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## *JERIBITA* IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COLONY OF ANGOLA AND THE KINGDOM OF KASANJE

by  
JOSÉ C. CURTO \*

With some 12.5 million individuals estimated as forcibly removed from Africa into the Americas and the Caribbean, the Atlantic slave trade represents the single largest migration in world history prior to the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The commerce, as its sheer magnitude suggests, was an extremely complex affair. It involved not only European traders and African slaves, but also slave merchants and plantation owners throughout the Americas and the Caribbean, as well as indigenous producers and suppliers of captives along the western coast and interior regions of Africa. Similarly, the commodities sustaining the business of slave trading did not originate exclusively in Europe. They were also produced in the thirteen colonies and their successor, the United States, as well as in the Caribbean, South America, Asia, and even Africa itself.<sup>2</sup> The items of exchange were extremely varied as the financiers of slaving enterprises sought to meet the sophisticated consumer tastes of African slave suppliers. During the late 1620s, for example, a total of

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<sup>1</sup> The most recent estimates on slave exports are found in David ELTIS and David RICHARDSON, "A New Assessment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade", in D. Eltis and D. Richardson (ed.), *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2008, p. 160; D. ELTIS and D. RICHARDSON, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2010, pp. 1-19. See also the revised online version of the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database: D. ELTIS et al., *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*. Available from [www.slavevoyages.org](http://www.slavevoyages.org).

<sup>2</sup> The following monographs illustrate well the complexities of the Atlantic slave trade from a number of different angles: John K. THORNTON, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, 2nd ed.; D. ELTIS, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; Paul E. LOVEJOY, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, 3rd ed.

218 different types of trading goods were utilized in the Gold Coast slaving town of Elmina.<sup>3</sup> Between 1784 and 1823, on the other hand, a staggering 600 to 700 different imports were offloaded annually at Luanda, the capital and major port town of the Portuguese colony of Angola, for the acquisition of captives in the interior.<sup>4</sup>

However, not all of the trade goods imported throughout the Atlantic coast of Africa for the purpose of acquiring slaves possessed the same importance. Some were far more significant than others. Alcoholic beverages represent a case in point: wine, rum, and brandy of various qualities and origins emerged into precious commodities to foster trade relations with African partners, to lubricate commercial transactions, and to exchange directly for captives.<sup>5</sup> Within this context, a Brazilian alcoholic drink rose

<sup>3</sup> Hugh THOMAS, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*, London, Papermac, 1998, p. 313.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph C. MILLER, "Imports at Luanda, Angola 1785-1823", in G. Liesegang, H. Pasch, and A. Jones (ed.), *Figuring African Trade: Proceedings of the Symposium on the Quantification and Structure of the Import and export and Long Distance Trade of Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (c. 1800-1913)*, Berlin, Dietrich Reimer, 1986, pp. 163-246.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example: K. Onwuka DIKE, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885: An Introduction to the Economic and Political History of Nigeria*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1956, pp. 105-106; Colin W. NEWBURY, *The Western Slave Coast and its Rulers: European Trade and Administration among the Yoruba and Adja-speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria, Southern Dahomey and Togo*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961, pp. 28-29; Karl POLANYI (in collaboration with Abraham Rotstein), *Dahomey and the Slave Trade: An Analysis of an Archaic Economy*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1966, pp. 35, 155, 162, and 165; I. A. AKINJOGBIN, *Dahomey and its Neighbours 1708-1818*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1967, pp. 75, 104, 135, and 144; Allen F. C. RYDER, *Benin and the Europeans, 1485-1897*, New York, Humanities Press, 1969, pp. 86, 160, 167, 207-209, and 335-336; Kwame Y. DAAKU, *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast, 1600-1720: A Study of the African Reaction to European Trade*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970, pp. 59, 64-65, 87, 98-99, 104, and 116; K. G. DAVIES, *The Royal African Company*, New York, Atheneum, 1970, pp. 45, 115-116, 173, 190, 234, 238, and 271; John J. McCUSKER, *The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Colonies*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1970, pp. 20, 480-484 and 492-497; Philip D. CURTIN, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1975, pp. 242-243, 252, 258-259, 262, 313, 316-318, 321, and 326-327; Pierre VERGER, *Trade Relations Between the Bight of Benin and Bahia from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, Ibadan, Ibadan University Press, 1976, pp. 12, 28-33, 48, 88, 110, 122, 132, 156, 222-225, 232, 259, and 595; David RICHARDSON, "West African Consumption Patterns and Their Influence on the Eighteenth-Century English Slave Trade", in Henry A. Gemery and Jan S. Hogendorn (ed.), *The Uncommon Market: Essays in the Economic History of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, New York, Academic Press, 1979, pp. 308-315, and 324-326; Walter RODNEY, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545 to 1800*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1980, pp. 135, 178-180, 187-189 and 242; Jay COUGHTRY, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade 1700-1807*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1981, pp. 16, 81-86, 107-120, and 170-174; James A. RAWLEY, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade: A History*, New York, Norton, 1981, pp. 154, 208, 311, 343-345, 355, and 361; Adam JONES (ed.), *Brandenburg Sources for West African History 1680-1700*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 1985, pp. 24-26, 31, 39, 50, 61-69, 76-80, 86, 95-106, 119, 126, 130-138, 147, 151, 168, 177, 182, and 196-199; George METCALFE, "A Microcosm of Why Africans Sold Slaves: Akan Consumption Patterns in the 1770s", *Journal of African History*, 28, 1987, pp. 379-380, 382-383, 385-386, 388-390 and 392-394; David ELTIS and Lawrence

above all others: *cachaça*. Between 1650 and 1850, this intoxicant, generically known at Luanda and its hinterland as *jeribita* (also *gerebita*), constituted the second most important commodity with which Luso-Brazilian traders and their agents obtained captives in this region. Between 1710 and 1830 alone, 25% of the 1.2 million slaves exported to Brazil from the colonial capital of Angola,<sup>6</sup> the most important slaving port in all of Western Africa, were acquired through this spirit.<sup>7</sup>

Large quantities of imported alcohol circulated throughout Western Africa and its respective hinterlands to prop the commerce in human beings. During 1754-1785, as pointed out by one historian, at least 1.5 million litres of rum and brandy were imported into Cape Coast through the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa.<sup>8</sup> In the 1780s, it has been estimated that West Africa as a whole imported an annual average of 2.88 million litres of foreign alcohol.<sup>9</sup> In the case of Luanda and Benguela, the volume of alcohol imports was even higher, reaching one million litres *per annum* during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup> The objective of this contribution is not to investigate the economic functions of foreign alcoholic drinks circulating throughout the coast of Atlantic Africa for the acquisition of slaves, roles that are already relatively well developed in the extant historiography.<sup>11</sup> Rather, the intention here is to explore an aspect of this process that has largely escaped the attention of historians: that is, the non-economic impact of imported intoxicants upon the African societies that guzzled them.<sup>12</sup>

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C. JENNINGS, "Trade between Western Africa and the Atlantic World in the Precolonial Era", *American Historical Review*, 93, 1988, pp. 951-952, and 955; Johannes M. POSTMA, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 104-105; James F. SEARING, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce: The Senegal River Valley, 1700-1860*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 33, 51, 66-68, and 71-74; Stanley B. ALPERN, "What Africans Got for Their Slaves: A Master List of European Trade Goods", *History in Africa*, 22, 1995, pp. 24-25; Charles AMBLER, "Alcohol and the Slave Trade in West Africa, 1400-1850", in William Jankowiak and Daniel Bradburd (ed.), *Drugs, Labor and Colonial Expansion*, Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 2003, pp. 73-88.

<sup>6</sup> José C. CURTO, "A Quantitative Re-Assessment of the Legal Portuguese Slave Trade from Luanda, Angola, 1710-1830", *African Economic History*, 20, 1992, pp. 1-25.

<sup>7</sup> J. C. CURTO, *Enslaving Spirits: The Portuguese-Brazilian Alcohol Trade at Luanda and its Hinterland, c. 1550-1830*, Leiden, Brill Academic Publishers, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Ty M. REESE, "Eating" Rum: Alcohol, Change and Cross-Cultural Interaction at Cape Coast, 1750-1807, unpublished paper presented at the international workshop "Alcohol in the Atlantic World: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives", 24-27 Oct. 2007, York University.

<sup>9</sup> D. ELTIS and L. C. JENNINGS, art. cit., p. 955.

<sup>10</sup> J. C. CURTO, *Enslaving Spirits*, cit.

<sup>11</sup> See the literature cited in footnote 5.

<sup>12</sup> The social history of foreign alcohol in Africa before 1900 is still in its infancy: Raymond E. DUMETT, "The Social Impact of the European Liquor Trade on the Akan of Ghana (Gold Coast and Asante), 1875-1910", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1, 1974, pp. 69-101; David GORDON, "From Rituals of Rapture to Dependence: The Political Economy of Khoikhoi Narcotic Consumption, c. 1487-1870", *South African Historical Journal*, 35, 1996, pp. 62-88; Emmanuel K. AKYEAMPONG, *Drink, Power, and Cultural Change: A Social History of Alcohol in*

As will be seen below, this too is a significant component of the history of alcohol in Africa under the context of the Atlantic slave trade.

This contribution analyses the images of African slave suppliers that the large amounts of imported alcohol in circulation created in the minds of exogenous slave buyers and how these affected relationships between the two communities. Its focus is on the Portuguese colony of Angola and its eastern neighbour, the kingdom of Kasanje, between which the exchange of exportable slaves for imported alcohol was particularly intensive. The analysis concentrates around two groups of individuals central to this relationship: the governors of Angola, who from Luanda oversaw the colony's only economic activity of note – the commerce in slaves; and the *jagas* or kings of Kasanje,<sup>13</sup> who from their capital tightly administered the great slave mart nearby – a major supplier of Angola's export captives. Particular attention is, moreover, given to these individuals between 1789 and 1812, a relatively short but nevertheless important period characterized by a considerable increase in the number of captives exported through, and a parallel rise in the volume of alcohol imported at Luanda, as well as a series of attempts to renegotiate the commercial alliance between the colony of Angola and the kingdom of

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*Ghana, c. 1800 to Recent Times*, Portsmouth, Heinemann, 1996; Edna BRADLOW, "Drunkenness at the Cape of Good Hope in the 1870s: a case study of a colonial ruling class and its philosophy", *Kleio*, 30, 1998, pp. 11-27; T. M. REESE, "Liberty, Insolence and Rum: Cape Coast and the American Revolution", *Itinerario: International Journal on the History of European Expansion and Global Interaction*, 28, 2004, pp. 18-37; Justin WILLIS, *Potent Brews: A Social History of Alcohol in East Africa, 1850-1999*, Athens, OH, Ohio University Press, 2002; J. WILLIS, "Drinking Crisis? Change and Continuity in Cultures of Drinking in Sub-Saharan Africa", *African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies*, 5, 2006, pp. 1-14; J. C. CURTO, "Alcohol in the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade: The Case of Benguela and its Hinterland (Angola)", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, LI:I, 2011, pp. 51-85.

<sup>13</sup> The Portuguese used the political title *jaga* from the mid-1600s onwards to refer to the king of Kasanje, thereby making it difficult to identify political leaders by name (see Table 2). This political title is not to be confused with the term *jaga* which they adopted earlier to characterize bands of migrant warriors in Angola. On the changing perceptions of these *jaga* bands by modern historians, see Jan VANSINA, "The Foundation of the Kingdom of Kasanje", *Journal of African History*, 4, 1963, pp. 355-374; David BIRMINGHAM, "The Date and Significance of the Imbangala Invasion of Angola", *Journal of African History*, 6, 1965, pp. 143-152; J. VANSINA, "More on the Invasions of Kongo and Angola by the Jaga and the Lunda", *Journal of African History*, 7, 1966, pp. 421-429; J. C. MILLER, "The Imbangala and the Chronology of Early Central African History", *Journal of African History*, 8, 1972, pp. 549-574; J. C. MILLER, "Requiem for the 'Jaga'", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 8, 1973, pp. 121-149; J. C. MILLER, *Kings and Kinsmen: Early Mbundu States in Angola*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976; J. K. THORNTON, "A Resurrection for the Jaga", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 18, 1978, pp. 223-228; J. C. MILLER, "Thanatopsis", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 18, 1978, pp. 229-231; François BONTINCK, "Un mausolée pour les Jaga", *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 20, 1979, pp. 387-389; Anne HILTON, "Reconsidering the Jaga", *Journal of African History*, 22, 1981, pp. 191-202; Paulo J. de SOUSA PINTO, "Em torno de um problema de identidade: os 'Jaga' na História do Congo e Angola", *Mare Liberum*, 18-19, 1999-2000, pp. 193-242; J. VANSINA, *How Societies Are Born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600*, Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2004, pp. 196-201; Beatrix HEINTZE, "The Extraordinary Journey of the Jaga through the Centuries: Critical Approaches to Precolonial Angolan Historical Sources", *History in Africa*, 34, 2007, pp. 67-101.



Kasanje. The tensions that arose from these endeavours were greatly fuelled by the availability of considerable volumes of *jeribita* in the Kasanje slave mart. This led the highest Portuguese colonial administrators to develop an image of the *jagas* as measly drunken royal sots, explaining and discarding their attempts to secure better terms of trade as a consequence of their inclination for the Brazilian intoxicant. Heavy drinking had turned them into untrustworthy commercial allies. Fully crystallized by 1812, this image then provided the governors of Angola with the moral justification to break the alliance with Kasanje and search for new African commercial partners. Thereafter, the significant amount volumes of *jeribita* previously available to the *jagas* diminished, while the loss of commercial activity in the great slave mart curtailed their wealth and power. The state of Kasanje, meanwhile, lost its pivotal role as a major supplier of Luanda's exportable slaves and entered a period of decadence and decentralization that culminated in 1850 with the loss of its independence through the military expedition commanded by major Salles Ferreira.<sup>14</sup>

The late eighteenth century image of the *jagas* that emerged in the minds of the highest Portuguese colonial administrators as drunken royal sots, no longer dependable to continue supplying Angola with the large number of captives required to meet the insatiable Atlantic demand for slave labour, clearly shows that the impact of *jeribita* unfolded beyond purely economic issues. Such an impact, moreover, provides further fuel to the new paradigm that over the last decades has increasingly evidenced the organic interconnections between the constituent parts of the Atlantic world before the mid-1800s. The focus on *jeribita*, produced in Brazil by many of the captive labourers acquired at Kasanje in exchange of this same commodity, demonstrates that the ramifications of slaving were not unidirectional but rather interactive and interdependent, turning Brazil and Kasanje from distant worlds parted by a huge ocean into inexorably linked parts of a whole.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> J. C. MILLER, "The Confrontation on the Kwango: Kasanje and the Portuguese, 1836-1858", in *Reunião Internacional da História da África: Relação Europa-África no 3.º Quartel do Século XIX*, Lisboa, Fundação Gulbenkian, 1998, pp. 535-572; António Rodrigues NEVES, *Memória da expedição a Cassange comandada pelo Major graduado Francisco de Salles Ferreira em 1850*, Lisboa, Imprensa Silvana, 1854.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, J. C. MILLER, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1988; J. K. THORNTON, *Africa and Africans*, cit.; Ira BERLIN, "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America", *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 53, 1996, pp. 251-288; D. ELTIS, P. E. LOVEJOY, and D. RICHARDSON, "Slave-Trading Ports: Towards an Atlantic-Wide Perspective, 1676-1832", in Robin Law and Silke Strickrodt (ed.), *Ports of the Slave Trade (Bights of Benin and Biafra): Papers from a Conference of the Centre of Commonwealth Studies, University of Stirling, June 1998*, Stirling, Centre of Commonwealth Studies, University of Stirling, 1999, pp. 12-34; Milton GURAN, *Agudas: os "brasileiros" do Benin*, Rio de Janeiro, Nova Fronteira, 1999; Lauren BENTON, "The Legal Regime of the South Atlantic World, 1400-1750: Jurisdictional Complexity as Institutional Order", *Journal of World History*, 11, 2000, pp. 27-56; Peter LINEBAUGH and Marcus REDIKER, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves,*

And since the link was nurtured through the existence of the colony of Angola, the process analysed here also adds an early, rare example from the African continent to the extant literature on the debilitating roles, images, and consequences of alcohol in colonial situations around the world before the late 1800s.<sup>16</sup> Wherever European settlers and their descendants adopted highly alcoholised drinks to stimulate economic and political engagement on the part of encountered indigenous societies, they came to view “others” as drunken sots, a perception that was subsequently and conveniently used to advocate and justify domination.<sup>17</sup> As such, the case of *jeribita* in the

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*Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, Boston, Beacon Press, 2000; J. C. CURTO and Raymond R. GERVAIS, “The Population History of Luanda During the Late Atlantic Slave Trade, 1781-1844”, *African Economic History*, 29, 2001, pp. 1-59; Linda M. HEYWOOD (ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2002; P. E. LOVEJOY and David V. TROTMAN (ed.), *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora*, London, Continuum, 2003; J. C. CURTO and P. E. LOVEJOY (ed.), *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil during the Era of Slavery*, Amherst, NY, Continuum, 2004; Matt CHILDS and Toyin FALOLA (ed.), *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2005; J. C. CURTO and Renée SOULODRE-LA FRANCE (ed.), *Africa and the Americas: Interconnections during the Slave Trade*, Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press, 2005; L. M. HEYWOOD and J. K. THORNTON, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1600*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007; Ana Lúcia ARAÚJO, Mariana P. CÂNDIDO and Paul E. LOVEJOY (ed.), *Crossing Memories: Slavery and African Diaspora*, Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> The extant literature is almost exclusively devoted to the subsequent periods of legitimate commerce and the beginning of colonialism. Beyond the pertinent works cited in footnote 12, see Lynn PAN, *Alcohol in Africa*, Helsinki, Finnish Foundation for Alcohol Studies, 1975; Emmanuel A. AYANDELE, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1872-1914*, London, Longman, 1966, especially chapter 10 – “The Triumph of Gin”, pp. 307-327; A. OLORUNFEMI, “The Liquor Traffic Dilemma in British West Africa: The Southern Nigerian Example, 1895-1918”, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 17, 1984, pp. 229-241; José CAPELA, *O Vinho para o Preto: Notas e Textos sobre a Exportação do Vinho para a África*, Porto, Afrontamento, 1973; Simon HEAP, “Before ‘Star’: The Import Substitution of Western Style Alcohol in Nigeria, 1870-1970”, *African Economic History*, 24, 1996, pp. 69-89; Susan DIDUK, “European Alcohol, History, and the State in Cameroon”, *African Studies Review*, 36, 1993, pp. 1-42; Ayodeji OLUKOJU, “Prohibition and Paternalism: The State and the Clandestine Liquor Traffic in Northern Nigeria, c. 1898-1918”, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 1991, pp. 349-368; A. OLUKOJU, “Rotgut and Revenue: Fiscal Aspects of the Liquor Trade in Southern Nigeria, 1890-1919”, *Itinerario: European Journal of Overseas History*, 21, 1997, pp. 66-81. For a relatively recent overview of much of the literature, see J. WILLIS, “Drinking Power: Alcohol and History in Africa”, *History Compass*, 3:1, 2005, pp. 1-13, available from [www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2005.00176.x](http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2005.00176.x). The exceptions are: J. C. CURTO, “Vinho verso Cachaça: A Luta Luso-Brasileira pelo Comércio do Álcool e de Escravos em Luanda, 1648-1703”, in Selma Pantoja and José F. S. Saraiva (ed.), *Angola e Brasil nas Rotas do Atlântico Sul*, Rio de Janeiro, Bertrand, 1999, pp. 69-97; J. C. CURTO, “Luso-Brazilian Alcohol and the Legal Slave Trade at Benguela and its Hinterland, c. 1617-1830”, in Hubert Bonin e Michel Cahen (ed.), *Négoce Blanc en Afrique Noire: L'évolution du commerce à longue distance en Afrique noire du 18<sup>e</sup> au 20<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Paris, Société française d'histoire d'outre-mer, 2001, pp. 351-369; J. C. CURTO, *Enslaving Spirits*, cit.; C. AMBLER, art. cit.; T. M. REESE, “Liberty, Insolence and Rum”, art. cit.

<sup>17</sup> See in particular: William B. TAYLOR, *Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1979; Marcia LANGTON, “Rum, Seduction and Death: ‘Aboriginality’ and Alcohol”, *Oceania*, 63, 1993, pp. 195-206; Peter C. MANCALL,

relations between the Portuguese colony of Angola and the kingdom of Kasanje was not specific to time and place, but part and parcel but of a generalized phenomenon.

## 1. The historical context

The kingdom of Kasanje was founded between 1629 and 1630 in the valley of the Kwango River by bands of warring Imbangala.<sup>18</sup> One of the major characteristics of this new state was the regular slave raids it carried out along corridor between the Kwango and the Kwanza rivers. Not all of the slaves thus acquired were destined for internal “consumption”. While establishing their state, the Imbangala concluded a commercial alliance with the Portuguese colony of Angola, an exogenous coastal state also of recent vintage whose existence depended upon the export of captives to the Atlantic world, especially Brazil with its ever increasing demand for slave labour. Not a few of the captives generated by the raids emanating from Kasanje found themselves in Luanda to await shipment into the “hell for blacks”, as Brazil was subsequently known.<sup>19</sup>

The last third of the seventeenth century saw Kasanje begin to adopt a new vocation. The expansion of the Lunda commonwealth westward towards the Kwango spawned large numbers of displaced persons and

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*Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1995; D. GORDON, art. cit.; João Azevedo FERNANDES, *Selvagens bebedeiras: álcool, embriaguez e contatos culturais no Brasil Colonial*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2004; Catherine FERLAND, *Bacchus en Canada. Boissons, buveurs et ivresses en Nouvelle-France, XVII<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Université Laval, 2004.

<sup>18</sup> In spite of its importance in the pre-1850 history of West Central Africa, the past of Kasanje has not yet been the object of a monograph length study. What is known, aside from the literature listed in notes 13 and 14, is scattered among the following: Jean-Luc VELLUT, “Relations Internationales du Moyen-Kwango et de l’Angola dans la Deuxième Moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup>”, *Études d’histoire africaine*, 1, 1970, pp. 75-135; J.-L. VELLUT, “Notes sur le Lunda et la frontière luso-africaine (1700-1900)”, *Études d’histoire africaine*, 3, 1972, pp. 61-166; J.-L. VELLUT, “Le royaume de Cassange et les réseaux luso-africains (ca. 1750-1810)”, *Cahiers d’études africaines*, 15, 1975, pp. 117-136; J. C. MILLER, “Slaves, Slavers, and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Kasanje”, in Franz-Wilhelm Heimer (ed.), *Social Change in Angola*, Munich, Weltforum, 1973, pp. 9-29; J. C. MILLER, *Kings and Kinsmen*, cit.; J. C. MILLER, “Kings, Lists, and History in Kasanje”, *History in Africa*, 6, 1979, pp. 51-96; J. C. MILLER, “Confrontation on the Kwango”, art. cit.; J. VANSINA, “It Never Happened: Kinguri’s Exodus and its Consequences”, *History in Africa*, 25, 1998, pp. 398-401; J. VANSINA, *How Societies Are Born*, cit., pp. 161-205; J. C. CURTO, “Un Butin Illégitime: Razzias d’esclaves et relations luso-africaines dans la région des fleuves Kwanza et Kwango en 1805”, in Isabel C. Henriques and Louis Sala-Molins (ed.), *Dérailson, Esclavage et Droit: Les fondements idéologiques et juridiques de la traite négrière et de l’esclavage*, Paris, UNESCO, 2002, pp. 315-327.

<sup>19</sup> Part of a Brazilian proverb, first written in 1711, as found in André João ANTONIL, *Cultura e opulência do Brasil por suas drogas e minas*, São Paulo, Companhia Melhoramentos, 1922, pp. 92-93.



captives.<sup>20</sup> Strategically positioned between the coast and the deep interior of West Central Africa, the Imbangala were able to tap into this seemingly endless reservoir of labour for the Atlantic market. Kasanje thus became a middleman state, the most important supplier of captives for Luanda. And, to protect this privileged economic position, it staunchly barred the Portuguese from establishing direct commercial contact with the Lunda and vice-versa until the early 1800s.<sup>21</sup>

The large numbers of trade slaves that Kasanje supplied to Luanda were not forwarded directly by the Imbangala to the coast for sale. Rather, after suffering the trauma of violently losing their freedom, the captives were kept in the slave mart that emerged immediately to the south of the capital of the kingdom: while a mid-1700s governor of Angola described it as “the largest market for negroes that is known”,<sup>22</sup> a late eighteenth century colonial administrator indicated that it “continued with reason to be considered as an entrepôt of the best slaves”.<sup>23</sup> It was there that they were sold to Luso-Brazilian merchants from the colonial capital of Angola or their trade agents from Ambaca, generically known as *pombeiros*,<sup>24</sup> who plied the interior in search of captives. At any one time, as eyewitness accounts by sergeant-major Manuel Correia Leitão in 1756 and by the French traveller Jean-Baptiste Douville in 1830 evidence, hundreds of men, women and children from diverse ethnic backgrounds found themselves in this market awaiting to be sold.<sup>25</sup> Reportedly some five kilometres in circumference, the mart

<sup>20</sup> J. VANSINA, “It Never Happened”, art. cit. See also J. K. THORNTON, *Africa and Africans*, cit., p. 313; J. K. THORNTON, “The Chronology and Causes of Lunda Expansion to the West, 1700-1852”, *Zambian Journal of History*, 1, 1981, pp. 1-14.

<sup>21</sup> On the various attempts of the Lunda and of the Portuguese to establish direct commercial relations, see J.-L. VELLUT, “Notes sur le Lunda”, art. cit. For particulars on the various confrontations that resulted in the end of Kasanje as an independent state, see J. C. MILLER, “Confrontation on the Kwango”, art. cit.

<sup>22</sup> ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO ULTRAMARINO [AHU], Angola, Cx. 39, doc. 89 (António Álvares da Cunha para el-rei, December 4, 1754): “hé a mayor feyra de negros q. se conhece”.

<sup>23</sup> ARQUIVO DO INSTITUTO HISTÓRICO E GEOGRÁFICO BRASILEIRO [AIHGB], DL81,02.27, fl. 80 (Joaquim José da Silva para [governador] Miguel António de Melo, March 20, 1798): “a Feira de Cassange continua com razão a ser considerada como hum entreposto dos melhores Escravos”.

<sup>24</sup> In his classic tome, *Way of Death*, cit., p. 189, J. C. MILLER defines these individuals as follows: “In the immediate vicinity of commercial centers, itinerant peddlers, known to the Portuguese as *pombeiros*, took modest quantities of goods on consignment and hawked those goods on a cash basis in surrounding villages and local markets (or *pumbos*) for whatever slaves they might buy.” See also Willy BAL, “Portugais *Pombeiro* Commerçant Ambulant du Sertão”, *Annali: Istituto Universitario Orientale, Sezione Romana*, VII, 1965, pp. 123-161; Ilídio do AMARAL and Ana AMARAL, “A Viagem dos pombeiros angolanos Pedro Baptista e Amaro José entre Mucari (Angola) e Tete (Moçambique), em princípios do século XIX, ou a história da primeira travessia da África central”, *Garcia de Orta, Série Geográfica*, 9, 1984, pp. 17-58.

<sup>25</sup> Manoel CORREIA LEITÃO [Gastão Sousa Dias (ed.)], “Uma Viagem a Cassange nos Meados do Século XVIII”, *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 56, 1938, pp. 3-30; Jean Baptiste DOUVILLE, *Voyage au Congo et dans l'intérieur de l'Afrique équinoxiale... 1828, 1829, 1830*, Paris, Jules Renouard, 1832, Vol. 2, pp. 350-354. For a modern, as well as critical, edition of

was under the direct control of the *jagas*. Many of the captives held there belonged to *jagas* themselves. Others were the property of less important Imbangala individuals. In the case of the latter, their sale was finalized only after a fee, of an unspecified amount, was paid to the kings of Kasanje. It was the only place in the kingdom, at least officially, where captives could be sold and where the Imbangala had access to foreign trade goods. Always under the watch of armed guards, the mart thus provided the *jagas* with a virtual monopoly over the slaving transactions carried out therein and the circulation of foreign trade goods within their realm.<sup>26</sup>

The mart was also the only venue in the kingdom of Kasanje that was recognized by the colonial state of Angola as the place for coastal slave traders to conduct their business. As such, numerous Luso-Brazilians and their *pombeiros* congregated there. These operated under the supervision of a director appointed from Luanda, whose job included the settling of disputes that inevitably arose between the expatriate merchant community and African slave suppliers, including the *jagas*. With the coastal traders and their agents came the bundles of foreign goods, transported on the backs and heads of African porters, required to acquire the captives available at the mart. Although extremely varied, most of the trade goods fell under a few generic headings. In the 1750s, these included: alcoholic beverages, textiles, firearms and gunpowder.<sup>27</sup> By 1830, the list had hardly changed. The warehouses of the then *jaga* contained two thousand Portuguese rifles without bayonets, two or three hundred barrels of gunpowder, over four thousand cartridges, as well as *tafia* (cane brandy), textiles, and glass-wares of all kinds.<sup>28</sup> A large percentage of the foreign goods imported at Luanda was thus re-directed straight to the Kasanje slave mart. And, once exchanged for slaves, relatively significant portions flowed into the hands of the ruling kings.

In the specific case of alcoholic beverages, Portuguese and Spanish fortified grape wines predominated until the middle of the seventeenth century. Thereafter, a new import at Luanda, *jeribita*, eventually became the dominant alcoholic drink forwarded to the Kasanje slave mart.<sup>29</sup> By the late 1680s, large quantities of this distilled Brazilian spirit were already found there. But with a far higher alcoholic content than fortified grape wines, which were already more potent than locally produced alcoholic beverages, *jeribita*

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Leitão's text in English, see Evá SEBESTYEÉN and Jan VANSINA, "Angola's Eastern Hinterland in the 1750s: A Text Edition and Translation of Manoel Correia Leitão's 'Voyage' (1755-1756)", *History in Africa*, 26, 1999, pp. 299-364.

<sup>26</sup> J. C. MILLER, "Slaves, Slavers, and Social Change", art. cit., pp. 17-20.

<sup>27</sup> Note that M. CORREIA LEITÃO, "Uma Viagem a Cassange", art. cit., p. 16, refers only to "*bebidas*" (beverages) in a generic fashion. In their English translation of his text, however, E. SEBESTYEÉN and J. VANSINA, art. cit., p. 338, have rightly contextualized the reference as "[alcoholic] beverages".

<sup>28</sup> J. B. DOUVILLE, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 350.

<sup>29</sup> This important substitution is analyzed in J. C. CURTO, "Vinho verso Cachaça", art. cit.

also brought a number of problems with it. This can be deduced from a fact related to another drink of similar alcoholic content whose importance in the relations between Angola and Kasanje was relatively brief. At the end of 1688 or the beginning of the following year, the ruling *jaga* wrote to João de Lencastre, the then governor of Angola, suggesting that he “avoid forwarding *agoardentes da terra* [brandies of the land] to his realm because it was killing his subjects”: otherwise, he warned, “I shall order the containers in which it is transported to be smashed”.<sup>30</sup> This, the first and only known instance where a king of Kasanje actually complained about the booze flooding into his state, indicates that highly alcoholised drinks such as brandies of the land soon became a detriment to the lives of African consumers. Yet, subsequent *jagas* would seek more, not less, quantities of these types of beverages.

And here the governors of Angola were only too eager to oblige. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, they had been instructed by the Portuguese crown to deal with the *jaga* of Kasanje “with such prudence as to never break with him”.<sup>31</sup> Part and parcel of “such prudence” came to involve generous *mimos* or gifts that the governors periodically bestowed upon their commercial partners *par excellence* in order to smoothen trading operations in the interior and to further the flow of slaves to the coast.<sup>32</sup> These almost always included *jeribita*. Late in 1790, for example, governor Manuel de Almeida e Vasconcelos sent the *jaga* a present that included two *ancoretas* (barrels with a capacity of around thirty-six litres) of Brazilian cane brandy.<sup>33</sup> Between the beginning of October and of November of 1795, the same governor forwarded another gift to *jaga* Kalandula (D. João António de Carvalho) with ten *ancoretas* of *jeribita*, four of which had been imported from Rio de Janeiro.<sup>34</sup> In October of 1801, it was the turn of Miguel António de Mello, Vanconcelos’ successor, to send two *ancoretas* of Brazilian cane brandy to the king of Kasanje for his “table and pleasure”.<sup>35</sup> And, shortly after taking

<sup>30</sup> AHU, Cód. 554, fls. 60v-61 (Parecer do Conselho Ultramarino, October 20, 1689): “[...] queira evitar o mandar lhe aguardentes da terra a seu quilombo, porque matava os seus Vassalos, e que se alguma paçasse aquellas partes mandaria quebrar as piroleiras em que fosse”.

<sup>31</sup> ARQUIVO NACIONAL DO RIO DE JANEIRO [ANRJ], Negócios de Portugal/59, Cód. 543, fl. 82 (Carta régia, October 17, 1705): “[...] que se trate com o Jaga Cassange com tal prudencia que nunca se chegue a romper com elle [...]”.

<sup>32</sup> On the *mimos* and their functions, see “governador barão de Moçâmedes para jaga de Cassange”, July 26, 1789, *Arquivos de Angola*, 1st Series, 13-15, 1936, p. 567.

<sup>33</sup> AHU, Cód. 1627, fls. 24v-25v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para jaga de Cassange, November 17, 1790). One *frasqueira* of *aguardente* (brandy made from the must of grapes) from the “Reino” (Portugal), accompanied this *mimo*.

<sup>34</sup> ARQUIVO NACIONAL DE ANGOLA [ANA], Cód. 88, fls. 198-198v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para jaga Kalandula [D. João António de Carvalho], October 2, 1795): see also AHU, Cód. 1631, fls. 202v-203v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para jaga Kalandula [D. João António de Carvalho], November 2, 1795). One *frasqueira* of *aguardente* from Portugal and another of liquor from Rio de Janeiro were further part of this present.

<sup>35</sup> ANA, Cód. 90, fls. 136v-137 (Governador Miguel António de Mello para jaga de Cassange, October 24, 1801): “para vosso tratamento e regalo”.

office in 1807, governor António de Saldanha de Gama had 59 litres of *jeribita* dispatched to the then ruling *jaga*.<sup>36</sup> These gifts only added to the voluminous amounts of Brazilian cane brandy available to the kings of Kasanje through the monopoly they held over slave-trading in their mart.

## 2. The commercial alliance in crisis

From the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, however, the commercial partnership that allowed the *jagas* to accumulate large quantities of *jeribita* and Luanda to acquire huge numbers of exportable slaves from Kasanje began to turn sour. By 1759, the governor of Angola was complaining to his superiors in Lisbon that the price of slaves arriving from the kingdom of Kasanje had doubled over the two previous decades.<sup>37</sup> Shortly thereafter, another complaint arrived in the Portuguese metropole: the *jaga* “insults and steals from *Pumbeiros* given that he has not admitted [Luanda-appointed] scribes and whites” in his mart “for over two years”.<sup>38</sup> This spat did not degenerate into a crisis for in 1765 the governor of Angola was able to report to his superiors that he had already had the slave mart “re-established” in Kasanje.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, the episode was the precursor of things to come.

In the middle of 1789, barão de Moçâmedes forwarded an embassy headed by captain-major Marcos Pereira Bravo to Kasanje as part of an attempt to reform Luso-African commerce in the interior of Luanda. One of its major objectives was to negotiate with the *jaga* a new price scale for the slaves available in his mart and thereby put a stop to the “extortions” which had “victimised” Luso-African traders there. Negotiations between Bravo and the *jaga* concluded towards the year’s end with an agreement of 28 *beirames* (standard measure of trade textiles), to be paid per *peça de Índia* (prime adult slave), with the mart designated as the only locale in the kingdom for slave-trading.<sup>40</sup> Within four months, an ambassador from the king of Kasanje had reached Luanda to ratify the treaty concluded with captain-major Bravo. Governor Moçâmedes thereafter appointed Paulo José

<sup>36</sup> ANA, Cód. 240, fl. 56 (Governador António de Saldanha da Gama para *jaga* de Cassange, September 9, 1807). A further 20 litres and seven flasks of *jeribita* for the nobles of the *jaga* accompanied this *mimo*.

<sup>37</sup> ANA, Cód. 439-A, fl. 2v (Governador António de Vanconcellos para Thomé Joaquim da Costa Corte Real [secretário de Estado], January 3, 1759). See also Table 1.

<sup>38</sup> ANA, Cód. 439-A, fl. 17v (Governador António de Vanconcellos para el-rei, July 9, 1762): “[...] aquele *Jaga* insulta e rouba aos *Pumbeiros* de forma que há mais de dous annos que não admite escrivão nem consente brancos [...]”.

<sup>39</sup> Governador Francisco Innocencio de Souza Coutinho para Francisco de Mendonça (secretário de Estado), May, 9, 1765, *Arquivos de Angola*, 1st Series, 5-6, 1936, without pagination.

<sup>40</sup> See “Termo de Fedelidade, e Vassalagen que Jurou o *Jaga* Kasanje”, December 19, 1789, *Arquivos de Angola*, 1st Series, 11-12, 1936, pp. 341-343.



de Loureiro as the new director of the mart, with orders to adhere religiously to the terms agreed upon.<sup>41</sup> But the treaty quickly ran into problems. By November of 1790, another ambassador from the *jaga* arrived in the colonial capital of Angola, this time protesting against Luso-Brazilian and their *pombeiro* agents who continued to trade for slaves outside of the designated mart which, if nothing else, undercut the *jaga*'s authority and power. Manuel de Almeida e Vasconcelos, Moçâmedes' successor, soon wrote to the king of Kasanje, assuring that all traders would congregate in his slave mart. This, however, did nothing to lessen the mounting tension.

Indeed, by early 1791, the Kasanje mart was experiencing a series of unspecified "disorders". Upon receiving this news, governor Vasconcelos ordered Loureiro to stick "exactly" to his instructions, "without innovations or arbitrary decisions". And, he added:

[...] what does it matter for us, if Africans in the backlands inebriate themselves [with our] [...] *vinho*, *aguardente*, and *cachaça*. [...] the more they acquire this taste, the more they will come to the slave markets with what to satisfy their appetite. [...] those that do wrong will be punished and treated following the terms negotiated [with the *jaga*]. [...] one of [our] principal objectives is to attempt to please those with whom we live and from whom we wish to take advantage, making them successively more dependent and passionate for our booze. [...] one of the most essential things is to please and have for certain the esteem and respect of the *jaga*...<sup>42</sup>

Whether Loureiro followed these instructions is not known. Nevertheless, in August of the same year, a confrontation between the director and the *jaga* took place, with the latter denouncing the agreement over the price scale for prime adult slaves.

Upon learning of this confrontation, governor Vasconcelos decided to remove Loureiro from the slave mart and to appoint second-lieutenant Manuel de Sousa de Andrade as its interim director. Soon upon arrival at the mart, Andrade was forced to accept a new price scale decreed by the king: 30 *beirames* per prime adult slave. In mid-December of 1791, Vasconcelos ordered the interim director to return to the previous price scale.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, he also wrote the *jaga*, threatening to remove the expatriate

<sup>41</sup> ANA, Cód. 439-A, fls. 34v-38 ("Regimento de Paulo José de Loureiro [director da feira de Cassanje]", October 6, 1790).

<sup>42</sup> ANA, Cód.84, fls. 178v-179 (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para Paulo José de Loureiro [director da feira de Cassanje], May 12, 1791): "[...] que nos importa a nos, que os pretos dos Sertoens se embebedam, quanto mais elles tiverem esse gosto, mais procurarão vir as feiras e trazerem com que satisfazer seu apetite, os que fizerem mal, serão castigados e tratados conforme as condições contrattadas, e sempre hum dos principaes pontos hé prouvar agradar a aquelles com quem se vive, e de quem se quer tirar a utillidade fazendo os mais e mais dependentes como succede, consebendo elles maior paixão pelas nossas pingas, huma das couzas mais essenciaes, hé agradar e ter certa a estimação e conceito do Jaga".

<sup>43</sup> ANA, Cód. 85, fls. 104v-105v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para Manuel de Sousa [director interino da feira de Cassanje], December 19, 1791).

slave-trading community if the price alteration was not reversed and that gratuities in kind were not to be doled out during transactions for slaves except, as was usual, “a flask, or bottle of *geribita* or its equal value”.<sup>44</sup> A few days later, however, the governor was more conciliatory. He again wrote to the king of Kasanje that “under no circumstances was the price scale to exceed 30 *beirames*” per prime adult slave.<sup>45</sup>

In April of 1792, the king of Kasanje accepted the concession. The interim director of the mart, however, unilaterally rejected it. Andrade soon had an embargo placed upon all trade goods destined there. The *jaga* responded by withdrawing from his capital, where he left but one of his notables. Then he sent his ambassadors to Luanda to denounce the interim director. Governor Vasconcelos was quick to reach an agreement with them over the 30 *beirames* price per prime adult slave.<sup>46</sup> A new director, Francisco das Chagas Veiga, was then also appointed to the mart in August of the same year. His most important endeavor was to ratify the new price scale with the *jaga*, but with enough latitude to increase it by one or two *beirames* so as to “lay to rest once and for all the disorders that arose in the said slave mart”.<sup>47</sup> Such, however, did not materialize. By March of 1793, the king of Kasanje had already abandoned the negotiated price scale. In its stead, he had instituted market prices. Luanda was overtaken with consternation: its merchants and their representatives now had to outbid one another for the captives available in the great slave mart.

Once the market price system implemented, governor Vasconcelos oscillated between a maximum and a minimum policy in his relations with Kasanje. While the former consisted of evacuating the expatriate trading community there under military escort, the latter involved slowly disengaging from the great mart and sustaining or developing other slave markets. But even then, the highest administrator of Angola thought that “securing the drunk and inconsistent Jaga” was still possible.<sup>48</sup> After captain Veiga was himself replaced early in 1794 by Joaquim Correia Pinto, governor Vasconcelos found it important to continue advising the new director that “it is well

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<sup>44</sup> ANA, Cód. 3529, fl. 160, and Cód. 439-A, fl. 47 (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para jaga Cassange, December 19, 1791): “hum frasco, ou huma Garrafa de geribita, ou igual valor”.

<sup>45</sup> ANA, Cód. 439-A, fls. 48-48v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para jaga Cassange, December 20, 1791): “[...] de que em cazo nenhum o preço de cada Pessa da India exceda a trinta beirames [...]”. In this case, a flask of *jeribita* equalled one *beirame*.

<sup>46</sup> ANA, Cód. 3259, fls. 171-172, and Cód. 86, fl. 31v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para jaga Cassange, May 28, 1792).

<sup>47</sup> “Ordem da Nomeação do Capitão Francisco das Chagas Veiga”, August 20, 1792, and “Directório para o Capitão Chagas”, August 22, 1792, *Arquivos de Angola*, 1st Series, 5-6, 1936, without pagination: “[...] para dehua ves ficarem sucegadas as dezordens causadas na dita feira [...]”.

<sup>48</sup> ANA, Cód. 86, fl. 229v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco das Chagas Veiga, September 25, 1793): “[...] sigurar o bebado e inconstante Jaga [...]”.

understood that the best way to secure whatever one wants from the Jaga is to know how to steer him, [...] giving him his drops of *geribita*: everything will thereby be had from him [...].<sup>49</sup> The governor of Angola had not given up on the *jaga* as the colony's most important commercial ally inland. And the way to ensure this was by keeping the king of Kasanje well supplied with the Brazilian intoxicant.

### 3. The drunken kings<sup>50</sup>

There was no doubt in the mind of governor Vasconcelos that *jeribita* "hooked" those who imbibed it immoderately. Made available during slave-trading negotiations, as trade goods, and in the form of presents, it turned Africans into "successively more dependent and passionate for our booze". The *jagas* represented the most acute case of such dependency and passion. The large quantities of Brazilian cane brandy to which they had access turned them into addicts. And to make them more malleable towards policies emanating from Luanda, all that was needed were more "drops" of *jeribita*. The kings of Kasanje, according to Vasconcelos, were thus nothing less than drunken royal sots.

Not all of the governors of Angola that followed Vasconcelos came to hold the same opinion of the *jagas*. One of these was, Miguel António de Mello, who took office in 1796. During the Mello's governorship, which lasted until 1802, market prices seem to have remained in place at the great slave mart, *jeribita* continued to arrive in large quantities from the coast for slave-trading purposes, and the kings of Kasanje were kept supplied with periodic gifts of Brazilian cane brandy. A number of unspecified disturbances also continued to plague the mart. But for Mello, the root cause of these problems was not the supposed immoderate use of *jeribita* made by the *jagas*. It was rather, he frankly disclosed, "our slave traders [that] are almost always those who hinder all of the good which we attempt to plant [...]."<sup>51</sup> Amongst these, Mello identified two particular groups of individuals: "the Negroes called *Branços calçados* [Africans wearing shoes] who happen to be the pest that has infected the peoples of the backlands and ruined the Commerce of the

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<sup>49</sup> ANA, Cód. 88, fl. 48v (Governador Almeida e Vasconcelos para director da feira de Cassanje, Joaquim Correia Pinto, March 15, 1795): "[...] está bem conhecido que o melhor meio de se conseguir do Jaga, tudo o que se quer, hé o sabelo levar, pelo que deve continuar, alias hé sabelo levar, e dar-lhe as suas pingas de giribita, pois que assim se terá delle tudo [...]".

<sup>50</sup> This sub-heading is based, needless to say, on one of the stereotypes that underpin the title of Luc DE HEUSCH, *The Drunken King or the Origin of the State*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1982 (translated and annotated by Roy Willis).

<sup>51</sup> ANA, Cód. 90, fl. 59 (Governador Miguel António de Mello para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco Honorato da Costa, September 8, 1798): "[...] os nossos Feirantes [...] quase sempre são os que mais estorvão todo o bem que se quer plantar".

Vassals of His Majesty<sup>52</sup>[;] and the Gypsies and other men of similar customs who are dispersed throughout those areas [of Kasanje] [...]”.<sup>53</sup> His ethnocentrism was less acute than that of those who preceded or succeeded him. But, once Mello left the governorship of Angola, it did not take long for the image of the *jagas* as measly drunken royal sots to resurface.

Half way during the term of Fernando António de Noronha, Mello's successor, relations between the *jaga* and the Luso-Brazilian merchants and their Luso-African agents again deteriorated. Early in October of 1804, news arrived in Luanda that the expatriate trading community stationed in the great mart had been the victim of fines and various extortions. According to governor Noronha, such an incident could only “have been incited by the excessive amount of *jeribita* that the *jaga* of Kasanje had drank”. And, continuing in the same vein, he added that this was far from a singular episode. Others, similar in nature, had taken place, “stemming from the excess with which the *jaga* guzzles *gerebita*”.<sup>54</sup>

As news of this event reached Luanda, a cloud of apprehension fell upon the port town. Governor Noronha believed that it placed the lives and the goods of the expatriate traders in the Kasanje mart at “great risk of being lost”. He consequently ordered Felix Velasco, the regent of Pungo Andongo, the last *presídio* or Portuguese military-administrative post along the Kwanza River facing eastward, to mount a rescue operation with the objective of relocating the exogenous trading community at the Bondo slave mart.<sup>55</sup> By the time the expedition began its trek eastward in early 1805, however, it had been transformed into a diplomatic embassy to secure the maintenance of the great mart in Kasanje, stop the extortions against the expatriate traders, and have the *jaga* send his ambassadors to Luanda. Negotiations over these issues quickly resulted in an agreement between Velasco and the king. But on its return to Pungo Andongo, the Velasco expedition carried out a number of slave raids all the way to the bend of the Kwanza River, capturing an estimated 200 people, including subjects of the *jaga*.<sup>56</sup> This resulted in immediate reprisals against the exogenous trading community stationed in the Kasanje mart. To redress the crisis, governor Noronha

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<sup>52</sup> ANA, Cód. 90, fl. 69v (Governador Miguel António de Mello para regente de Ambaca, January 21, 1799): “[...] os Negros chamados *Branços calçados* que são a peste que tem infectado os Povos do sertão, e arruinado o Commercio dos Vassalos de S. Magestade”.

<sup>53</sup> ANA, Cód. 90, fl. 85 (Governador Miguel António de Mello para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco Honorato da Costa, September 16, 1799): “[...] Ciganos, e outros homens de iguaes costumes que andão espalhados por esses sitios”.

<sup>54</sup> ANA, Cód. 90, fls. 218-219 (Governador Fernando António de Noronha para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco Honorato da Costa, October 9, 1804): “[...] movida sem duvida da demaziada Geribita que o Jaga de Cassange naquella occasião teria tomado [...] por terem acontecidos outros quase semelhantes, e que nascem do excesso com que o Jaga bebe a Geribita [...]”.

<sup>55</sup> J.-L. VELLUT, “Le royaume de Cassange”, art. cit., pp. 124-125.

<sup>56</sup> For an analysis of these military incursions, see J. C. CURTO, “Un Butin Illégitime”, art. cit.



ordered Velasco to locate the captured individuals “wherever they may be or to whomever they were remitted so that they can be removed therefrom”. Then, he assured the *jaga* that his subjects, “stolen by ours”, would “all be duly returned”. But after penning this guarantee, Noronha further added: it is “in your best interest to have an abundance of trade cloth and *gerebita* in that mart”.<sup>57</sup> In other words, the *jaga* had to re-establish the appropriate conditions for the expatriate trading community to conduct business in the great slave mart. Only then would he be able to continue imbibing Brazilian cane brandy. The king of Kasanje soon complied. At the beginning of May, 1805, governor Noronha was informed that the “Jaga remained calm, with commerce thriving at the mart”.<sup>58</sup>

This, however, was but a momentary respite. In May of 1807, news reached Luanda that an embassy from the Mwaat-Yanv, the ruler of the Lunda, had reached Kasanje. It was on its way to the colonial capital of Angola with the objective of establishing direct trading relations with Luso-Brazilians slave traders. This provided António de Saldanha da Gama, the new governor of the Angola, with the opportunity to realise an old dream: break the Kasanje barrier between the slave supplying regions further east and the slave-exporting coast.<sup>59</sup> Towards this end, governor Gama soon instructed the *jaga* to allow the Lunda embassy to continue its journey to Luanda. He was also to grant Luso-Brazilians and their *pombeiro* agents access to eastern slave-supplying regions. Otherwise, Kasanje would suffer the military wrath of Angola and its new ally, the Lunda. The *jaga* grudgingly accepted the first part of this ultimatum, but refused to comply with the second. When news of this development arrived at Luanda, early in September, Gama concluded:

The answer of the *jaga* leaves me greatly perplexed, for I could not think that he would forget so many of his interests, to the point of risking his State and his own life. [...] I can only attribute the response to some spirited drinks which he may have consumed on that occasion [...].<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> ANA, Cód. 240, fl. 36v (Governador Fernando António de Noronha para Jaga Cassanje, July 14, 1805): “[...] sendo do vosso maior interesse que nessa Feira haja abundancia de Fazenda, Geribita [...]”.

<sup>58</sup> ANA, Cód. 91, fl. 13 (Governador Fernando António de Noronha para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco Honorato da Costa, July 20, 1805): “[...] o Jaga se acha socegado, e que nessa Feira corre o Comercio [...]”.

<sup>59</sup> ANA, Cód. 91, fl. 73 (Governador António de Saldanha da Gama para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco Honorato da Costa, August 7, 1807).

<sup>60</sup> ANA, Cód. 91, fl. 79 (Governador António de Saldanha da Gama para director da feira de Cassanje, Francisco Honorato da Costa, September 6, 1807): “[...] [a] resposta do Jaga [...] me deixa bastantemente admirado, pois não podia pensar que este Jaga se esquesse tanto dos seus interesses, aponto de arriscar o seu Estado, e a sua propria vida, e so posso atribuir semelhantes respostas a algumas bebidas espirituozas que elle nessa ocasião teria tomado [...]”.

Once again, the *jaga's* response could only be explained as stemming from yet another round of *jeribita* drinking.

Kasanje did not suffer the military wrath of Angola and the Lunda, as had been threatened. Nevertheless, its pivotal position in the West Central African slave trade entered into a transitory phase. Luanda ordered the expatriate trading community to progressively withdraw from the great slave mart and to re-establish operations in marts closer to the *presídios* of Angola. And since textiles and other merchandise, such as *jeribita*, were the very items that “perpetuated” the Kasanje mart, governor Gama decided to disallow future transfers of trade goods there.<sup>61</sup> In short, the tap stopped flowing to Kasanje.

When, in 1812, the Kasanje mart resumed slave-trading with Luso-Brazilians and their *pombeiro* agents, this was done under a radically different Angola-Kasanje partnership. The mart was no longer officially sanctioned by Angola as the only one where transactions for slaves could take place. Rather, it was now only one of many marts in the interior accessible to coastal traders. Moreover, with Luanda having itself established direct contact with the court of the Mwaat-Yanv, the regional context too was quite different. The results of this new alliance would become only tangible later. But, in the interim, it did enable Luso-Brazilians and their agents to begin using Kasanje as a springboard into the large reservoirs of slaves further to the east. The middleman role of the Imbangala state had reached its end.

From this new reality followed a series of important developments. The huge quantities of trade goods, including *jeribita*, that had previously arrived in the Kasanje mart to be exchanged for captives subsequently diminished considerably. By the 1820s, some of the *jagas* even found themselves having to send slaves directly to the governors of Angola, who with the proceeds then bought for them the imported goods they sought.<sup>62</sup> This, in turn, led to a reduction in the amount of trade goods to which the *jagas* had access to. As shown by Joseph C. Miller, the kings of Kasanje used an important proportion of these imported goods to redistribute amongst notables and important subjects so as to better control, if not totally curtail, their decentralizing tendencies.<sup>63</sup> With the loss of their position as middlemen in the Angolan slave trade and limited access to foreign goods which this development engendered, the *jagas* found themselves increasingly unable to effectively control those tendencies. The end of Kasanje as an independent state was in sight.

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<sup>61</sup> ANA, Cód. 91, fl. 102v (Governador António de Saldanha da Gama para director da feira de Mucary e Bondo, Francisco Honorato da Costa, September 19, 1808).

<sup>62</sup> ANA, Cód. 95, fls. 53v-54 (Governador Christovão Avelino Dias para *jaga* Cassanje, January 3, 1824), shows 3 captives has having been sold on behalf of the king of Kasanje for 165\$000 *réis*; AHNA, Cód. 95, fls. 93v-94 (Governador Christovão Avelino Dias para *jaga* Cassanje, May 14, 1824), shows another five captives having been sold for 135\$000 *réis*.

<sup>63</sup> J. C. MILLER, “Confrontation on the Kwango”, art. cit.

#### 4. Conclusion

The impact of the large volumes of *jeribita* available in the great slave mart of Kasanje went beyond purely economic issues. By the late 1780s, it allowed the highest colonial administrators of Angola to develop an image of the *jagas* as measly drunken royal sots, no longer trustworthy as commercial partners. Once crystallized, this image in turn led Kasanje to lose its importance as an intermediary state in the Angolan export slave trade. Once the great slave mart was confronted with decreasing commercial activity and the *jagas* thereby lost access to the imported trade goods that were crucial to maintain control over their subjects, the kingdom then entered into a period of decadence and decentralization that culminated in 1850 with its conquest by Salles Ferreira's military expedition. The impact of *jeribita*, distilled in Brazil from the sugar cane produced by African slaves, many of whom had been acquired in Kasanje in exchange for this very spirit, was thus truly circular, evidencing well the multiple organic interconnections that had arisen between both of these landscapes separated by a vast ocean. Indeed, amongst the captives held for sale in the mart controlled by the *jagas*, those who survived the forced march to the coast, the stay in the overcrowded and filthy barracoons of Luanda, the no less difficult middle passage across the South Atlantic, and an infernal life in the sugar plantations of Brazil could well have thus found through the hands of the colonizer a certain justice, as ironic as it was sweet.

TABLE 1: Slave prices, slave exports, and *jeribita* imports (Luanda, 1740-1819)

Decade	Average slave prices (in réis)	Average slave exports (by decade)	Average <i>jeribita</i> imports (in pipas)
1740	17\$000	10,440	n.d.
1750	34\$000	10,180	n.d.
1760	42\$000	8,305	n.d.
1770	48\$000	7,574	n.d.
1780	53\$000	9,463	1,413
1790	59\$000	10,260	1,822
1800	61\$000	12,300	2,599
1810	72\$000	13,292	1,726

SOURCES: Joseph C. MILLER, "Slave Prices in the Portuguese Southern Atlantic, 1600-1830", in Paul E. Lovejoy (ed.), *Africans in Bondage: Studies in Slavery and the Slave Trade*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1986, pp. 54-61, for the first column; José C. CURTO, "A Quantitative Re-assessment of the Legal Portuguese Slave Trade from Luanda, Angola, 1710-1830", *African Economic History*, 20, 1992, pp. 1-25, for the second; J. C. CURTO, *Enslaving Spirits: The Portuguese-Brazilian Alcohol Trade at Luanda and its Hinterland, c. 1550-1830*, Leiden, Brill Academic Publishers, 2004, for the third.

TABLE 2: **Governors of Angola and *jagas* do Kasanje (1784-1816)**

Angola	Kasanje
Barão de Moçâmedes, 1784-1790	Kitamba kya Shiba, 1789
António de Vasconcellos, 1790-1797	Kasanje ka Ngunza
Miguel António de Mello, 1797-1802	Kalandula, 1795
Fernando António de Noronha, 1802-1806	Malange a Ngonga, 1805
António de Saldanha da Gama, 1807-1810	"Kwango" ???
José de Oliveira Barbosa, 1810-1816	Kitumba kya Ngonga, 1815

SOURCE: Joseph C. MILLER, "Kings, Lists, and History in Kasanje", *History in Africa*, 6, 1979, pp. 51-96.

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