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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

DEADRIA FARMER-PAELLMANN,

and

RESTITUTION STUDY
GROUP, INC.,

on behalf of themselves
and all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Defendant.

Civil Case No. 1:22-cv-3048

DECLARATION OF DEADRIA FARMER-PAELLMANN IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFFS' EMERGENCY MOTION FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER
AND PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746(2), I declare as follows:

1. My name is Deadria Farmer-Paellmann and I am over the age of 18. I am the Executive Director of the Restitution Study Group, Inc. (RSG), a New York non-profit company concerned with slavery justice. Amongst our various projects, we conduct research to identify parties complicit in slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

2. I am a direct descendent of enslaved people from West Africa. My 23 & me DNA report shows my DNA ancestry at two ports controlled by the Kingdom of Benin during the transatlantic slave trade – Warri and Lagos. The report indicates over 27% of my DNA is from the area known today as Nigeria. My ancestors were enslaved in communities near Charleston, South

1 Carolina – the main port in the United States where people enslaved by the Benin Kingdom
2 disembarked and were sold.

3 3. On March 8, 2022, I read an article in the Washington Post explaining that the
4 Smithsonian Institution reached a decision to repatriate 39 Benin bronzes to Nigeria to be
5 displayed in a museum in Benin City -- the home of the Kingdom of Benin. This news was very
6 distressing because I learned through research as a law student in 1999, that the Benin kingdom
7 made the bronzes with melted manilla currency exchanged for people the kingdom captured and
8 sold into the transatlantic slave trade.¹

9 **BACKGROUND**

10 4. In my capacity as Executive Director of the RSG, on March 12, 2022, I emailed
11 Ngairé Blankenberg, the Director of the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of African Art.
12 In the letter, I advised her that the Smithsonian Institute's decision to return the Benin bronzes
13 excluded an interested party – people like me who are descendants of the Africans enslaved and
14 sold into transatlantic slavery by the Benin kingdom in exchange for manillas melted down to
15 make the bronzes. Upon research, information and belief, the Benin kingdom made the bronzes
16 with melted manilla currency exchanged for people the kingdom captured and sold into the
17 Transatlantic slave trade.

18 5. Professor Raymond Winbush, Director of the Institute for Urban Research at
19 Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland, and author of two books on reparations for the
20 Transatlantic slave trade, *Should America Pay? Slavery and the Raging Debate on Reparations*
21 and *Belinda's Petition: A Concise History of Reparations for the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, wrote

¹ A manilla is a metal bracelet or armlet formerly used as a medium of exchange in West Africa.

1 an email, appended as **Exhibit 1**, to the Secretary and Director of the Smithsonian Lonnie Bunch,
2 and Associate General Counsel for the Smithsonian Institution Craig Blackwell, registering his
3 support for the co-ownership of the Benin bronzes with descendants of enslaved Africans whose
4 lives financed the making of these cultural artifacts. His email referenced a 2018 book entitled,
5 *The Benin Monarchy: An Anthology of Benin History*, by Oba Ewuare II Foundation 2018, p.205,
6 in which there is an admission by the Kingdom of Benin that they made the Benin bronzes using
7 manillas they were paid in exchange for people they enslaved. This, they say, started with their
8 trade with the Portuguese in the 16th century. Their slave trading for manillas lasted for 300 years
9 and included British, Dutch, and American slave traders. The kingdom stopped trading men and
10 only traded women in the 17th century, but resumed trading both genders in the 18th century and
11 continued until the Punitive Expedition of 1897. Professor Winbush referenced a book written by
12 Alan Ryder entitled *Benin and the Europeans 1485-1897*, 1969, p.40 & p.302, in which it is stated
13 that the typical price that Europeans paid the kingdom for an enslaved man was 57 manillas, but
14 they paid the kingdom 50 manillas for women. Professor Winbush referenced the Transatlantic
15 slave trade database which indicates that at least 1 million people are believed to have been
16 enslaved by the Kingdom of Benin during this 300-year period. Furthermore, the database
17 indicates that in the United States, most were enslaved in South Carolina where they were bred to
18 increase their numbers. Professor Winbush indicates that today, 82% of Jamaicans and other
19 Caribbeans, and 93% of the 40 million African Americans have DNA from enslaved ancestors
20 from Nigeria.

21 6. Dr. Ibrahima Seck, a Professor of History at Université Cheikh Anta Diop located
22 in Dakar, Senegal, wrote a letter to me, appended as **Exhibit 2**, giving his professional opinion
23 into the relationship between the Kingdom of Benin and the transatlantic slave trade. In the letter

1 he opined that the Kingdom of Benin, located to the west of the lower Niger River valley in what
2 is today Nigeria, connected to the Atlantic through various tributaries of the Niger River, the most
3 important being the Forcados River. In the eighteenth century, Benin also controlled the lagoons
4 to the west of the Niger delta as far as Lagos. The Kingdom of Benin was a major exporter of
5 captives in the sixteenth century. Although substantially cut off in the second half of this century,
6 the traffic resumed in the late seventeenth century and peaked in the eighteenth century. The main
7 buyers were the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, and the English traders. The exact number of
8 captives leaving Benin over the course of the slave trade is not known, but the Transatlantic slave
9 trade database indicates a number of 308 voyages that took 103,000 captives from the Kingdom
10 of Benin to the Americas. The principal places of purchase were the Benin river, Aghway, Lagos,
11 Onim, Oere, and Rio Forcados. The principal places of landing were Brazil, the Caribbean,
12 Mainland North America, Spanish Mainland America, and Europe. Dr. Seck asserts that these
13 numbers are certainly below the reality. The Benin Empire and its kings were the mightiest powers
14 on the eastern slave coast. For over 200 years powerful Benin Kings captured human beings
15 through warfare. The most important imports during this period were bracelet-shaped brass
16 manillas, that were used as a currency. The brass manillas were also melted down and fashioned
17 into the extensive collection of plaques, statutes, and other items that were important symbols
18 associated with Benin kingship and ritual life in the kingdom. The well-known Benin Bronzes
19 were, indeed, cast with the proceeds of the transatlantic slave trade. By the year 1517, a slave price
20 had risen up to 57 brass bracelets (manillas). After the British invasion of the Benin Empire in
21 1897, 10,000 objects were looted (including bronze plaques and sculptures, and other valuable
22 objects) and taken away.

1 7. Professor Paul E. Lovejoy FRSC, a distinguished research professor at York
2 University and the Canada Research Chair in African Diaspora History, wrote a letter to me,
3 appended as **Exhibit 3**, giving his professional opinion into the relationship between the Kingdom
4 of Benin and the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In his letter he asserts that, as is well known, the
5 Kingdom of Benin was one of the first indigenous states in West Africa that came into contact
6 with merchants coming from western Europe, first the Portuguese and later Dutch, British and
7 French. The Kingdom traces its origins to the 12th and 13th centuries, and its history connects the
8 country closely with the history of the Yoruba to the west and the Igbo to the east. Benin was and
9 is located to the west of the lower Niger River valley with ports on the Atlantic in the Niger River
10 delta, and should not be confused with the modern Republique du Benin, with which it has no
11 direct connection. The Kingdom of Benin was connected to the western Niger delta via various
12 tributaries of the Niger River, the most important being the Forcados River with its links to Warri.
13 Until the late 18th century, Benin also controlled the lagoons to the west of the Niger delta as far
14 as Lagos. While the exact number of enslaved Africans leaving Benin over the course of the slave
15 trade is not known, it is known that one of the most important imports from Europe during the
16 period was brass manillas, which are bracelet-shaped items that were used locally in Benin and
17 areas to the west as a currency. The brass manillas were also melted down and fashioned into the
18 extensive collection of plaques, statues, and other items that were important symbols associated
19 with Benin kingship and ritual life in the kingdom.

20 8. In an article written by David Frum, *Who Benefits When Western Museums Return*
21 *Looted Art?*, THE ATLANTIC, September 14, 2022, Frum noted that after the Punitive Expedition
22 of 1897, at least 3,000 Benin artworks are now owned by public museums or held in private
23 collections around the world, especially in Britain, Germany, and the United States. Furthermore,

1 Frum noted that Nigerians have long demanded the return of the artworks, and in 2007, a
2 consortium of Western museums joined Nigerians in a “Benin Dialogue Group” to open
3 discussions about repatriation. The dialogue moved slowly for a decade until the George Floyd
4 protests of 2020 jolted the group into hyperactivity. Entities in possession of the artworks, such as
5 the German government and the Jesus College at the University of Cambridge, have begun
6 surrendering Benin objects back to Nigerian authorities. The Smithsonian Institution, which is in
7 possession of 39 Benin Bronzes, has pledged to give most of its collection to a museum in modern-
8 day Benin City. Frum noted that these pledges intensified the uncertainty about what exactly is
9 being pledged, asking what does it mean to return an object “to Nigeria,” and what will happen
10 once the objects get there?

11 9. On or about March 12, 2022, I sent a letter to Ngairé Blankenberg, the Director of
12 the Smithsonian Institute’s National Museum of African Art. In the letter, I told her that their
13 decision to return the Benin bronzes excluded an interested party – people like me who are
14 descendants of the Africans enslaved and sold into transatlantic slavery by the Benin kingdom in
15 exchange for manillas melted down to make the bronzes. I urged her to change the Smithsonian’s
16 transfer plan and include all the proper beneficiaries as owners of the Benin bronze treasures. I
17 asked that the Smithsonian hold them in trust for Nigeria and the DNA descendants of enslaved
18 people from the region. In addition, I offered to share documents with her to verify the source of
19 the metal that made the bronzes. I further asked for a meeting to discuss the matter.

20 10. On March 13, 2022, I sent a similar letter to the Smithsonian Institution
21 Director/Secretary Lonnie Bunch, and the full Board of Regents Members including Vice
22 President Kamala Harris and Chief U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Roberts, Jr. They never
23 responded.

1 11. On March 14, 2022, Ngaire Blankenberg responded to the email sent to her. She
2 said her assistant would call to set up a meeting with me. Later that day, her Special Assistant
3 Kristine Juncker, PhD, called to set up a zoom meeting. During this call she expressed that they
4 were glad to hear from me and that I should keep expressing my concern.

5 12. On March 15, 2022, I confirmed the zoom meeting date of April 5 via email, and
6 asked Ms. Blankenburg not to transfer the bronzes before that date. I asked that the Board of
7 Regents put a hold on the transfer of the relics until the issue of the DNA descendants being
8 designated as co-owners be resolved. I also asked for information on any official procedure to
9 inquire with the Board of Regents on the matter. Ms. Blankenberg did not share any information
10 about such procedure.

11 13. On March 19, 2022, I sent a letter with the list of my counsel who would attend the
12 meeting with me.

13 14. On March 20, 2022, Ms. Blankenberg asked why I invited lawyers. She said that if
14 I was expecting more from the meeting, she would need to invite her General Counsel. She also
15 expressed a preference for meeting without counsel at this stage and that she did not think it was
16 necessary.

17 15. On March 28, 2022, the meeting took place on this day at the request of Ms.
18 Blankenberg. I attended without counsel. Ms. Blankenberg and her museum Archivist, Amy
19 Staples, attended the meeting. I explained to them that the reason for our co-ownership claim is
20 because the Benin bronzes were made with manillas exchanged for our enslaved ancestors. Ms.
21 Blankenberg said she did not know that the Benin bronzes had any connection to the transatlantic
22 slave trade or slavery. Ms. Staples nodded yes in agreement with Ms. Blankenberg. Ms.
23 Blankenberg said she never heard of a manilla. I described manillas as small c-shaped metal

bracelets. Ms. Staples responded saying she thinks she saw a manilla depicted in a Benin bronze, but she did not know what it was. Ms. Blankenberg insisted that the bronzes in their collection have nothing to do with the slave trade and she doubts that anyone could prove otherwise. I told them both that it is hard to believe they don't know about the slave trade origin of the relics because nearly any book about the Benin bronzes includes something about this history. I told them extensive scholarship exists on the matter and that I would get it to them.

16. During the March 28, 2022, meeting, I expressed concern over the safety of the bronzes in Nigeria where there was a report of a repatriated bronze being sold to a private collector in the West. Ms. Blankenberg expressed that as an African national, she finds it offensive that people think Africans can't manage their own artifacts. She said that she took the bronzes down when she took charge of the museum and that if they were going to be owned by anyone besides Nigeria, she would not rehang them. I asked if the Board of Regents would need to vote on the transfer. She said she has exclusive authority to transfer them, and she planned to transfer them to Nigeria, but if they have a certain monetary value, the Board will have to vote to transfer. Ms. Staples said they don't place monetary value on the bronzes because they are priceless cultural artifacts. I told them that one *Oba* head sculpture sold for \$13 million in 2016, so the bronzes have immense value. I asked for the process to get a vote from the Board of Regents. They did not give an answer.

17. After the meeting, I gathered all the top scholar books on the Benin bronzes to draft a memo to Ms., Blankenberg. When I reviewed, "Royal Art of Benin: In the Collection of the National Museum of African Art," by Byrna Freyer, Smithsonian, 1987, p54, a book by Ms. Blankenberg's museum, I found excerpts that said the bronzes were made with manillas from the slave trade:

1 The oba controlled foreign trade. While guns were desired imports, the trade currency was
2 often the manilla, a C-shaped metal ingot that came in a range of sizes and weights. The
3 bracelet like form on the base by the figure's right heel is a variant of the standard shape.
4 At first made of copper, most manillas were later made of brass. They were melted for use
5 in art objects or worn as regalia. In 1517, a single ship brought thirteen thousand manillas
6 to Benin. Forty-five manillas were traded for an eighty-pound tusk and fifty-seven for a
7 slave (Ryder 1969, 40, 53).

8 Ibid. p43.

9 The increased availability of previously scarce copper and brass after contact with the
10 Portuguese is often cited to explain the increase in Benin artistic production of metal
11 objects such as plaques.

12 18. Then I checked the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art's website and
13 saw entries acknowledging that the bronzes were made with metal ingots from the slave trade.

14 The half figures depict Portuguese. Trade between Benin and Portugal increased the wealth
15 and power of the oba and his court and provided the ingots that were recast into art such as
16 this plaque.²

17 19. At this point I grew concerned that something was seriously wrong with the
18 information conveyed to me by Ms. Blankenberg and Ms. Staples at the March 28th meeting.

19 20. On May 16, 2022, we followed-up with Ms. Blankenberg for the status of the 39
20 bronzes in their collection and shared the slave trade origin cites and quotes with her. She
21 responded via email the same day inviting my organization to collaborate with her and expressed
22 she would be happy to collaborate with our historian or curator to help develop future exhibits
23 around the Benin bronzes. She did not give an update on the transfer of the bronzes. Craig
24 Blackwell, of their General Counsel's office, was copied on Ms. Blankenberg's email.

25 21. On May 23, 2022, we followed up to give her the names and contact information
26 for our historian, curator, and genealogist. I also asked for help meeting with Nigeria on the co-

² Accessed at: https://collections.si.edu/search/detail/edanmdm:nmafa_82-5-3?q=%22Benin+kingdom+court+style%22&record=25&hlterm=%26quot%3BBenin%2Bkingdom%2Bcourt%2Bstyle%26quot%3B.

1 ownership issue. Also, I expressed that a foundation was offering \$300 million to help us reach a
2 shared resolution. Ms. Blankenberg never responded. Craig Blackwell was copied on the email.

3 22. On June 15, 2022, I followed up with Ms. Blankenberg by email and asked about
4 the latest story in the news about the Smithsonian Board of Regents voting to transfer 29 of the 39
5 Benin bronzes to Nigeria. I asked her a few questions: *1. Will the Smithsonian grant co-ownership*
6 *of the bronzes to DNA descendants? 2. Did the Board of Regents get the proof of slave trade origin*
7 *we gave her before they voted to transfer the bronzes? 3. What will become of the 10 bronzes they*
8 *are not transferring to Nigeria? and 4. When will the meetings start to plan future exhibits?* Craig
9 Blackwell was copied on the email.

10 23. On July 28, 2022, Ms. Blankenberg responded saying her organization would let
11 us know when they need us for exhibit planning. She said that the transfer of the bronzes will be
12 exclusively to Nigeria's National Commission of Museums and Monuments. She said that more
13 research was needed to link the Benin bronzes in question to the transatlantic slave trade and to
14 make the case that their bronzes were made specifically from manillas exchanged for humans. She
15 then suggested that the role of the Kingdom of Benin in the slave trade is less documented than
16 other African kingdoms and that confusion was being perpetuated about the Benin kingdom's role
17 in slavery. This message was copied to Craig Blackwell.

18 24. On July 29, 2022, we responded asking how they reached their decision and inviting
19 them to do a joint effort of due diligence with the Restitution Study Group. We also told them that
20 top scholarship on the Benin bronzes differs from their conclusion. We did not get into details.

21 25. On August 10, 2022, we sent an email to Ms. Blankenberg asking the Smithsonian
22 Institution to reconsider its decision in light of the fact that news was finally breaking on our co-

ownership request. The world would learn about the unjust transfers and the Smithsonian would be on the wrong side of history. No one responded.

26. On August 20, 2022, we sent an email to Ms. Blankenberg giving her the update on the unstable safety conditions in Nigeria and particularly Benin City, the place where the Smithsonian bronzes would be returned. Twenty bodies had just been found in a ritual shrine appearing to be subjects of human sacrifice. The Oba of Benin issued a letter suspending his Ezomo, War Chief, who was the supervisor of the town. The reason for the suspension was anti-Palace activities. The sacking order letter was dated for August 8th, 2022, the week before the story about the corpses broke in the news, but the suspension was supposed to have happened in January 2022.

27. On September 29, 2022, I called the Smithsonian's General Counsel's office. No answer. We sent a follow-up email to Craig Blackwell inquiring about the status of our complaint. The letter stated as follows:

Greetings Mr. Blackwell,

What is the status of our complaint against the transfer of the Smithsonian collection of Benin bronzes to Nigeria? We know there is a ceremony scheduled for October 11, 2022, for the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art to transfer the bronzes to Nigeria. ¹ Based on our communications with Ngaire Blankenberg, Director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, it is clear that this transfer is happening under fraudulent circumstances. Attached please find her most recent statement dated July 28, 2022, regarding the ability to determine if the bronzes in the Smithsonian collection come from slave trade manillas. You will also see my follow-up letter dated May 16, 2022, to which she is responding. This slave trade origin is a critical factor in transferring the bronzes. To ignore this origin would allow transfer of the bronzes without considering beneficiaries who have registered a timely co-ownership claim -- slave descendants -- as beneficiaries that the Smithsonian must consider before finalizing repatriation. Indeed, we registered our claim before a final repatriation agreement was signed with Nigeria. We sent follow-up email to Craig Blackwell for status of our complaint. Ms. Blankenberg's statement in the attached letter is absolutely fraudulent. The slave trade origin of the bronzes is a settled matter. ² The Benin Kingdom's own admission that the bronzes made from the 16th century and after,

1 are made from manillas they were paid for enslaved people they sold into the
2 transatlantic slave trade, is published in their 2018 book Benin Monarchy.³

3 We believe the Board of Regents was misled into approving the transfer of the
4 bronzes. Certainly, if Ms. Blankenberg's fraudulent statement was provided to the
5 Board of Regents, which includes Vice President Kamala Harris, and Chief
6 Supreme Court Justice John Roberts, the potential transfer would be illegal and
7 must be stopped.

8 We have shared other proof of the slave trade origin of the Benin bronzes with Ms.
9 Blankenberg from a Smithsonian Institution book, from the Smithsonian's Benin
10 bronze website entries, and from the top scholars on the Benin bronzes^{4, 5, 6} -- see
11 the attached letter. She chooses to ignore these facts and pretend the origin cannot
12 be determined or linked to the bronzes in the Smithsonian collection.

13 Ms. Blankenberg seems to be pursuing her own pro-Africa agenda at the expense
14 of American citizens, and African American and Caribbean descendants of
15 enslaved people who helped make the bronzes by paying for them with their lives.
16 We heirs of the enslaved are still paying for these bronzes with our sufferings due
17 to race discrimination born out of our status as descendants of enslaved people.

18 What are you and the Inspector General doing to stop this fraudulent transfer? What
19 is the status of your investigation? We need a letter from you verifying that the
20 transfer will be stopped until the actual facts are reviewed. We want co-ownership
21 declared and an agreement drawn up to verify details of the co-ownership
22 relationship. Included should be that we exercise all rights of owner beneficiaries.
23 This would include rights to exhibit and transfer fees and payments; educational,
24 internship, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities associated with the
25 bronzes, etc.

26 We ask that you stop this transfer and meet with us to work out a co-ownership
27 arrangement. Our children have a right to see the bronzes where they live today due
28 to the enslavement of our ancestors. Transferring them all to Nigeria, to the heirs
29 of the people responsible for our enslavement and genocidal loss of African
30 nationality and homelands, is an act of discrimination and intentional infliction of
31 emotional distress.

32 Any bronze from the 1500s to 1800s in the Smithsonian collection belongs to
33 descendants of enslaved Africans with DNA from the region called Nigeria -- 93%
34 African Americans, 82% Jamaicans and other Caribbeans identified by DNA
35 research by 23 & Me.⁷ These bronzes are clearly identified in your collection.⁸
36 Further, research by metal experts verify the European origin of alloys in the
37 bronzes with manillas from the Portuguese and later European slave traders.⁹

38 This is an urgent matter that requires urgent action to secure justice. We will be left
39 with no other option but to pursue more aggressive legal action. We prefer to not

1 go that route and settle this amicably as you have attempted with Nigerian
2 stakeholders.

3 Thank you for your attention.

4 Sincerely,
5 Deadria Farmer-Paellmann, J.D., M.A.
6 Executive Director
7 Restitution *Study Group*

8 28. On the afternoon of October 6, 2022, Kevin Gover of the Smithsonian Institution emailed
9 me, stating:

10 I am the Undersecretary for Museums and Culture at the Smithsonian Institution.
11 This message responds to your inquiry about “what has the Smithsonian decided
12 to do with the Benin Bronzes?” In April 2022, the Smithsonian adopted a policy
13 on ethical returns. Pursuant to the process provided under that policy and the
14 National Museum of African Art’s collections management policy, it was decided
15 that certain Benin bronzes in the collections of the Smithsonian be deaccessioned.
16 Those deaccessioned items will be returned to the Federal Government of Nigeria,
17 through its National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

18 We know that you have a different perspective regarding to whom these works
19 should be returned. While we understand your position, the Smithsonian has
20 made its decision, and that decision is consistent with our policy and reflects the
21 best judgment of our museum professionals and others charged with management
22 and stewardship of our collections.

23 29. As a direct descendant of enslaved people whose lives were sold for the metals
24 represented in the bronzes in the Smithsonian collection, I am extremely concerned that if the
25 Smithsonian Institution is allowed to transfer the bronzes to parties who are descendants of the
26 very people who were complicit in slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, I and similarly
27 situated descendent of enslaved people from West Africa will be irreparably harmed when title to
28 the Bronzes is transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Bronzes are allowed to leave
29 the United States.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Executed on: October 7, 2022

/s/ Deadria Farmer-Paellmann
Deadria Farmer-Paellmann

RESTITUTION STUDY GROUP, INC.

By: /s/ Deadria Farmer-Paellmann
Deadria Farmer-Paellmann
Its: Executive Director

EXHIBIT 1



Benin Bronzes

1 message

Raymond Winbush <raywinbush@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 14, 2022 at 3:55 PM

Reply-to: RAYMOND WINBUSH <Raymond.Winbush@morgan.edu>

To: Chair@charitycommission.com, Ceo@charitycommission.com, BunchL@si.edu, BlackwellC@si.edu, Poststelle@bkm.bund.de

Cc: rsgincorp1@gmail.com, Ray Winbush <raywinbush@gmail.com>

Honorable Orlando Fraser QC
Chair, Charity Commission
Chair@charitycommission.com

Honorable Helen Stephenson, CBE
CEO, Charity Commission
Ceo@charitycommission.com

Honorable Lonnie Bunch
Secretary and Director
Smithsonian Institution
BunchL@si.edu

Craig Blackwell, Esq.
Associate General Counsel
Smithsonian Institution
BlackwellC@si.edu

Honorable Mrs. Claudia Roth
Minister of State for Culture and the Media
Poststelle@bkm.bund.de
Fax: 0049 30 1868153608

Dear Madams and Sirs,

I am Professor Raymond Winbush, Director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University in Baltimore Maryland, USA, one of 102 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the United States. I am also the author of two books on reparations for the transatlantic trade, [Should America Pay? Slavery and the Raging Debate on Reparations](#) and [Belinda's Petition: A Concise History of Reparations for the Transatlantic Slave Trade](#). I am writing to you to register my support, and that of other Professors, Clergy, and experts listed below, for the co-ownership of the Benin bronzes with descendants of enslaved Africans whose lives financed the making of these cultural artifacts.

We are aware of the fact that in the 2018 book entitled, *The Benin Monarchy: An Anthology of Benin History*, by Oba Ewuare II Foundation 2018, p205, there is an admission by the Kingdom of Benin that they made the Benin bronzes using manillas they were paid in exchange for people they enslaved. This, they say, started with their trade with the Portuguese in the 16th century. Their slave trading for manillas lasted for 300 years and included British, Dutch, and American slave traders. The kingdom stopped trading men and only traded women in the 17th century. They resumed trading both genders in the 18th century and continued until the Punitive Expedition of 1897. Alan Ryder, in his book, *Benin and the Europeans 1485-1897*, 1969, p40, says the typical price that Europeans paid the kingdom for an enslaved man was 57 manillas, but they paid the kingdom 50 manillas for women. p302.

The Transatlantic slave trade database and a recent article entitled "Remelted Slave Money," in the *Sächsische.DE*, on August, 29, 2022, by Matthias Busse, indicates that at least 1 million people are believed to have been enslaved by the kingdom of Benin during this 300 year period. Most of these people ended up working to death in Jamaica and other Caribbean colonies. In the United States, most were enslaved in South Carolina where they were bred to increase their numbers. Today, 82% of Jamaicans and other Caribbeans, and 93% of the 40 million African Americans have DNA from enslaved ancestors from Nigeria.

We are keenly aware of the issues pertaining to the return of the Benin bronzes. We support the people of Nigeria in their desire to repatriate precious cultural property. We also support the retention of bronzes at Western museums where, due to the transatlantic slave trade, descendants of enslaved people who paid for the bronzes reside.

Considering the volume of the Benin bronzes, circa 2,500 - 10,000, we believe there are enough to share with both groups. Certainly, the descendants of the slave traders should not be the exclusive owners. The children of the enslaved need access to them too. They also need education, employment and business opportunities involving the Benin bronzes.

We know that you have an interest in serving justice and we see this as an opportunity to address 2 historical wrongs at once: slavery and colonialism. Both are equally wrong, equally connected to the bronzes, and sharing can help bring about healing to both groups.

Below please find other leaders of descendants of enslaved Africans and others who support co-ownership. We are available should you need our further input toward resolving this issue or to coordinate educational, employment and business efforts around the world related to the Benin bronzes.

Thank you kindly for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

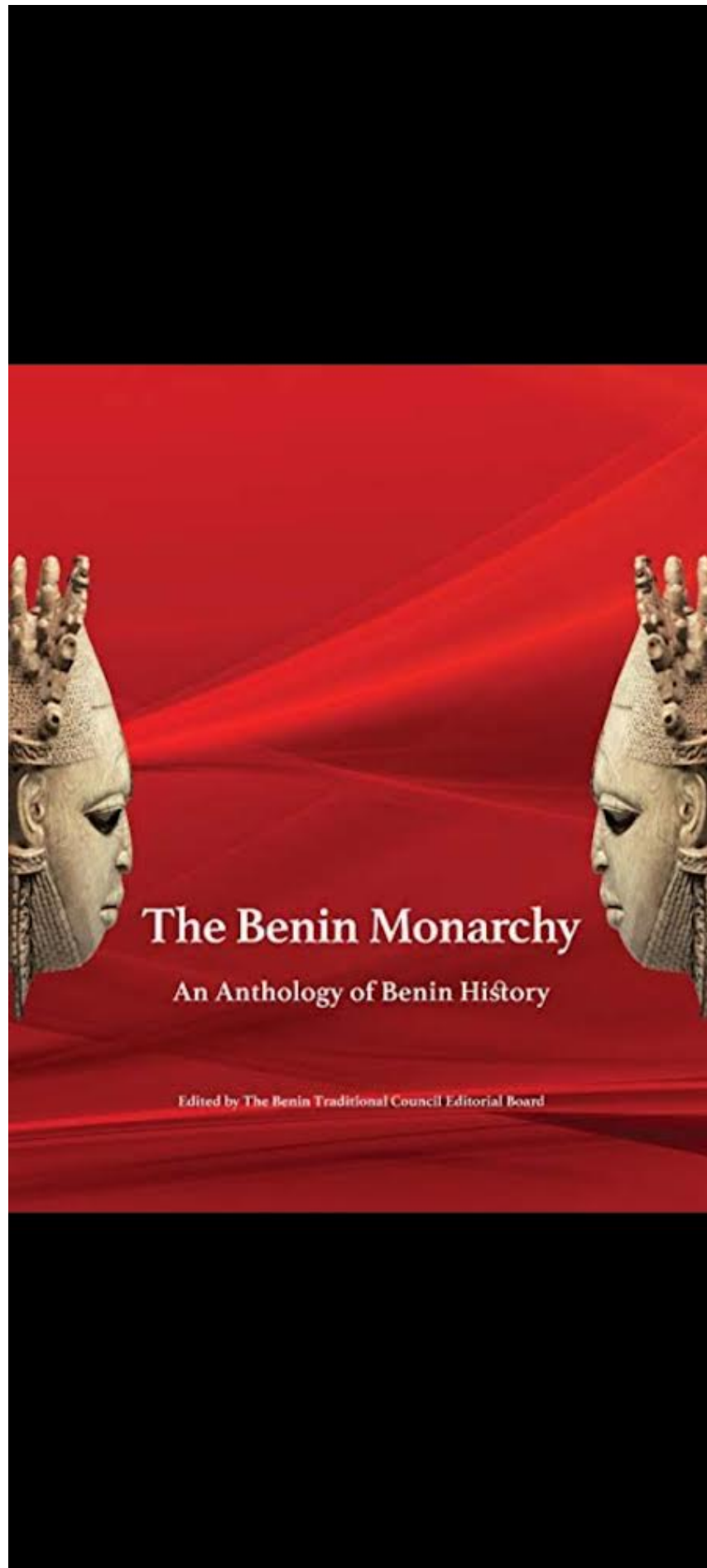
Raymond A. Winbush, Ph.D.
Director, Institute for Urban Research
Morgan State University
Baltimore, Maryland

SIGNATORIES

Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright, Pastor Emeritus
Trinity United Church of Christ
Chicago, Illinois

Kamm Howard, Executive Director
Reparations United
Chicago, Illinois

Rev. JoAnn Watson, Former Member
Detroit City Council and City Council President Pro Tem
Former Public Liaison Congressman, John Conyers
Detroit, Michigan



The Benin Monarchy

An Anthology of Benin History

Edited by The Benin Traditional Council Editorial Board

Barbora Půtová
Václav Soukup
Joseph Nevadomsky

Benin Royal Art: Artistic and Hand-Crafted Artefacts

The year 1897 marked the entrance of Benin art into European consciousness and the start of the academic study of brass and ivory objects taken from the kingdom by a British punitive expedition that conquered the kingdom and exiled the king. The loot, booty, theft or pillage—the nomenclature depends on one's political stance—was astonishing. Among the horde of nearly 4,000 confiscated objects were relief plaques and commemorative heads and busts. There were superbly carved ivory tusks that until recently defied any definitive interpretation. The relief plaques seemed more amenable to interpretations as examples of important palace life and crucial events of war and expansion, but early curiosity was stoked by the reluctance to give credit where it was due, that is, to the local inhabitants and artists. Some of the artists were organised into guilds or associations with links to kingship, an organised bureaucracy and a highly refined system of political organisation that in many respects recalls a parliamentary or presidential system, complete with checks and balances. It was a wonderful system that allowed for the supremacy of a king, and the myth of a king from outside invited to rule, with kingship hedged in by a group of kingmakers, palace and town chiefs, an early city organised into productive guilds and a strong apparatus for waging war under war chiefs.

It soon became clear to Europeans that their narrative around Benin art was flawed, and that the plaques and heads were part of a local art form, and a legacy of brass-casting and ivory-carving that was more than 500 years old, and coincided with the consolidation of kingship and the expansion of the kingdom under three significant kings—Ewuare, Ozolua and Esigie—who have come to be known as the Warrior Kings.

The kingdom of Benin became famous for the production of brass artefacts by members of the guild of brass casters (*Igun Ironmwon*). This guild ranked very highly among the other Benin guilds, and ritual, spiritual and aesthetic values were attributed to their output (Barnes, 1997). The royal palace in Benin constituted a strongbox of artistic works, among which two types of artefacts dominated—brass plaques and memorial heads. Even though the adjective 'bronze' was until recently used to describe Benin metal artefacts, or 'Benin bronze/brass', in fact the brass objects are composed of an alloy of

copper, lead, zinc, tin and other metals. The metal composition has changed over centuries in the kingdom of Benin; however, these four metals have remained the essential alloy components (Dark, 1973; Scott, 2002; Nevadomsky-Půtová-Soukup, 2014). The origin of the technique *cire perdue* ('lost wax'), which was used for producing these objects, has been the subject of scientific discussion and controversy. The lost wax technique is relatively complex, and the production of artistic artefacts requires experience and considerable skill. Europeans originally attributed a non-African origin to Benin bronzes (Buchner, 1908; Crabtree, 1909). Later, however, it was accepted that these works and their method of manufacture were the result of an original African tradition, as art historical and archaeological research has shown the existence of artistic metalworking in West Africa before the arrival of Europeans in Igbo-Ukwu or Ife (Reid and Dalton, 1899; Luschan, 1910; Craddock, 1985; Okpewho, 1988). Copper and brass were originally imported from the mines to the south of the Sahara, but towards the close of the fifteenth century, migrating Arab tribes penetrated inland up to the territory of present-day Chad and broke the traditional trade routes heading towards West Africa. The role of metal importers to the kingdom of Benin was taken over by the Portuguese, who traded imported metal in the form of bracelets (*mamillas*) for slaves, spices and ivory in the sixteenth century (Olaniran-Sweet, 2010; Půtová-Nevadomsky, 2016).

According to oral tradition, the lost wax technique reached the kingdom of Benin from the city of Ife in Yorubaland. Oba Oguola (1274–1287) asked the king of the kingdom of Ife to send him a metalworker who would be able to teach the palace craftsmen to make brass artefacts. Accordingly, a metalworker named Igueghae arrived. The king of Benin gave Igueghae credit for spreading metal-casting technology, and he was appointed the senior member (*he n'Igun*) of the guild of brass casters. From the moment Igueghae became the head of the guild of brass casters, all Benin brass casters symbolically considered themselves his descendants (Egharevba, 1968; Dark, 1973; Ezra, 1992; Půtová-Soukup, 2014). The members of the guild of brass casters were divided into three different groups, according to age. The first group (*Iroghae*) consisted of teenage boys

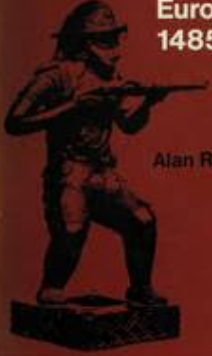
Fig. 1 The front of a human head. Brass, using lost wax technique.

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Blackwell History Series

**Benin
and the
Europeans
1485-1897**

Alan Ryder



give some idea of the nature and quantity of the merchandise that the Portuguese brought to Benin. During his twenty months as factor Bastiam Fernandez, for example, received manillas, cloth, beads and caps, besides a number of articles evidently meant for the use of the establishment. Manillas, of which he had 12,750, were mostly expended on slaves. In Pacheco Pereira's time a slave had cost between 12 and 15 manillas, but that price moved steadily upwards to reach 57 manillas in 1517.¹ Benin had also shifted its preference for copper manillas in the earlier years of the trade to those made of brass, though 7,991 of the copper variety were sent to Ughoton as late as 1505.² An increased use of brass in *cire perdue* casting may have influenced the change, and it is perhaps significant that tradition credits Oba Esigie with the improvement of brass-casting in Benin at a time when the metal would have become available in quantities sufficient to permit experimentation and continuous production.³

The amount of cloth supplied to Fernandez was relatively small, and seems to have been consumed mainly in customary presents to Benin chiefs, interpreters, and other officials who administered trade with the Europeans. It comprised 128 yards of coloured cloth, 52 yards of linen, 16 yards of fustian, 31 yards of a cloth known as *studilha*, and 22 yards of Indian Cambay cloth. Coral and glass beads were imported in large quantities, amounting, for the twenty months in question, to 44 $\frac{3}{8}$ ounces of barrel-shaped coral beads (the most valuable variety), 33,844 pieces of small coral, 97 strings of glass beads, 28,969 loose glass beads, two strings of red beads fashioned from bone, and 84 large enamelled ones. The headgear, consisting of 37 caps dyed in grain and 12 coloured hats, was clearly destined for the adornment of chiefs; likewise the 32 horse-tails which the *Casa da Mina* had purchased especially for the Benin trade in the time of Duarte Lopes.⁴ Dapper explained in the following century that horse-tails were symbols of authority.⁵

¹ A.T.T. *Corpo Cronológico* I, *maço* 22, no. 70. 24 August 1517. This was the price in large manillas; the price of a slave in a smaller manilla, known as the Flemish manilla, varied from 80 to 90.

² A.T.T. *Núcleo Antigo*, *maço* 166, f. 369r. ³ cf. Egharevba, *A Short History*, p. 30. ⁴ A.T.T. *Núcleo Antigo*, *maço* 166, f. 35v.

⁵ Dapper, *Naukeurige Beschrijvinge*, p. 127. In the seventeenth century the tails adorned the caps of war chiefs.

Benin and the Europeans

And the total of coris that were purchased amounted to one thousand, four hundred and thirty coris

item. The pilot bought two manillas of osiers.

Account of the pieces that were bought with manillas.

item.¹ On the 25th day of the month of June the pilot bought a female piece aged 16 years more or less for 50 manillas 50 manillas

Account of the pieces that were bought for cowries.

item.² On the fourth day of the month of July the pilot bought a female piece aged 19 years more or less for seven goats³ and three chickens—sc— 7 goats 3 chickens
three large and four small

Account of the pieces that were bought on private account with the King's merchandise.

item. The pilot bought one female piece on behalf of Pedro ship's boy in the ship São Miguel

item.⁴ The pilot bought one female piece for the hospital⁵ for 20 customary yards.

Account of the pieces that the pilot bought on private account with private merchandise.

item. The pilot bought for Fernão Dyames sailor of the ship São Miguel a male piece with his allowances and merchandise for which he owes a quarter and a twentieth to the King 1 piece

item. The pilot bought for Gaspar da Gama, a freedman and ship's boy of the ship São Miguel, a female piece with his allowances and merchandise, for which he owes a quarter and a twentieth to the King 1 piece

item.⁶ The pilot bought for Francisco, ship's boy of the ship São Miguel and slave of Jorge Vaz, a female piece with his allowances and the merchandise of the said pilot for which he owes a quarter and a twentieth to the King 1 piece

1 Sixteen similar items are omitted. The seventeen slaves bought under this heading cost in all 840 manillas.

2 Twenty-nine similar items are omitted.

3 For these units of the cowry currency *vide* p61. *supra*.

4 In all five slaves were bought in this manner.

5 The hospital of São Tomé was founded by royal decree in 1504, and it was entitled to receive six slaves each year from the royal factor.

6 In all fourteen slaves were bought in this manner. Each crew member was permitted to take one, on payment of royal dues. Those bought on behalf of the slaves among the crew—there were three of these—would of course belong to the slaves' masters.

EXHIBIT 2

Dr. Ibrahima Seck
Professor of History
Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar Senegal
Department of History
birimaseck@hotmail.com
504-913-2887

To Deadria Farmer-Paellmann Executive Director Restitution Study Group
15 West 12th Street, 6G New York, New York 10011

Dear Ms. Deadria Farmer-Paellmann,

The Restitution Study Group recently asked me to give my professional opinion into the relationship between the Kingdom of Benin and the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Located to the west of the lower Niger River valley in what is today Nigeria, the Kingdom of Benin was connected to the Atlantic through various tributaries of the Niger River, the most important being the Forcados River. In the eighteenth century, Benin also controlled the lagoons to the west of the Niger delta as far as Lagos. The kingdom of Benin was a major exporter of captives in the sixteenth century. Although substantially cut off in the second half of this century, the traffic resumed in the late seventeenth century and peaked in the eighteenth century. The main buyers were the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, and the English traders. the exact number of captives leaving Benin over the course of the slave trade is not known. The Transatlantic slave trade database indicates a number of 308 voyages that took 103,000 captives from the Kingdom of Benin to the Americas. The principal places of purchase were the Benin river, Aghway, Lagos, Onim, Oere, Rio Forcados, etc. The principal places of landing were Brazil, the Caribbean, Mainland North America, Spanish Mainland America, and Europe. These numbers are certainly below the reality.

The Benin Empire and its kings were the mightiest powers on the eastern slave coast. What actually happened was that for over 200 years powerful Benin kings have captured human beings through warfare. The most important imports during the period were bracelet-shaped brass manillas, that were used as a currency. The brass manillas were also melted down and fashioned into the extensive collection of plaques, statues, and other items that were important symbols associated with Benin kingship and ritual life in the kingdom. The well-known Benin Bronzes were, indeed, cast with the proceeds of the transatlantic slave trade. The cost price of a human being was approximately between 12-15 brass bracelets (manillas) in the year 1506. By the year 1517, a slave price had risen up to 57 brass bracelets (manillas). After the British invasion of the Benin Empire in 1897, 10,000 objects were looted (including bronze plaques and sculptures, and other valuable objects) and taken away.

Sincerely,



Dr. Ibrahima Seck

CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr. Ibrahima SECK

Professor of History
University Cheikh Anta Diop
Department of History
Dakar, Senegal
Telephone: 504 913 2887
E-mail: birimaseck@hotmail.com



Higher Education: Université Cheikh Anta Diop-Dakar

- **July 1999:** Doctoral degree. Dissertation on: “Cultures Africaines et Esclavage dans la Basse Vallée du Mississippi, d’Iberville à Jim Crow ” (African Cultures and Slavery in the Lower Mississippi River Valley, from Iberville to Jim Crow).
- **July 1985:** Certificat d’Aptitude à l’Enseignement Secondaire (Secondary School teacher degree/ Ecole Normale Supérieure of Dakar).
- **July 1984:** Maîtrise/Master’s degree.
- **July 1982:** Certificat de Licence (BA) and Certificate of Specialization in African History.

Fellowships and Grants

- **Summer 2001:** The West African Research Association Collaborative Scholars-in-Residence Program: Senegal-Mauritania-Mali. Topic: The roots of the blues culture. Partnership with Portia Cobb, film teacher at the University of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- **Spring 2000:** The West African Research Association Travel Grant. Research along Bayou Teche, Louisiana.
- **January-June 1998:** Transcending boundaries: A University of Ghana and Northwestern University African Humanities Program, sponsored by CODESRIA and the Ford Foundation: University of Ghana (Legon) and Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.
- **July 1995-August 1996:** Fulbright Junior Staff Fellowship: The University of Mississippi at Oxford (Ole Miss) and the University of New Orleans (UNO).
- **September-October 1989:** The United States Information Agency (USIA) International Visitor Program, sponsored by The Institute of International Education

(IIE): Washington-DC, Massachusetts, Illinois, Mississippi, Texas, Washington and New York States.

Selected Publications

- Forthcoming. *Masters of the Savannah. The West African roots of Louisiana Afro-Creole culture*. Lafayette: The University of Louisiana Press.
- 2016. Homegrown privileges vanish in exile. The history and systems of slavery behind Wynton Marsalis' Blood on the Fields. Illustrations from Whitney Plantation by Toan Nguyen. *Louisiana Cultural Vistas. The magazine of the Louisiana Endowment for the humanities*. Summer 2016.
- 2015. "Le marronage en Louisiane (Louisiana maroons)." In *Sociétés marronnes des Amériques. Mémoires, patrimoines, identités et histoire du XVIIe au XXe siècles*, Jean Moomou, editor. Matoury, French Guiana: Ibis Rouge Editions. ISBN: 978-2-84450-451-7.
- 2015. Forbidden knowledge. In *Dysconscious racism, Afrocentric praxis, and education for human freedom. Through the years I keep toiling. The selected work of Joyce E. King*. Joyce E. King, editor. New York and London: Routledge, The World Library of Educationalists Series. ISBN: 978-1-138-85932-6.
- 2014. *Bouki fait Gombo: A History of the Slave Community of Habitation Haydel (Whitney Plantation) Louisiana, 1750-1860*. New Orleans: UNO Press. ISBN: 978-1-60801-095-0.
- 2013. "Espacio y Nación en Africa: Historia de los pueblos africanos." In *Enseñar Africa* (textbook for high schools of the Canary Islands, Spain), Ignacio Nadal Perdomo and Ezequiel Guerra de la Torre (editors). Las Palmas: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria y Casa Africa. ISBN: 978-84-9042-061-4.
- 2012. The French Discovery of Senegal: Premises for a policy of Selective Assimilation. In *Brokers of Change: Atlantic Commerce and Cultures in Pre-Colonial Western Africa*. Edited by Toby Green. Proceedings of the British Academy, number 178. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-19-726520-8.
- 2012. Les Français et la traite des esclaves en Sénégal. In *Dix-huitième siècle. N° 44 (L'Afrique)*. Paris: La Découverte. ISBN: 9782707173850.
- 2009. Esclavage et traite des esclaves dans les manuels de l'enseignement secondaire du Sénégal : des programmes de domestication coloniale aux programmes dits d'enracinement et d'ouverture, *Revue Historiens-Géographes du Sénégal*, N°8. Dakar: Faculté des Sciences et Technologies de l'Éducation et de la Formation, UCAD. ISSN 0850-8011.

- 2009. Habitation Haydel: Histoire économique et sociale d'une plantation de la Côte des Allemands en Louisiane, in *Mélanges en hommage au Professeur Mbaye Guèye*, R. Fall & A. Diané editors. Dakar: Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, UCAD. ISSN 0850-1254.
- 2008. Esclavage et traite des esclaves dans les manuels de l'enseignement secondaire du Sénégal (slavery and slave trading in Senegalese textbooks). *Afrika Zamani, the journal of the Council for the Development of social sciences research in Africa in cooperation with the Association of the African Historians*. Nos. 15 & 16, 2007–2008, pp. 99-124. ISSN 0850-3079.
- 2007. *Sénégal-Suisse 1:1. Un manuel pédagogique interculturel et pluridisciplinaire* (comparative school textbook for Senegal and Switzerland in French and German), C. Buess & H. Schäer editors, Klett und Balmer, Zoug. ISBN 978-3-264-95011-3.
- 2006. African Media Development Initiative. Senegal, research findings and conclusions. London: BBC World Service Trust. ISBN 1-966086-10-3.
- 2005. "The relationships between St. Louis of Senegal, Its hinterlands, and Colonial Louisiana", in French Colonial Louisiana and the Atlantic world, Bradley G. Bond editor. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. ISBN 0-8071-3035-4.
- 2000. "La traite négrière clandestine entre St Louis du Sénégal, les Antilles et la Louisiane au 19^{ème} siècle", in Saint-Louis et l'Esclavage, *Notes et Initiations Africaines*, N° 39. Djibril Samb editor. Dakar: IFAN. ISSN 0850-0207.
- 1999. "Quelques remarques sur les études étymologiques du slang africain-américain", in *Sciences et Techniques du Langage*, N° 3 /4. Dakar: Centre de Linguistique Appliquée de Dakar (CLAD). ISSN 0850-3923.
- 1997. "Les Relations entre la Sénégalie et la Louisiane à la Lumière des Travaux de Gwendolyn Midlo Hall", in Gorée et l'Esclavage, *Notes et Initiations Africaines*, N° 38. Djibril Samb editor. Dakar: IFAN. ISSN 0850-0207.

Miscellaneous Academic and Non-Academic Positions

- **Secretary General of the Association of the Teachers of History and Geography of Senegal (ASPHG), 2000 to 2004.** This association is based at the School of Education of UCAD (FASTEF) in Dakar, Senegal. Its mission is to facilitate the teaching of history and geography in the middle and high schools of Senegal. The main mission is to make teaching materials available and its members benefit from regular seminars and field trips destined to improve their skills and knowledge. ASPHG is also involved in local development providing valuable advice to local authorities.

- **Secretary General of the West African Branch of the West African Research Association (WARA), 2003 to 2012.** The headquarters of WARA West Africa are located at the West African Research Center (WARC) of Dakar, Senegal, one of the branches of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC). I was in charge of the coordination of the programs implemented by the West African chapter of WARA. This included Academic events such as seminars and cultural events such as the Bouki Blues Festival which I initiated in 2002. The role of the Secretary General is also to assist the director of the West African Research Center in all matters related to the implementation of the programs of the WARC. For instance, I was in charge for many years of the final selection of the laureates of WARA's travel grants.

-**African Coordinator and Principal Researcher - The Eurescl Project (2008-2012).** Eurescl is a project by the Social and Economic Sciences and Humanities Program funded under the Seventh Framework of the European Commission's Development Fund. EURESCL stands in French for Europe-Esclavage (Europe-Slavery). The project was designed for a four-year period during which pools of researchers worked at locating slavery and slave trading in the history of the construction of the European identity. Its objective was to study through a global approach the evolution of the social relationships that arose from the management of the representations of slavery and social practices inherited from slavery. The research activities of EURESCL were implemented in a multidisciplinary and comparative approach linking researchers from Europe, Africa, the Americas, and the Muslim World. One essential goal of Eurescl was the creation of a strong body of knowledge and, above all, the interaction of research and education for the dissemination and transfer of knowledge. The results are posted on the project's website. Professor Ibrahima Thioub, now the Rector of UCAD and I were the coordinators of the African section of Eurescl and I handled the secretariat from 2008 to 2012. I participated in the kick-off conference in Martinique in March 2008. I also participated in the summer seminar organized by Eurescl in Aix-en-Provence, France, in August 2009. This seminar brought together university professors, high school teachers, and students dedicated to the implementation of strategies for the teaching of slavery. Among other miscellaneous activities, I organized a festival of documentaries on slavery in Dakar in June 2008. On 9 May 2009 I was a member of the jury of the same festival held this time at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris. In 2010 I coordinated the Eurescl conference in Dakar, Senegal on the theme: "*Slave Trade, Slavery, Abolitions and their Legacies in European Histories and Identities.*" I also participated in the last conference of Eurescl held on January 24-26, 2012

at the University of Hull (UK) Wilberforce Institute for Slavery and Emancipation (WISE) on the theme “Enslavement, Identity, and Cultural exchange.

- **Secretary General, The Pole d’Excellence Regional (PER). Les esclavages et les traites : communautés, frontières et identities (Regional Pole of Excellence. Slavery and the slave trades: Communities, Frontiers, and Identities).** The PER was initiated in 2007 by Professor Ibrahima Thioub, then the head of the department of History of the Université Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar (UCAD). The PER was implemented as an international project on the study and the teaching of slavery and slave trading with a focus on the African continent. It connected researchers from Francophone institutions and was funded by the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF). The member institutions were: Université Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar (Sénégal), Université of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Université Abou Moumouni (Niger), Universités of Yaoundé I and Ngaoundéré in Cameroun), Université of Port au Prince in Haïti, the Canadian Endowed Chair of research in Comparative History of Memory in Québec, and the CNRS in France. As secretary of PER, I supervised a pool of graduate students involved in the selection and digitalization of slavery-related documents at the National Archives of Senegal. From May 22nd to June 2nd 2009, I did a teaching mission at the University of Yaoundé I in Cameroon, a French and English speaking country. While in Cameroon, I gave lectures to the Faculty of Arts and Letters and handled bilingual seminars for graduate students of the department of History. In addition, I gave presentations organized by the PER at the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (25-31 October 2009) and at the Museum of the National Panthéon of Haïti in Port-au-Prince (13-19 December 2009). In 2012 the PER project came to an end and was replaced by the Centre Africain de Recherche sur les Traites et les Esclavages (CARTE) based in Dakar, Senegal. This research center was designed as a continuation of most of the programs implemented by the PER and Eurescl. I was appointed Director of Operations during the transition from PER to CARTE, my last mission in Senegal before taking the job as the director of research of the Whitney Plantation.

- **Member of the Advisory Board of “Slave Biographies: Atlantic Database Network.”** This is an open access repository of information on the identities of enslaved people in the Atlantic World. Slave Biographies reveals much about slave life in the New World and about enslaved Africans' lives in parts of the Old World. *Slave Biographies* also provides a platform for researchers of African slavery to contribute, analyze, visualize, utilize, and collaborate on data they have collected. *Slave Biographies* received initial funding in 2011 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and their new Bridging Cultures Initiative promoting projects that work to build international communities of collaboration and scholarship. I was invited to be a member of the advisory board by my colleagues Walter Hawthorne (MSU), and Paul Lovejoy (York University/Toronto) at the Slave Biographies Conference held on November 8-9, 2013 at Michigan State University.

EXHIBIT 3



5 October 2022

Paul E. Lovejoy FRSC
Distinguished Research
Professor
Canada Research Chair in
African Diaspora History

4700 KEELE ST
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CANADA M3J 1P3
T 416 736 2100
EXT 66917
F 416 650 8173
plovejoy@yorku.ca

Deadria Farmer-Paellmann
Executive Director
Restitution Study Group
15 West 12th Street, 6G
New York, New York 10011

Dear Ms. Farmer-Paellmann,

I have been asked to give my professional opinion into the relationship between the Kingdom of Benin and the trans-Atlantic slave trade. As is well known, the Kingdom of Benin was one of the first indigenous states in West Africa that came into contact with merchants coming from western Europe, first the Portuguese and later Dutch, British and French. The Kingdom traces its origins to the 12th-13th centuries, and its history connects the country closely with the history of the Yoruba to west and the Igbo to the east. Benin was and is located to the west of the lower Niger River valley with ports on the Atlantic in the Niger River delta, and should not be confused with the modern République du Bénin, with which it has no direct connection.

The Kingdom of Benin was connected to the western Niger delta via various tributaries of the Niger River, the most important being the Forcados River with its links to Warri. Until the late 18th century, Benin also controlled the lagoons to the west of the Niger delta as far as Lagos. While the exact number of enslaved Africans leaving Benin over the course of the slave trade is not known, it is known that one of the most important imports from Europe during the period was brass manillas, which are bracelet-shaped items that were used locally in Benin and areas to the west as a currency. The brass manillas were also melted down and fashioned into the extensive collection of plaques, statues, and other items that were important symbols associated with Benin kingship and ritual life in the kingdom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Lovejoy'.

Paul E. Lovejoy FRSC
Distinguished Research Professor



CURRICULUM VITAE

**Paul E. Lovejoy FRSC
Distinguished Research Professor**

1 October 2022

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CURRENT POSITIONS:

Distinguished Research Professor, York University
Canada Research Chair in African Diaspora History
Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Academy II
General Editor, The Harriet Tubman Series on the African Diaspora, Africa World Press
Chair, Board of Directors, Walk With Web Inc.

PREVIOUS POSITIONS:

Director, Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on the Global Migrations of African Peoples, 2008-2012 <<http://tubman.info.yorku.ca/>>
International Scientific Committee, UNESCO “Slave Route” Project, 1996-2011
Research Professor, Department of History and Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation (WISE), University of Hull (UK), 2002-2008
Visiting Professor, El Colegio de Mexico, January 1999
Vice-President, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1995-97
Member of Council, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1990-97
Research Associate, Arewa House, Ahmadu Bello University, 1994-95
President, Canadian Association of African Studies, 1988-89
Vice-President, Canadian Association of African Studies, 1987-88
Associate Vice-President (Research), York University, 1986-90
Chair, Department of History, York University, 1983-86

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND HONORS:

Special Issue in Honor of Paul E. Lovejoy, *African Economic History*, Volume 49, Number 1, 2021, edited by Mohammed Bashir Salau and Toyin Falola
Paul E. Lovejoy Prize, Annual Award for Excellence and Originality in a Major Work on Global Slavery, *Journal of Global Slavery* and Brill Publishers, 2019
W.E.B. DuBois Lectures, Hutchins Center, Harvard University, 2019
Life Time Achievement Award, Canadian Association of African Studies, 2011
Teaching Award, Faculty of Graduate Studies, York University, 2011

Distinguished Africanist Award, University of Texas at Austin, 2010
 President's Research Award of Merit, York University, 2009
 Honorary Degree, Doctor of the University, University of Stirling, 2007
 Dean's Award for Outstanding Research, Faculty of Arts, York University, 2004
 Diversity World Heritage Diaspora Africa Celebration and Distinction Award, 2004
 Byrne Lecture, Vanderbilt University, 2001
 Canada Research Chair in African Diaspora History, 2001
 Honorary Mention, Finalist, African Studies Association Award for Excellence in the
 Publication of Primary Source Material, for *Pilgrims, Interpreters and Agents:
 French Reconnaissance Reports on the Sokoto Caliphate and Borno, 1891-1895*,
 African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1997
 Distinguished Research Professor, York University, 1996
 Bradsford Morse Lecture, Boston University, 1995
 Killam Senior Research Fellowship, 1994-96
 Wallace K. Ferguson Prize, Canadian Historical Association, for *Slow Death for Slavery:
 The Course of Abolition in Northern Nigeria, 1897-1936*, Cambridge University
 Press, 1994
 Honorary Mention, Finalist, African Studies Association Award for Excellence in the
 Publication of Primary Source Material, for Paul Staudinger, *In the Heart of the
 Hausa States* (trans. J. Moody), Ohio University Press, 1993
 Certificate of Merit, Social Science Federation of Canada, for *Transformations in
 Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 1990
 Directeur d'étude invitée, Centre d'étude africaines, Ecole des Haute Etudes en Sciences
 Sociales, Paris, 1989
 Fellow, Royal Society of Canada, Academy II, 1989
 Finalist, Herskovits Award, African Studies Association, *Salt of the Desert Sun: A
 History of Salt Production and Trade in the Central Sudan*, Cambridge University
 Press, 1986
 Honorary Lecturer in Economic History, Ahmadu Bello University, 1975-76
 Fulbright-Hayes Fellow, 1969-70

PUBLICATIONS – BOOKS Authored and Co-authored:

- 2019 *Slavery in the Global Diaspora of Africa* (London: Routledge)
- 2018 *Storia della Schiavitù in Africa* (Milano: Bompiani)
- 2017 *Transformation de l'esclavage. Une histoire de l'esclavage en Afrique* (Paris :
Karthala, 2017)
- 2016 *Jihad and Slavery in West Africa during the Age of Revolutions (1780-1850)*.
Athens, OH: Ohio University Press
- 2011 *Transformations in Slavery. A History of Slavery in Africa*. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 3rd revised edition
- 2005 *Slavery, Commerce and Production in West Africa: Slave Society in the Sokoto
Caliphate*. Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press, The Harriet Tubman Series on the
African Diaspora

- 2005 *Ecology and Ethnography of Muslim Trade in West Africa*. Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press, The Harriet Tubman Series on the African Diaspora
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 “Muslim Freedmen in the Atlantic World: Images of Manumission and Self-Redemption,” Conference on “From Slavery to Freedom: Manumission in the Atlantic World,” October 4-6, 2000, College of Charleston, Charleston

of the Department of History (1983-1986), and Coordinator of the African Studies Program and the Department of History’s Undergraduate Program.

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

Ana Lucia Araujo, Ph.D., Université Laval, 2008-2009
 Jeffrey Packman, Ph.D., University of Toronto, 2009-2010
 Abubakar Babajo Sani, Ph.D., Bayero University Kano, 2011-2012
 Adebisuyi Adeniran, Ph.D., University of Ibadan, 2011-2012
 Nielson Bezerra, Ph.D., Universidade Federal de Fluminense, Banting Fellows, 2012-2014
 Richard Anderson, Ph.D., Yale University, SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellowship, 2015-2017
 Melchisedek Chetima, Ph.D., Université Laval, Banting Fellow, 2019-2021

Ph.D. SUPERVISION

- 1992 Gerard Kunene, “British Colonial Policy in Swaziland, 1920-1960” (University of Lesotho, deceased)

- 1992 Iheanyi M. Enwerem, "The Politicization of Religion in Modern Nigeria: the Emergence and Politics of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)" (Director, Dominican Institute, University of Ibadan, Nigeria)
- 1992 Colleen Kriger, "Ironworking in 19th Century Central Africa" (Professor, University of North Carolina, Greenboro)
- 1996 Ibrahim Muhammad Jumare, "Land Tenure in the Sokoto Sultanate of Nigeria" (University of Usmanu Danfodiyo, Nigeria)
- 1999 Femi James Kolapo, "Military Turbulence, Population Displacement and Commerce on a Slaving Frontier of the Sokoto Caliphate: Nupe c. 1810-1857" (Assistant Professor, University of Guelph)
- 1999 Sean Stilwell, "The Kano Mamluks: Royal Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate, 1807-1903" (Associate Professor, University of Vermont)
- 2003 Olatunji Ojo, "Warfare, Slavery and the Transformation of Eastern Yorubaland, c. 1820-1900" (Assistant Professor, Brock University)
- 2004 Behnaz A. Mirzai, "Slavery, the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and the Emancipation of Slaves in Persia (1828-1928)" (Assistant Professor, Brock University)
- 2005 Muhammad Bashir Salau, "Growth of the Plantation Economy in the Sokoto Caliphate: Fanisau, 1819-1903" (Assistant Professor, University of Mississippi)
- 2006 Mohamed Kassim, "Colonial Resistance and the Transmission of Islamic Knowledge on the Benadir Coast in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries" (Lecturer, Seneca College)
- 2006 Mariana Candido, "Enslaving Frontiers: Slavery, Trade and Identity in Benguela, 1780-1850" (Assistant Professor, Princeton University)
- 2007 Ismael Musah Montana, "Slavery and its Abolition in the North African Regency of Tunis, 1730-1846" (Assistant Professor, Northern Illinois University)
- 2008 Jennifer Lofkrantz, "Third-Party Ransoming and Self-Redemption in the Western Sudan 1850-1910" (Assistant Professor, Franklin and Marshall College)
- 2010 Ibrahim Hamza, "'Cargill's Mistakes': A Study of British Colonial Policies in Kano Emirate Northern Nigeria c. 1903-1919" (Visiting Assistant Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University)
- 2010 Yacine Daddi Addoun, "Abolition de l'esclavage en Algérie, 1816-1871"
- 2012 Alia Paroo, "Aga Khan III and the British Empire: The Ismailis in Tanganyika, 1920-1957"
- 2015 Katrina Keefer, "Mission Education and the Changing World in Early Sierra Leone, 1808-1820"
- 2019 Jeffrey Gunn, "Kru Free Wage Laborers in the Nineteenth Century Black Atlantic"
- 2021 Dele Jemirade, "The Colonial Economy: Prosperity and Depression in Kano Province of Northern Nigeria, 1899-1939"

In Progress, with expected date of completion:

In progress Oscar Grandio Moraguez, "West Central African Slaves and the Transformation of their Ethnic Identities: The Development of a Congo Culture in Nineteenth Cuba"

In Progress Carlos Liberato, “The Maranhao Company in Upper Guinea in the 18th Century”
 In progress Matthew Robertshaw, “A Longing For Saint-Domingue/A Longing for Haiti: The Meaning of Haiti and the Rise and Fall of French West Africa” (Year three)
 In progress Leidy Alpizar, “Biographies of Africans in the Church Missionary Society” (Year two)

Other Ph.D. supervision:

Ana Lucia Araujo (Université Laval), joint supervisor with Bogumil Jewsiewicki (completed 2007)
 Matthew Heaton (University of Texas), thesis committee chaired by Toyin Falola (completed 2008)
 David Wheat (Vanderbilt University 2009), thesis committee chaired by Professor Jane Landers
 Priscilla Mello (Colegiado de Pos-Graduacao em Historia, Universidade Federal Fluminense, completed 2010), joint supervisor with Mariza de Carvalho Soares
 Bertrand Basseine (Université de Bretagne Sud, 2011), joint supervisor with Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau
 Melchisedek Chetima (Université Laval), external examiner (2015)
 Erika Melek Delgado (University of Worcester, UK), “The Liberated African Children of Sierra Leone” (2017)
 Timothy Soriano (University of Illinois-Chicago), “Sierra Leone and the Abolition of the Slave Trade” (forthcoming 2019)
 Megane Coulon, University of Worcester), “Demographic and Social Change in Freetown, Sierra Leone, c. 1819-1862”

Master Degree supervision (partial):

2021 Fabio Cascadura Silva Magalhaes, “Lieutenant-Colonel Caetano Mauricio Machado: A Merchant in Bahia, 1774-1807”
 2014 Thomas Zajac, “A River Flowing with Letters: An Examination of Two Letters between W.H. Smyth and Hugh Clapperton during the Second Expedition, 1825-1827”
 2014 Shoshannah Lautenschlager, “The Register of Alien Children in the Colony of Sierra Leone, 1865-1867”
 2012 Karlee Sapoznik, “The Letters and Other Writings of Gustavus Vassa”
 2011 Neil Marshall, “The Persistence of Slavery in Early Colonial Igboland 1900-1920”
 2011 Stacey Jean Muriel Sommerdyk, “A Re-Examination of the Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade”

- 2010 Robert Stewart, "Akan Ethnicity in Jamaica: A Re-Examination of Jamaica's Slave Imports from the Gold Coast and the Implications for the Colony's Creole Culture, 1655-1807"
- 2010 Nadine Hunt, "Regional 'Colonial' Trade in the Americas: Jamaica and the South Sea Company, 1713-1748"
- 2009 Brigitte Cairus, "Numbers that Matter: Politics, Ethnic Relations and the Slave Trade between Angola and Brazil in the late 18th Century"
- 2005 Ismael M. Montana, "The *Hatik al-Sitr* of Al-Timbuktawi on Enslaved Africans' Religious Practices in Nineteenth-Century Tunisia" (M.A. thesis, 1999)