands of individuals descended from the plateau to pillage the lower river valleys in search of palm trees (Miller 1992: 14, 36), presumably, in part, for their sap. All of these local alcoholic beverages shared one important feature: their alcoholic content was low.

- 6 In central Angola, as elsewhere in West Central Africa, alcohol was not ingested merely to quench one's thirst. Thus, in 1785, the *Intambi* ritual that followed the death of a chief in Kilenges, south of Caconda, required, in part, that the kin and subjects of the deceased decry his absence, praise his accomplishments, and then "drink *Alos* or *N-Burungas* and *Hellas*, two sorts of wine, amongst others, that they produce and use" (da Silva 1813: 52)⁸. At the very end of the eighteenth century, on the other hand, when a female highlander sought to seal a relationship with a prospective partner, she would first to get him to acquire a bull: once the bull in hand, she would then invite kin and neighbours to a feast, infused with *mingundi*, *kimbombo*, and *hèla*, to show her appreciation (Pinheiro de Lacerda 1845: 490). The feast served to cement their relationship in public, as well as to show the couple's wealth. Both of these late eighteenth century examples, the earliest known cases during which locally produced alcohol was used in central Angola, surely had their roots very deep in time. Later documentation not only evidences other instances during which local alcohol was consumed, but also suggests that these circumstances were similarly long-standing.
- 7 Indeed, a number of other occasions lent themselves to drinking local alcohol. One of these were annual feasts. For example, the *kikalánka*, a celebration held during the drier months of April and May to rejoice the return of warriors from battle, was always serviced with abundant amounts of *kimbombo*. Another celebration, the *kánye*, was held following harvest in March, with similarly large volumes of *kimbombo* and other local alcoholic drinks available. Rituals were further occasions for drinking. *Kimbombo* was always part and parcel of funeral rites. The same occurred during libation rituals to appease the ancestors. *Kimbombo* was also consumed while marriage contracts were negotiated, as well as during engagement and wedding celebrations. Outside of these occasions, highlanders simply gathered around a fire at night to socialize around their local alcoholic beverages⁹.
- 8 A great deal of local alcohol was consumed during these feasts, rituals, and other social events. The amounts imbibed rarely failed to impress Europeans who ventured into the highlands¹⁰. But, outside of these occasions, it is doubtful that the consumption of local alcohol was extensive. In central Angola, as was the case elsewhere in West Central Africa, local alcohol consumption patterns were governed by a number of restrictive factors. One of these was the seasonal availability of the primary materials required to produce alcoholic drinks. Another was the intensive labour involved in production, mainly performed by women who also happened to be responsible for household chores and agriculture. A third inhibiting factor related to the production process itself: fermented in a "cottage" setting, none of the local alcohol drinks held for long. Available in limited quantities and only during specific times of the year, the low

alcohol content fluids produced locally were thus predominantly consumed during occasions sanctioned by society.

The Rise of Slave Trading and of an Atlantic Creole Drinking Culture at Benguela

- 9 It did not take long for Cerveira Pereira and his men, following their arrival in Cattle Bay, to begin acquiring captives for export through a combination of commercial relations with and military actions against neighbouring African polities. By June of 1618, at least one vessel full of slaves had already departed from Benguela (Parreira 1990: 67). At year's end, the total number of captives shipped amounted to over 350¹¹. The export of slaves from this emerging port town thus began to take place on a regular basis. Of the 1,000 prime slaves that resulted from the 1627-1629 military operations carried out inland by Lopo Soares Lasso (Delgado 1948-1955: 125-126), Cerveira Pereira's successor, the majority surely found themselves shipped away from *Baía das Vacas*. In 1641, this growing slave trade led the Dutch to occupy Benguela so as to supply part of their slave labour requirements in northeastern Brazil, which they had earlier wrestled from the Portuguese Crown. Seven years later, the Dutch were, in turn, ousted from Cattle Bay by a military force of Portuguese subjects dispatched from southern Brazil for the same purpose. Thereafter, with individuals born in Brazil and Brazilianised Portuguese having gained control over Benguela, its slave export economy increased further still. It has been estimated that during the 1680s, some 2,000 slaves were exported annually therefrom (Ferreira 2003: 77-78).
- 10 Although rising, the volume of the slave trade from *Baía das Vacas* remained comparatively small. In effect, it was only during the middle decades of the eighteenth century that Benguela emerged into a major Atlantic slaving town as the extant data on legal slave exports show. While 2,035 captives were shipped from this port of embarkation in 1730, a further 1,793 experienced the same fate eight years later. In 1740-1742, 1744, and 1747-1749, the combined total reached only 6,088. During the 1750s, the overall volume increased to 22,638 slaves. The following decades saw the commerce attain new heights. Legal slave exports jumped to 47,173 during the 1760s, 53,013 in the 1770s, 64,931 in the 1780s, and then 83,355 during the 1790s. The trade subsequently entered into a period of gradual decline, with 62,407 slaves shipped during the first decade of the nineteenth century and 45,178 in the 1810s. In 1820, 1822-1825, and 1828, another 18,555 captives were further legally exported from Benguela. Between 1730 and 1828, a total of 407,166 captives are thus known to have been legally shipped from this central Angolan port town over a 73 year period¹². A further 78,827 captives were embarked in this port town and surrounding areas during 1833-1864, when the trade operated on an illegal basis¹³.
- 11 Such a volume turned Benguela into an important supplier of captive labour. Indeed, this central Angolan embarkation point was "among the ten leading" slaving ports on the Atlantic coast of Africa (Eltis, Lovejoy & Richardson 1999: 22). As was the case elsewhere, a great variety of trade goods were also required here to exchange for captives¹⁴. Alcohol imports, for example, accounted for 10% by value of the slaves shipped from Cattle Bay between 1798 and 1828 (Curto 2001). The weight of imported booze in Benguela's slave export trade was thus far from negligible. For the period before the late eighteenth century, import data is not available to work out the

importance of the booze imported relative to the number of captives shipped. Nevertheless, other documentation not only suggests that the connection between imported alcohol and slaves exported was established following the late 1610s but that, as this connection grew, the subsequent availability of alcohol imports led first to the recreation of an Atlantic drinking culture within the town itself and then to significant changes in the alcohol consumption patterns of neighbouring African populations.

- 12 The 1617 arrival of Cerveira Pereira and his men in *Baía das Vacas* represented more than the advent of a foreign political power in central Angola. It also represented the coming of a different culture, with its own specific consumption habits. The new arrivals came from a culture where *vinho* or grape wine had long become the preferred alcoholic drink. Not surprisingly, the first shipments of *vinho*, fortified to withstand transportation in the high seas, arrived at Benguela right on their heels (*ibid.*)¹⁵. The embryonic colonial administration that was being set up in town immediately imposed an import tax on this alcoholic drink to finance part of its expenses. Then, in 1621, Baltazar Rebello de Aragão suggested that another tax could be placed on the *vinho* offloaded at Cattle Bay to help defray the cost of “fortifying” the newly conquered *Reino*¹⁶. Whether this second tax was ever implemented is not known. Nevertheless, the fact that the suggestion was made at all indicates that, shortly after 1617, appreciable quantities of grape wine became available at Benguela to satisfy the palates of Portuguese expatriates residing there.
- 13 By the middle of the seventeenth century, Portuguese expatriates were not the only foreigners residing in Benguela. The town, albeit still small, now also included persons born in Brazil and Portuguese who previously had settled in Brazil. They too came with particular alcohol consumption preferences which were soon met. In 1648, or shortly thereafter, *aguardente de cana* (sugar cane brandy) appears to have began arriving at Cattle Bay from Brazil¹⁷. At about the same time, an equally potent brandy distilled from the must of grapes, *aguardente do Reino* or Portuguese brandy, also seems to have made its appearance, possibly as an alternative to *aguardente de cana*. Over the course of the second half of the 1600s, cane brandy emerged as the alcoholic drink of choice amongst the increasing numbers of Brazilian-born and Brazilianized Portuguese consumers residing in Benguela and, indeed, the population as a whole¹⁸: this because, produced by slave labour in Brazil and shipped therefrom over a comparatively shorter distance to Cattle Bay, the price of *aguardente de cana* in central Angola was much lower than either Portuguese brandy or wine¹⁹. Such a preference did not fail to be accounted for in the new import tax structure that was implemented in 1696 to take advantage of the rising volumes of alcohol being offloaded at Cattle Bay. While 4\$000 and 3\$000 réis²⁰ were respectively imposed on every *pipa* (500 litres wooden cask) of *aguardente do Reino* and of *vinho* offloaded, the import levy on each *pipa* of cane brandy was but 1\$600 réis²¹. The *vinho* and *aguardente* imported from Portugal had turned into luxury items and were correspondingly heavily taxed. In contrast, having arisen into the drink of choice for the masses of Benguela, *aguardente de cana* was imposed but a modest import levy.
- 14 The 1696 alcohol import tax structure appears to have remained unchanged until the early 1770s. Throughout this long period, the duties on *vinho*, cane brandy, and *aguardente do Reino* imports were collected by local representatives of merchant capitalists in Portugal who periodically secured the right to tax the wet goods offloaded at Cattle Bay, of which alcohol was the most voluminous, from the Portuguese Crown in

exchange for fixed sums. In 1764, the wet goods contract at Benguela fetched a total of 143\$200 réis²², a very modest sum, to say the least. In 1722, on the other hand, when merchants in Rio de Janeiro sent a ship with over 100 *pipas* of their cane brandy to *Baía das Vacas* to exchange for slaves²³, this venture alone would have netted more than 160\$000 réis in import duties, thereby surpassing the amounts collected during all of 1764. Perhaps the local representatives of Portuguese merchant capitalists found it difficult to levy the duties on alcohol imports²⁴. Be that as it may, the wet goods contracts were ended in 1769, when the Portuguese Crown abolished the contract system. In their place, Francisco Innocêncio de Sousa Coutinho, then Governor of Angola, implemented a system in 1771 whereby import duties were directly collected by colonial civil servants with an abatement on the tariffs previously levied upon each *pipa* of alcohol unloaded. The duty on cane brandy was lowered by 7% to 1\$488 réis, while the imposts on *vinho* and on *aguardente do Reino* were each decreased by 5% to 2\$850 and 3\$800 réis, respectively, reflecting once again the local preference for cane brandy²⁵. Between 1796 and 1825, the wet goods import duties produced 2.7% of the overall revenue acquired at Benguela by the Portuguese Crown²⁶. The sums collected were small. But, for the chronically under-funded colonial administration in this port town, they were far from insignificant.

- 15 The colonial administration, however, was not the only governing body that collected taxes on the intoxicants imported through Cattle Bay. At an undetermined date, the Câmara Municipal or Municipal Council of Benguela also began to levy an excise tax on the imported alcohol to finance part of its operations²⁷. The rate imposed on each *pipa* of sugar cane brandy, *vinho*, and *aguardente*, although not known, seems to have nevertheless generated relatively important sums. During 1812-1813, 1815, and 1828-1829, almost 23% of its revenue came from the taxes it collected on all wet goods offloaded at Benguela²⁸. Moreover, Benguela's Câmara Municipal further augmented its precarious finances by imposing an annual fee upon the owners of taverns to operate legally within its jurisdiction, a practise that probably also arose following the creation of the Municipal Council in the late 1760s. In 1812-1813, 1815, and 1828-1829, this license, coupled with that imposed on the trade establishments in town produced a further 25% of the Council's overall revenue²⁹. Thus, in the case of the Câmara Municipal, alcohol imports and the taverns they sustained were clearly extremely important sources of revenue.
- 16 It is not known when taverns made their appearance behind *Baía das Vacas*³⁰. Nevertheless, it is more than probable that the first were established soon after the arrival of Cerveira Pereira. If that was the case, they relied heavily on *vinho* up to the middle of seventeenth century and thereafter even more so on Brazilian cane brandy to satisfy the palates of their patrons. In the 1780s, there were at least nine taverns in this port town³¹. At the end of 1797, Benguela boasted no less than 26 tavern-keepers³². During 1801-1802, 1806, and 1808-1813, an annual average of 41.5 tavern-keepers operated in this port town³³. By then, drinking establishments had already become a ubiquitous feature in Benguela. According to extant occupational data compiled in 1801-1802, 1806, and 1808-1813, its population averaged 2,386 individuals³⁴, a figure slightly higher than the 2,285 residents evidenced by the censuses carried out between 1797 and 1850 (Candido 2006: 134). During the early nineteenth century, the ratio of taverns relative to the total population was, on average, one drinking establishment for every 71.5 residents³⁵. Such an impressive number of taverns could not have remained in business by catering to selective clientele. The 1797-1850 census data show whites

as representing an average of but 4% of the total urban population and mulattos for a further 11%; blacks, on the other hand, accounted for the overwhelming majority with 85%. Moreover, the black population was made up of a slightly greater proportion of slaves than free persons. As a result, the numerous drinking establishments in this port town could only have continued to operate by serving their alcoholised fluids to every sector of the urban population. The first taverns may well have arisen to meet the drinking needs of Portuguese expatriates and later Brazilianized individuals and Brazilian-born persons. But, between the middle of the seventeenth and the late eighteenth centuries, their primary clienteles became the major segments of the population that over the course of this period was born, attracted to or forced to relocate in the port town: that is, mulattos and especially Africans, both free and enslaved, who emulated the drinking patterns of the small white population. Even though the more privileged seem to have preferred to engage in drinking binges within the confines of their own homes³⁶, almost everyone patronized the taverns of Benguela. Just like in Luanda (Curto 2004: 173-180), these establishments constituted one of the few spaces where the social, economic, and colour barriers characteristic of a slaving society broke down over drinks, allowing the multicultural urban population a rare opportunity to enjoy some leisure time and to socialize. And drinking they did. Between 1798 and 1819, the town's multicultural population had access to an annual average of at least 382 *pipas* of the low cost cane brandy imported from Brazil, as well as 72.5 *pipas* of fortified *vinho*, half a *pipa* of *aguardente* imported from Portugal, and smaller amounts of beer and liqueurs³⁷. During 1823-1825 and 1828, the annual volumes included nearly 489 *pipas* of *aguardente de cana*, 83.5 *pipas* of *vinho* and slightly over 1 *pipa* of *genebra* (a spirit distilled from malt or grain)³⁸. In the second semester of 1840, 60 *pipas* and 47 *garrações* (demijohns) of cane brandy were exported to Benguela from the northeastern Brazilian port of Pernambuco alone³⁹. The amount of foreign alcohol available was even higher during 1855-1859, after the illegal slave export trade had declined to a trickle: an annual average of 557.5 *pipas* of *aguardente*, 83.5 *pipas* of grape wine, nearly 4 *pipas* of *genebra*, and some 3.5 *pipas* of beer, liquor, and other alcoholic beverages on average per annum⁴⁰. In other words, by the end of the 1700s, a veritable Atlantic creole drinking culture was already well embedded at Benguela.

The Expansion of the Atlantic Creole Drinking Culture into the Hinterland of Benguela

- 17 The multicultural population of Benguela did not guzzle all of the alcohol offloaded at Cattle Bay. Appreciable amounts of foreign booze, particularly the low cost, highly alcoholised Brazilian cane brandy, also made their way inland for a variety of purposes. In order to supply the rising Atlantic demand for enslaved labor, slave dealers in this port town relied upon a veritable army of intermediaries to acquire captives in the densely populated central Angolan highlands. They included: *pombeiros*, African and Luso-African slaves or dependents of Portuguese and Brazilian merchants based on the coast who conducted business in the interior on their behalf; *sertanejos*, Portuguese and Brazilian agents of coastal merchants who did the same; and *comerciantes*, Portuguese and Brazilian traders whose operations were actually based inland (Candido 2006: 97-100). These intermediaries operated with *banzos* or bundles of trade goods made up from the great variety of imports at Benguela, including cane

brandy. Around 1850, in Bihé, each *banzo* included 1-2 bottles of *aguardente de cana* (Magyar in progress: chap. VIII). Because there were no beasts of burden, the trade goods were always moved inland on the backs of African *carregadores*, sometimes slaves, but more often than not free people from the surrounding areas contracted for the task, organized into caravans of various sizes. When the Hungarian Ladislau Magyar left Benguela in mid-January, 1849, to set up shop in the central highlands, he had a total of 20 *ancoretas* (wooden barrels, each with a capacity of 25 litres) of *aguardente de cana* transported on the backs of his carriers (*ibid.*: chap. I)⁴¹. Some of this alcohol was destined to pay the carriers contracted, with those transporting the most valued trade goods receiving 2 bottles of the Brazilian cane brandy, amongst other items, for a 30 to 42 day march from Benguela to Bihé. This was but one, amongst a variety of ways through which imported alcohol made its way into the interior.

- 18 As the caravans made their way to the major slave markets inland, they ran the possibility of being attacked by local peoples and have their trade goods, including the omnipresent cane brandy, looted. To minimize such a possibility, caravan leaders had to pay tribute or transit taxes to the rulers of the lands to ensure the safe passage of their carriers and trade goods. Rarely was cane brandy not part and parcel of such taxes (Magyar in progress). Once the final destination reached, the agents of Benguela's slave dealers then drew on part of the remaining cane brandy to secure the right to trade. According to the account of Jean Baptiste Douville, who appears to have engaged in trading for slaves during the late 1820s, whenever they sought to acquire captives in Hako and Tamba, two polities immediately to the north of the central plateau, they first had to provide gifts in the form of cane brandy to the local potentates and, then, had to supply them with daily portions of this distilled spirit until trade negotiations were concluded (Douville 1832, vol. II: 16-17, 24, 65-67, 73, 77). Further south, on the plateau itself, things were no different. When Douville arrived in the capital of Mbailundu, he himself quickly presented the local potentate with twelve bottles of cane brandy (*ibid.*: 105). And, upon his arrival in the capital of Bihé, he promptly offered its ruler a whole barrel of the Brazilian distillate (*ibid.*: 141). As Douville appropriately noted, only "the powerful potentates have the right to claim one barrel" (*ibid.*). Twenty years later, Magyar had to engage in exactly the same smoothing process (Magyar in progress). For those upon whom they were bestowed, these gifts were regarded as a commercial tax. Failure to offer them led to dire consequences. In 1819, for example, Luso-Brazilian and Luso-African slave traders operating inland from Novo Redondo, a minor port town south of the Kuvo River, regarded the cane brandy exactions of the local potentates a high price to pay for the right to trade for captives. When they did not provide the appropriate amounts of cane brandy, all of their merchandise was promptly plundered⁴². In another case from the late 1820s, Benguela's trading agents similarly found their daily supply of the Brazilian intoxicant to the ruler of Hako too onerous an exaction. They packed up and left. But only to be followed by a party from the offended ruler and see all of their merchandise sacked as well (Douville 1832, vol. II: 17).
- 19 Not only was imported alcohol required to pay local rulers for the safe passage of caravans and to secure the right to trade in captives, but it was also a central item during slave trade transactions. Douville has left us a vivid description of this process in the slave mart of Bihé, then the single largest in the interior of Benguela:
- "[T]he way in which a transaction for a slave, regardless of sex, begins [...] [is that] the seller never offers more than one at a time, unless it is a mother with her

children under age. He arrives at the [compound of Benguela's trading agents], accompanied by a friend or a middleman: one or the other presents a captive, without boasting about the merchandise, unless it is a young virgin. In this case, he impresses the fact upon the mulatto to demand a higher price. The mulatto starts by pouring each of the two Africans a large glass of cane brandy; this is a preliminary [condition] for the negotiations, which can sometimes last half a day. Once agreement has been reached over the price and the assortment of trade goods that it represents and, [the merchandise] has been inspected, the mulatto seals the negotiations by offering a bottle of the best *tafia* (cane brandy), which is emptied instantly. He [then] takes advantage of the inebriety of the two Africans to slip lower quality trade goods into the bundle than those agreed upon. And if cane brandy has been deemed part of the assortment, he provides an amount mixed by at least half with water" (*ibid.*: 144-145).

- 20 Here, just like in the hinterland of Luanda, transactions could not be initiated without Benguela's trading agents first offering cane brandy to African slave dealers. Ample amounts of this intoxicant were thereafter used to render the negotiating capabilities of Umbundu speakers less effective. Then, instead of inserting the Brazilian spirit in the bundle of trade items agreed upon, Benguela's commercial agents introduced a much tampered alcoholic drink, as well as other lower quality goods, all, no doubt, to augment profit margins.
- 21 However, it was the acquisition of captives from African slave dealers that soaked up most of the Brazilian spirits brought into the central highlands. In Bihé, again according to Douville:
- "The average price of the best slave is 80 *panos* [...], a measure of length which [...] varies from place to place. The value of the slave in Viye is established at 80 *panos* of cotton cloth; but payment is not made with only this type of merchandise. The buyer forms an assortment [of goods] in which generally enter a rifle for 10 *panos*, a flask of gunpowder for 6, cane brandy for 10 to 15 depending on his wishes, *baetas* [or] a sort of light textile sheet for 16, and lastly cotton cloth for the rest" (*ibid.*: 113).
- 22 As in the hinterland of Luanda, imported textiles were also the dominant trade item used to obtain captives here. Sugar cane brandy, on the other hand, accounted for some 15.5% by value of the best slaves acquired by Benguela's commercial agents. The weight of *aguardente de cana* in the acquisition of slaves throughout the central highlands was thus not negligible. Indeed, as late as the 1850s, 9 to 10 bottles of cane brandy could still to buy "a young male or female adult slave"⁴³.
- 23 And the caravans dispatched from Benguela to acquire slaves for export were not the only means through which imported alcohol made its way into the interior. Indeed, one of the most important functions of cane brandy was as part and parcel of the presents forwarded by colonial officials to the rulers of the numerous states emerging on the central plateau to further slave trading. Shortly after 1769, when the *presídio* (interior military-administrative unit) of Caconda was relocated on the southern edge of the central plateau, its leaders sent abundant amounts of cane brandy to the ruling family in Kalukembe, one of the smaller polities to the southwest (Hauenstein 1963: 62)⁴⁴. The oral tradition relating this fact provides no clue at all as to why the alcohol was forwarded. But Caconda had been relocated to gain control over and expand slave trading on the highlands. Consequently, the reason behind this gift was surely to encourage the rulers of Kalukembe to supply captives to the agents of Benguela's slave trading community. Then, in 1795, the Governor of Angola, Manuel de Almeida Vasconcelos, forwarded from Luanda six barrels of *aguardente do Reino* and some thirty-

one litres of strong liqueurs to Messo Ababa, the ruler of Mbailundu, while roughly sixty-two litres of the same intoxicant were destined for the latter's subjects⁴⁵. Accompanying this gift was a letter where Governor Vasconcelos asked the potentate of the second most important and populous of the polities on the plateau to punish the “rebels and barbarians” then disrupting commerce within his domains⁴⁶. Similarly, in 1805, after the *soba* or African chief of Cabo Negro asked the Governor of Benguela for a Portuguese representative and trade, the colonial official trusted with this mission did not fail to provide an unspecified amount of *aguardente de cana* to the newly found commercial partner⁴⁷. Nearly 40 years later, following an August, 1846, uprising lead by one of the *sobas* of Catumbela, only fifteen kilometres north of Benguela, the African ruler entrusted with his imprisonment was given, as an incentive, a gift which included no less than 8 *ancoretas* of *aguardente*, while two other local *sobas* who remained “loyal” to the Portuguese cause were each rewarded with, amongst other items, 3 *ancoretas* full of the same spirit (Delgado 1944: 144). In 1847, after the ruler of Bihé had written to the Governor of Benguela seeking the restitution of one of his subjects, Katiaballa, who appears to have been illegally enslaved by Manuel de Azevedo Pereira, a resident of the port town, he was given the following reply: “Azevedo told me that your subject was never under his power; but because he is your friend, he sends you [gifts, including] one *ancoreta* of *aguardente* [...]. I thus I expect that you treat well the whites that trade in your lands given that your subjects are here well treated” (*ibid.*: 614-615). The connection between offering gifts in the form of foreign alcohol to local potentates and furthering Benguela's slave export economy was thus far from tangential.

- 24 Taverns, too, became a mechanism for the dissemination of imported alcohol into the interior. In Angola, these drinking establishments were rare outside of the major colonial centres. But a few do seem to have operated inland from Benguela. During the mid-1780s, for example, the commandant of the small garrison established in the hamlet of Kilenges, owned a tavern that sold only one type of alcoholic beverage, Brazilian cane brandy⁴⁸. At the same time, a junior military officer, the priest, and the son of a Benguela merchant were also retailing there “many jars of *aguardente de cana*” on a daily basis⁴⁹. And at least two agents of Benguela's trading community ran taverns outside of this hamlet, selling exclusively cane brandy to the local African population⁵⁰. Although it is not possible from the evidence at hand to determine which commodities were received as payment, slaves were, given the context, most probably amongst them.
- 25 Yet another method for the movement of imported alcohol beyond the coast was through the wages paid to Africans working in colonial enterprises. This was the case in the white-wash and salt factories located to the north of Benguela. Labourers from the neighbouring areas were periodically called into service for these colonial works. But, towards the very end of the eighteenth century, they were rarely answering the call. The reason was that the conscripted workers were just not being paid according to their labour. What they did receive on a daily basis was about 1.5 litre of manioc flour, a handful of tobacco, and a very small glass of cane brandy⁵¹. As a result, not a few of the pressed Africans preferred to lose themselves in the bush. To cajole conscripted labourers to “work with more inclination”, at least one Governor of Benguela, Joaquim Bento da Fonseca, decided to increase the daily rations of the Brazilian intoxicant and tobacco given to 80 individuals working in 1824 to redirect the flow of the Kavako River⁵².

- 26 A second colonial venture where African workers found themselves paid partly with the low cost Brazilian cane brandy was the sulphur mine in Ndombe Grande, to the south of Benguela. By the mid-1790s, this mine had fallen into neglect and become flooded. But plans were soon devised to bring it back into production. José da Silva Costa was entrusted with the task. After inspecting the mine in 1798, he informed the Governor in Benguela, Alexandre José Botelho Vasconcelos, that 100 Africans were required for the job. And for payment, he suggested that each worker be given daily some five litres of manioc flour and \$030 réis in money or in tobacco and cane brandy⁵³. Governor Botelho Vasconcelos, or one of his immediate successors, followed Costa's recommendation and the mine soon began to operate again. But, as of 1808, its workers had still received no payment, whether in money or in kind. This because the administrator of the mine had entered into the habit of stealing what was sent from Benguela for their wages, which included a small ration of manioc flour and \$020 réis worth of the Brazilian spirit and other consummables allocated to each worker per diem⁵⁴. Two years later, the situation had changed, presumably due to the arrival of a new and less rapacious administrator. Throughout the month of September, 1810, the thirty-three conscripted individuals working in the mine received sixty-nine litres of sugar cane brandy and rations of tobacco, beans, and manioc flour for their labour⁵⁵. In January of 1813, a larger group of fifty-five forced labourers received some 210 litres of *aguardente de cana*, as well as tobacco, in the form of payment⁵⁶. Towards the end of 1820, these two items still constituted the wages given to those working in the sulphur mine of Ndombe Grande⁵⁷. As the Governor of Angola put it in 1808, drawing upon the cheap cane brandy to pay the Africans labouring in the mine turned out to be a real bargain for the Royal Treasury and, apparently, kept the workers in a most content state⁵⁸.
- 27 And the African workers involved in colonial works were not the only ones to get their hands on imported alcohol. Portuguese authorities also used imported alcohol as a means of rewarding African political leaders who provided the labour necessary for these types of ventures. In 1810, nearly nine litres of *vinho*, as well as some tobacco, were offered to the *soba* who had sent thirty-three labourers to the sulphur mine in Ndombe Grande⁵⁹. And in the first month of 1813, a total of twenty-five litres of the less costly Brazilian cane brandy, not to mention tobacco, were equally divided amongst three other *sobas* who had similarly provided workers for the same mine⁶⁰.
- 28 If and when imported alcohol was unavailable through commercial transactions, diplomatic gifts, wages and rations, or taxation, other methods of procurement were drawn upon. Early in November, 1800, workers resorted to helping themselves to the *aguardente de cana* stored in the unlocked and unprotected warehouse of the white-wash factory to north of Benguela, consuming one *ancoreta* in a single day and night (Delgado 1944: 546). Violence, or the threat thereof, also emerged as a means through which to acquire relatively large amounts of the Brazilian spirit. In December of 1805, for example, a band of warriors led by the ruler of Ngalangi was marching westward across the plateau into Kilenges. The condition for these fighting men to leave the area in peace and return to their homeland was the exaction of tribute from the Portuguese regent there, its the Luso-African residents, and the *soba* of Sokoal. Part of the payment included no less than 360 litres of cane brandy (*ibid.* 1940: 48). Then, late in 1816, another band of warriors from the *soba* of Hako was returning from an expedition near the Kwanza River. Along the way, it encountered agents of Benguela'

s trading community, who were promptly relieved of some goods and an unspecified amount of *aguardente de cana*⁶¹. At the end of the 1820s, Douville witnessed a similar seizure in Mbailundu:

“I was to dine at the home of a slave trader. We were about to sit at the table when some 40 blacks forced their way into the house and took two barrels of *tafia* and two bales of cloths. Once outside, one of them told him: ‘We are from a hamlet nearby. This merchandise is destined to pay for eight slaves that a black man from a neighbouring agglomeration of captives owes me. Now, he becomes your debtor’” (Douville 1832, vol. II: 118-119).

- 29 Shortly thereafter, on December 1, 1829, seventy days before the ban on slave imports in Brazil, Benguela's single most important market, was to go into effect, the Governor of the port town sent a report to his counterpart in Luanda suggesting it unwise to publicize the impending prohibition in the interior, for there would surely be a general uprising and all of Benguela's trading agents there would be assassinated. With the ban approaching, he continued, there were already no textiles or Brazilian cane brandy being forwarded from the coast inland. And, he alarmingly informed, *sobas* throughout the highlands had begun to openly say that they would bring war upon Benguela to probe the motives behind this state of affairs⁶². The war did not materialize since, after 1830, large numbers of slaves continued to be illegally imported in Brazil from *Baía das Vacas* and Brazilian cane brandy thus remained available both in Benguela and throughout the highlands. In the case of the early 1849 caravan of which Magyar and over 150 other traders were part, the cane brandy carried on the back of its *carregadores* could be “smelled” along the route to Bihé. The scent reached a Mbailundu war party on its way to sack the Humbe, further south. Its leader, Kanduko-Lombéáganda, quickly sent an emissary seeking “certain things which he lacked”, including “6 *ancoretas* of the Brazilian spirit”. Magyar and the other traders did not fail to acquiesce to this extravagant demand so as to ensure a “tranquil passage, without having to engage in a struggle whose result is always doubtful” (Magyar in progress: chap. v). In other instances, requests for the booze transported by the caravans were far less threatening. As villages came within sight, their inhabitants would improvise concerts by singing and dancing around the *marimba* or xylophone, chanting in particular “*Ámbata v' áleni*” or the caravan brings us cane brandy (*ibid.*: chap. II). Even local artists had come to expect their performances to be paid, in part, by this Brazilian distillate.
- 30 Moreover, by the 1840s, another method had been devised by rulers throughout the highlands to secure further quantities of cane brandy, amongst other trade goods, from exogenous merchants settled in Bihé and the caravans they led (Madeira Santos 1986: 42-44, 90). This was the dreaded *mucano*, a judicial proceeding and its corresponding punishment, which consisted in every type of crime committed by one person against another or any contentious issue arising between individuals being adjudicated, justly or not, by local political authorities, who then imposed upon the accused the payment of an indemnity to the offended party⁶³. António Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, a prolific merchant-traveller and the best known of the Portuguese *sertanejos* then residing on the central plateau, was often the target of such a manoeuvre. Between the middle of 1841 and the end of 1870, he was accused of no fewer than 159 *mucanos*, crimes that cost him 5.25% by value the trade goods that he had acquired at Benguela (*ibid.*: 91, 391-396). For example, in mid-August, 1841, while returning to Bihé from Pungo Andongo, Silva Porto came face to face with a warrying party led by the *sova* of

Kwiengwe bent on impounding his caravan. The reason was that Antonio D. da Costa (Kwitumba Lumbanganda), “friend” of a daughter of the ruler of Kwiengwe had died amongst his people and the local chief had never agreed to “pay for his life”. Since the dead man had been part of Silva Porto's caravan, it was up to its white leader to pay for the life of the deceased. As the Kwiengwe warriors were rather numerous, Silva Porto give in to the power of strength and paid 4 *ancoretas* of *aguardente*, various cloths and gunpowder worth a total of 441\$000 *réis*⁶⁴. Then, at the end of April, 1845, Silva Porto punished one of his slaves who had absconded by way of “a light beating with the whip”. Ten days later the slave was dead. After the local sova learnt of the matter, he quickly sent his emissaries to seek the payment for the crime from Silva Porto, who had no other recourse but to fork out cloths, gunpowder, arms, and one *ancoreta* of *aguardente* valued at 676\$000 *réis* in all⁶⁵. One year later, a caravan with which Silva Porto was travelling was met in Wambo by a local warrying party requesting payment for another crime. A former captain of sova Kallandula seems to have been engaged in a conspiracy. The alleged conspirator happened to be a friend of Silva Porto, who kept him supplied with gunpowder, arms, cloths, and *aguardente*, goods that the ex-captain apparently used to distribute amongst supporters of Callandula's rival. For this particular crime, Silva Porto paid cloth, gunpowder, and one *ancoreta* of *aguardente* worth a total of 125\$000 *réis*⁶⁶. All in all, 24 out of 159 *mucanos* paid by Silva Porto from 1841 to 1870 involved 26 *ancoretas* and 141 *garrafas* or bottles of *aguardente*⁶⁷. Has he pointed out, the *mucanos* that white traders paid to the sova of Bihé was something akin to a voluntary tribute for the ruler to “face his immense expenses”, since “to conserve his people, it is necessary [that he] eat and drink next to them [and thus] show that he is popular [...]”⁶⁸. If “the use of liquor to attract followers from one's immediate group may have fed into the existing slave trade”, in Asante, that was certainly the case in Bihé.

- 31 Part of the alcohol imported at Benguela under the context of the Atlantic slave trade thus flowed into the interior of central Angola through a variety of mechanisms. The early seventeenth century alcohol consumption patterns of the African populations that inhabited this region, characterized by locally produced, low alcohol content fluids, drank predominantly during occasions sanctioned by society, were thereby altered. By 1785, the people of Kilenges, were already reputed to have taken to Brazilian cane brandy to such an extent that they would “give their lives for it, if asked” (da Silva 1813: 52). A decade or so later, this distilled spirit had reportedly also emerged into the most prized alcoholic drink of Umbundu speakers on the plateau itself (Pinheiro de Lacerda 1845: 490). When Douville visited the capital of Bihé in the late 1820s, he found his barrels of tafia “securing the visit of the [local] sovereign night and day” (Douville 1832, vol. II: 141). In Wambo, as Silva Porto wrote in 1846, *ancoretas* of *aguardente* had become part of the *Mambj*, the ritual that followed the death of the local ruler⁶⁹. Three years later, Magyar observed that the consumption of cane brandy amongst the Ndombe, in the immediate neighbourhood of Benguela, had become so generalized that the drunkenness resulting therefrom was viewed as an honourable affair: the only way they could be enticed to work was if wanted to drink this Brazilian spirit (Magyar in progress: chap. I). By the early 1850s, according to the same source, Umbundu speakers had further integrated cane brandy in their *kikalánka* celebrations (*ibid.* chap. VII). Over the course of two and a half centuries, foreign intoxicants had thus also insinuated themselves into the social fabric of the inland African populations that underpinned Benguela's slave trade.

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- 33 Through the context of the Atlantic slave trade, a veritable Atlantic creole drinking culture thus not only emerged in Benguela, but the ingestion of foreign alcohol also became part of the consumption habits of Africans who lived on the plateau. By the late 1820s, according to Douville (1832, vol. II: 116), the central highlanders had turned into nothing less than “consummate drunks”. Such a generalization grossly oversimplified the situation. In the 1850s, Magyar estimated the total population of the plateau at slightly over 1.2 million individuals (Magyar in progress). Even if we multiply the known volume of alcohol imports at Benguela between 1798 and 1859 by a factor of ten to account for smuggling and assume that all made its way to the plateau, the amount was far from sufficient to turn the large numbers of consumers throughout the central highlands into drunken sots. But it was certainly enough for those underpinning Benguela's slave export economy to acquire a definite taste for the low cost, highly alcoholised cane brandy. When this economy collapsed during the 1850s, so did the importation of the Brazilian intoxicant at Cattle Bay. But by then, the transition to legitimate commerce was already well under way. Drawing upon slave labour that would previously have been exported to Brazil, sugar plantations began to mushroom throughout central Angola. Their *raison d'être* was not to produce sugar, with cane brandy as a mere by-product: it was, rather, to exclusively produce cane brandy for the palates of local consumers already grown accustomed to the Brazilian intoxicant⁷⁰. In 1910, this thriving industry was destroyed overnight by the central government in Lisbon. In its stead, Angola was turned into an exclusive dumping ground for the fortified wines of Portugal, a process that ended in 1974, when the colony finally secured its independence⁷¹. Each of these subsequent phases threw upon earlier developments. They too need to be reconstructed in order to better understand the long history of alcohol in Angola.

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ANNEXES

ANNEXES

TABLE I. — TAXES ON WET GOOD IMPORTS AND SLAVE EXPORTS AND CROWN REVENUE AT BENGUELA, 1796-1825 (IN RÉIS)

	Wet Goods Import Tax	% of Total	Taxes on Slave Exports	% of Total	Total Crown Revenue
1796	1,359\$700	1.8	71,028\$400	92.5	76,794\$910
1799	744\$800	n.a.	35,541\$100	n.a.	n.a.
1802	1,350\$500	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1805	1,035\$130	2.1	45,041\$700	92.8	48,511\$650
1806	1,543\$225	3.3	43,038\$450	92.2	46,694\$969
1808	1,150\$200	2.8	36,630\$150	90.6	40,405\$734
1809	913\$970	1.8	46,179\$000	90.8	50,846\$978
1810	880\$590	1.6	46,971\$000	88.2	53,231\$636
1811	620\$626	1.3	43,744\$500	90.4	48,362\$893
1812	501\$241	1.2	39,132\$000	90	42,537\$240
1813	644\$360	1.5	39,631\$500	89.6	44,208\$667
1815	663\$335	1.9	27,130\$500	80.1	33,872\$908
1819	854\$660	2.3	35,432\$500	95	37,287\$160
1823	1,648\$350	6.2	26,500\$200	83.2	31,862\$294
1824	1,445\$731	5.7	25,517\$100	70	36,444\$280

1825	1,434\$350	3.7	38,227\$800	87.5	43,696\$401
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Sources: AHU, Angola, "Mappa do Rendimento de Benguela"; 1796 in Cx. 85, Doc. 28; 1802 in Cx. 107, doc. 30; 1805 in Cx. 115, Doc. 28; 1806 in Cx. 118, Doc. 21; 1808 in Cx. 120, Doc. 1; 1809 in Cx. 121, Doc. 32; 1810 in Cx. 121-A, Doc. 36; 1811 in Cx. 124, Doc. 8; 1812 in Cx. 127, Doc. 1; 1813 in Cx. 128, Doc. 31; 1815 in Cx. 131, Doc. 45; 1819 in João C. Feo Cardoso de Castello Branco e Torres, *Memórias Contendo a Biographia do Vice Almirante Luis da Motta Feo e Torres, a História dos Governadores e Capitaes Generaes de Angola desde 1575 até 1825, e a Descrição Geográfica e Política dos Reinos de Angola e Benguela* (Paris: Fantin, 1825), p. 340; and 1823-1825 in AIHGB DL82,01.18, fls. 43-43v, "Demonstração do producto de Cada huma das Rendas Publicas na Cidade de Benguela, em 1823, 1824 e 1825". For 1799, see AHNA, Cód. 441, fls. 124v-125, "Movimento dos Navios em 1799".

TABLE II. — REVENUE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF BENGUELA, 1812-1828 (IN RÉIS)

	Excise Tax on Wet Goods Imported	% of Total	Licenses (Taverns and Trade Establishments)	% of Total	Total
1812	102\$435	11.4	208\$000	23.1	900\$351
1813	201\$475	19.2	262\$400	25	1,049\$041
1815	158\$500	13.7	240\$000	20.7	1,157\$332
1828	336\$558	25.3	537\$150	40.4	1,329\$933
1829	509\$950	44.3	188\$000	16.3	1,150\$000

Sources: AHU, Angola, "Receita do Senado da Camara de Benguela"; 1812 in Cx. 126, Doc. 31; 1813 in Cx. 127, Doc. 59; 1815 in Cx. 131, Doc. 2; and 1828-1829 in Cx. 164, Doc. 1.

TABLE III. — TAVERNS AND TOTAL POPULATION OF BENGUELA, 1801-1813

	Population	Tavern-Keepers	Ratio
1801	2652	36	Jan-74
1802	2794	50	Jan-56
1806	2495	52	Jan-48
1808	2450	56	Jan-44
1809	2462	50	Jan-49
1810	1640	50	Jan-33
1811	1675	45	Jan-37
1812	2885	19	1/152

1813	2423	16	1/151
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Sources: AHU, Angola, "Mappa das Ocupações dos Habitantes de Benguela"; 1801 in Cx. 103, Doc. 11; 1802 in Cx. 107, Doc. 30; 1806 in Cx. 118, Doc. 21; 1808 in Cx. 120, Doc. 1; 1809 in Cx. 121, Doc. 32; 1810 in Cx. 121-A, Doc. 36; 1811 in Cx. 124, Doc. 2; 1812 in Cx. 127, Doc. 1; and 1813 in Cx. 128, Doc. 31. NB: The year end population data above includes residents of Benguela who, at the time, were in the interior to acquire slaves.

TABLE IV. — ALCOHOL IMPORTS AT BENGUELA 1798-1859 (IN PIPAS)

	Gerebita	Aguardente	Vinho	Genebra	Liquer & Beer	Total
1798	465.5	5.5	69.52	0.75	0.25	540.75
1799	272.5	0.5	70.75	0.75	0.25	342.75
1801	357.5	0.5	46.75	0.75	0.25	403.57
1802	326.5	0.5	97.75	0.75	0.25	423.75
1805	518.5	0.5	66.75	0.75	0.25	584.75
1806	744.5	0.5	116.75	0.75	0.25	860.75
1808	467.5	0.5	134.75	0.75	0.25	601.75
1809	496.5	0.5	44.75	0.75	0.25	540.57
1810	407.5	0.5	89.75	0.75	0.25	496.57
1811	174.5	75.75	0.75	0.25	249.75	
1812	223.5	0.5	48.52	0.75	1.25	273.75
1813	325.5	0.5	59.75	0.75	0.25	384.75
1815	378.5	0.5	52.25	0.75	0.25	430.75
1819	194.5	0.5	52.25	0.75	0.25	246.75
1823	686.5	0.5	97.25	4.57	0.25	787.57
1824	384.5	0.5	53.25	0.75	0.25	437.75
1825	398.5	0.5	79.25	0.75	0.25	477.75
1828	487.5	0.5	105.52	0.75	0.25	592.57
1855		272	69.25	2.75	0.25	343.75
1856		318	69.25	0.57	0.25	387.75
1857		503	69.25	7.75	5.37	585.75

1858		519.5	54.25	6.75	7.25	586.75
1859		1175.75	156.25	3.75	2.25	1337.75

Sources: Annual import data in AHU, Angola; 1798 in Cx. 89, Doc. 88; 1801 in Cx. 103, Doc. 11; 1802 in Cx. 107, D. 30; 1805 in Cx. 115, Doc. 28; 1806 in Cx. 118, Doc. 21; 1808 in Cx. 120, Doc. 1; 1809 in Cx. 121, Doc. 6; 1810 in Cx. 121-A, Doc. 36; 1811 in Cx. 124, Doc. 8; 1812 in Cx. 127, Doc. 1; 1813 in Cx. 128, Doc. 31; 1815 in Cx. 131, Doc. 45; 1819 in Cx. 138, Doc. 3; and 1828 in Cx. 167, Doc. 33; 1799 in AHNA, Cód. 441, fls. 122v-123. For 1823-1825, AIHGB, DL82,01.18, fls. 38-39, "Demonstração da qualidade, quantidade dos generos importados dos portos abaixo declarados, para esta Cidade de São Felipe de Benguela nos annos de 1823, 1824, e 1825". For the late 1850s, with data originally in *almudes*: 1855-1856 monthly imports in AHU, Angola, Correspondencia dos Governadores, Pasta 37; 1857 annual imports in *Boletim Oficial de Angola*, 28-08-1858, pp. 9-11; 1858 semestral imports in *Boletim Oficial de Angola*, 23-10-1858, pp. 4-5 and 16-04-1859, pp. 4-7; and 1859 annual imports in *Boletim Oficial de Angola*, 23-06-1860.

NOTES

1. The italicized emphasis is mine.

2. For the literature published up to the early 1990s, see José C. CURTO (1989) and Simon HEAP (1994).

3. ABBINK (1999), AKYEAMPONG (1994, 1995, 1996b), AMBLER (1990, 1991), AMBLER & CRUSH (1992), BRYCESON (2002), COBLEY (1994), DIDUK (1993), GLAZER (1997), GREEN (1999), HEAP (1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2005), LENTZ (1999), MAGER (1999, 2005), MCALLISTER (1993, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005), MALOKA (1997), MAULA (1997), NELSON (1997), OLOKUJO (1991, 1996), SIISKONEN (1994), WEST (1992, 1997), WHITE (2007), WILLIS (1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2005).

4. See also the first chapters in AKYEAMPONG (1996b), and WILLIS (2002).

5. "Atlantic creole" is used here in the sense developed by Ira BERLIN (1996), to designate "those who by experience or choice, as well as by birth, became part of a new culture that emerged along the Atlantic littoral—in Africa, Europe or the Americas—beginning in the 16th century". The consumption of different types of alcoholic beverages, some locally produced and others imported from various parts of the Atlantic world, was also part of this new culture. See, for example: AMBLER (2003), AZEVEDO FERNANDES (2004), DA CÂMARA CASCUDO (1968), COUGHTRY (1981), CURTO (2004), FERLAND (2004), GORDON (1996), HANCOCK (1998, 2000), DE LURDES DE F. FERRAZ (1990), MANCALL (1995), MCNAMARA (2004), REESE (2004), RICE (1997), RORABAUGH (1979), SALINGER (2002), SCARDAVILLE (1980), TAYLOR (1979), THORP (1996), VIEIRA (1993).

6. See LIMA (1988: 158, 210), PINHEIRO DE LACERDA (1845: 490), DA SILVA (1813: 52). For modern references, see CHILDS (1949: 33), EDWARDS (1962: 121), HAMBLY (1934: 141, 149), HAUENSTEIN (1963: 63, 73, 77, 113), HEYWOOD (1984: 40, 65).

7. Ernest G. RAVENSTEIN (1901: 22, 30). Once felled, each palm tree provided an average of two quarts, or just over one litre, per day of wine.

8. "Alos or *N-Burungas* [uâlua or *bulunga*]" were in fact beer made from millet and sorghum (*kimbombo*). See Óscar RIBAS (1997: 29, 289). My thanks to Ms. Maria Conceição Neto for this reference.

9. Aside from DA SILVA (1813: 52) and PINHEIRO DE LACERDA (1845: 490), this reconstruction is based upon the following mid-nineteenth century eye-witness accounts: Biblioteca da

Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa (hereinafter BSG), Reservados 146-C-6, A. F. FERREIRA DA SILVA PORTO, (1846-1853: 13, 22-23, 102-103) and L. MAGYAR (in progress: chap. 1, 2, 7, 8), under translation by Ms. Maria Conceição Neto. I am indebted, again, to Ms. Neto for sharing with me a copy of this yet unpublished work.

10. See the sources cited in the previous footnote.

11. See the anonymous chronicle of these conflicts in Luciano CORDEIRO (1881: 10-15).

12. J. C. CURTO (1993-1994: 101-116) and the newly located annual export figures in Arquivo Histórico Nacional de Angola (hereinafter AHNA), Códice (hereinafter Cód.) 441, fls. 122v-123, “Mappa dos Generos que se exportarão... no Anno de 1799... de Benguela”, with 5,862 slaves exported in 1799 and in Arquivo do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro (hereinafter AIHGB), DL82,01.18, fl. 40, “Demonstração da qualidade, e quantidade dos generos exportados desta Cidade de Benguela, com declaração dos portos para onde forão nos annos de 1823, 1824, e 1825”, with 3,046 captives shipped in 1823 and a further 2,933 in 1824.

13. D. ELTIS, S. BEHERENDT, D. RICHARDSON and H. KLEIN, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, online edition, <<http://wilson.libray.emory.edu:9090/tast/>>, last accessed May 6, 2008.

14. At Luanda, the single most important embarkation point for slaves throughout western Africa and Benguela's sister port town, between 600 and 700 items of exchange were imported annually during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries (MILLER 1986).

15. The introduction of the vine at Benguela may also date from this period, but local production of *vinho* does not seem to have developed. An early reference to grapes grown behind Cattle Bay comes from the 1680 account of António DE OLIVEIRA DE CADORNEGA (1972: 171). An Italian missionary who sojourned there in February, 1683, Girolamo MEROLLA DA SORRENTO (1692: 62), found that grapes matured copiously twice a year: but no wine was produced because of the excessive heat, which stalled the fermentation process. In November 1698, another Italian missionary, Antonio DA GRASDICA ZUCHELLI (1712: 92), witnessed locally grown grapes maturing to perfection and of a size seen nowhere else, with a single bunch weighing between 18 and twenty pounds: but, even if pleasant to the eye and mouth-watering, the grapes could not be used to make wine successfully due to the great heat. One hundred and thirty years later, the French traveller Jean-Baptiste DOUVILLE (1832: 11), also observed that the vine gave two harvests per year in Benguela: the quality of the grapes was good enough to “produce excellent wine”, but there was no local production of *vinho*. When the Italian physician, Tito OMBONI (1845: 75), spent some time in this port town during February, 1835, he too found that the vine gave “two harvests of exquisite grapes, but is only seen in the garden of the [local] Governor, who sends this precious fruit to the [Governor-General and his friends in Luanda]”: hence no wine was produced locally. In October, 1841, another physician, the German Gustav TAMS (1969: 106), noted that “[t]he quality of the vines must have greatly deteriorated, if the assertion be correct, that about a hundred years ago, bunches of grapes weighing 18 lbs. were sold in the market of Benguela, for now they seldom weigh even a pound; their taste, however, is delicious, and they would probably yield good wine, if some pains were bestowed upon their cultivation. I was told that in the more elevated parts of the interior, excellent wine is

made by resident Europeans [...] from the vine; however, I never had the good hap to taste any”.

16. Baltazar Rebello de Aragão to the King, 1621, in L. CORDEIRO (1881: 21). Between 1580 and 1640, Portugal and its overseas were part of the Dual Monarchy headed by the Hapsburgs of Spain.

17. Although this Brazilian distillate became generically known at Luanda and its hinterland as *gerebita* (CURTO 2004), it was usually referred to as *aguardente de cana*, or simply as *aguardente* in Benguela and its interior, most likely because the volume of *aguardente do Reino* offloaded at Cattle Bay was comparatively insignificant (CURTO 2001). It should also be noted that, although the introduction of the sugar cane in this part of Angola may date from the second half of the 1600s, there was no local production of *aguardente de cana* until the mid-nineteenth century. In 1828, for example, DOUVILLE (1832, I: 11-12), found that “sugar-cane grows there with vigor, but no one takes advantage from it”. Less than a decade later, OMBONI (1845: 75), similarly noted that the local “sugar-cane is nice and vigorous, but they [Europeans] derive no profit from it”. At the beginning of the 1840s, TAMS (1969: 149) observed that “sugar-cane is in universal request, but it is somewhat rare, on account of the trouble attending its conveyance from the fertile banks of Catumbella, where it grows in great abundance. The canes are of such a superior quality that if some care were bestowed upon their cultivation, ample profit would unquestionably be derived; but unhappily, the Europeans are so indolent and blind to the general interest, that they make no use whatsoever of this important source of gain”. For the significantly changed post-1850s situation, see the text below.

18. When, in 1698, DA GRASDICA ZUCHELLI (1712: 96-97), observed that the principle business of vessels arriving in this port town consisted in buying slaves to transport to Brazil, with payment made in all kinds of merchandize, he also noted that one of the most lucrative goods was “Ciribita [...] fire water made from the lees of sugar, which they [the residents of Benguela] get drunk upon”.

19. Extant data on prices at Benguela clearly shows that the diferencial was indeed substantial. In 1799, the average value of a *pipa* of *aguardente de cana* was 80\$000 réis (see note below), while that of a *pipa* of *vinho* was 120\$000 réis. AHNA, Cód. 441, fls. 124v-125, “Mappa dos Preços Correntes em Benguela em 1799”. In 1801, on the other hand, a *pipa* of *aguardente de cana* was then valued at 70\$000 réis, a *pipa* of *vinho* fetched 190\$000 réis, and a *frasqueira* (one-sixteenth, by volume, of a *pipa*) of *aguardente do Reino* cost 19\$200 réis: Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (hereinafter AHU), Angola, Caixa (hereinafter Cx.) 103, Documento (hereinafter Doc.) 11, “Mappa dos Preços Correntes em Benguela em 1801”. During 1823-1825, that is immediately following Brazil's secession from the Portuguese Crown, the import value of *aguardente de cana* barely increased, but that of *vinho* plunged. While the former averaged 74\$000 réis per *pipa*, the latter was but 103\$320 réis for the same container. AIHGB, DL82,01.18, fls. 38-39, “Demonstração da qualidade, quantidade dos generos importados dos portos abaixo declarados, para esta Cidade de São Felipe de Benguela nos annos de 1823, 1824, e 1825”. In other words, the differential remained significant.

20. Portuguese currency: one thousand réis written 1\$000.

21. AHU, Angola, Cx. 100, Doc. 31, Miguel António de Melo (Governor of Angola) to D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, 30-05-1801.

22. AHU, Cód. 556, fls. 1v-3v, “Receita do Reino de Angola [em 1764]”.

23. AHU, Angola, Cx. 21, Doc. 136, António Albuquerque de Carvalho (Governor of Angola) to the Crown, 26-09-1722.

24. At the very beginning of the nineteenth century, one Governor of Benguela frankly admitted: “I consider the 1799 [import data, as well as that for] 1800 that on this occasion I am sending Your Excellency rather inaccurate because the merchants who are the most able to be nominated for their compilation have certified to me that it can not be exact for there being no customs house here nor a register of the goods that arrive [...]. Each merchant gives a roll of the goods imported that he wants [...]. It is through these rolls that the [import-data] is compiled given that we do have not the formalities here that exist in other Cities [...]. As a result, we can neither follow Royal Orders to the letter nor calculate with certainty the goods that are imported since merchants put together their rolls according to their own arbitrariness.” AHNA, Cód. 441, fl. 118, José Mauricio Rodriguez (Governor of Benguela) to Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho 26 February, 1801. All import data available for this port town must thus be viewed as representing a minimum of actual imports. I am indebted to Vanessa Oliveira for sharing her transcription of this document.

25. AHU, Angola, Cx. 57, Doc. 40, “Relação dos Rendimentos que tem a Fazenda Real do Reino de Angola”, 1772; AHU, Angola, Cx. 95, Doc. 18, Alexandre José Botelho Vasconcelos (Governor of Benguela) to Luiz Pinto de Souza, 27-07-1796; “Regimento de Alfândega da Cidade de São Paulo da Assumpção, Capital do Reino de Angola, 21-10-1799”, *Arquivos de Angola* 1st series, II: 12 (1936), pp. 425-427; AHU, Angola, Cx. 100, Doc. 31, Miguel Antonio de Melo (Governor of Angola) to Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, 30-05-1801; AHU, Sala 12, Maço # 858, Governor Melo to President of the Erário Régio, 14-08-1802; and “Relatorio do Governador Fernando António de Noronha, 2-01-1806”, *Arquivos de Angola* 1st series, II: 15 (1936), p. 660. See also the synopsis of the “Estado da Capitania de Benguela, seu Comércio, Agricultura, Estado das tropas e Saúde”, 14-07-1791, in *Fontes & Estudos: Revista do Arquivo Histórico Nacional* 1 (1994), p. 14.

26. See Table I (Annexes).

27. This excise tax was probably implemented after 1767, when the Governor of Angola, Francisco Innocência da Sousa Coutinho, created the Municipal Council of Benguela: AHNA, Cód. 3, fl. 261v, Francisco Innocência da Sousa Coutinho to the Crown. During the late 1830s, this excise tax was distributed as follows: \$500 réis for each *pipa* of *vinho* and *gerebita* offloaded at Benguela (DELGADO 1940: 125).

28. See Table II (Annexes). In comparison, between 1785 and 1804, the municipal levy on alcohol imports at Luanda averaged an estimated 40 % of the total revenue of its Municipal Council (CURTO 2004: 172-174).

29. See Table II (Annexes).

30. A few passing references to taverns in Benguela during the early 1800s are found in DELGADO (1940: 45, 47). For taverns elsewhere in the Atlantic world, see POPHAM (1978), SCARDAVILLE (1980), THORP (1996), SALINGER (2002), MCNAMARA (2004), CURTO (2004: 173-180).

31. AHU, Angola, Cx. 70, Doc. 9, “Lista de todos os moradores que prezentemente se achão em Benguella, sem excessão de pessoa, e seus empregos, do mayor athe o menor”, undated, but certainly from the mid-1780s. Their owners were Mathias Ferreira, Jozé da Costa, Manoel Jozé Alves da Silva, Luis Jozé Malaquias, Lourenço Francisco, Jozé

Marques, Manoel da Silva Metelo, Pedro de Saes, and João Antonio. While the first eight were white, the last was a black man.

32. IHGB, DL32,02.02, fls. 7-17v, “Relação de Manuel José de Silveira Teixeira [d]os moradores da [parte sul da] cidade de São Felipe de Benguela”; and IHGB, DL32,02.03, fls. 20-32v, “Relação de José Caetano Carneiro [...] dos moradores da parte do norte da cidade de São Felipe de Benguela”, 20 November, 1797. They were: Amaro Francisco Pereira, Amaro Joaquim dos Santos, Bonifacio Antonio de Medeiros, Domingos Gomes Chavez, Francisco Luiz Cascaes, Manoel Alvares da Costa, Manoel de Oliveira, Manoel José da Silva, Anastácio Pereira, Domingos José Vieira, Francisco José das Neves, Francisco Lourenço Rodate, José Miguel, Luis de Lemos, Sebastião de Noronha, and José Jorge, all white males; the mulattos João Coelho, José Rodriguez de Magalhães, and Vitoriano da Sousa, as well as the mulatta Dona Aguida Gonçalves; Caetano Gonçalves, João Nunes, Joaquim Teixeira, Miguel Ferreira, and Valentim Miz. de Siqueira, all black males; and Bento Esteves, whose colour was not listed.

33. See Table III (Annexes).

34. *Ibid.*

35. See Table III (Annexes).

36. This was the case of João da Costa Lemos, a lieutenant of the militia of Benguela, who on the day of Saint John (June 24) in 1817 held a sumptuous feast in his house: AHNA, Cód. 446, fls. 139v-140v, Manuel de Abreu de Mello e Alvim to Luiz da Motta e Feo (Governor of Angola), 12-07-1817. When the Italian missionaries Dionigi de Carli da Piacenza and Michel Angelo da Reggio Guattini arrived in Benguela just before Christmas 1667, they were wined and dinned by the Governor of the port town, presumably in his headquarters (GUATTINI & DE CARLI 1680: 48).

37. See Table IV, along with the caveat in footnote 24 above.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Obras Publicas, Lisbon, MR 57 “Mappas de Importação e Exportação Fornecidos pelos Consules de Portugal”. Out of the 37,903\$718 réis in import duties import duties collected by Benguela's custom house in 1839-1840, 12,426\$451 came from *aguardente* imports. See AHU, Angola, Correspondencia dos Governadores, Pasta 4-B, “Receita da Alfandega de Benguela em 1839-1840”.

40. See Table IV (Annexes).

41. To satisfy Magyar's more “sophiscated” palate, his carriers also transported unspecified amounts of Port wine. See chapter II of his travelogue.

42. AHU, Angola, Cx. 136, Doc. 31, José Botelho de Sampaio to Luiz da Motta Feo (Governor of Angola), 6-04-1819 and Motta Feo to Ignacio Sudre Pereira de Nobrega, 12-04-1819.

43. According to MAGYAR (in progress: chap. VII), one such slave equaled 35-40 *covados*, 2 *covados* equaled 1 *bekka*, and 2 *bekka* equaled one bottle of cane brandy: hence, 8.75 to 10 bottles of the Brazilian spirit would have sufficed to purchase the slave.

44. Although Hauenstein lists this alcoholic drink as an unspecified type of *eau-de-vie*, the reference must be to Brazilian sugar cane rum, since *aguardente* imports at Benguela were extremely small.

45. AHNA, Cód. 88, fl. 139v, “Relação do Mimo que manda [o] [...] Senhor General ao Souva de Bailundo”, 1-08-1795.
46. AHU, Cód. 1631, fls. 153-155, Almeida e Vasconcelos (Governor of Angola) to Sova de Bailundo, 18-08-1795.
47. António Gomes Cortezao (Governor of Benguela) to Governor of Angola, 24-06-1805, in DELGADO (1940: 45).
48. AHU, Angola, Cx. 71, Doc. 11, Francisco Ignacio de Mira to António da Silva Metelo, 19-12-1785.
49. AHU, Angola, Cx. 71, Doc. 11, Nuno Joaquim Pereira e Silva to his brother, 14-01-1786.
50. AHU, Cx. 71, Document 11, Francisco Ignacio de Mira to António da Silva Metelo, 19-12-1785.
51. AHNA, Cód. 441, fl. 14, report of Botelho de Vasconcelhos upon taking up the governorship of the *Reino de Benguela*, 27-07-1796.
52. AHNA, Cód. 449, fls. 10v-11, Joaquim Bento da Fonseca to Nicolau d' Abreu Castello Branco (Governor of Angola), 05-08-1824.
53. AHU, Angola, Cx. 87, Doc. 51, Jose da Sylva Costa to Governor Botelho Vasconcelos, 28-03-1798.
54. AHU, Angola, Cx. 120, Doc. 37, Antonio de Saldanha da Gama (Governor of Angola) to Visconde de Anadia, 24-09-1808.
55. “Folha de despesa feita com os pretos Munbombes empregados no serviço da mineração de 1 a 30 de Setembro, 1810”, in M. DOS ANJOS DA SILVA REBELO (1970: 171).
56. “Folha da despesa com os sobas, oficial inferior, soldados e pretos desde 1 a 31 de Janeiro, 1813”, in DOS ANJOS DA SILVA REBELO (1970: 172). Cane brandy and tobacco payments continued through the month of February. AHU, Angola, Cx. 122, Doc. 59, João de Alvellos Leiria (Governor of Benguela) to José Oliveira de Barboza (Governor of Angola), 25-02-1813.
57. AHNA, Cód. 447, fl. 172, Mathias Joaquim de Britto (Governor of Benguela) to Manoel Vieira de Albuquerque e Tovar (Governor of Angola), 15-11-1820.
58. AHU, Angola, Cx. 120, Doc. 37, Antonio Saldanha da Gama (Governor of Angola) to Visconde de Anadia, 24-09-1808.
59. “Folha de despesa feita com os pretos Munbombes empregados no serviço da mineração de 1 a 30 de Setembro, 1810,” in DOS ANJOS DA SILVA REBELO (1970: 171).
60. “Folha da despesa com os sobas, oficial inferior, soldados e pretos desde 1 a 31 de Janeiro, 1813”, in DOS ANJOS DA SILVA REBELO (1970: 172).
61. AHNA, Cód. 3058, fls. 90v-91, Felix V. Galiano to Luiz da Motta e Feo (Governor of Angola), 01-12-1816.
62. AHNA, Cód. 449, fls. 116v-117, Joaquim Aurélio d' Oliveira (Governor of Benguela) to Nicolao d' Abreu Castello Branco (Governor of Angola), 01-12-1829.
63. BSGL, Reservados 146-C-6, Silva Porto, “Apontamentos de um Portuense em Africa”, Vol. 1, p. 123.
64. BSGL, Reservados 1, Pasta 3-Nº 2, António Francisco Ferreira da Silva Porto, “Memorial de Mucanos, 1841-1885”, fl. 1.

65. *Ibid.*, fls. 6-7.
66. *Ibid.*, fls. 8-9.
67. *Ibid.*, fls. 1-68.
68. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91, 114-115.
69. BSGl, Reservados 146-C-6, Silva Porto, "Apontamentos de um Portuense em Africa", Vol. 1, pp. 22-23.
70. On this development in the hinterland of Benguela, see: Vicente FERRER BARRUNCHO, "Relatorio da Viagem que fez o Governador de Benguella ao Dombe Grande e Equimina, 26-11-1856", in *Boletim Official de Angola*, 13-12-1856, pp. 4-5; "Governador de Benguella [João Antonio das Neves Ferreira] to Secretario Geral do Governo da Provincia de Angola, 14-09-1865", in *Boletim Official de Angola*, 28-10-1865, p. 198; AHU, Angola, Correspondencia dos Governadores, Pasta 35, Governador de Benguella, João Antonio das Neves Ferreira, to Ministro e Secretario d' Estado, 10-10-1866; and AHU, Angola, Correspondencia dos Governadores, Pasta 38, Carlos Maria da Cunha Figueiredo, "Relatorio acerca do Districto de Benguella, 24-10-1864 a 16-08-1868". For a sketch of this industry throughout Angola, see Gervase CLARENCE-SMITH (1979: 24-25, 49, 50-51; 1984: 227-349; 1985: 38, 49, 75, 105, 120, 134) and Gerald J. BENDER (1978: 145-146).
71. Though impressionistic, José CAPELA (1973) provides much information on this important shift. See also: CLARENCE-SMITH (1985: 5, 7-8, 11-14, 18, 24, 44, 68, 92-94, 120-122, 160-166, 200-201, 220), PIRIO (1982, chap. 7: 234-302) and BENDER (1978: 146-147). As shown by CAPELA (*ibid.*), CLARENCE-SMITH (*ibid.*), PIRIO (*ibid.*), and PENVENNE (1995: 40-43), this development was not specific to Angola. It also took place in Mozambique.

RÉSUMÉS

Résumé

L' alcool dans le contexte de la traite atlantique d' esclaves. Le cas de Benguela et de son arrière-pays (Angola).

Cette contribution donne un éclairage sur un aspect de l' histoire de l' alcool en Afrique en explorant l' introduction des boissons étrangères, les nombreux circuits à travers lesquels celles-ci étaient distribuées aux consommateurs, et leur impact sur les modes de consommation à Benguela et son arrière-pays, une importante région d' approvisionnement de la traite négrière atlantique qui a été peu étudiée. Basée sur une variété de sources quantitatives et qualitatives, cette contribution soutient qu' une véritable culture « atlantique créole » de la boisson a émergé à Benguela dans le contexte du commerce d' êtres humains et que les modes de consommation d' alcool des Africains se trouvant plus à l' intérieur des terres étaient aussi de ce fait transformés.

ABSTRACT

This contribution sheds light on one aspect of the history of alcohol in Africa by exploring the introduction of foreign drinks, the various systems through which they were delivered to consumers, and their impact upon patterns of consumption at Benguela and its hinterland, a

major supply region of the Atlantic slave trade that has hitherto received little attention. Drawing upon a variety of quantitative and qualitative sources, it argues that a veritable “Atlantic creole” drinking culture did emerge in Benguela under the context of the commerce in human beings and that the alcohol consumptions patterns of Africans further inland were also thereby transformed.

INDEX

Keywords : Angola, Benguela, Alcohol, Creole, Slave Trade

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