

Transforming Atlantic slaving: trade, warfare and territorial control in Angola, 1650-1800¹⁷

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This dissertation examines slaving in Angola between 1650 and 1800 by focusing on trade, warfare and territorial control. The work begins by analyzing the decline of the exports of slaves from Luanda in the late seventeenth century. It argues that the Luanda trade was crippled by colonial inability to assert itself against Africans polities in the Luanda hinterland and the growth of foreign slaving off the coast of Loango in northern Angola. It explores the business and political environment in Luanda by closely examining the role of Angolan governors in the slave trade. It also seeks to demonstrate that Benguela became a key provider of slaves at the end of the seventeenth century and that the business-unfriendly environment in Luanda was one of the crucial factors behind the development of full-fledged trading networks in Benguela and the interior of southern Angola.

The dissertation addresses the role of imports of foreign goods to Angola, particularly Indian textiles, which were widely traded for slaves and used as currency and social artifacts in African societies. It demonstrates that taste and fashion played a pivotal role in imports of textiles. The trade in Indian textiles came to be dominated by merchants based in Brazil due to key transformations in the *carreira da Índia* commerce between Lisbon and India in the second half of the seventeenth century, which led to an increased role for Salvador, Bahia. The dissertation argues that Brazilians were eventually able to offer credit for textiles on more favorable conditions than metropolitan merchants, thus consolidating their role in the Benguela trade.

Finally, the work investigates Angolan warfare and its importance in extending territorial control and trading networks by analyzing recruitment policies and the relationship between technology and military strategy. It seeks

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to demonstrate that colonial military forces were perennially understaffed due to the erratic supply of criminal and political exile recruits from Portugal and Brazil, which made the Luanda government dependent on alliances with African rulers and military reinforcements from Brazil. In terms of warfare, the most effective technology employed by Europeans in Angola was the use of horses together with infantrymen recruited from allied African rulers – *guerra preta* soldiers. The use of horses was deemed so critical that Lisbon sponsored several expeditions to procure horses in Brazil and created mechanisms granting special rights for ships carrying horses from Brazil to Angola. These preferential licenses were used to create favorable conditions for the transport of slaves on the ships' return journeys to Brazil.