

# DARK BULLION: Quick Reference Guide

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## 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
7. **Meanwhile in Europe** (30 min) - Democratization of the trade: Dutch Republic, France, Britain; mass investment, supporting industries, Enlightenment contradictions

*Total Runtime: 127 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

### **Episode 7: Meanwhile in Europe (17th–18th Centuries)**

1. **Dutch West India Company** (chartered 1621) - Enabled ordinary citizens – clerks, shopkeepers, widows – to purchase shares in the slave trade; Dutch merchants in Curaçao brokered sale of hundreds of thousands of captives
2. **Antoine Crozat & the Montaudouin family** - Crozat, wealthiest man in France, directed the Compagnie de Guinée; built a home that became the Palais de l'Élysée. The Montaudouins outfitted 357 slave ships from Nantes
3. **Liverpool, Birmingham & Manchester** - Liverpool became Britain's dominant slave port after the RAC monopoly broke (1698); Birmingham produced shackles, chains, and firearms; Manchester's mills processed slave-grown cotton into cloth traded for more captives

### **Resources**

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

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**Series Website:** [calvinwalker.cc/dark-bullion](http://calvinwalker.cc/dark-bullion)