

Dark Bullion: Quick Reference Guide

© 2025 Calvin Walker --- calvinwalk@gmail.com

Episode List

1. **A Portal to Oblivion** (14 min) - Ouidah 1685, Tree of Oblivion, European slave trading powers
2. **West African Peoples** (10 min) - Diversity of cultures: Yoruba, Fon, Mandé, Akan, and others
3. **Captive Markets** (15 min) - Mechanics of trade, methods of capture, witchcraft, Ganvié
4. **Paper Bulls** (13 min) - Religious justifications, Curse of Ham, church complicity, Vodou traditions
5. **Women of West Africa** (22 min) - Warriors, remarkable women leaders, woman marriage
6. **Inventory** (23 min) - Barracoons, systematic assessment, financial infrastructure, gold/slave parallels

Total Runtime: 97 minutes

Important Figures & Context

Episode 1: A Portal to Oblivion (October 1685)

1. **King James II of England** - Governor and chief stockholder of Royal African Company; previously branded enslaved people with "D-O-Y" as Duke of York
2. **Captain Henry Clarke** - Slave trader captain commanding the ship Prosperous for the Royal African Company
3. **King Louis XIV of France** - Established the Code Noir (Black Code), defining enslaved people as movable property

Episode 2: West African Peoples (17th Century)

1. **The Yoruba people** - Cultural/linguistic group from southwestern Nigeria with complex spiritual systems and art forms
2. **The Fon people** - Dominant ethnic group of Dahomey, traders and warriors of coastal kingdoms
3. **The Mandé peoples** - Merchants and scholars, descendants of Mali Empire; resisted European enslavement longer than coastal groups

Episode 3: Captive Markets (17th Century)

1. **The Tofinu people** - Built Ganvié water village on stilts since the 16th century to escape Fon slave raids (name means "we survived")
2. **African female merchants** - Present at markets, belonging to powerful trading families controlling flow of captives
3. **Victims of witchcraft accusations** - False accusations became a primary method of condemning people to slavery

Episode 4: Paper Bulls (15th-21st Centuries)

1. **Pope Innocent VIII** (late 15th century) - Received enslaved Africans as gift from Spanish monarchy, distributed among Cardinals
2. **Pope Alexander VI** (late 15th century) - His Papal Bulls validated colonization and lifelong bondage in the Americas
3. **Mawu-Lisa** - Dual-gendered creator deity in Fon Vodou belief; inspired gender equality in precolonial Dahomey

Episode 5: Women of West Africa (17th-18th Centuries)

1. **Queen Nzinga Mbande** (17th century) - Leader of Ndongo/Matamba who diplomatically and militarily resisted Portuguese colonization for decades; took title "King"
2. **Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita** (1684-1706) - Founded Antonianism movement proclaiming Jesus and saints were African; condemned enslavement of Congolese; burned at stake age 22
3. **Queen Agontimé** (late 17th-early 18th century) - Captured from Mahi people, became Dahomey queen, mother of King Ghezo; later enslaved and sent to Brazil where she became renowned Candomblé priestess

Episode 6: Inventory (1685 & 18th Century)

1. **Alexander Falconbridge** (late 18th century) - British surgeon who served on slaving voyages; documented brutal assessment practices and conditions in barracoons in his account of the slave trade
2. **Cape Coast Castle** - Major British fortress on Gold Coast (Ghana); dungeons redesigned to hold thousands; exemplifies transition from gold trading to human trafficking
3. **Bank of England** (founded 1694) - Provided commercial facilities for Atlantic slave trade; owned plantations as loan collateral; governors included slavers and plantation owners

Resources

Full Study Guide includes: Episode descriptions with key terms • Quiz questions • Discussion points • Essay questions • Detailed timeline • Complete glossary • Character biographies • Maps

Contact: calvinwalk@gmail.com

Series Website: calvinwalker.cc/dark-bullion