the Ewe while the label "Ewe" in itself has to be regarded rather as a colonial invention.[19] According to Brown, the political agitation for and emergence of an Ewe identity is phenomenon of the late 19th century that was rather due to "the adjustment of boundaries in the interest of sub-ethnic collectivities."[20]

5.1.3 The Emergence of 'Eweness'

In fact, Enlightenment ideas such as that of the "Ewe-nation," were brought in from outside by a yet-to-be-formed Ewe-elite that was no longer entirely autochthonous in nature. The background for this development was the industrialisation of Britain, the number one maritime power, which changed the structure of Atlantic trade in West Africa.

Britain's need for new liberal type of 19th century Atlantic trade no longer required slave labour and the traditional coastal forts. The British banned the transatlantic slave trade in 1807, yet, since slavery had not yet been banned in the southern United States before 1863, there was still an extensive slave trade to North America, but also to cash crop producing states such as Cuba or Brazil.[21] British warships patrolled West African ports, such as Porto Seguro (today Agbodrafo). Testimony to the once Portuguese influence in the slave trade still bears on the naming of Porto Seguro ("safe haven"), which did not refer to the ability to dock safely at the harbour (the surf was just as dangerous as anywhere else on the coastal strip), but "safe haven" referred to the safety from the pursuit from British warships for illegal slave trade. British naval predominance slowly changed the balance of power on the coast,[22] monopolizing Britain's presence after 350 years of competition between various European powers. While British warships were spoiling business for Portuguese slave traders, Napoleon's campaign in Europe forced the Portuguese royal family to flee to Brazil.

The signs of the Portuguese empire's decline significantly set the stage for Brazil's independence in 1822 and several subsequent upheavals that were to become important for a forming Ewe elite. At the beginning of the 19th century, there were several slave revolts in Bahia, Brazil, to which the Brazilian state responded with violent repression and restrictions: free blacks were denied owning property and were subjected to strict taxation. When in the mid-19th century, the US-sponsored establishment of the Republic of Liberia (1847) gave rise to the repatriation wave of former slaves to West Africa, the 17-year-old Francisco Olympio da Silva, a mestizo of mixed Portuguese, indigenous and African descent, went along and migrated from Bahia, Brazil, to Keta, east of the Volta Delta in search of economic opportunities. Francisco Olympio dropped the "da Silva" part of his name, under which he had been a slave in Brazil, worked for a decade in the slave trade in various places along the coast east of Volta until he settled and founded the Olympio

19 Paul Nugent, "Putting the History Back into Ethnicity," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50, no. 4 (2008), available from https://www.jstor.org/stable/27563713; Skinner, *The Fruits of Freedom in British Togoland*, p. 12; Keese, *Ethnicity and the Colonial State*, p. 233.

20 Brown, "Borderline Politics in Ghana," p. 579.

21 Sebald, *Die deutsche Kolonie Togo 1884 – 1914*, p. 15.

22 The British administration of the Gold Coast Colony (now Ghana) was able to buy out the Danish coastal forts in 1850 and the Dutch coastal forts in 1870.

family in Porto Seguro, where there was already an emerging urban society, a bustling Brazilian community, and a Catholic chapel.[23]

In the 1850s, German missionaries of the Bremen-based "Norddeutsche Missionsgesellschaft", known as "Brema" for short, established their first stations in the coastal area of Keta and a few years later also in its hinterland.[24] Though missionary societies were not part of the approaching state colonialism (which at times they opposed in fact),[25] they certainly trailblazed it.[26] In their self-understanding and missionary vocation far from the life in Germany, the missionaries saw themselves as "saviours," rescuing the African population from the purgatory of the afterlife – a self-empowerment that was not far from the vocation of the *mission civilisatrice*. From the first missionary foundations of the Bremen Missionary Society in the early 1850s until the end of the German colonial period, only about 100 priests undertook missionary work, which according to Skinner was painfully slow. In the first decade of their evangelistic efforts, only fourteen conversions of 'free Africans' were recorded. This record led to about a hundred slave children being bought, 'freed' and converted between 1857 and 1868. The efforts were set back even further as the Bremen and the Basel mission station in the Volta basin were destroyed in 1869 by slave-hunting campaigns from the Asante in the Ewe settlement area.[27] And yet, these missionary ventures were the reason that most Ewe later found themselves in the Ewe Presbyterian Church. Even today over half of the southern Togolese elite are still Protestant, while the majority of Christians in French West Africa, and especially the Afro-Brazilian elite in the present-day Togo are Catholic.[28]

Due to their knowledge of several European languages, the new generations of "Brazilians," who were born and raised on the coastline, soon assumed the role of agents for the various European wholesalers from England, France, Portugal, and Germany, who settled on the coast founding outposts of their trading companies. The first German company, Friedrich M. Vietor & Söhne, established itself in 1874 in Be Beach (later Lomé), having already operated the trading business of the North German Mission Bremen in Keta in the Gold Coast Colony since 1857, whilst the trading house Wölber & Brohm was active in "Little-Popo" (later Aného).

For the operation of the European trading posts, the coastal chiefs and family clans, who considered the shore their legitimate domain, demanded both land taxes and export duties. Fuelled by the political fragmentation of the Ewe, rival chiefs often sought support from equally rival European powers. The 50-kilometer-long coastal strip east of the Gold Coast Colony boundary, was not yet officially occupied by any colonial power. Yet,

23 Alcione M. Amos, "Afro-Brazilians in Togo," *Cahiers d'études africaines* 41, no. 162 (2001): 293–95, https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesafricaines.88.

24 Skinner, *The Fruits of Freedom in British Togoland*, p. 38.

25 Habermas (2016) highlights moments when the Bremen or Steyer Mission joined forces with the Togolese petitioners and denounced the ruling practices of the German colonial administrations in the Reichstag.

26 Rainer Alsheimer, *Zwischen Sklaverei und christlicher Ethnogenese: Die vorkoloniale Missionierung der Ewe in Westafrika (1847 – ca. 1890)* (Münster: Waxmann, 2007), http://www.waxmann.com/kat/inhalt/1764.pdf

27 Skinner, *The Fruits of Freedom in British Togoland*, p. 43.

28 Decalo, *Historical dictionary of Togo*, p. 74.

British merchants clearly dominated in the growing presence of Europeans traders and missionaries.[29] By virtue of their own business interests, African intermediaries such as the "Brazilian" elites were trailblazers of British colonial expansion.

Francisco Olympio, who himself had grown up speaking Portuguese, initially had his two sons Epiphanio and Octaviano learn Portuguese from a Catholic priest. However, as almost all Europeans involved in the Atlantic trade used the English language, coins, weights, measures and legal norms,[30] Francisco Olympio sent his two sons to London to receive higher-level education in accounting and business. Upon their return, Epiphanio worked in the British trading house Miller Brothers in Agoué (present-day Benin). In 1902, Epiphanio had a son with a Mamprusi slave (an ethnic group from the north of contemporary Togo), who was sold to the Olympio family: the later Ewe nationalism leader, independence fighter, and first president of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio, was thus not himself from an Ewe lineage. Meanwhile, Epiphanio's brother, Octaviano, worked for the British trading house A. and F. Swanzy, where he secured commercial property for coconut plantations in the northwest of Lomé.

While the Afro-Brazilian community on the coastline was expanding, Octaviano became by far the richest and most influential indigenous citizen of Lomé. For six decades and under three colonial powers, he was one of the most respected members of Lomé's commercial and political elite.[31]

5.2 The 'Schutzgebiet Togoland'

With 1870/71 defeat of France, which was the leading colonial power alongside Great Britain, the German Empire emerged as the new great power in Western Europe, almost inevitably turning its attention to colonial policy. Although Otto von Bismarck had little to no sympathy for the colonial ambitions of large sections of the German population, the statement written in 1897 by the then German Foreign Minister, Bernhard von Bülow, "We don't want to outshine anyone, but we also demand our place in the sun"[32] soon became the new political slogan.

However, it was rather by chance that Togoland came under German control: In 1881, the French and British had received petitions from rival kings, each asking the other power for 'protection.' If it was not for consideration of other domestic power relations, either power could have occupied this territory permanently as a protectorate even before the Germans appeared.[33] Yet, in the run-up to the Berlin Congo Conference, which ultimately decided the colonial division of the African continent, the German Consul-General, Gustav Nachtigal, was traveling by sea to secure claims to Cameroon. Previously, Bremen- and Hamburg-based trading houses indicated their business interests on the

29 Sebald, *Die deutsche Kolonie Togo 1884 – 1914*, p. 15.

30 Sebald, *Die deutsche Kolonie Togo 1884 – 1914*, p. 16.

31 Amos, "Afro-Brazilians in Togo," p. 296.

32 James Holmes, "Mahan, a "Place in the Sun," and Germany's Quest for Sea Power," *Comparative Strategy* 23, no. 1 (2004), https://doi.org/10.1080/01495930490274490.

33 Sebald, *Die deutsche Kolonie Togo 1884 – 1914*, p. 18.