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panied by such legal changes, and in these cases slavery often took on informal, extralegal characteristics.

[*See also* Abolition and Anti-Slavery, *article on* Africa; Historiography, *article on* Africa; *and* Slave Trade, *articles on* Brazil and the United States, Trans-Atlantic Trade, *and* Trans-Saharan Trade.]

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—JOHN K. THORNTON

West Africa

West Africa was integrated into the world economy as a supplier of slaves first for the Mediterranean and the Middle East and later for the trans-Atlantic trade. No region of the world has been so intensively slaved over such a long period of time, and in few has slavery had such a vital impact on the development of state and society.

Slave systems within West Africa tended to conform to one of two types. The older, well described by Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, is a very integrative form of slavery common in smaller-scale kinship-based societies. In it slaves made up a low percentage of the population; they lived in the master's compound, worked alongside his family, and often ate with them. Children of slaves were initiated with those of the free and raised in the master's culture. Slave status was rapidly ameliorated, sometimes disappearing within a single generation. Some aspects of the integrative system persist in more exploitative, market-oriented societies. In Asante, slave status disappeared after three generations. Elsewhere the distinction between captives and slaves "born in the house" persisted primarily in a ban on the sale of the latter.

More intensive exploitation resulted both from political centralization and from the increasing importance of the market. In the more intensive form of slavery there were often slave majorities, sometimes as high as 75 percent. Most slaves lived separately from their masters and worked in groups. The master did not eat with or work alongside his slaves; instead, he supervised them. Manumission was limited and work was carefully regulated. These systems can be referred to as slave modes of production because slavery was the dominant form of labor.

There were also privileged slaves. Some argue that these people were not slaves, but in fact their privileges were rooted in their dependence. They had no kinship ties and were therefore totally dependent on their masters. The largest privileged category was the warriors, who made up the core of the more powerful armies. Military commanders, administrators, diplomats, and servants were often recruited from among the slave warriors. Slaves also worked in commercial enterprises and could become important traders. Slave concubines could become favored partners, and if they gave birth to sons, they could benefit from a son's success.

Slavery probably existed long before the rise of Ghana early in the first millennium. Climate change led to a struggle for control of scarce resources at least as far back as the first millennium BCE and created the conditions for conflict and state formation and thus for enslavement. We know little about the first states in the western and central Sudan, but there is evidence that by the seventh century, there was a slave trade into and across the Sahara. These slaves were obtained by kidnapping and slave-raiding. The possession of horses and iron weapons made it possible for raiding parties from the savannah states to raid farther south. The absence of barriers to movement meant that armed horsemen could dominate large areas. Conversion of Sudanic princes to Islam provided a

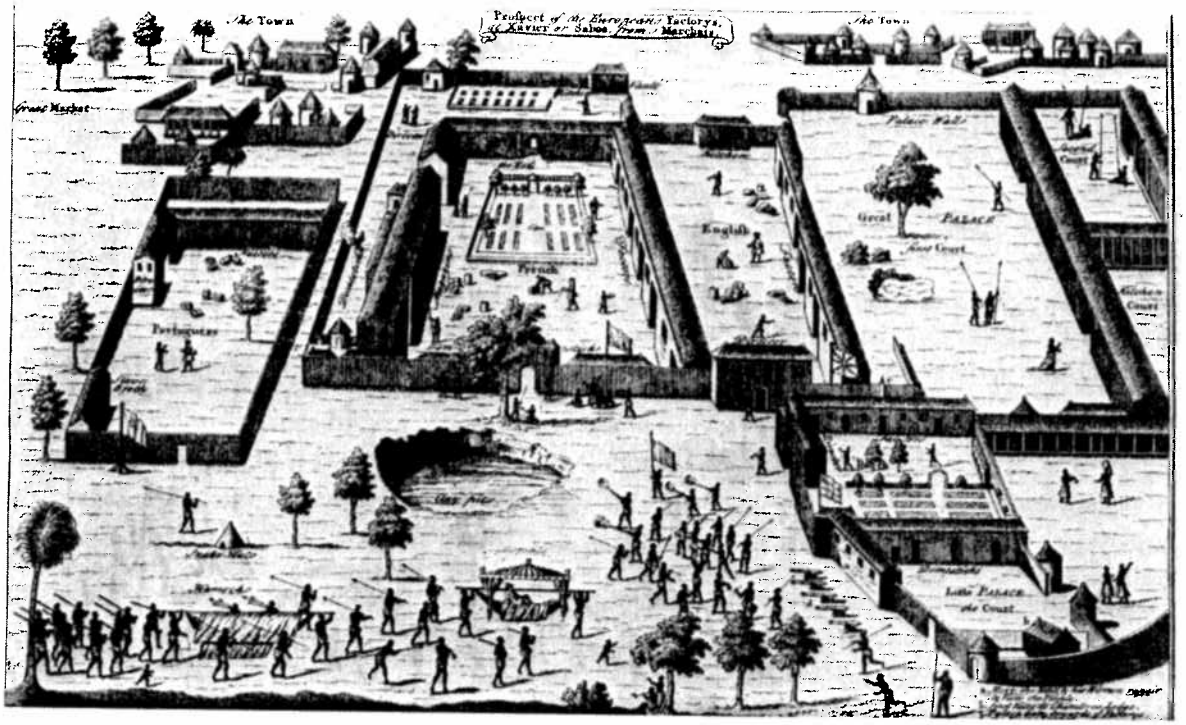
justification for enslavement, though one based on a faulty reading of Muḥammad's teachings. According to the Qur'ān, a person could be enslaved only in a *jihād* (war against unbelievers); few wars and no slave raids met that requirement.

Large numbers of slaves were also used within the Sudanic empires. The Arab traveler Ibn Battutah referred to slaves working as soldiers, servants, porters, and concubines in fourteenth-century Mali. They were also traded and given as presents. In sixteenth-century Songhai there were numerous slaves at court and in slave villages who helped feed court and army. Within these empires specialized merchant communities used profits to buy slaves, who were used to produce commodities.

Walter Rodney has questioned whether the term *slave* should be used to describe servile groups on the upper Guinea coast, but he and most other writers agree that some form of slavery existed on many parts of the coast. In Senegal, for example, rulers raided for slaves, who could be either sold or put to work growing food for the court. Farther down the coast, the early Portuguese explorers found slave systems, although the number of slaves available for sale was limited. With the exception of Benin, states were small and had few newly enslaved persons they wanted to trade. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Portuguese sold slaves on the Gold Coast in exchange for gold.

For West Africa to become a massive supplier of slaves for the New World, two changes were necessary. First, its states had to develop marketing networks capable of channeling surplus slaves from the interior into coastal barracoons. Fueled by European demand, African slave-traders did this during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Sec-

Drawing depicting the layout of a European slave-trading center in West Africa, c.1746.



ond, it was necessary to develop military structures capable of enslaving large numbers of people. Slaves were "produced" in a variety of ways: some were kidnapped; some were enslaved as a result of unpaid debts or criminal penalties; the majority, however, came as a result of war and raiding. Wars were fought for many reasons, but in any war the victorious army took large numbers of prisoners. Raiding focused on areas where population was dense or where raiders would face little resistance. Raiders would surround a village, often before sunrise, and attack it, taking as many prisoners as they could control. Slave-raiding shaped patterns of settlement as vulnerable peoples often retreated to safer areas, seeking easily defended sites in hilly regions and building walled towns in the savanna.

The sharpest increase in slave exports came in the middle of the seventeenth century, when the development of sugar plantations in the West Indies stimulated the demand for slaves and led to higher prices. During the same period Europeans began selling guns to Africans, which facilitated the work of slaving. The result was the emergence of a series of powerful slave-producing states in the hinterland. In western Nigeria, Oyo, a savanna state with a powerful cavalry, expanded from the middle of the seventeenth century. Tributary to Oyo but quite powerful in its own right, Dahomey developed a small but efficient slave-producing army in the early eighteenth century. In the forest zone of Ghana, Asante became dominant after destroying its major rival in 1702. Farther east the Bambara state of Segou was created in about 1712. Finally, later in the century the Futa Jallon in central Guinea emerged from a bitter half-century civil war between Muslims and followers of traditional religion, which ended only in 1776.

These slaving states had a number of features in common. All made war regularly; Oyo and Dahomey sent their armies into the field every dry season. Others relied heavily on raiding into neighboring areas. Most had forces of warriors recruited from slaves. Asante depended largely on tribute from the three to five million people it ruled, many of whom owed a certain number of slaves every year. Religious conflict, and later raiding and trade, provided the Futa Jallon with slaves for sale. In Segou mounted slave warriors operated over a large area.

There has been a heated debate over the demographic effects of the slave trade. It is probable that more than seven million West Africans were exported in the Atlantic trade, constituting about 60 percent of that trade. If we include the trans-Saharan trade, between eight and nine million were exported from West Africa over four centuries. The greatest impact of the trade, however, was not from the number exported, but in the number who died as a result of warfare and disease. People resisted slave-raiders and died or were wounded in the effort. Those who fled often returned to burned-out villages where they had difficulty sustaining themselves. The captives also experienced high mortality. They were first marketed and then walked down to the coast. Poorly clothed and ill-fed, many died on the way or became ill. They were then held in barracoons at the coast until some European trader bought them. Paul Lovejoy suggests that one-quarter to one-third of those reaching the coast could not be sold to European traders. We cannot estimate how many lives were lost overall, but it was certainly several times the number shipped out.

One byproduct of a slave-producing economy was that slaves were increasingly used within Africa. Invariably both those who enslaved people and those who traded in them decided to keep some of the slaves they handled, preferring slaves to more consumer goods. Those kept were used as concubines, wives, soldiers, cultivators, and laborers. It is probable that as many of the newly enslaved were kept within Africa as were exported. This can be deduced from the juxtaposition of two aspects of West African slaving. First, the majority of those enslaved were women and children, largely because men resisted and were often killed or wounded in raids. At the same time, almost twice as many men as women were exported.

African purchasers preferred women and children. Children were easier to acculturate. Women were sought as concubines, as rewards to soldiers and male slaves, because they could do a wide variety of tasks, and because they were less likely to resist or flee. The evolution of African slave systems is a subject that needs further study.

Political centralization and economic accumulation meant that West Africa was increasingly dominated by wealthy and powerful men, each surrounded by kin, slaves, pawns, and clients. Merchants and warriors differed in their values but were tightly linked by their interests. The warriors sold their captives to merchants, who provided them with weapons and consumer goods, but the two groups used slaves in different ways. Merchants saw slaves as an investment and were interested in profit. Military elites used female booty as a reward for service. Slave wives probably did much of the farming for the warriors. The state also sought young males to be trained as soldiers and farmers to feed court and army. Merchants put slaves to work producing goods for sale. Slaves grew grain, raised cotton, wove cloth, and worked leather. By the nineteenth century, Juula and Hausa towns were generally surrounded by a ring of intensively worked slave plantations, and many were also major centres of craft production. Slave labor was also important in the desertside towns, where Saharan nomads arrived annually to exchange salt and animals for grain and cloth. By the late nineteenth century a slave producing grain and cloth could cover his purchase price in three to five years. There was also a constant flow of slaves into the Sahara, where they worked as miners, cultivators, and herders.

The growth of a slave economy within West Africa meant that African slave producers were able to adapt relatively easily to the end of the Atlantic trade. Beginning with Denmark in 1803, the European powers abolished first the slave trade and then slavery. The key action was Britain's abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and of slaveholding in 1833. Some areas had difficulty. Asante had a brief crisis because slaves flowed in faster than Asante could dispose of them. The end of the Atlantic trade also fueled the Yoruba civil wars, which continued intermittently until 1893. However, slaving activities continued. In part this was to feed an illegal slave trade, which remained important for half a century despite British abolition and the efforts of the British Navy. More important was the increasing demand for agricultural produce by both industrial Europe and Saharan nomads. The most important exports to Europe were palm oil and peanut oil, used for lubrication and the manufacture of soap. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also saw a series of Muslim *jihāds*. Although some of these movements originated as reactions of industrious Muslim peasants to the demands of predatory slave-trading states, the new Muslim states almost all ended up using slave labor in a more rigorous way. One effect was that slave prices dropped only briefly after Atlantic markets were closed.

West African slavers not only remained active but even became more effective with the importation of new weapons from Europe. Most important were breech-loading rifles, which were more accurate, had greater range, and could be loaded more rapidly. It was thus easier for small armed bands to dominate large populations. By the end of the nineteenth century the Sokoto Caliphate in northern Nigeria had about two and a half million slaves, and French West Africa had more than two million. The last quarter of the century was probably the bloodiest period in West Africa's history as new contenders for power sought to overturn older states. West Africa was so much oriented to a slave economy that these new contenders could often get the money they needed for guns only by selling slaves.

With increasing accumulations of slaves, domestic models of slavery gave way to the plantation or slave village. Slave labor was more systematically exploited for profit, and thus more strictly controlled. Few African slaves worked the dawn-to-dusk routine of the American slave. The work cycle

was dependent on climate and the nature of agriculture. The newly enslaved worked full-time for and were fed by their masters. Once the slave was integrated in the society, he or she received a plot of land. In grain-growing areas integrated slaves generally worked about five days a week from sunrise to early afternoon on the master's lands. Usually such male slaves were given female partners. Evenings and the two other days, they worked their own lands. In the more market-oriented societies the hours of labor were extended either by adding a sixth day or by a longer workday. With time a slave ménage could be freed of direct control and allowed to work for themselves in exchange for a fixed annual payment. Male slaves owed approximately what it took to feed a healthy male for a year; women generally owed one-half that. In slave villages work was supervised by a slave chief or a member of the master's family. During the dry season slaves had many other tasks. They repaired houses and rebuilt fences. In many societies, they produced cloth; the women spun and the men wove. In merchant families male slaves might work as porters on the caravans that left shortly after harvest.

Law and custom afforded the slaves some protection. Those born in the house were not supposed to be sold. It is not clear how often this was violated, but it could probably be done only during famine years or when the slave's behavior so alienated other slaves that they approved sale. Within Muslim communities, slave women who bore children for their masters were freed after the master's death. This was probably the most common form of manumission, but Islam also recommended manumission of all a dying person's slaves as a pious act. Faithful retainers were often the beneficiaries of this practice.

In theory, slaves did not marry, but they did cohabit. The difference was that they had none of the rights that spouses had to each other's services or to their children. They could neither bequeath nor inherit: in theory, the slave owned nothing. In practice, masters were forced to recognize the slave's personality. This meant allowing the slave a full family life. Children could, however, be taken from their parents when they were old enough to work, and either put to work in the master's house or given as servants to his children. This meant that slave society was more atomized than that of the freeborn. In spite of this, slaves lived in family units. The surplus of female slaves made it possible for almost all male slaves to have spouses and for some to have two. Domesticity was probably a key factor tying slaves into their new societies. When slaves fled their masters, they often left in family units; when parents fled alone, they often tried to recover their children.

The abolition of slavery by European powers had little effect on African slaves. European colonies were very small and reluctant to shelter fugitive slaves because it threatened their relations with African states. In 1848, when the French abolished slavery, slaves living on the islands of St. Louis and Goree were freed, but the French soon began expelling runaway slaves as vagabonds, often by arrangement with their owners. The British also worked out extradition arrangements with slave-owning neighboring polities. When colonial rule extended beyond coastal bases, both powers used the device of a protectorate to avoid enforcing their own anti-slavery legislation. Gradually these systems were changed. In the 1850s an abolitionist governor began giving sanctuary in the Gold Coast; in Senegal during the 1870s, a determined prosecuting attorney brought charges against slave-owners and freed their slaves within the colony. Slavery was abolished in the Gold Coast in 1874, though even there an effort was made to limit enforcement. The armies that conquered Africa for Europe were largely made up of slaves, often purchased for the army and often rewarded with slave prisoners.

When the conquest was completed at the turn of the century, the colonial powers acted. Even though the colonies depended heavily on slave-owning collaborators, slavery was seen in the metropolis as immoral, and emancipation was after-

ward offered as one of the goals of colonization. The colonial regime generally chose a variant of what can be called the Indian formula, under which colonial states refused to enforce the control of the masters over the slaves. In 1905 French West Africa prohibited any transactions in persons; it did not actually abolish slavery, but a refusal to enforce the rights of masters led to between one-half and three-quarters of a million slaves returning to earlier homes. In Northern Nigeria too there was large-scale flight, but Governor Frederic Lugard feared economic and social disruption. He proclaimed the freedom of children born after 1901 and made provision for older slaves to purchase their freedom, but he reinforced control of masters over the bulk of their slaves. In Sierra Leone, once the beacon in the anti-slavery struggle, slave-trading was abolished in 1896, but slavery itself was not prohibited until 1926, after a League of Nations inquiry on slavery.

The struggles to control the labor of former slaves in West Africa have been poorly studied. The majority of slaves remained where they were. In most areas they were able to establish control over both family and work life. Where masters established control over land, the former slaves became a dependent class of sharecroppers and rural workers. Where the former slaves were able to get access to land, they became an independent and often successful peasantry.

[*See also* Abolition and Anti-Slavery, *article on* Africa; *and* Historiography, *article on* African Slavery.]

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—MARTIN A. KLEIN

Central Africa

We know very little about slavery in the region that today comprises the central African states of Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. There is no book-length study dealing with the subject in any of these countries; the most extensive treatment is Marcia Wright's biographical account of six ex-slaves. The literature on the institution in nineteenth-century Malawi and Zambia includes a few published articles, observations in general historical surveys, and dissertations. Even sparser is our knowledge about slavery in nineteenth-century Zimbabwe; this article derives its information on Zimbabwe from Albino Pacheco's report of his journey from Tete to Zumbo in 1861. Some general works, such as David Beach's *The Shona and Zimbabwe, 900–1850* (1980), do not even mention the institution. Hoyini Bhila's *Trade and Politics in a Shona Kingdom* (1982) has only a single reference, and this is to the slave trade rather than slavery. It appears that slavery was not an important institution in many communities of precolonial Zimbabwe, and much of Zimbabwe may have been little affected by the slave trade. Present-day Malawi and Zambia have figured in discussions of slavery mainly because of their involvement in the so-called "Arab" slave trade that became the staple target of British anti-slavery propaganda in the late nineteenth century.

One significant exception to this overall pattern was Bulozi in what is today northwestern Zambia. Bulozi may have attracted the attention of other