struggled to maintain its independence from two competing superpowers, the Umayyads of Cordoba and the Fatimids of Ifriqiya. In 1054–1055, Sijilmasa fell to another Berber tribe, the Almoravids. In his *Masalik wa-l-Mamalik*, al-Bakri provided the most complete medieval description of Sijilmasa: a circular wall with twelve gates, beautiful houses within—many with gardens—magnificent public buildings, a solidly built mosque, and poorly built baths. He also described abundant agriculture irrigated with water collected in cisterns.

Arab writers of the first half of the fourteenth century also described a city at its height. While Sijilmasa was under the control of the Marinid dynasty, al-ʿUmari called it one of the mightiest cities of Morocco. In a civil war in 1393, the inhabitants killed the governor, destroyed the walls of the city, and built *qsur* (fortified villages) in the surrounding area.

Following the civil war, Sijilmasa was neglected by the Moroccan Saʿadian dynasty (1549–1659). In the seventeenth century, the ʿAlawi dynasty, which still rules Morocco in the early twenty-first century, emerged from the Tafilalt. They fortified the garrison of Sijilmasa in the late seventeenth century and built an impressive system of irrigation that generally improved their quality of life. Sijilmasa in the early twenty-first century is replaced by the town of Rissani that serves as the principal market for some 125–130 villages in the oasis. Monuments and shrines on the outskirts of Rissani identify it as the ʿAlawi spiritual hearth. The physical remains of Sijilmasa lie buried just to the west of Rissani.

See also **Morocco; Morocco: History of (1000 to 1900); Timbuktu; Transportation: Caravan.**

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SLAVE TRADES

This entry includes the following articles:

ATLANTIC, CENTRAL AFRICA

Central Africa, in the context of the Atlantic slave trade, refers to the African coast and hinterland south of the equator (roughly Cape Lopez, in modern Gabon) as far as the mouth of the Kunene River (at the border of modern Angola and Namibia). In British studies, it is designated

"West-Central Africa," to distinguish it from colonial British Central Africa (now Zambia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe.) The low population densities of the forests to the north of this region separated it as an integrated set of demographic and economic units from "western Africa" (Cameroon to the west and north); beyond the Kunene to the south lay the virtually uninhabited Namib Desert. The western Central African region economically integrated into the commercial economy of the Atlantic, expanded from 120 miles inland from the coast or less at the dawn of slaving in the early sixteenth century to the very center of the continent, as much as 900 miles inland, by the decline of exports in the 1860s.

Central Africa contributed nearly half of the more than 12 million or so captives sent across the Atlantic from all parts of Africa. From the principal source of the sixteenth century's relatively small numbers of slaves, Central Africa's contribution declined toward one-third as western African exports surged at the end of the seventeenth century, and then rose again, becoming the principal region of origin for captives sent to the Americas after 1800—about 45 percent overall. These captives came from populations less numerous than those on which the slave-trading networks in western Africa preyed. Most of them had lived along the margins of the equatorial forest and from the grassland savannas, in a band which ran east from the mouth of the region's greatest river, the Congo (Zaire). Relatively moist highlands in central Angola drained by the Kwanza and Kunene rivers supported a second comparatively dense area of human habitation, while smaller vulnerable populations lived further to the east, around the valleys of other major rivers running through lands that were generally dry, subject to periodic drought, and covered in large part by porous, sandy soils. The fragility of agriculture under these conditions in the more southerly regions, where nearly everyone relied on farming for their food, forced people to disperse when the rains failed and thus exposed them periodically to capture and enslavement once European slavers supported raiders who created military bands, and eventually commercial communities and wide-ranging caravans, to do so.

Portuguese ships first felt their way south along the western Central African coast during the 1480s, but they turned to loading slaves only gradually, over the following century. The first Europeans were motivated by the royal sponsors' futile quest for precious metals, gold or silver; they also sought military allies, whom they found in the early sixteenth century in the ambitious heads of the largest African polity, or network of trading chiefs, near the coast, just south of the Zaire (Congo) River mouth, lords (*mani*) whom they treated as "kings" of Kongo analogous to the European monarchs they knew at home.

A second wave of Portuguese brought a more commercial orientation after the 1520s. Backed by Italian capital, they extended the sugar industry then growing on the islands off northwestern Africa (Madeira, the Canaries) to equatorial São Tomé (Saint Thomas), lying between Kongo and the main destination at that time for captives from Central Africa, the Portuguese fort at Elmina, on the Gold Coast in western Africa. Cane thrived in the island's humid equatorial climate, and sugar production required field laborers in large numbers. The planters of the island turned to the mouth of the Kwanza River, to the south of the sheltered Bay of Luanda, to buy them, particularly after the *mani* of Kongo protested the disruptions to their own political agendas done by Portuguese merchants drawing captives from their wars of expansion. In the hills above the upper valley of the Kwanza, the São Tomé planters brought captives taken by warlords known by their title, the *ngola*. By the 1560s, São Tomé had assembled perhaps thirty thousand slaves from the highlands above both sides of the Kwanza.

Large-scale slaving south of the Zaire River grew between the 1570s and the 1620s from these roots, with annual exports probably ranging between five and ten thousand individuals. This massive growth started from a severe drought that engulfed the Kwanza Valley region in violent conflict during the 1570s. A royally sponsored expedition from Portugal arrived in the same decade to challenge the São Tomé planters for control of the region. The metropolitan troops sought mythical "mountains of silver" but turned to systematic raiding for captives when they failed to materialize. They succeeded mostly by collaborating with marauding bands of young Africans, known as Imbangala (but exaggeratedly characterized by the Portuguese as cannibalistic "Jaga"), driven by hunger to a violent, predatory style of living in the midst of widespread social disintegration.

The union of the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns in Iberia in the 1580s fortuitously converted this temporary collapse in Africa to two and one-half centuries of systematic slaving. Spain took advantage of its new authority over the Portuguese fortress built at Luanda Bay to award the famous *asiento* contracts for delivering Africans as slaves to their silver-mining colonies in the Americas to merchants from Lisbon. The enormous profits obtained from selling captive Africans for Spanish pieces of eight covered the high costs in mortality among the slaves as the Europeans learned to carry larger numbers—300 and more per ship—of people alive across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World.

The sugar industry of northeastern Brazil, just then taking shape under the stimulus of Dutch investment, bought some of these captives en route to Spanish ports in the eastern Caribbean region. Along with other captives from Portuguese outposts in Upper Guinea (modern Guinea [Bissau]), these Africans enabled sugar barons in Pernambuco and then Bahia to replace São Tomé as the principal, and vastly greater producers of sugar and a much larger market for "Angolan" slaves from Central Africa. Most captives left through a port that developed at Luanda, under the guns of the fortresses commanding the bay. The Iberian government presence, under a governor and commander of the local troops, made the Luanda trade, uniquely in Africa, subject to Europe-based government regulation and taxation. The town remained the principal locus of Portuguese government authority for the duration of the trade, except for a brief loss of control to the Dutch from 1641 to 1648. Slaves regularly accounted for 90 percent of the area's exports (in European currency values), with ivory a very distant second.

Portuguese military intervention in the politics of slaving from Kongo to the central highland region, backed by sugar-planting interests in Pernambuco (in Brazil), extended the conflicts among the Africans through the late seventeenth century, in what have become known as the "Angolan wars" These wars spread slaving east to the valley of the Kwango River, where in the 1630s an Imbangala band established a military and commercial base known as Kasanje. As the slaving wars moved east beyond the Kwango at the end of the century, Kasanje became the primary supplier of slaves to Luanda for more than a century. These wars also spread slaving up to the highlands south of the Kwanza, where other Imbangala bands created several similar regimes—later known as the Ovimbundu "kingdoms"—between about 1670 and 1730. Other Brazilian planter interests, particularly from Rio de Janeiro, grew desperate for slaves from Central Africa after the discovery of gold and diamonds in Minas Gerais at the end of the seventeenth century. In order to evade the taxes, bribes, and government regulations imposed at Luanda, these Brazilian slavers developed the small southerly settlement at Benguela into the outlet for slaves from the populous highlands just to the east. Exports of captives from Benguela grew steadily to about eight thousand per year, until they approached those from Luanda—then shipping from ten thousand to fifteen thousand annually—in some decades of the late eighteenth century.

The 1670s also marked the extension of English, French, and Dutch slaving in western Africa south to the coasts of Central Africa, starting in the region north of the mouth of the Zaire River known as Loango, from the name of the largest African trading principality there. The northern Europeans bought slaves primarily for sugar plantations on the islands they held in the West Indies and, very secondarily, for South Carolina and the Chesapeake region in North America, where the captives from western Central Africa were known as "Angolas," even though they had only indirect connections with the Portuguese colony of the same name south of the mouth of the Zaire River. In the eighteenth century these northern Europeans, commercially wealthier than the Portuguese, boarded Central African captives from Kongo, Kasanje, and even further south, through ports in this northerly region at Loango, Cabinda, and Molembo. Government authorities in Luanda were responsible for maintaining a Portuguese monopoly over slaving from the coasts south of Cape Lopez but never inhibited these European competitors to their north. Central Africans—known as "Angolas" or as "Congos"—became significant components of the enslaved populations of the Caribbean, the Carolina Lowcountry (where the designation connoted the population known as "Gullahs"), and the Chesapeake.

Though Lisbon (or its contracted private agents) taxed the trade at its port at Luanda and its network of military posts to the east, it did not dominate commercially. Rather, its own colonial subjects, both Angolans and Brazilians, handled nearly all of the imports, dominated by textiles and Brazilian cane brandy, and the exports in the form of captive people. Metropolitan merchants tended to limit their involvement to supplying commercial credit, often in the form of textiles from India, wines from Madeira and Portugal, and northern European linens and woolens sent to Luanda; by leaving ownership of the slaves themselves to their colonial subjects, they passed along to them the primary risk of the trade—mortality among the slaves carried. Brazilians operated the ships that plied the south Atlantic back and forth from Rio, and secondarily from Bahia and Recife (in Pernambuco), and contributed the rotgut cane brandy prominent among the Angolan imports. They owned the slaves at most periods, together with a "Luso-African" community of families descended from women associated with the African suppliers of the slaves and from immigrant Brazilian and Portuguese traders and officials. These Angolans worked with criminals and gypsies exiled to Angola from Portugal and Brazil, as well as with their skilled African slaves, to run the caravans that linked Luanda and Benguela to the main trading fairs of the interior—at Kasanje, in southern Kongo, in the Central Highlands, and elsewhere. The ambitious Portuguese first minister of the 1750s and 1760s, the Marquis of Pombal, chartered two metropolitan companies to expand Lisbon's limited role at Luanda, but both sank beneath a sea of debt when they tried to buy their way into the Brazil-dominated trade with liberal loans of trade goods.

The numbers of Central Africans sent off to slavery in the Americas repeatedly surged because of droughts that recurred during the 1670s, again in the middle of the eighteenth century, and particularly in the 1790s and after. Kasanje drew many of the captives it sent to Luanda from "Lunda," the sandy plains reaching to the very center of the continent, through a loose but extensive network of warlords there who raided the large populations along the southern margins of the forest. The highland Ovimbundu developed large armed caravans of their own to buy the captives taken in these wars and also sent them to the southeast around the headwaters of the Zambezi River to promote the slave trade there. Kongo became a transit region for slaves who originated from far to the east and southeast and were sold to the French and English along the northern coasts. By the early nineteenth century, slaving was also advancing northeastward up the Zaire River into the heart of the equatorial forests under the stimulus of canoe traders, known as Bobangi, who dominated the trade of the lower river.

Communities in nearly every part of Central Africa weres raided by slavers or lived in one way or another off slaving. Smaller, more remote communities suffered as victims of the large raiding states. By the eighteenth century, nearly all of the African polities of the region either derived their power from the control of slaving routes passing through their lands or to defensive strengths developed to protect themselves from raiding. The older kingdoms near the coast—chiefs and warlords in the Kongo region, Kasanje, the Ovimbundu states—abandoned raiding and became commercial brokers between the zones of violence farther in the interior, where many captives originated, and the commercial agents of buyers on the coast. In these more commercialized regions, political authorities exploited their power and used their wealth in trade goods to sink their subjects in debt and then condemned failed debtors, and often also the debtors' families, to exile, sale, and slavery.

In the absence of population counts, scholars disagree about the demographic impact of this pervasive slaving. After the clearly devastating drought of the early seventeenth century, total numbers of people embarked along the coasts of western Central Africa dropped to around five thousand per year in 1700 and then rose toward ten thousand each year by the end of the eighteenth century. The extent of the new regions afflicted may have increased fast enough, while African slavers may have retained enough women (since the people they sold for export were predominantly males) to have sustained overall levels of population, within the recurrently harsh limits imposed by the region's susceptibility to drought.

One very selective count made in the 1740s revealed twice as many women as men in the reproductive age cohorts, exactly complementing the 2:1 majorities of males among the people shipped off. Some scholars have hypothesized that overall population densities in the area may have been too low to support the decades of intense slaving at the end of the eighteenth century without at least a temporary decline in population. The total number of captives exported exceeded 5.5 million; the additional casualties—those displaced and enslaved within Africa and those who died in the course of the tragedy—are uncountable but would have been at least as great.

The Africans subjected to this turmoil regarded the European slavers as "red cannibals" who rendered the bones of the captives taken beyond the sea into the gunpowder with which they returned to buy more. They interpreted the butter and cooking oil among these imports as rendered from the fat of the captives' bodies, and the red wine they saw as distilled from the blood of those sent into the Atlantic, the "land of the dead." The commercially oriented warlords who dominated the trading polities they viewed as "witches."

Those enslaved in the interior reached the coast only after prolonged starvation and abuse along the way, though conditions were less severe along the northerly trails leading to the Loango coast and on the riverine canoe trade in the forests than in the drier lands to the south. Death rates at sea were correspondingly very high—averaging around 10 percent from Luanda to Rio at the end of the eighteenth century (that is, a rate that would have killed all aboard within ten months, had the voyages lasted longer than the normal four to six weeks), probably twice that earlier in the century, and perhaps lower later in the nineteenth—in spite of clumsy Portuguese medical and sanitary efforts to salvage their investments in vulnerable human capital. Smallpox epidemics in Africa, often following droughts, briefly raised mortality rates at sea to dramatically higher levels. The slaves' survival on the "middle passage" also depended on the adequacy of the food and—especially—water provided for them. Divided responsibilities for the slaves' welfare, distributed among Lisbon financiers, Africa-based traders, Brazilian shippers, and planter-buyers in Brazil left none of them in positions to protect themselves, or the slaves, adequately. The so-called "slave risk," of mortality, became a calculation made in terms of each of the slavers' narrow economic interests, not the lives of the enslaved.

Nineteenth-century British efforts to suppress the Atlantic slaving of all other European powers north of the equator, in the wake of Britain's abolition of its own trade in 1808, only stimulated the trade from Central Africa. Portuguese and Brazilian (independent of Portugal after 1826) slavers, protected by treaty provisions and stimulated by growing production of sugar, cotton, and coffee in Brazil, drove the volume of Central African slaving to record levels—as many as thirty-five thousand captives in the final, most intense years (see Table 1). Surreptitious support from French, Spanish, and U.S. merchants, the financial backing of the British themselves for Brazil's export agriculture, and the chaotic aftermath of searing drought in Africa also contributed to the high volume. International treaties declared this trade illegal after 1830, but shipments to Brazil ended only in 1850. The booming sugar and coffee plantations of Cuba became the other principal destination of Central African captives from the 1840s until well into the 1860s.

Much of this later trade moved through ports remote from the Portuguese government posts at Luanda and Benguela. Luso-African families in Angola, deprived of profits and taxes from the slave exports that had overwhelmingly dominated the colony's economy for so long, turned to growing sugar and coffee on a minor scale and to exporting beeswax, ivory, and wild ("red") rubber that they purchased from African traders from the remote regions to the east. These African suppliers staffed their extraction and processing of the new commodities with captives whom they continued to buy and to seize; other traders put them to work in their caravans and gathering parties. The Portuguese in Angola developed their own nascent plantation agriculture—coffee, then sugar—with African laborers legally termed "servants," (*serviçaes*) but in fact slaves, whom they continued to buy from the same African suppliers into the early 1900s. The Angolan government sent several thousand such "servants" to cocoa plantations developed on the island of São Tomé until 1910,

Estimated volume of the transatlantic slave trade by African region and half-century

African regions	Western Africa	West Central Africa	Southeast Africa	Total	West Central Africa %
1501–1600	126,999	**149,294**	0	276,293	**54.0%**
1601–1650	146,321	**526,522**	934	673,777	**78.1%**
1651–1700	771,932	**408,618**	29,876	1,210,426	**39.7%**
1701–1750	1,833,573	**728,344**	17,674	2,579,591	**28.2%**
1751–1800	2,496,420	**1,417,562**	61,773	3,979,755	**35.6%**
1801–1850	1,491,348	**1,736,772**	394,183	3,622,303	**47.9%**
1851–1867	46,870	**84,077**	89,447	220,394	**38.1%**
1501–1867	6,974,586	**5,051,189**	593,887	12,558,491	**40.2%**

*Data in columns for West Central Africa and Southeast Africa and the Total trade are summed from the source table; the data in the column for Western Africa are calculated from these sums. Percentage column is calculated from the bolded column for West Central Africa and the totals for each period. The original data include varying estimated components, and the numbers are not in fact known as precisely as their expression in the table. Confidence levels are generally in the 95% range, or above.

SOURCE: Calculated* from "Introduction," in Eltis, David, and David Richardson, eds. "Introduction." *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

Table 1.

where four hundred years of some of the most intense slaving anywhere in Africa finally ended, amidst a storm of international protest, on the same small island where it had begun.

See also **Benguela; Colonial Policies and Practices; Congo River; Ecosystems; Luanda; Production Strategies: Agriculture; Slavery and Servile Institutions; Women: Women and Slavery.**

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JOSEPH C. MILLER

ATLANTIC, WESTERN AFRICA

Thanks to the research conducted since the mid-twentieth century, historians' knowledge of the African past has grown considerably. This advance in knowledge, however, has been uneven. Economic history remains an underdeveloped field in African studies. In particular, several aspects of the political economy of the Atlantic slave trade have yet to attract serious research employing rigorously analytical tools employed in the study of other regions of the world by development economic historians. Why did European merchants trading to the Americas seek slave labor rather than free wage labor? If they had to procure slave labor, why did they not do so in Europe or in Asia instead of Africa? How did the European trade in African slaves compare with the one in European and Asian slaves that preceded it? What effect did the loss of millions of young men and women have on the processes of socioeconomic development in western Africa? For this purpose, a clear distinction is drawn between the short-term private gains of a few African individuals and groups, and the long-term developmental consequences for the economies and societies of the region as a whole.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The most challenging problem in comprehending and demonstrating how the Atlantic slave trade affected long-term socioeconomic development in sub-Saharan Africa is a conceptual one. While discovering the extant archival sources, and evaluating and establishing the basic facts about the trade are by no means easy tasks, even more difficult is knowing what information to look for and what meaning to give to that information once it has been procured. Only a carefully thought out conceptual framework can help solve this problem.

With the focus on long-term socioeconomic development in western Africa, an appropriate analytical framework must identify, in general terms, the central elements in the development process, given agricultural economies and societies in which subsistence production is still dominant, as was the case in western Africa in 1450. Put simply, the ultimate goal of socioeconomic development in organized societies is to raise societal capacity to regularly produce goods and services, which the members wish to consume, in a steadily expanding quantity and steadily improving quality. This requires cooperation and coordination within and between societies on a very large scale and over extensive geographical areas. At the center of this cooperation and coordination over vast and diverse geographical regions is the market. The growth of markets and market institutions makes possible the development of specialization and division of labor. Extensive development of the division of labor (interpersonal, interregional, and international) on a market basis enlarges the scale of production and offers the best opportunity for improving the skills of individual producers and the overall techniques of organization, production, and distribution.

Thus for agricultural societies still dominated by subsistence production (that is, a form of production in which the bulk of the output is not exchanged on the market but rather is consumed directly by the producer), the first prerequisite for development is generalized commercialization of socioeconomic life. The bulk of agricultural and manufacturing output must be deliberately aimed at the market and exchanged therein, and all factors of production (land, labor, and capital) must also be freely exchanged on the market as a matter of course. All of these are necessary preconditions for the full development of all the sectors of an economy (agriculture, mining, manufacturing, trade, transportation, and other services). An analysis of the impact of the Atlantic slave trade on western Africa at this level requires an understanding of how the conditions created by the trade facilitated or hindered the generalized development of these necessary preconditions.

Cooperation and coordination in a complex market economy also need rules and regulations, along with enforcement mechanisms, that must guide the production and consumption decisions of individuals and social groups. When these laws and enforcement mechanisms function properly, they provide opportunities and incentives for individuals to acquire economically useful skills and attitudes, and to evolve organizations that help to increase the social output of individuals' productive efforts. When they do not, they offer disincentives to the acquisition of productivity-increasing skills and encourage activities that disrupt productive efforts, while offering at the same time short-term rewards to a few individuals. Which of these two outcomes prevails at a given moment depends on the character of ruling elites and the conditions that inform their perception of their self-interests and determine the governmental instruments they fashion to secure them. As the fundamental conditions change, all the elements mentioned also change in the long run, including the type of ruling elites, their perception of their self-interests, and the governmental instruments they create to attain them.

It must be understood that governmental institutions are created to meet the private needs of those with the power and influence to design them. Socioeconomic development requires the establishment of socioeconomic and political structures that regularly promote the acquisition and employment of economically useful skills and attitudes, and adequately reward productive efforts in a structurally sustained manner. Such development takes place only if the interaction of internal and external factors creates conditions that produce ruling elites whose rational choice, induced by the conditions of their existence, simultaneously secures their self-interests and fulfills the requirements for long-term socioeconomic development. If a set of conditions favoring the reproduction of such a happy coincidence does not exist, then the alternative outcome will result. Analysis of the impact of the Atlantic slave trade on the societies of western Africa at this level has to examine how the conditions that the trade both created and prevented determined the type of ruling elites that emerged, the choices made by political and economic entrepreneurs, and how those choices, in turn, affected the process of economic development in western Africa in the very long run.

THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND ITS FORERUNNERS

From biblical evidence, historians know that a large number of Hebrew slaves were employed by African rulers in ancient Egypt. The Greeks who followed the Egyptians employed slaves procured from Europe and Asia. Then came the most elaborate slave system of the ancient world, Roman slavery. The slave population in Rome was built up initially with captives taken in the imperial wars. Subsequently, the slave markets in Rome were supplied with slaves from the British Isles and continental Europe. The rise of Islam from the seventh century CE, and the socioeconomic and political system to which it gave rise in the Middle East and northern Africa, occasioned the development of yet another major slave system that supported an important international trade in slaves. Again, the main supply sources for the Middle East and North African slave markets were, for many centuries, in Europe, especially central and eastern Europe. Italian slave traders were in charge. When the Roman Church decreed that European Christians must not be sold as slaves to Muslims in North Africa and the Middle East, they ignored the papal injunctions.

The early centuries of the present millennium witnessed the consolidation of politically and militarily strong state systems all over Europe. The weakly organized communities in Europe were incorporated into empires and other state systems sufficiently strong to defend their territorial integrity and their citizens. With this development, the taking of captives became very costly to captors. As the European supply of captives to the Middle East and North African markets dwindled and became more expensive, North African and Arab merchants trading across the Sahara to western Africa began to take more interest in procuring captives from that region. By the middle centuries of the second millennium CE, a regular trade in western African captives across the Sahara had been well established. Arab merchants trading to the eastern African coast added some numbers from that region. The main difference between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa, in terms of captive taking at this time, was the existence of a balance of power of large states in the former, and the continuing existence of political fragmentation in the latter. Sub-Saharan Africa was still characterized by a multiplicity of small-scale political systems coexisting with a smaller number of larger and stronger political organizations, such as Mali and Songhay. This political contour facilitated the taking of captives from the weakly organized sub-Saharan communities by the stronger polities at very little cost to the latter.

European colonization of the Atlantic islands and the Americas, following the fifteenth-century explorations, became the source of an unprecedented demand for slave labor. Commercial exploitation of the vast resources of the Americas needed a large amount of workers separated from their means of production and the products of their labor, and under the effective control of profit-seeking entrepreneurs. Such workers could be free wage laborers, indentured servants, or slaves. European experimentation with the enslavement of the American Indians had a disastrous outcome. Humiliated, overworked, and infected with European diseases, the American Indian populations were almost wiped out everywhere in a few decades. The experiment with European indentured servants was not any more successful; with vast unoccupied lands available in the Americas, the few European migrants to the New World at this time preferred independent employment. Large-scale commercial exploitation of the American resources, therefore, had to depend on slavery.

But where would the slaves come from? Supplies within the Americas had already dried up. The taking of captives in Europe had become so costly that even the limited demand in the Middle East and North Africa could not be met as in previous centuries. This left sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia as possible sources. Asian slaves were utilized by European entrepreneurs who operated in East Asia for centuries following the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498. But, relative to western Africa, the cost of transporting Asian slaves to the Americas would be prohibitive, given the rudimentary ocean transportation technology of the time. Thus, given the politico-military situation in sub-Saharan Africa already stated, cost considerations ensured that the supply of slaves to the Americas would come mostly from that region. The same cost considerations virtually ruled out eastern Africa until the British anti-slave trade naval patrols significantly raised the cost of procuring slaves from several subregions in western Africa in the nineteenth century.

What made the European slave trade from Africa different from preceding trades in captives was its scale and character. For the first time in human history, the demand for slave labor was based on the employment of slaves to produce commodities on a very large scale for a growing capitalist market that embraced all parts of a vast ocean. It has been estimated that in the last decades of the eighteenth century, the value of commerce conducted across that ocean was at least over £100 million (sterling) per annum, and that of the New World produce that formed the basis of this commerce, over three-quarters came from the labor of African slaves. The use of African slave labor to exploit commercially the vast natural resources of the Americas was big business, the trade that supplied the slave labor was big business, distributing the slave-produced commodities was big business, and supplying in Europe the resources that supported the entire enterprise was very big business that was highly profitable, privately and socially. This was a new phenomenon in world history.

Consequently, European slave traders were able to pay on the African coast slave prices that made captive taking privately rewarding for some political and economic entrepreneurs in the short run. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the European traders carried to western Africa alone various manufactures worth more than £2 million (sterling) annually, over 90 percent of which were exchanged for slaves. This amount of manufactures looks ridiculously small in light of the value of commerce based on the produce of the labor of those slaves, as stated above. This in itself is an indication of the low cost of captive taking in western Africa. Nevertheless, the amount of manufactures involved was sufficiently great to encourage a sustained supply of large numbers of captives, provided by a few individuals and some ruling elites, since initially the short-term costs were borne in the weaker polities and the short-term benefits were accrued in the stronger ones, until all were ravaged in the long run by the cumulative effects. It must be stressed that people on the continent of Africa during the period did not see themselves as Africans. They identified only with their more locally defined polities and communities. Ruling elites were, therefore, not constrained by ideological considerations in taking captives from other polities and selling them to European traders in exchange for imported manufactures.

EFFECTS ON WESTERN AFRICA'S POPULATION

An important aspect of the consequences of the European slave trade for western Africa was its effects on the region's population. Although the total numbers shipped from Africa are still being debated by historians, it is well established by research that whichever estimate one accepts, from 11 million to 20 million, as the number of Africans exported across the Atlantic from 1500 to 1870, the process of procuring those numbers led to a huge loss of population in sub-Saharan Africa. The socioeconomic disruptions arising from the wars caused by the trade and the attendant demographic consequences have been elaborately documented by recent research, especially for West-Central Africa, the slave coast (from the Volta River in Ghana to Lagos in Nigeria), the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana), and the Middle Niger River valley.

The debate has shifted to whether the agricultural resources and the disease environment could have sustained the population destroyed by the slave trade and its attendant consequences. On this there is ample evidence. In the decades immediately following the ending of the Atlantic slave trade—1870 to 1939—population grew in most areas of western Africa at 0.5 to 1.0 percent per annum, long-run average. During the same period, there was a phenomenal expansion of land-intensive commodity production for export. Yet, there was more than enough arable land to sustain both developments without the need to import food from outside. Similarly, with no contribution from Western medicine worth considering, the population expansion was sustained by traditional African medicine that was available throughout the slave trade era. While many regions shared the impact, two were hardest hit: West-Central Africa and what geographers call the West African Middle Belt. The extremely low population densities of both regions in the late nineteenth century are historically explained in terms of the slave trade's effects rather than in terms of rainfall and the physical environment, which in fact are broadly similar to those of the more densely populated regions of western Africa.

While the trade lasted from the 1440s to the 1860s, the exports were concentrated in the 1650 to 1850 period, particularly 1700 to 1850. On the average, 36 percent of the exports were female and 64 percent were male. The very young and the very old were rarely included, the bulk of the exports being ages fifteen to thirty. These export characteristics were determined primarily by the preferences of the employers of slave labor in the Americas.

Some historians treat the introduction of American food plants into western Africa as a benefit associated with the slave trade, but this is a misconception. The American crops were introduced at a time when European trade with western Africa was predominantly in African products, such as gold, copper, ivory, cotton cloth, wood, and pepper. The introduction of American crops in sub-Saharan Africa, like their introduction in Europe at about the same time and the earlier introduction of Asian crops, was independent of the slave trade. Also, those crops were not adopted on a significant scale in western Africa until the late nineteenth century, or even the twentieth century in some areas. In West-Central Africa, where they seem to have been adopted much earlier, they still could not prevent the devastating effects of the trade, which attacked the region's populations at a time when the societies of Bantu migrants were still going through the process of diffusing new techniques of production and sociopolitical organization.

POLITICAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC EFFECTS ON WESTERN AFRICA

As stated earlier, European demand for captives to be shipped as slaves began at a time when the political scene in western Africa was still characterized by a multiplicity of small-scale autonomous political units. Growing population and expanding internal and external trade provided the main driving force for the incorporation of these independent units into larger political organizations by economic and political entrepreneurs. Some remarkable advances had already been made in this regard. In the western Sudan, a succession of large and complex political organizations developed from the last centuries of the first millennium CE; Mali and Songhay were the climax of that process. Other early complex political organizations included the kingdom of Kongo and a host of city-states. These polities were still going through their early stages of formation when the Europeans arrived. All over western Africa at this time the foundations were being laid for the competitive process of building large and complex state systems.

Initially European demand for African products such as gold, copper, pepper, and cotton cloth tended to encourage the emergence of state systems and ruling elites with vested interests in peaceful relations and trade with their neighbors. A good example here is the Akan trading empire ruled by merchant corporations in present-day Ghana. The combination of European and trans-Saharan demand for gold in the region stimulated general production and trade, which gave rise to the Akan sociopolitical system dominated by merchants. Early Portuguese demand for copper also tended to reinforce the central elements in the Kongo system, based originally on the production and distribution of copper and shell money.

As European demand shifted increasingly from products to captives, a fundamental change occurred in the political process. At the beginning the Europeans arranged with the rulers of the more strongly organized states, such as Bénin and Kongo, to supply captives from their weaker neighbors. But the expanding European demand for more and more captives soon gave rise to banditry all over western Africa. In places where the foundations already laid had not yet given rise to firmly established large political organizations, the process of state building was hijacked by bandits who became successful political entrepreneurs as their self-interests demanded. All the states created in this way, such as Dahomey, the Segu Bambara state in the middle Niger Valley, and several Akan states on the Gold Coast, were dominated by military aristocracies and constantly at war with their neighbors. The activities of bandits also led to major changes in the character of the established states, some of which collapsed and gave way to more militaristic states, such as Asante and Ibadan.

The prices paid for captives by the European traders made it privately more rewarding in the short run for the predominantly military rulers of hegemonic states to take captives from the weaker communities rather than to incorporate those communities and exploit their resources through the peaceful organization of production and trade. On the other hand, the taking of prisoners for sale overseas offered the weaker communities no incentives to be part of the hegemonic polities. On the contrary, predation forced the prey to organize militarily and thus to form hostile neighboring states of their own. Thus, the existence of a large-scale export market for captives induced the development of state systems characterized by hostile relations with neighbors, which both imposed strict limits on the size of states and created the conditions for their eventual demise. The atomistic nature of the political market made it impossible for any individual state to arrest or contract out of the situation.

Overall, the conditions created by the large-scale European demand for captives for more than three hundred years severely retarded long-term socioeconomic development in western Africa. The Atlantic slave trade arrested population growth at a time when the agricultural societies of western Africa were in transition from predominantly subsistence production of food and manufactures to the generalized commercialization of socioeconomic life. By doing so, it neutralized one of the main factors behind the creation of the necessary conditions for the development of market economies and capitalism in western Africa. The growth of export demand for captives also acted against the development of commodity production in western Africa for export to other regions in the Atlantic Basin. In western Africa's competition for Atlantic markets with other tropical and semitropical regions, the export of its human resource transferred its main advantage to its competitors, while at the same time creating internally unfavorable conditions for the development of efficient production of goods and services. Hence, by the end of the eighteenth century commodity exports were less than 10 percent of the value of western Africa's seaborne commerce. The history of the Gold Coast from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries vividly illustrates the consequences of this phenomenon.

From the late fifteenth to the early seventeenth centuries, the external trade of the Gold Coast (with both the trans-Saharan and the European traders) was overwhelmingly dominated by gold (and to a lesser extent kola nut) exports. The growth of this commodity production for export stimulated population growth, urbanization, forest clearing for agriculture, and the expansion of internal trade. In particular, peasant production for market exchange increased. The decline of subsistence production in the countryside allowed manufacturing to concentrate in the expanding cities, further stimulating the growth of town-country trade. Evidence shows a gradual evolution of land markets in the area during the period.

But the entire process was halted and reversed when the Gold Coast was transformed from gold to slave exports, following a shift in European traders' demand from gold to captives as the Americas expanded commodity production for Atlantic commerce, employing enslaved Africans. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, major areas of the Gold Coast suffered depopulation and deurbanization, peasant market production declined, subsistence production increased, manufacturing and agriculture were once again reintegrated in the countryside, and internal trade generally contracted. The evolving constituent elements of capitalism on the Gold Coast had to wait until the late-nineteenth-century demand for cocoa and resumption of population expansion gave them a new lease on life.

Some contributors to the literature on the Atlantic slave trade mistake the growth of market activities in export enclaves for a "commercial revolution" in western Africa induced by the production and sale of captives. In reality, however, the "booming" trade of the slave-trading enclaves concealed the general destruction and retardation of town-country and interregional commercial development by the multiple effects of the violent procurement of captives for export. As a simple illustration of one of the many ways captive taking retarded the development of commerce, there was no market transaction between captive takers and the communities that expended their resources to raise the people seized as captives, unlike the market exchanges that characterized the relationship between gold or cocoa producers and distributors. It was the dislocation in market circuits imposed by the violent production of captives that compelled those involved in the slave trade (merchants, warriors, and ruling elites) to accumulate servile producers employed primarily to produce their own subsistence.

The rather low-level development of the market economy in western Africa in the late nineteenth century, relative to other major regions of the Atlantic basin at the time, was largely a function of the adverse impact of the Atlantic slave trade on both population growth and the development of commodity production for export in western Africa during the critical period of 1650 to 1850. This limited development of the market economy explains the absence of proto-industrialization in all but one region—the cotton textile industry in Kano, Nigeria—of late nineteenth-century western Africa.

The delayed development of the market economy (and its associated commercialization of socioeconomic life) gave rise logically to socioeconomic characteristics wrongly labeled by some historians as uniquely African institutions—"African economic system," "African legal system," "African land law," "African social system," and so on. It is important to note that under favorable conditions—like those in pre-1650 Gold Coast (modern Ghana), nineteenth-century Kano, and late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century western Africa generally—the growth and development of the market economy and its cultural underpinnings followed essentially historically predictable patterns. The issue of African agency is also erroneously argued in the literature. Clearly individuals and states in Africa made self-interested choices during the period. But the conditions, under which those rational choices were made, were created by the shift of European traders' demand from products to captives. As can be seen from the Gold Coast evidence presented, that shift was beyond the control of anyone in Africa during the period.

See also **Colonial Policies and Practices; Economics and the Study of Africa; Kano; Labor; Research: Historical Resources; Slavery and Servile Institutions; Textiles; Women: Women and Slavery.**

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INDIAN OCEAN

Histories of the trans-Atlantic slave trade have largely shaped the way in which scholars based in the West have viewed the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. The conventional view is that the Indian Ocean slave trade was considerably smaller than the Atlantic slave trade and largely comprised a traffic in black Africans initially to Middle Eastern markets, with the addition from the mid-eighteenth century of the plantation economies of the Francophone Mascarene islands (Réunion and Mauritius) in the Western Indian Ocean, and in the nineteenth century of Cuba and Brazil and the East African islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (and opposite continental littoral). As in West Africa, violence was the hallmark of enslavement, the victims being chiefly captured in military expeditions or kidnapped.

Moreover, while some Africans were slavers, the main culprits were foreigners, notably Muslims, who sought slaves from the entire sub-Saharan region of East Africa, comprising the Sudan and Ethiopia in the north and the entire east African littoral between Somalia and Mozambique. Moreover, at the peak of the trade in the nineteenth century, the slaving frontier moved deep into the interior, sweeping through the Great Lakes region into Central Africa. By then, most slaves were exported through Cairo, the Muslim-dominated Red Sea coastline of Ethiopia, and Zanzibar.

As in West African waters, the slave trade in the Indian Ocean was in the nineteenth century attacked by an abolitionist movement backed by the full diplomatic and naval power of Britain, then the world superpower. The British government signed a series of anti–slave trade treaties with local powers that were backed by naval searches, notably of Arab dhows. Only in the 1890s with the establishment of colonial rule in the region did the slave export trade from the east African coast finally end. However, this marked neither the end of slave exports, which continued, albeit in smaller quantity, across the Red Sea to Arabia and the Persian Gulf, nor of the internal slave trade, which has in strife-torn regions such as the Sudan witnessed a resurgence.

Historians of the Atlantic slave trade have also stimulated an extension into the Indian Ocean research into the African diaspora. Concentrating chiefly on Muslim regions, diaspora scholars have highlighted the role of African slaves who in the Middle East and South Asia rose to become great military leaders, court councilors and administrators, and even rulers. More recently, diaspora studies have enlarged to examine the African cultural heritage of communities of ex-African slaves such as the Sidis of Western India.

By contrast, revisionist scholars have eschewed the Atlantic model to study the Indian Ocean slave trade from the perspective of the regions concerned. They have highlighted the development by at least the tenth century CE of a "global economy" based on transoceanic trade that linked the entire region from the Middle East to South Asia and Southeast Asia to the Far East. Within that global economy, the main productive centers and centralized administrations of China, India, Mesopotamia, and Egypt established a strong demand not only for exotic luxuries such as cloves and ivory but also for servile labor.

In the revisionist view, the slave trade of the Indian Ocean world (IOW) global economy contrasted significantly with that of the Atlantic slave trade. First, demand was largely color blind. For long, slaves were obtained from both regional (from wars of conquest to raids against "primitive" hill or island tribes) and distant sources (e.g., for Middle Eastern markets from Eastern Europe and Central Asia). Some scholars consider that the slave trade was greatly stimulated by the rise of Islam, although more important was the demand for labor that accompanied the concomitant growth in IOW global economy (notably from the ninth to thirteenth centuries) as occurred in other periods of sustained economic development in the last centuries BCE and first centuries CE, and during the rapid expansion of the international economy in the nineteenth century.

Although small numbers of slaves were from early times shipped from Nubia and Ethiopia, East Africa did not become a significant source of slaves for IOW markets until the ninth century. Even then, traditional assumptions that African slave exports were very high have been undermined by evidence that most of the supposedly mass "Zanj" and hence "East African" slave rebels in late-ninth-century Iraq were either of local or North African origin. The export of Malagasy and East African slaves to Southeast and East Asia increased from the sixteenth century due to demand from European enclaves, notably Portuguese settlements in Macao and Japan, and Dutch forts in Indonesia; in 1694 there were about 25,000 slaves—of many different origins—in Batavia alone. However, the import of African slaves into Southeast Asian markets was limited due to the availability of slaves within the region (the hill "tribes" of Southeast Asia and the islands) and slave mortality on long-distance routes. For instance, of the 278 Malagasy slaves shipped to Batavia on one ship in 1684, only 108 survived the voyage.

From the late eighteenth century, with the rise in demand for slaves for the Mascarene plantations, East African slave exports increased sharply but only in the nineteenth century did black Africans come to dominate the slave markets of Western India (until about mid-century) and the Middle East. Moreover, the vibrant slave markets of Southeast Asia and the Far East continued to be supplied predominantly by slaves from within the region, some of whom were also exported to meet Middle Eastern demand. Moreover, for the nineteenth century, revisionists have emphasized the existence of Madagascar as a hitherto neglected market for East African slaves.

The IOW slave trade was thus multidirectional and changed over time. East African slaves were exported in cumulatively large numbers over the centuries to other regions of Africa, such as Ethiopia and Egypt, Arabia, the Persian Gulf, India, and to a lesser degree to the Far East. From the mid-eighteenth century, export markets in Africa expanded and considerable numbers of East Africans were shipped to Zanzibar, Pemba, Somalia, Madagascar, the Mascarenes, and some to Cape Town. They were also exported to Portuguese enclaves in India and the Americas. Malagasy slaves were sent in small quantities to Muslim markets, and to European settlements in the Americas, the Cape and Batavia, and from the mid-eighteenth century in considerable numbers to Réunion and Mauritius. Indian slaves were shipped to Indonesia, Mauritius, Cape Town, and the Middle East. However, most slaves to the Middle East initially originated from the Caucasus, Eastern Europe, and Africa. These were joined in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by slaves from the Makran coast of Iran, some from Western India, and a few from Indonesia and China. Indonesians were dispatched mainly to markets across Southeast Asia and to Cape Town, while Indochinese and Korean slaves were exported to China, and, in the nineteenth century, Chinese slaves were sent to Singapore and San Francisco.

Revisionists have also challenged the traditional concept that the IOW slave trade was of less demographic significance than the Atlantic slave trade in which for about 400 years from circa 1500 to 1850 some 10 million to 12 million slaves were transported to the Americas. The IOW slave trade, started by at least 2000 BCE, is at least 4,000 years old and is still vibrant. It is impossible to estimate with any precision the number of slaves traded in the IOW given the duration of the slave trade there, the limited nature of extant records, and the fact that, in contrast to the Atlantic system, IOW slaves rarely constituted a specialist cargo. Moreover, the IOW slave trade involved both maritime and overland routes.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the IOW slave trade came under increasing international scrutiny, which induced slavers to adopt indirect routes and pass slaves off as non-slave porters, sailors, domestics, and even as children or other kin. Unlike the trans-Atlantic slaving system, which was dominated by European finance, the ships, personnel, and finance of the IOW slave trade was dominated by indigenous agents; coastal Chinese, Bugis and "Malays" in the eastern sector, and coastal Arabs and Indians, notably Gujaratis, in the western sector. In the nineteenth century, when the IOW slave trade peaked, an estimated 1.5 million slaves were exported from East Africa alone and slaves comprised between 20 percent and 30 percent of the population of many IOW societies, rising to 50 percent and over in parts of Africa and in Indonesian ports. Overall, however, it is possible that the greatest IOW slave traffic was overland, notably within Africa, Hindu India, and the Confucian Far East. The total number of slaves traded across the Indian Ocean world in a trade that has endured ten times as much as the Atlantic trade is thus likely to have been considerably larger than those shipped across the Atlantic.

Moreover, whereas some two-thirds of slaves landed in the Americas were male, most of them adults, it is probable that many more females and children than adult males were trafficked in the Indian Ocean. Also, whereas the typical employment of New World slaves was unskilled labor on plantations or in mines, that of Indian Ocean world slaves varied enormously according to region and the time period concerned. Some female slaves worked as water carriers, and in agriculture, textile production, and mining, although girls and young women were valued particularly for their sexual attractiveness and reproductive capacity. This profoundly affected the shaping of African-Asian communities. Rulers and the wealthy, most of whom were men, surrounded themselves with female slaves. In terms of Middle Eastern demand for Africans, Berber, Nubian, and Ethiopian females were valued as sexual partners. Ethiopians were considered excellent entertainers, and Berbers and Nubians as good child rearers and domestic servants. Sub-Saharan women were considered docile, robust, and excellent wet nurses, but were less sought after as concubines than Circassians and North Africans. Slaves as secondary wives, concubines, entertainers, and domestic servants enjoyed a lifestyle and a respect often superior to that of female peasants, while their lot was generally much easier than that of male slaves. There are instances of concubines in the Middle East sending for family members to join them—albeit as non-slaves. Female slaves were also less likely to be sold.

Young female slaves commanded generally higher prices than male and older female slaves but not eunuchs ("males made female") who were universally the most highly prized (e.g., in medieval times, black eunuchs sold for three times the price of ordinary Negro male slaves on the Egyptian market). In the Islamic Middle East, eunuchs were in high demand as bodyguards, household and harem guards, and servants and doorkeepers of the Friday mosques of Mecca and Medina. Whites castrated in Spain were initially the source of most eunuchs in the Middle East, but as time progressed were increasingly replaced by Africans, notably from Sudan (exported via Egypt), followed by Lower Senegal, the Maghreb (Berbers), and Ethiopia. As Islam forbade castration, it was generally carried out before the slaves entered the Muslim world. Moreover, it was sometimes performed at the behest of the slaves who viewed it as a means to a privileged position.

Demand for black African male slaves in the Middle East during the initial expansion of Islam was probably for arduous tasks like clearing the Mesopotamian marshes for cultivation, and the mining and smelting of gold and silver. Later occupations included date plantation labor, pearl diving, dock work, and soldiery. However, African slaves also became famous scholars, poets, military commanders, and even rulers. Many of Mecca's Qurayshī elite were the progeny of Arab males and African concubines, and the three greatest early Arab poets, ʻAntara bin Shaddād al-Kalbī, Khafāf bin Nudba al-Sulakhī, and Sulayk bin al-Sulaka, were known as the Crows of the Arabs because they possessed black mothers (Hassad, Mufuta, and Mutunda).

Similarly, in the early ninth century Abū Al-Djāhiz, of probably Ethiopian slave origin, achieved fame and influence in Basra and Baghdad as author of sociological commentaries, theology, and politico-religious polemics. In India, imported African slaves were used primarily as domestic servants, soldiers, and sailors. A few Africans rose to positions of great political power in the Deccan states of the Bahmani (1347–1538), Nizam Shahi (1589–1626), and Bijapur (1580–1627). Indeed, at much the same time as Mamluks transformed themselves into the ruling elite in Egypt, some African slaves transformed themselves into rulers in India. Such was the dynasty established by the African slave Mubārak Shāh in the Dehi sultanate (c. 1399–1440) and the rule of African military commanders in Bengal from 1486–1493. The Sidis of Janjira, an island forty-five miles south of Bombay, from 1618 established a naval and military presence and a considerable political autonomy that endured well into the nineteenth century. However, the African slaves who ascended to power presented no real challenge to a political system the parameters of which they accepted and worked within.

The further away from Africa, the more expensive and valued African slaves became. In East Asia, many were acquired as symbols of conspicuous consumption, to reflect the power and wealth of slave owners. In Mongol China (1260–1368), it was *à la mode* for elite households to possess Korean maidservants and Negro manservants, while African males were also valued as divers. European powers also used African soldiers. For example, in the 1630s some three hundred Africans served in the Portuguese army in Sri Lanka. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch used African slaves to build their forts, work on pepper plantations, and mine gold in West Sumatra.

Overall, slave conditions in the IOW were rarely universally harsh. Some slaves depended for sustenance on their owners, while others were given land for subsistence cultivation. Yet others were rented out or left free to seek livelihoods: Although generally remitting from 50 to 75 percent of their earnings to their owner, they were often able to accumulate funds. Indeed, non-slave commoners were frequently described as poorer and less content than domestic slaves, despite the inferior legal status of the latter, while the particularly good treatment of skilled slaves contrasts sharply with the position in some regions of non-slave artisans subject to state imposed forced labor.

See also **Cairo; Cape Town; Colonial Policies and Practices; Diasporas; Heritage, Cultural; Labor: Conscript and Forced; Réunion; Slavery and Servile Institutions; Women: Women and Slavery.**

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NORTHEASTERN AFRICA AND RED SEA

Slaves were brought across—and settled in—the frontier regions of northern and northeastern Africa for almost twelve hundred years, beginning with the Islamic conquests of the eighth century CE and ending during the twentieth century. This commerce has attracted more than its share of debate, since it touches on questions of European attitudes toward Islam, the unity of the African continent, and the ability of modern scholars to measure and evaluate developments for which they have limited and often far from "objective" records.

What scholars know for sure about the Saharan and Red Sea slave trades is that their victims were black-skinned inhabitants of the Upper Nile Valley, southern Ethiopia, and the regions south of the great African desert. Most of these captives were settled in the Arab-speaking countries of Mediterranean Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt), the Arabian Peninsula, and the Persian Gulf, as well as the South Asian subcontinent. Many imported slaves did, however, remain within the Sahara, the northern Nilotic Sudan, and the political centers of Ethiopia. Others, especially those entering Libya, were further sold on to ships that took them to the Islamic lands in the eastern portions of the Mediterranean and, around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, north into Italy and other European territories. A few also seem to have reached Southeast and East Asia.

The best-known (and also the largest) component of this trade was conducted via camel caravans organized by the Berber and Arab-speaking peoples of North Africa and the Sahara. This included both the trans-Saharan trade as normally understood and the trade from Darfur in the western Nilotic Sudan along the notorious Darb al-Arbain (Forty Day Road) to Asyut in Egypt. Along these routes most of the slaves had to transport themselves on foot, and the evidence suggests that many of them perished along the way.

The pedestrian caravan routes through various parts of Ethiopia were not as long or as arduous as those across the desert, although slaves forced along them often experienced very harsh conditions. Slaves captured in or brought to the southern Sudan were sometimes marched across a shorter desert route to such Red Sea ports as Sawakin or Aydhab. If en route for their more common destination of Egypt, however, they would travel most of the distance by Nile river craft.

Descriptions of these trades as well as the price data from various markets indicate that the majority of the human cargo consisted of women, sought for domestic service and concubinage. However, males were also recruited for employment in agriculture (especially in the Persian Gulf), mining, shipping, pearl fishing (again primarily in the Gulf), as well as urban street cleaning and porterage. A particular area of intensive but fluctuating male demand was military service: various North African and Egyptian regimes relied on servile black troops, as did a number of South Asian states (whose Ethiopian forces were known as Hubshi) prior to the seventeenth-century hegemony of the Mogul Empire. Some boys (up to a few hundred per year) were also castrated for service as eunuchs in the courts and shrines of the Middle East.

There are records of a slave trade across the Sahara and the Red Sea from very early Islamic times. The precise routes varied over time and were often quite complex, especially in the Sahara, the physical conditions of which shifted over time. Everywhere, the slave trade was closely tied to the rise and fall of various political centers as well as alliances between merchants and populations along the routes, particularly the Berber communities of the Sahara. For most of their history, these slave trades were integrated into broader systems of long-distance commerce in goods such as gold, ivory, and ostrich feathers.

THE SIZE OF THE TRADES

Both the demand for and supply of slaves could go up sharply depending upon factors at both ends of the trade routes. There appears to have been a major increase of slave exports to both the

Mediterranean and the Red Sea during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the entire international economy was undergoing major expansion. During this same period the Islamic world was cut off from alternative sources of slaves in the Caucasus by the expansion of the Russian Empire. Slaves also became available for export during this period due to jihads in the western and central Sudan, the Egyptian invasion of the Sudan, and the rise of mutually competing imperial centers in Ethiopia.

A consistent factor in creating demand for all categories of slaves in northern Africa and the Middle East was the need to replace existing servile populations. Forced immigrants from tropical Africa seemed particularly susceptible to the diseases of the Mediterranean zone. They had remarkably few children while in captivity there, and were much more frequently manumitted in Muslim societies than in the European plantation colonies of the New World. In portions of Arabia and Iraq, African slaves seem to have survived at least as well as native populations, but in the higher altitudes of Iran and (their more frequent location) the palm plantations and pearl fisheries of the Persian Gulf, life expectancies were quite low.

The Atlantic trade, when first undertaken by the Portuguese in the fifteenth century, drew on slaves who would otherwise have been transported across the Sahara. In the long run, however, the two trades seem to have complemented each other, in part because European buyers had a strong preference for male over female slaves. More important, European overseas expansion stimulated the growth (if not the "development") of non-European economies, thus increasing both the capacity to sell slaves in exporting areas and the demand for them in receiving zones.

One of the most controversial issues surrounding both the trans-Saharan and Red Sea trades is their actual size. This question has arisen in response to attempts by historian Philip Curtin and others to calculate the scale of the Atlantic slave trade. The Saharan and Red Sea counts have been restricted to slaves moving beyond the desert, the Nilotic Sudan, or Ethiopia since, in standard terminology, they were thus being removed from "sub-Saharan" Africa. In any case, it is harder to count slaves settled in the areas of transit, although these probably exceeded (as they did on the Indian Ocean coast) the number who traveled farther.

Even if one restricts oneself to the trans-Saharan and Red Sea export slave trade, one can never produce statistics as precise as those for the Atlantic, since researchers of the former have been able to find very few commercial accounts, customs documents, or census records. Best estimates are based mainly on observations by European travelers and diplomats that are concentrated in the period after 1700. For earlier centuries one can only make projections, based on scattered numerical statements in Arabic sources and a consideration of supply and demand conditions.

The resulting uneven calculations suggest that somewhere in the region of 3.5 to 4 million slaves crossed the Sahara and another 2 million crossed the Red Sea throughout the twelve-century history of the trade. By comparison, the Atlantic slave trade took at least 10.5 million people out of Africa—three times as many as the trans-Sahara and Red Sea trades, in less than four centuries. (Another comparison might add the Indian Ocean trade to the trans-Sahara and Red Sea total, which then comes to somewhere around 8 million.) Even if one adds some 10 percent to the Saharan sum so as to take into account deaths in the desert crossing—which appears to have been more dangerous than the notorious Atlantic Middle Passage—the final figure is still below that of the Atlantic and spread out over a much longer time period. However, when compared with systems other than that of the Atlantic, the Saharan and Red Sea slave trades remain among the major examples of enslavement in world history.

DEFINING THE TRADES

The trans-Saharan and Red Sea routes have also been referred to as Islamic and Oriental, designations that indicate some of the other issues involved in studying these slave trades. In addition to the moral questions that frame modern views on all histories of slavery, this topic calls into question the very identity of the participants on both sides. The immediate recipients of the slaves in question and the overwhelming majority of those who ultimately held them were non-Europeans and at least nominally Muslim. But to speak of an "Islamic" trade suggests that Islam as a religion and cultural system is somehow to blame for the abuses of slavery. Many who documented the trade while it was in progress held such a view, and it is sometimes invoked in contemporary Western polemics about the threat of Islam to liberal values throughout the world. This is not the place to discuss the relationship between slavery and Islam, but it should be noted that a number of prominent Islamic scholars and political leaders of both northern and western Africa publicly criticized the abuses of the Saharan trade (especially where it victimized free Muslims), even if the only arguments for its abolition came after the demand for slaves had receded.

The geographical terms for this system likewise raise questions. The historian Patrick Manning and others refer to all the trades out of Africa not controlled by Europeans as "Oriental." But this term, besides being literally inaccurate about the spatial direction of Saharan commerce, raises the specter of "Orientalism" as a demeaning Western form of knowledge about the exotic and amoral non-European "Other." One critic of Manning's terminology, the African economic historian Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, is even more concerned about the use of the Saharan slave system to draw what he sees as a "racist" line between those portions of Africa on either side of the desert. For Zeleza, slaves are just one of many items of a commercial traffic that linked northern Africa and western Africa more closely to one another than to any other regions within the continent.

The major role of slaves in the commerce across the Sahara and Red Sea can most easily be explained in seemingly neutral economic terms. The transport of any goods to the northern or northeastern shores of Africa involved high costs that could only be born by a limited range of available commodities. Gold fitted such a role particularly well since it has extremely high value in proportion to its bulk. However, slaves could be supplied by a wider range of interior African regions and, even if not in as much demand in the Mediterranean as in the Atlantic, fetched a price that covered the relatively low cost of feeding them while they walked to their points of resale. Also, those slaves not exported could be used along the routes for both military and economic purposes. Thus some slaves supported the trade as they served in the armies of Sudanic and Ethiopian raiders or provisioned merchants and transporters.

Franco-Algerian singer Rachid Taha. Rachid Taha performs during the ninth annual festival Gnaoua and world music festival of Essaouira on the Moroccan Atlantic coast, June 2006. The Moroccan Gnaoua, believed to be descended from slaves, are master musicians or maalems near to the Sufi brotherhoods. Their music is a mixture of Arabo-berber and African. ABDELHAK SENNA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Others, however, contributed to the intensification of local agricultural, salt, and handicraft production, thus providing alternative commodities for markets within and outside their own regions.

THE DECLINE OF THE TRADES

Whether such industry would eventually have discouraged slave exports by raising the value of local labor, as argued for all of Africa by Stefano Fenoaltea, is difficult to determine. As it turned out, the Saharan and Red Sea trades were terminated by a combination of exogenous political and economic forces. During the second half of the nineteenth century European abolitionists gradually imposed restrictions on the Mediterranean and Arabian dealers in African slaves, thus cutting off much—if by no means all—of the demand.

With the advent of colonial rule, the trans-Saharan trade was more effectively ended than that of the Red Sea, which has lingered close to the present. By the early twentieth century European railroads provided transport from the western and central Sudan to the Atlantic, which was less costly than caravan carriage across the desert, thus reducing the entire Saharan commercial system to very local dimensions. Colonial governments then interfered directly with slavery in the desert regions, although never eliminating entirely the traffic in human beings, to say nothing of its social residue.

The trade to Egypt from both the Sahara and the Nile Valley diminished drastically as early as the late nineteenth century, due to both European intervention and the rapid rise of the indigenous population, reducing any serious demand for servile labor. Ethiopia, which remained independent throughout most of the twentieth century, could not be as effectively policed, particularly when conditions of famine in densely populated areas created a ready supply of human—particularly juvenile—exports. Meanwhile, on the eastern side of the Red Sea, demand for slaves was stimulated by rising oil wealth amid relatively low population densities. However, the pressure placed on local governments by their European and American patrons has reduced this trade to fairly small and clandestine forms that may well still persist.

See also **Colonial Policies and Practices; Labor: Conscript and Forced; Sahara Desert; Slavery and Servile Institutions; Transportation: Caravan; Transportation: Railways; Women: Women and Slavery.**

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RALPH A. AUSTEN

NORTHERN AFRICA AND SAHARA

The slave trade in Northern Africa and the Sahara began before 1000 CE. Initially, individuals captured in small raids on villages or nomadic camps were integrated into their captors' kin groups. By the ninth century, savanna kingdoms formed along the Sahara's southern edge, and gradually large empires such as ancient Ghana, Mali, and Songhay grew, increasing both the complexity of local social systems and the potential uses for slaves. Slaves who were captured in war or traded with other kingdoms grew food for the royal courts, dug wells or constructed buildings, fought in the new armies, and served in the royal households as concubines, washerwomen, cooks, pages, retainers, and stable workers, and performed other menial tasks. Because the enslaved were neither members of local ethnic groups nor royalty, they were disqualified as rulers. Paradoxically, they were ideal for trusted political and military positions because they had no obvious constituency, no clear loyalties in court intrigues, and derived their power solely from their royal masters.

Several factors had to be in place before the trans-Saharan slave trade could flourish. The camel, introduced to the Sahara in late Roman times, greatly increased the ability of nomadic groups north and south of the desert to travel in and across the Sahara. The Muslim expansion across North Africa in the eighth century, and the consequent development of towns, ports, and kingdoms there brought in new Arab overlords and provided political challenges and economic stimulus to the local populations and to Egypt. Local nomadic populations at the Sahara's margins, including Berbers in the Maghreb (present-day Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya), Tuareg in West Africa, and Arab-speaking groups in Egypt, Sudan, and elsewhere, ventured into the desert, established

Trans-Saharan slave trade, 650–1900

Period	Annual average	Estimated total
650–800	1,000	150,000
800–900	3,000	300,000
900–1000	8,700	1,740,000
1100–1400	5,500	1,650,000
1400–1500	4,300	430,000
1500–1600	5,500	550,000
1600–1700	7,000	700,000
1700–1800	7,000	700,000
1800–1900	12,000	1,200,000
Total		**7,420,000**

SOURCE: Lovejoy, Paul E. *Transformations in Slavery*, 2nd edition. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Table 1.

communities in the oases, and exploited local salt, natron, and copper deposits.

The stage was now set for the slave trade in the region. On top of the local patterns of small wars and village raids, the savanna kingdoms fought larger wars of conquest as they struggled to create the new empires. Desert nomads brought goods from the desert mines and oases to towns at the northern and southern ends of the trans-Saharan trade routes, and soon gold, ivory, and slaves were traded north across the desert, while war horses, textiles, paper and books, and assorted hardware from chain mail and fine swords to cooking pots and hoes, flowed southward. Islam spread in the region as traders ventured southward, as desert populations converted, and as Muslim groups, such as the al-Moravids in western Morocco, gained control over specific trans-Saharan routes.

The trans-Saharan traders left the actual collection of the goods they bought, including slaves, to their local partners. Thus local rulers sought control over the gold-producing areas of Bambuk and Buré, and later, farther east in Gyaman and eastern Sudan, as well as areas with large elephant herds, to harvest their tusks for ivory.

Increasingly, the trans-Saharan traders adopted Muslim law to regulate their commercial interactions, and as the savanna empires became more thoroughly Muslim over time, the Muslim strictures on slavery also began to apply in the lands south of the desert. Many laws regulate the correct behavior of Muslims toward slaves. For example, it is unlawful for a Muslim to enslave another Muslim. This made determining the religion of captives important, and gave additional incentives for conversion to Islam. Slave women who became pregnant by their masters were to be freed. Several masters could share a slave, but if one of the masters freed his share of the slave, the others were urged to free their shares as well. There were also limits on the physical and verbal abuse of slaves. Of course, the existence of religious strictures did not guarantee lawful human behavior.

THE SLAVE CARAVANS

The desert crossing was a huge enterprise. Two main factors affected the timing of the crossing: avoidance of the hottest part of the year to reduce fatalities in the Saharan Middle Passage, and the desire of Muslim pilgrims who accompanied the trans-Saharan caravans to reach North Africa in time to continue on to Mecca for the *hajj*. There were both official caravans that had their leaders appointed by the rulers of large sub-Saharan empires such as Darfur or Sinnar, and unofficial caravans organized around regional nomadic groups—Berber, Tuareg, or Arab. The official caravans could number up to five or six thousand people and an equal number of camels. Such large caravans were often subdivided into smaller sections for easier management and communication, and to limit the peak demand for water at the smaller oases. Caravans faced attacks from hostile groups along the way, and this discouraged smaller groups from attempting the crossing. The members of a large northbound caravan would gather in a town at the desert's edge shortly before the starting date to collect equipment such as ropes, water bags, and saddles, supplies such as grain and dried foods, and trade goods including slaves, ivory, and gold. The local market place would be abuzz with activity to supply all those items.

The caravan leader was as the captain of a ship, with responsibility for those who traveled with him, for discipline, for choosing the times of departure and rest periods, for selecting the basic route, and for consulting with the expert guides who knew the route, water supplies, and local populations in great detail. In some cases, he traded on behalf of the ruler, and had an official written appointment from him.

Individual merchants traded for themselves and their partners who were related by kinship or marriage. Each had his stock of goods, some camels or donkeys to carry the goods, a few assistants—slaves or younger relatives—and slaves to trade. The richest merchants might also have a wife or several female slaves to cook for them. These merchants rode donkeys, or occasionally horses, while the less wealthy walked or rode camels. The slaves usually walked, though some select slaves—usually beautiful young women destined to be sold as concubines—might ride. In the nineteenth century, boats were used for part of the journey along the Nile to reduce the exhaustion of the slaves and their subsequent mortality. The wealthiest merchants had the best food and most water, and slaves got gruel and a minimal amount of water. Many slaves died in the desert crossing, most commonly of dehydration and exhaustion. Some travelers claimed to recognize the trans-Saharan route by the bodies along the way. Occasionally entire caravans perished, having lost their way or misjudged their water supplies.

SLAVES IN THE DESERT AND THE OASES

Within the desert societies, slaves did vital work. Drought was common in the desert, and slave raiding and slave trading served as means of restocking nomadic and oasis populations. Slaves did the hard work of desert life: digging deep wells with the attendant risk of cave-ins, drawing and hauling water, slaughtering animals, growing and irrigating crops in the oases or in the nomadic base camps at the desert's edge, mining for salt under harsh conditions, tanning leather, tending livestock, and cooking. Slave women might also spin, weave, and serve as concubines to their masters. Sometimes the free nomadic populations placed their slaves in remote villages to grow crops, returning periodically to collect the grains they needed for life in the desert. In the oases, Muslim religious communities—*zawiyas*—provided hospitality to passing caravans. Their slaves did the hard work of irrigating and growing sufficient supplies of food for these periodic visits, and then preparing meals, supplying water, and restocking the equipment and supplies for the caravans.

SLAVE MARKETS IN THE MAGHREB AND EGYPT

Although slave caravans might sell slaves at any point during the desert crossing, they generally brought the bulk of their slaves to slave merchants in northern Saharan towns. North African merchants with the caravan took their stock to their trading partners, and distributed their slaves through them. Merchants who lived south of the desert sold their slaves to northern merchants or accompanied their slaves to the larger towns and cities of the Maghreb and Egypt. There the arriving caravans were met by government officials and required to pay a standard customs duty.

Most major towns had large markets with a section for the sale of products from sub-Saharan Africa, including slaves. These were open-air markets or large buildings with a central courtyard, with an arcade for shops and storage rooms, and lockups for the slaves who were not on display. Prior to sale, slaves washed and oiled their bodies and hair, and dressed in suitable jewelry and clothing for their eventual employment.

Potential buyers approached the slave merchants there and discussed the type of slave desired. Typically the most expensive slaves were the eunuchs and best-looking young women, and males, girls, older women, and slaves with obvious defects were the least expensive. Before purchasing, buyers inspected various individuals in detail, looking at their eyes, teeth, tongues, limbs, and the shape of their heads, trying to judge the slaves' age, health, and character. At the same time, bargaining began between buyers and sellers. Buyers not satisfied with what they saw could approach a broker to locate traders with additional stocks of slaves.

Once a deal was reached, the buyer and seller might write up an agreement and have it recorded. Muslim commercial practice required that each slave in effect came with a warranty against defects such as snoring, bed-wetting, mental conditions that caused seizures, hidden handicaps, infectious diseases that had incubation periods, and, for females, unannounced pregnancies or a lack of promised virginity.

Most slaves in the market were freshly imported, but some were being resold. Potential buyers viewed them with some suspicion, wondering if they were ill, dangerous, conniving, or lazy. Consequently, sellers tried to pass them off as new arrivals, and buyers devised tests to determine their understanding of Arabic and for other signs of acculturation.

North of the Sahara, there was often a hierarchy of slaves by place of origin or ethnicity, and by race. In the Maghreb, slaves of European origin included European sailors, merchants, and passengers captured by the Barbary corsairs. The best-known were held for ransom, often for years, and served as slaves while they waited. Slaves from the Balkans and the Black Sea area (north of Turkey) were also available, as were Circassian and Greek women in the early nineteenth century and, later, Abyssinian women. Powerful rulers and wealthy men sought such women as slave concubines, or even as wives. Buyers had notions that certain African ethnic groups were better as concubines or cooks or doormen. Women were favored over men in the cities. But men may have been preferred for agricultural labor, and rulers, notably in Morocco and Egypt, built black slave armies.

Some of the most expensive slaves were eunuchs, castrated males. Muslims considered the operation itself immoral, so it was often performed south of the desert on prepubescent boys. Without proper expertise this was often fatal, and the high price of eunuchs reflected the many slaves lost during castration. Eunuchs served to guard the large harems of nobles and the rich, and often helped to manage large households.

INTERACTIONS WITH THE ATLANTIC TRADE

The slave trade in northern Africa and the Sahara interacted with the better-known Atlantic slave trade in multiple ways. So long as there were Muslim kingdoms in the Iberian Peninsula, the Maghreb supplied sub-Saharan slaves to Spain and Portugal. From the fifteenth century, the trans-Saharan trade was an alternative source of slaves for this region. The Portuguese exploration of the West African coast from 1415 led to competition between Saharan and Atlantic routes for slaves captured in the Senegal River region. Those who captured and traded slaves there had to choose whether the enslaved should be retained locally, sold into the desert, sold in exchange for European and Atlantic goods, or sold to trans-Saharan traders. The answers were affected by price, scales of demand for particular types of slaves, access, and local and regional power struggles. Except along the Atlantic coast in Senegal and Mauritania, it was often cheaper to send European goods from the Mediterranean via the Sahara to the savanna region rather than through West African forest kingdoms until late in the nineteenth century.

SUPPRESSION

As opposition to the trans-Atlantic slave trade increased in the early nineteenth century, there were consequences for the trans-Saharan slave trade and slavery in northern Africa. Historians generally agree that there was an expansion of the trade in the nineteenth century, but disagree about its causes: some suggest that the slowing down of the Atlantic slave trade in effect left more slaves to be traded within Africa, but others believe that growth in internal markets in the savanna and Sahara created a demand for labor met largely through the local use of slaves. The process of abolition of the trans-Saharan slave trade began in the 1830s with the French occupation of part of Algeria, and growing British abolitionist pressure. Tunisia was the leader, banning the export of slaves via the Mediterranean in 1841, the trans-Saharan slave trade to Tunisia in 1841, and slavery itself in 1846.

Egypt followed Tunisia's lead, but at a slower pace. It initially banned the slave trade in 1854, the import, export, and transit of slaves in 1877, and slavery itself banned within seven years of that. A more thorough and detailed measure on slavery and the slave trade in Egypt was signed in 1895. From the 1840s, the other states of the Maghreb were under considerable pressure from European abolitionists to outlaw slavery. Morocco initially demurred, stating that slavery was a recognized by Islam. A second wave of pressure led to the banning of the public sale of slaves in 1885. Events in Algeria as the French expanded their control over the country, and in sub-Saharan Africa as European nations took over the kingdoms of the savanna during the scramble for Africa, diminished the supplies of slaves and reduced the trans-Saharan trade, though slave caravans were still reported in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

See also **Colonial Policies and Practices; Ivory; Metals and Minerals: Gold and Silver; Slavery and Servile Institutions; Textiles; Transportation: Caravan; Women: Women and Slavery.**

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GEORGE LARUE

SLAVERY AND SERVILE INSTITUTIONS

This entry includes the following articles:

OVERVIEW
ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES
COLONIAL
SUDAN

OVERVIEW

Institutions of servility have been associated with human society in Africa, as elsewhere, since time has been recorded. The earliest records attest to the existence, and often extensive practice, of slavery and other types of servile relationships. Institutions of servility in medieval times are sometimes referred to as serfdom, although a lack of sources makes it difficult to establish more than people imprisoned in war, sometimes settled in servile villages to produce agricultural commodities, and sometimes bought and sold on the market. Moreover, Islamic legal precedents and traditions that clearly recognized slavery often applied. Whether in areas influenced by Islam or not, servile institutions appear to have been pervasive, closely identified with issues of gender and ethnicity, as well as with political and economic developments. Slavery also appears to have been common in relatively undifferentiated societies beyond the control of centralized states, although, again, the absence of source material makes it impossible to establish the antiquity of such practices. Nonetheless, slavery and related institutions have been integral to all periods of history in Africa, up to and including the early twenty-first century, for which there are historical records.

VARIETIES OF SERVILE CONDITIONS

The types of servile institutions that developed in Africa ranged from formal slavery to debt bondage or pawnship. Slavery could and did exist alongside other types of labor, including wage-labor (in which there was monetary compensation for work), pawnship (in which labor was for interest on debts and the person was collateral for the debt), and communal work (often based on kinship or age grades, in which work was a reciprocal activity based on past and future exchanges). These other forms of labor could involve coercion but usually not to the point at which they could be called slavery. In addition, slaves could be attached to political office, living on land that was subject to patronage. In theory, these situations approximated serfdom. Concubinage, especially under Islamic law, was a special category of slavery. Children of concubine slave women were usually treated as equal to the children of free mothers. Under slavery, individuals were considered property whose ownership conferred on masters the right to buy, sell, and otherwise exploit the labor or the person of the slave without that individual's consultation or agreement. Only in instances of concubinage (in which slave women gave birth to children by their masters) was it not legally possible to sell slaves—neither the concubines nor their children could be sold. In some areas where lineage structures were particularly strong, servile relationships, including slavery, expanded the size of families and villages through the incorporation of girls