THE SLAVE-TRADE IN EGYPT AND THE SUDAN IN THE TIME OF MUHAMMAD ALI AND HIS SUCCESSORS

by

CHRISTOPHER B. DENMAN

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by

CHRISTOPHER DENMAN

(Name of Student)

Approved:

J.S. Trimingham

PROFESSOR J.S. TRIMINGHAM — Advisor

PROFESSOR NICOLA A. ZIADEH — Member of Committee

M. Zayid

PROFESSOR MAHMUD ZAYID — Member of Committee

Member of Committee

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PREFACE

The object of this paper is to describe the trade in slaves which was carried on in Egypt and the Sudan, and between these and the adjacent regions, during the nineteenth century down to the Mahdist revolution and the British occupation of Egypt. Much is known of the campaign carried on under the auspices of the viceroys of Egypt to put an end to this trade as it existed in the regions of the Upper Nile after about 1860. But just as a great deal of attention has been paid to this aspect of the trade, so there has been a corresponding dearth of interest in the trade carried on in these regions during the years before 1860. It would seem, in fact, that no serious study of this subject exists in English, although there is an abundance of material on which such a study could draw.

This paper attempts to begin to fill this lack. In it we shall discuss the slave-trade as it existed throughout the whole period from, roughly, the beginning of the century down to the 1880s. We shall describe the various circumstances in which certain people were

reduced to slavery, and the means by which they were transported to market and sold, matters into which we shall go in some detail. But since the slave-trade of this period cannot be fully understood without reference to the campaign already mentioned to abolish it, we have described the main outlines of this undertaking, a matter which, however, has already been the subject of detailed investigation and discussion.

The area in which this slave-trade was centered was of course the valley of the Nile, which had from antiquity been an important avenue of traffic in slaves between inner Africa and Egypt. Two areas adjacent to the Nile valley properly speaking also contributed in large measure to this commerce, Darfur, to the west of the Nile, and Ethiopia, to the east, and we shall consider the circumstances of the slave-trade in these countries as well, in so far as they affected trade with the Nile valley.

A brief word should be said on the rendering of Arabic names. In this I have followed a commonsense method of adhering fairly closely to the accepted mode of transliteration in regard to personal names, while spelling several tribal and place-names according to the way they are best known in the world at large.

It remains for me to express my gratitude to those who have helped me in the preparation of this paper. In particular, thanks are due to those faculty members of the department of History who read the draft and offered valuable advice. I am also most grateful to Mr. Peter Kilburn, of the Acquisitions department, and to Mr. Fawzi Abu-Haydar, of the Cataloguing department, of the Library of the American University of Beirut, for their patient and courteous attention to my many requests.

Christopher B. Denman

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ABBREVIATIONS

E.I.	Encyclopaedia of Islam .
F.O.	Foreign Office.
SP	British and Foreign State Papers.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

It would appear that no study exists in English of the slave-trade carried on between Egypt and other parts of North-east Africa during the whole period of the nineteenth century; the present paper is an attempt to begin to remedy this lack. In it we shall discuss the places wherein, and the means by which, the slaves were obtained, the circumstances in which they were conveyed to market, and the manner of selling them.

Slavery had long been a common feature of society in all the countries of North-east Africa. Owing to several circumstances, however, the slave population was not self-renewing, and fresh supplies of slaves had continually to be imported for the markets of Egypt and the Sudan. Because Muslim tradition did not countenance the enslavement either of Muslims, or of non-Muslims living in Muslim territory, it was customary to obtain these fresh supplies from amongst the pagan and Christian peoples who dwelt on the southern borderland fringes of the Sudan, beyond the limits of effective Muslim rule. The slave-trade was carried on by Sudanese jallabs, or slave-traders, who obtained their wares in a number of ways. One of these was by purchase from the peoples of the borderlands themselves.

The population of the borderlands was fragmented into a multitude of tribes and sects who were constantly at war amongst themselves. In the course of this warfare numerous prisoners were taken and reduced to slavery, and many of these were sold to the itinerant jallabs from the Sudan, generally in return for articles of small value like glass beads.

Another source of slaves arose from the warfare directed against the borderland peoples not only by the nomad tribes, but also by the 'sedentary' states, of the Sudan proper. Among the latter, the most prominent in this regard was no doubt the 'Turco-Egyptian' government of the Sudan, whose armies, better armed and organized than the forces of the indigenous Sudanese sultanates, were able to impose themselves on the peoples of the borderlands more effectively than those of the indigenous states had been. In the course of the warfare carried on by all these agencies, largenumbers of slaves were seized, many of whom, again, were disposed of to the slave-dealers.

Large numbers of slaves were also furnished to the trade by the activity of the Sudanese settlers in the Upper Nile basins of the Bahr al-Ghazal and the Bahr

al-Jabal. The Sudanese settlements were established in those regions during the years after 1855, in consequence of conditions of the ivory trade. For it was in search of ivory, not of slaves, that the first traders had penetrated into the Upper Nile regions, which had been virtually unknown to the outside world before 1840. Owing to certain circumstances, however, these traders, some of them Europeans, were eventually compelled to undertake raids for slaves and other plunder in order to avoid bankruptcy. The traders established settlements of armed servants whose function was to carry on this activity, as well as to continue to obtain ivory on their behalf. The settlements soon possessed considerable numbers of slaves taken in the course of raids on the pagan tribes, and slave-traders came in large numbers from the Sudan to buy from the settlers.

The slaves acquired by the jallabs from all these sources in the borderlands were conveyed over a number of routes (several of which had been used as avenues of trade for a very long time before the nineteenth century) to markets in the Sudan and Egypt. Conditions of travel on these roads were often arduous for the slaves. This was especially true of travel across the deserts which cover so large a part of

the Sudan. The lot of the slaves on this journey was not made easier by the treatment given them by their trader-masters, men of generally ungenial character to whom the well-being of their charges was often less important than matters of profit and loss. In respect of security, however, conditions of travel after the Egyptian conquest were much better than they had been before it, owing to the ruthless repression of bandits and other marauders near the towns and along the main roads. It was due to this hitherto unknown security, and to the opening up of the Sudanese Nile to shipping that a considerable expansion took place in Sudanese trade during the Egyptian period, including, as far as we can judge, the trade in slaves.

Slave-markets existed in all the major towns of Egypt and the Sudan, and in many smaller centres; indeed, in the Sudan the slave-trade seems to have been one of the most important branches of commerce. The value of the slaves sold in these markets varied according to their sex, age, and tribal or ethnic origin. Young slaves were valued above older ones, and females above males, whilst members of certain tribal groups, such as the Gallas of Ethiopia, were held to have virtues which placed them in a class above most other slaves. A group of slaves of some special interest

were the eunuchs, the 'making' of whom during much of the nineteenth century was centred in Upper Egypt.

Three features of the slaves' life in Egypt contributed to maintaining the demand for slaves from the interior of Africa. These were: first, their high rate of mortality; second, their low birth-rate; and third, the widespread practice of emancipating slaves after a period of several years of servitude. These things all contributed to the constant diminution of the slave population, a diminution which, together with the more or less constant demand, inevitably stimulated activity on the part of the jallabs and their suppliers in the southern borderlands.

Under the influence of Western ideas and of British diplomatic pressure, the first step towards curbing the slave-trade in the territories under Egyptian control was taken in 1854 by the Ottoman viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad Sa'id Pasha, when he forbade the importation of slaves into his dominions. This decree remained largely a dead-letter, however, and it was left to Muhammad Sa'id's successor, Isma'il Pasha, to take more positive measures in this direction. Although there is some convincing evidence that Isma'il was sincere in his professed intention of ending the

slave-traffic, the fact that the measures he took to this end were so closely associated with his expansionist ambitions, has laid him open to the charge that his programme for repressing the trade was nothing more than a screen for those ambitions.

Isma'il Pasha held that the slave-trade might be destroyed most easily by putting it down in its place of origin, the borderland areas to the south of the Sudan. He dispatched two Englishmen, Sir Samuel Baker and Charles George Gordon, to the Sudan, in 1869 and 1874, respectively, to try and carry out this repression. While Baker had little success, Gordon was more fortunate, and in 1877 he was appointed Governor-General of the Egyptian Sudan, in which post he was able to do much to put down the trade in that country.

But the definitive end of the slave-commerce was brought about not by Isma'il's policy, but by the Mahdist revolution in the Sudan, which ended most commercial intercourse between that country and Egypt for some time, and by the occupation of Egypt by Britain. It was under the auspices of the latter Power that strict measures were enforced in Egypt, and later, after 1898, in the Sudan, against the trade in slaves.

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INTRODUCTION

THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

The Political Background

The area of the North-East Africa whose trade in slaves is the subject of this essay consists, broadly speaking, of three distinct regions, viz. Egypt, the eastern reaches of the geographical Sudan, and Ethiopia. The geographical Sudan, the Bilad al-Sudan of the mediaeval Muslim geographers,[1] is that "chain of trans-Saharan Muslim principalities stretching across Africa on the border between Arab and African cultures."[2] The term 'Sudan' "in its full sense includes the whole of this great belt of territory, extending from the Red Sea to the Atlantic."[3] In this paper, the term will be used in a more restricted sense, to denote the region between the Red Sea and the western frontiers of Darfur, with which the very greatest proportion of Egypt's slave-trade with the geographical

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[1] P.M. Holt, The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-1898 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958) p.1 (hereafter cited as Mahdist State)

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

Sudan was carried on, and which came under Egyptian rule in the course of the nineteenth century. The term 'Ethiopia' is used in this paper to denote the territory of what is today the Empire of Ethiopia, with the exception of the Ogaden and other lowland regions in the south-east of the Empire, which are excluded because they seem to have played little if any part in the slave-trade carried on between Ethiopia and Egypt.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Egypt, or a great part of it, was occupied by a French army, which however was withdrawn in 1801. There followed a struggle for power between the Ottoman viceroy of Egypt, who was the Sultan's representative, various members of the Mamluk military aristocracy (whose members were recruited from slaves sent largely from the Caucasus), and Muhammad 'Ali, the capable commander of a corps of Macedonian (or Albanian) troops. The last tried to make the best of the situation by giving his support now to one, now to another, of the various other contenders for power. After a complex series of manoeuvrings, Muhammad 'Ali succeeded in having himself nominated viceroy of Egypt by the Porte, with the title of Pasha. Although his position at the time of his elevation seemed anything but secure, the new viceroy was

resolved to maintain his newly-acquired authority. To accomplish this, by no means easy, object, he brought to bear great energy and an unusual keenness of vision. For he understood, as few others of his contemporaries appear to have done, the importance of re-organizing much of the machinery of the State and of the economy, if the superior military power of the European States was to be successfully resisted. He did not hesitate to draw upon European methods and European technicians of various kinds to carry out the reforms which he projected; and after 1815, he enjoyed the services of a number of French army officers who assisted in the modernization of his military forces.

Although the threat of attack, either from Europe or from Constantinople, which he had feared in the early years of his reign diminished, Muhammad 'Ali became aware of the greatly increased military capability which his re-organizations had afforded him. He decided to take a step which he thought might strengthen his power still further; this step was the conquest of the Sudan.

The political condition of the Sudan in the period shortly before the invasion by the viceroy's armies was in fact one which might well have tempted an expansionist ruler in Egypt. In principle, all the territory along the Nile

from Hannak, below Old Dongola,[4] to Fazughli, and between the Nile and the Red Sea (excepting the port of Suakin) was the domain of the Funj Kingdom, whose capital was at Sennar.[5] This kingdom, established, it is now believed, about 1504,[6] began to show signs of serious breakdown about 1760, when the ruling sovereign was reduced to a cipher, and a protracted struggle began for the supremacy in the ruling elite.[7] Under these circumstances, the various vassal rulers (mukuk, sing. makk, commonly referred to as nek) along the Nile began to assert themselves. None of them ever apparently explicitly repudiated the overlordship of Sennar. But the account we have from John Lewis Burckhardt, a Swiss who travelled from Egypt to Suakin by way of Berber and Shendi in the guise of a Turkish merchant, in 1814, makes it clear that the meks considered their vassalage to Sennar as nominal only, being content to render homage to the suzerain, and to receive

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[4]P.M. Holt, A Modern History of the Sudan from the Funj Sultanate to the Present Day (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961) p. 24 (hereafter cited as Modern History)

[5]James Bruce of Kinnaird, Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile (Edinburgh: Ruthven, 1790) IV, pp. 479-80. Holt, loc. cit., p. 20

[6]O.G.S. Crawford The Fung Kingdom of Sennar, (Gloucester: J. Bellows, 1951) p. 329.

[7]Holt, loc. cit., pp. 22-3

their investiture from him.[8]

The nomad tribes of the region, too, felt the weakening of the central power. James Bruce, who travelled from Gondar in Abyssinia to Egypt by way of Sennar in 1772, emphasizes the increasing lawlessness of the tribes, and the adverse effect of this upon trade in the area of the Sudanese Nile.[9] The depredations of the tribes became so great that considerable numbers of people in the riverain towns were moved to quit their homes and emigrate.

Many of these went to live in Darfur. This was a Muslim Sultanate whose dynasty had established itself possibly about the year 1640.[10] By 1787, it was sufficiently strong to have conquered Kordofan from its ruling dynasty and to have held it down to 1821. This conquest was shortly followed by the reign of the Sultan 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rashid, a time of progress in both cultural and commercial development.[11] This development was stimulated by the immigration

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[8]John Lewis Burckhardt, Travels in Nubia (London: J. Murray, 1819) pp. 211, 278.

[9]Bruce, loc. cit., pp. 530, 536

[10]Holt, loc. cit., p. 26

[11]Ibid., p. 27

into the country of people from the Sudanese Nile.[12] These people worked in Darfur as merchants and artisans.[13] We learn from W. G. Browne, an Englishman who visited Darfur between 1793 and 1796, that although they came from many towns along the Nile,[14] the largest single group of them seemed to have come from Upper Nubia, especially from the regions of Dongola and the Mahass.[15] Many others visited Kordofan and acted as middlemen between that country and Darfur, and between Kordofan and Egypt. Among these too, the predominance of Nubians, especially Danagla (Danaqla, sing. Dunqulawi or Dongolawi, natives of Dunqula, or Dongola) seems to have been marked.[16]

The growing anarchy of the Funj territories in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries may well

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[12] W. G. Browne, Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria from the Year 1792 to 1798 (London: Cadell, Davis and Longman, 1799) p. 241.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., pp.241-2

[16] Edward Rüppell, "Voyages en Nubie, en Kordofan et dans l'Arabie petrée," Nouvelles Annales de Voyages, IV (1836), 169-70.

have been one of Muhammad 'Ali's motives for undertaking the conquest of those regions.[17] Two even stronger motives were probably the desire to obtain slaves for his army and to procure a reliable supply of gold.[18] The Sudan had furnished slaves to Egypt since antiquity, and the viceroy, like other Muslim rulers before him,[19] conceived the idea of organizing an army of slave troops, which he would have trained on European lines.[20] Muhammad 'Ali also believed that gold might be found in the Sudan in abundance, an idea which was "his constant obsession from early manhood to old age."[21]

In September of 1820, an army under Muhammad 'Ali's third son, Isma'il Kamil Pasha, struck down the Nile towards Sennar.[22] In June of the following year, Isma'il received the submission of the last of the Funj kings.[23] A month

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[17]Richard Hill, Egypt in the Sudan 1820-1881 (London: Oxford University Press, 1959) p.7 (hereafter cited as Egypt in the Sudan)

[18]Ibid.

[19]R. Brunschvig, "'Abd," E.I., (2nd ed.) I, 33.

[20]Burckhardt, loc. cit., pp. 341-2

[21]Hill, op. cit., p. 7

[22]Ibid., p. 9

[23]Ibid., p. 10

later, another force, led by Muhammad Bey the Defterdar (the chief fiscal official in Egypt), marched southwards to invade Kordofan. The Defterdar's possession of firearms enabled him easily to defeat the troops of the Darfurian governor of Kordofan, and in August he made his entry into the capital, El Obeid (al-'Ubayyid).[24]

During these two campaigns, the viceroy in Cairo emphasized to his commanders the urgent necessity of their procuring male negro slaves fit to be enrolled in his army. In August of 1822, for example, he wrote to Isma'il Pasha in this sense:

> Mon but, en vous déléguant à ces regions,... en plaçant dans votre suite ces effectifs importants, ... est de nous procurer les nègres dont nous avons besoin et de les faire venir aux casernes d'Assouan... C'est là notre désir le plus cher... A nos yeux, les nègres utiles à notre service ont la valeur des bijoux, en raison des circonstances...[25]

He had already written to the Defterdar in December, 1821:

> Comme il est évident que notre but en vous chargeant... d'une mission et de travaux aussi difficiles... est de réunir le plus grand nombre possible de nègres,... nous vous demandons de déployer toute votre activité afin de réunir ces noirs et de les envoyer au fur et à mesure, en adoptant comme devise le mot: Courage. N'ayez

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[24] Ibid., p. 12.

[25] Abdin Palace Archives, Ma'iyet-i seniye, Muhammad 'Ali to the Ser'asker of the Sudan, 7/VIII/1822, quoted in Georges Douin, Histoire du Soudan égyptien, Vol. I: La Pénétration (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1944), p. 283 (hereafter cited as La Pénétration).

aucune crainte...; attaquez, frappez et prenez![26]

The slaves recruited in response to these injunctions were obtained in raids on the pagan tribes of the Sudan's southern fringe, or taken from their former masters in payment of taxes.[27] But despite the energy shown in this regard by his generals, the viceroy's plans for a slave-army did not come to pass; the slaves taken died in thousands, and Muhammad 'Ali had to look elsewhere for the main body of his recruits.[28] However, the slave-raids then carried on against the pagans presaged future events.

A revolt against the conquerors occurred in the autumn of 1822, set off by the slaying of Isma'il Pasha at Shendi. But this rising was put down ruthlessly by the Defterdar,[29] who, in retaliation for the murder, razed the town of Shendi,[30]

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[26]Abdin Palace Archives, Ma'iyet-i seniye, Muhammad 'Ali to the Ser'asker of Kordofan, 10/XII/1821, quoted in Douin, op.cit., p. 305.

[27]P.M. Holt, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516-1922: a Political History (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1966), p. 182. (Hereafter cited as Fertile Crescent.)

[28]Ibid.

[29]Hill, op.cit., pp. 16-17.

[30]Georges Douin, Histoire du règne du Khédive Ismail, Vol. III: L'Empire africain, part 1 (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie du Caire, 1936), p. 5. (Vol. III of this work is hereafter cited as L'Empire africain.)

and wreaked devastation generally throughout the territory dominated by the Ja'liyin tribe (whose center Shendi was),[31] between the Atbara confluence and the Sabaluqa Gorge, a short distance downstream from the confluence of the Blue and White Niles.[32] Large numbers of Ja'liyin fled from their homes and were dispersed through all parts of the Sudan.[33] Many of them became pedlars and petty merchants. They were most active "in the borderlands between the Arab and the non-Arab tribes, particularly in Kordofan and Darfur, where they acted as intermediaries in the slave-trade."[34]

By 1826, the newly-conquered regions seemed sufficiently tranquil for military government to be replaced by civilian.[35] With the arrival at the newly-founded town of Khartoum in 1826 of 'Ali Khurshid Agha, later first Governor-General of the Egyptian Sudan, a new epoch may be said to have opened.[36] Under the rule of the viceroy (or

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[31]Hill, op.cit., 16-17

[32]Holt, Modern History, p. 7

[33]Douin, loc. cit.

[34]Holt, Mahdist State, p. 10

[35]Holt, Modern History, p. 50

[36]Ibid.

rather, of his lieutenants), the Sudan achieved a certain degree of stability,[37] and plans were made for a further expansion of the Egyptian sphere. In 1839, at the viceroy's command, an expedition was sent up the White Nile, beyond al-Ais, the limit of Egyptian control, on a voyage of exploration.[38] Two more expeditions followed in 1840 and 1841.[39] Although the expeditions received a cold reception from the main tribes along the White Nile, the Nuer and the Dinka,[40] they received a very friendly welcome from the tribes along the Bahr al-Jabal,[41] especially from the important Bari tribe, who received them very cordially.[42] Muhammad 'Ali conceived that a profitable trade might be opened with these up-river regions, and that there might

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[37] Hill, op. cit., 35-46

[38] Richard Gray, A History of the Southern Sudan 1839-1889 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 8, 16-18

[39] Ibid., pp. 18-19

[40] Ibid., p. 17

[41] The White Nile may be said to be that extent of the river from the mouth of the Blue Nile to the mouth of the Sobat. From the latter point southwards to Lake Albert, the river is commonly known as the Bahr al-Jabal. Cf. Georg Schweinfurth, The Heart of Africa (3rd ed. abr. London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington Ltd. [no date]) I,7.

[42] Gray, op. cit., pp. 17-19

well be deposits of precious metals to be exploited.[43]

But after the failure of his Syrian adventure in 1841, the viceroy seems to have lost interest in expansion in the Nile regions south of the Sudan.[44] Instead, the initiative in opening the southern areas passed mainly into the hands of the European merchant community in Khartoum, who were especially interested in the ivory trade.[45] No further serious attempts to penetrate into the south were to be made by the Government until the reign of Khedive Isma'il.

The occupation of the Sudanese Nile brought Egypt into direct contact with Ethiopia. This great region was not as now united under the authority of a single government, a condition which has only come to pass in the last eighty years.[46] Established in the thirteenth century, the Ethiopian empire "had never in its history been a truly homogeneous political unity, but rather a confederation of principalities..."[47] The heart of this ancient polity was the highland region of Abyssinia, that is, the principalities

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[43] Ibid., p. 19.

[44] Ibid., p. 20.

[45] Ibid., pp. 21-9.

[46] J.S. Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia (2nd ed.: London, Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1965), pp. 127-38.

[47] Ibid., pp. 65, 105.

of Tigrai, Amhara, Gojam, and Shoa,[48] whose people adhered to Monophysite Christianity.[49] In the later eighteenth century, the power of the emperors had so far declined, due to diverse circumstances, that it was largely ineffective even in the Abyssinian heartland.[50] The period from 1770 to 1855 witnessed a time of unusual anarchy in Abyssinia and in Ethiopia generally. The constituent parts of Abyssinia came under the control of warlord chieftains who waged constant warfare among themselves. The general confusion reminded one traveller of mediaeval Europe in the throes of baronial feudalism,

> when the great barons were followed to war by all born on their lands, by lesser chiefs under their influence and protection, and by their followers. Allowing for the poverty of the country, and the less stern and ferocious character of its inhabitants, you have, in the military of Abyssinia, the picture of those times.[51]

Not only was there continual fighting among the Abyssinian chieftains themselves, but between these and

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[48] Ibid., p.1

[49] Ibid., pp. 24-9

[50] Ibid., pp. 107-8

[51] Walter Plowden, Travels in Abyssinia and the Galla Country, with an Account of a Mission to Ras Ali in 1848. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), p. 51.

numerous other peoples and tribes in the countries adjacent to the Abyssinian highlands,[52] and to an even greater degree, it would appear, among those peoples and tribes themselves.[53] This condition was further aggravated by raids upon Abyssinian and other Ethiopian territory, not only by nomad tribes tributary to the viceroy of Egypt,[54] but by the forces of the Egyptian Government itself.[55] The striking degree of anarchy in the region is evident from the accounts of contemporary observers.[56]

But a reaction to this condition occurred, partly in consequence of the Egyptian occupation of the Sudan and the menace to their independence which the Abyssinians felt this implied.[57] A new leader arose, Kasa, the energetic "bandit nephew of the hereditary chief of Kwara,"[58]

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[52] Ibid., pp. 8, 20, 22 and passim. J. Lewis Krapf, Travels, Researches and Missionary Labours, during an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa (London: Trubner & Co., 1860) p. 27

[53] F.O. 1/8, Consul Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/ 1854.

[54] F.O. 1/9, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 4/III/ 1855.

[55] F.O. 1/9, Plowden to Clarendon, Mogos, 29/III/1854.

[56] F.O. 1/8 Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854. Krapf, op.cit., pp. 27, 46, 65.

[57] Trimingham, op.cit., pp. 108, 115-16

[58] Ibid., p. 108

who after defeating the greater warlords, was crowned Emperor as Theodore III in 1855.[59] But the feudal magnates were not wholly subdued, nor were the warlike Galla tribesmen who had settled in Abyssinia, and Theodore's reign was largely occupied in warfare with these elements.[60] In consequence of a serious misunderstanding with the British Government,[61] a British expeditionary force invaded the country and successfully stormed Theodore's citadel in 1868. Theodore himself committed suicide,[62] and the country relapsed into something like its former disorder.[63]

While Abyssinia was thus declining, the viceroy of Egypt, now Khedive[64] Isma'il Pasha (1863-1879), was planning a great expansion of his territories. In 1869, he dispatched an expedition to annex the basin of the Bahr al-Jabal between Gondokoro and the Albert Nyanza, and to repress the slave-trade in those regions. In the early

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., p. 119

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid., p. 120

[64] 'Khedive' was a title granted the viceroy by the Sultan in 1867. Holt, Fertile Crescent, p. 196.

1870s, the Khedive took steps to extend his authority, at least nominally, over much of the vast region of the Bahr al-Ghazal, that land of a multitude of small rivers, "draining the south-western plain and originating in the ironstone plateau which forms the Nile-Congo divide."[65] In 1874, more by accident than by design, he was able to add Darfur to his possessions.

A flourishing trade in slaves was carried on in the Sudan, as will be seen, and Khedive Isma'il hoped to repress it. He had already employed a European to this end when he had placed the expedition of 1869 under the command of Sir Samuel Baker. In 1877 he went much further and appointed another Briton as Governor-General of the Sudan. This was Charles George Gordon, a colonel in the British Army, who as Governor-General pursued the slave-traders with relentless energy. But slavery was, at this time, an essential part of the Sudanese economy, and Gordon's repression of the trade which supplied it had serious repercussions on the whole of Sudanese society. These repercussions might have been less serious had the Khedivial government been strong and energetic enough to pursue this policy for a considerable period of time. But

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[65]Holt, Modern History, p. 4

Gordon's term of office coincided with the bankruptcy of the Egyptian Government in 1876, owing to the Khedive's improvident expenditure. This led to an increasing control of the Government by Isma'il's European creditors, which in its turn led to a sharp rise in xenophobic feeling among the Egyptian population and in the army. After the Porte's deposition of the Khedive in 1879 at the instance of the Powers, and his replacement by the weak Tawfiq Pasha, a chain of events occurred which led to the occupation of Egypt by British troops in 1882.

While Egypt was thus convulsed, little attention could be spared for the Sudan. There the stresses caused by Gordon's measures to end the slave-trade, together with a web of other circumstances,[66] led to a rebellion against Egyptian rule. The revolt was led by a religious teacher named Muhammad Ahmad, who claimed to be the Mahdi, the Forerunner of Jesus' Second Coming, a claim made by others in the history of Sunni Islam.[67] Muhammad Ahmad's movement was not merely political in character, but was also partly eschatological and partly a movement of religious

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[66] Holt, Mahdist State, pp. 24-36.

[67] Ibid., pp. 21-3.

reform.[68] Such was the force of the Mahdi's appeal, under the prevailing circumstances, that he was able to defeat all the forces sent against him, finally capturing Khartoum, the last citadel of Egyptian power in the Sudan, in January 1885.

The Social Background

Slavery is one of the most ancient institutions of human society. It was a prominent element in the social and economic structures of many ancient civilizations, such as those of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome.[69] In more recent times, it has flourished in the Islamic world, in the warmer regions of the Western Hemisphere, where slave-labor was once considered indispensable for the carrying on of agriculture, especially large-scale plantation agriculture,[70] and in the pagan lands of equatorial and sub-equatorial Africa. As in this paper, we shall consider the trade in slaves as it was

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[68] Ibid., pp. 22-3.

[69] W.L. Westermann, "Slavery, ancient," Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, eds. E.R. Seligman and A. Johnson (New York: Macmillan Co., 1937), XIII, 74-7.

[70] Ibid., pp. 20-1.

carried on between a part of the Islamic world and certain non-Muslim regions of Africa adjacent to it, we might begin by making a few brief remarks on the social context of slavery in these two areas.

To begin with, slavery was deeply rooted among the pagan peoples of Central Africa. The statement of an American traveller in the Egyptian Sudan in 1852, that slavery prevailed "throughout all the native kingdoms of Central Africa, in more or less aggravated forms"[71] is confirmed in some degree by the British explorer, Samuel W. Baker in 1874, when he remarks, "In every African tribe that I have visited, I have found slavery a natural institution of the country."[72] Another British explorer in the equatorial regions of the Nile basin also refers to the widespread use of slaves among the Central African pagans.[73] These circumstances were not confined to the Nile basin

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[71]Bayard Taylor, Life and Landscapes from Egypt to the Negro Kingdoms of the White Nile (2nd ed.; London: Sampson Low and Co., 1854), p. 390

[72]Sir Samuel Baker, Ismailia: a Narrative of the Expedition to Central Africa for the Suppression of the Slave-Trade Organized by Ismail, Khedive of Egypt (London: Macmillan, 1874) II, 209 (Hereafter cited as Ismailia.)

[73]John Petherick, Egypt, the Soudan, and Central Africa (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1861), p. 468

alone, but existed throughout equatorial Africa, as has been attested by explorers, missionaries, and civil servants in this region. All agree that slavery "était un état social commun et que la vente d'esclaves était chose courante parmi les indigènes."[74]

The institution of slavery was perhaps no less widely spread in Islamic society. It was inherited by the Muslims both from the society of the pre-Islamic Arabs[75] and from the ancient societies of Egypt and Western Asia, and was an integral part of Islamic society until very recently.[76] As it continued in existence over the centuries, it must increasingly have acquired a kind of religious sanction, supported as it was by the weight of custom and time-honored usage, and so by that

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[74]P. Ceulemans, "Introduction de l'influence de l'Islam au Congo," Islam in Tropical Africa, ed. I.M. Lewis (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 177.

[75]Brunschvig, loc.cit., pp. 24-5.

[76]Ibid., p. 31.

"reverence for tradition [which] was the doctrine most characteristic of and most strongly stressed in Islamic teaching."[77] The place of slaves and slavery in Muslim society is a topic of many ramifications, a detailed discussion of which would be outside the scope of this essay. Owing however to the misrepresentation to which this subject seems particularly liable in Western writings,[78] I thought it right, without intending an apology for slavery per se, to suggest in what manner slavery among Muslims differed significantly, generally speaking, from the slave-systems known in the Western world until the last century.

Islamic jurisprudence assigns to a slave, in principle, the status of a chattel, an article of property.[79] But this legal condition was not absolute, even within the provisions of the Law itself,[80] and it was further ameliorated by a number of historical circumstances.

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[77] H.A.R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, Vol. I: Islamic Society in the Eighteenth Century (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), part 1, 214.

[78] Cf. for example Guillaume Lejean, "La Traite des esclaves en Egypte et en Turquie," Revue des deux mondes, LXXVIII (1870), pp. 896, 901 (hereafter cited as "La Traite des esclaves"); and E.W. Bovill, The Golden Trade of the Moors (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 245-6.

[79] Cf. Brunschvig, loc.cit., p. 26.

[80] Ibid., pp. 26-7, 29-30.

It was the case that large numbers of slaves in the course of Muslim history reached positions of great power and responsibility. The Mamluk Sultans of Egypt, the Atabeg dynasties of the Near East, and the slave members of the Ottoman 'ruling institution' are all cases in point.[81] There were, moreover, numerous persons of great rank who, although born free, were mothered by slaves. This was true of most of the 'Abbasid Caliphs and of all the Ottoman Sultans after the mid-fifteenth century.[82] To be sure, the vast majority of slaves had to be content with a much humbler lot.[83] Nevertheless, it is clear that in such a world there could be little social stigma attached to the condition of slavery.[84]

Again, slaves in Muslim society were used in a wide variety of occupations; but in general it would appear that when slaveswere not employed as soldiers, they tended to be connected with the households of their masters, as domestic servants, concubines, teachers, and in some cases, even managers of commercial concerns.[85] Some

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[81]Gibb and Bowen, op.cit., I, 41-88; Reuben Levy, The Social Structure of Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 74.

[82]Gibb and Bowen, op.cit., I, 43.

[83]Levy, op.cit., p. 75.

[84]Gibb and Bowen, loc.cit.

[85]Brunschvig, loc.cit., pp. 32-6.

slaves were employed in agriculture; but "it must be emphasized that mediaeval Islam seems scarcely to have known the system of large-scale rural exploitation based on an immense and anonymous slave-labour force... which condemns a man to one of the most distressful of all existences,"[86] and which did so much to disfigure the slave-systems of North and South America.

It may be that it was because slaves in Muslim society tended thus to be associated with the life of the towns and cities, from time immemorial the focus and heart of that society's life,[87] because of the small degree of stigma attached to a servile condition, and because of the close association of the great majority of slaves with the families of their masters, that bondsmen achieved a high degree of integration into Islamic society. Muslim slaves seem in general to have shown a remarkably strong attachment and loyalty to Islam;[88] indeed, some observers thought their loyalty to the Islamic community even greater than that of freeborn Muslims.[89] Possibly this intense loyalty was a way

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[86] Ibid., p. 33.

[87] Gibb and Bowen, op.cit., I, 276.

[88] Brunschvig, loc.cit., p. 35.

[89] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 328; Edward William Lane, The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1908), p. 159.

of emphasizing that, however inferior their position as slaves might be in a mundane legal sense, they were, as Muslims, essentially full participants in the life of the Islamic Community. This wholehearted self-identification of these slaves with their society is admittedly a difficult thing to define. Perhaps it can be best understood by recalling to mind a condition in sharp contrast to it, namely, the failure of negroes in the United States, whether as slaves or as free men, to identify themselves with the greater community around them, a failure for which there is ample evidence in American history, especially in recent times.

There were indeed aspects of Muslim slavery, at least during the period to be discussed here, which vividly recall the abuses of the slave-systems of the Western Hemisphere: the brutalities of the slave hunts, the hardship and suffering, often extreme, of the slaves being conveyed from their homelands to their final destinations in a Muslim country, and the often debased characters of the professional slave-dealers. Nevertheless, for those slaves who successfully passed through

these trials, there was a life of probably as much ease and tranquillity as most freeborn Muslims, and more than many of them, could hope for.[90] And after not too many years there was for the majority of slaves, it would seem, the prospect of emancipation.[91]

Slavery had flourished in Egypt not only during the Islamic period,[92] but also during pharaonic times.[93] The Swiss traveller John Lewis Burckhardt, mentioned,

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[90]There is in fact a striking degree of unanimity in the testimony of nineteenth-century European writers to the effect that the general condition of the great majority of slaves in Egypt, the Sudan, and Arabia at their masters' hands was tolerable or better. Cf. for example John Bowring, Report on Egypt and Candia (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1840), p. 91; Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 341; Sir Richard Burton, Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Meccah (New York: Dover Publications, 1964), I, 61; Lady Duff Gordon, Letters from Egypt, 1863-65 (London: Macmillan & Co., 1865), p. 207; C. Snouck Hurgronje, Mekkah in the Latter Part of the 19th Century (London: Luzac & Co., 1931), pp. 13-14. These references could easily be multiplied.

[91]Cf. infra, p. 196.

[92]Brunschvig, loc.cit., pp. 32-5.

[93]Indeed, Dr. Bowring, noting the numbers of slaves in Egypt, and similarities between Muslim and Mosaic usages in respect of slavery, believed that in regard to these matters the state of Egypt in 1837 was "very nearly what it was at the time of the patriarchs." Bowring, op.cit., pp. 90-1.

who visited Egypt in 1813, stated that "almost every family" there kept "a couple of slave servants..."[94] Indeed, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, slaves were owned not only by the wealthy, in whose households they were numerous,[95] but by people of a more humble condition.[96] Some few were found among the crews of the Red Sea merchant ships, rented out by their owners to the ship captains;[97] others were to be found in the army,[98] and a small number may have been employed as mechanics.[99] But the very great majority of them were attached to the households of their masters, either as domestic servants or as concubines.[100] The majority

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[94]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 338; townspeople only, not peasants, whose economic condition did not allow of such a luxury; cf. Lane, op.cit., pp. 199-201.

[95]P.S. G[irard], "De la caravane de Darfour," Mémoires sur l'Egypte (Paris: Didot, an IX), III, 305.

[96]Lane, op.cit., p. 192

[97]Edmond Combes, Voyage en Egypte, en Nubie dans les déserts de Beyouda, des Bicharys et sur les côtes de la mer Rouge (Paris: Desessart, 1846), II, 353.

[98]Bowring, op.cit., p. 10

[99]Stephen Olin, Travels in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Land (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1860), I, 99.

[100]Bowring, op.cit., pp. 6, 91; Lane, op.cit., pp. 136, 190-1.

of these were African slaves; there were relatively few white slaves, and these were mostly in the possession of wealthy Turks.[101] An attempt was made in the 1830s to introduce large-scale slave-labor on certain estates in Upper Egypt; but this project was soon abandoned, since the cost of slave-labor in these conditions was found to be "far more" than the cost of free peasant labor.[102] This circumstance was, however, somewhat altered a generation later. In the United States, which was one of the largest suppliers of cotton to the world market, a civil war was fought from 1861 to 1865. During this period, the supply of American cotton to British and Continental markets was cut off, and Egyptian cotton was sold at a premium.[103] This fact had two consequences in regard to slavery in Egypt. The first of these was that, following a shortage of labor resulting from the greatly increased demand for cotton, slaves began to be widely used as farm laborers in the cultivation of the commodity.[104] The second was that, because of

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[101] Lane, op.cit., pp. 137, 190.

[102] Bowring, op.cit., p. 89.

[103] Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 115.

[104] Gabriel Baer, "Social Change in Egypt: 1800-1914," Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt, ed. P.M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 151.

the affluence of money in Egypt during the boom, there was a greatly increased demand for domestic slaves, who were now purchased in considerable numbers by classes of the population for whom a 'staff' of household slaves had hitherto been an unheard-of luxury.[105]

Slavery was also quite common in the other countries of North-East Africa, in Ethiopia and the Sudan. In Ethiopia, slaves were kept by the rulers of the Galla kingdoms of Enarya, Gomma, and Jimma,[106] for whom the export of slaves was a source of considerable revenue.[107] It was estimated that one of the kings of Jimma, Abba Jifar II, possessed as many as ten thousand slaves; wealthy men owning more than a thousand "were not rare," and even simple farmers might own one or two.[108] Numbers of female slaves, "often fair and very beautiful," were kept in and exported from the kingdom of Kaffa.[109] And at least one of the kings of Shoa, Sahla Sellase, was said to have "many

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[105] Douin, L'Empire africain, part ii, p. 696-7

[106] F.O. 1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/ 1854.

[107] Plowden, op.cit., p. 128.

[108] H. S. Lewis, A Galla Monarchy: Jimma Abba Jifar, Ethiopia 1830-1932 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p. 66.

[109] F.O.1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854.

thousands of slaves" engaged in all manner of work.[110]

Again, in the countries of the geographical Sudan, slavery was a significant feature of society. Slaves were found not only in humble occupations, but also in positions of responsibility. According to Burckhardt, a slave brought up in a Sudanese family "is admitted to all the family councils, is allowed to trade, or to engage in any other business on his own account, and to do just as he pleases, provided he proves a bold fellow, and in case of emergency can wield a sword in his master's defence; he may then misbehave at pleasure, without the fear of punishment."[111]

In the Sultanate of Darfur, as we learn from Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Tunisi, who travelled there from Egypt about 1803, two of the highest offices in the kingdom could be held only by eunuch slaves of the Sultan.[112] Further west, in the kingdom of Adamawa (now part of the Cameroons), Heinrich Barth, who explored the central regions of the geographical Sudan between 1850 and 1855, states that

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[110] Krapf, op.cit., p. 42

[111] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 342

[112] Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Tunisi, Voyage au Darfour (Paris: B. Duprat, 1845,) p. 253.

"some of the head slaves" belonging to provincial governors "have as many as a thousand slaves each under their command, with whom they undertake occasional expeditions for their masters."[113]

We may infer from this last statement that the whole number of slaves kept in Adamawa was very considerable, and so indeed it was. The same observer writes that "slavery exists on an immense scale in this country, and there are many private individuals who have more than a thousand slaves."[114] Speaking of Kano, a commercial center of importance (now in Northern Nigeria), Barth says that "the number of domestic slaves, of course, is very considerable; but I think it hardly equals, certainly does not exceed, that of the free men, for, while the wealthy have many slaves, the poorer class, which is far more numerous, have few or none."[115]

Slaves were hardly less numerous in the eastern lands of the Sudan. Tunisi, whom we have mentioned, remarks

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[113] Henry Barth, Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa (New York: Harper, 1857), II, 191.

[114] Ibid., pp. 190-1.

[115] Ibid., I, 510.

that in Darfur, "les riches, les personnages dont la position inspire le plus de respect et de considération,.. ont à leurs ordres nombre d'esclaves et de serviteurs.."[116] Many of these were women, for he adds, "Les princes et les grands, du Soudan surtout, dominés par des passions ardentes et par un désir incessant de varier leurs jouissances, ont dû s'entourer de légions d'eunuques."[117] The Sultan himself, he said, had more than a thousand eunuchs, all under the supervision of a Captain who was himself a eunuch, and who commanded his subordinates in the same way a military officer commanded his soldiers.[118] In Kordofan, it was said that at the time of the conquest of that country by Muhammad Bey the Defterdar in 1821, the principal wealth of the people of El Obeid, the capital, was held in the form of slaves.[119] Slaves were used as a common medium of commercial exchange in Kordofan,[120] as well as

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[116] Tunisi, Darfour, p. 213

[117] Ibid., p. 252

[118] Ibid.

[119] E. de Cadalvène and J. de Breuvéry, L'Egypte et la Turquie de 1829 à 1836: Egypte et Nubie (Paris: Arthur Bertrand, Libraire-Editeur, 1836), Vol.II, p.228

[120] Ignatius Pallme, Travels in Kordofan, Embracing a Description of that Province of Egypt and of some of the Bordering Countries (London: J. Madden and Co. 1844), p. 294

at Shendi[121] and in Wadai,[122] the western neighbor of Darfur. Burckhardt remarks that hardly a household at Berber and Shendi "does not possess one or two slaves, and five or six are frequently seen in the same family, occupied in the labours of the field, tending cattle, etc. etc.; the great people and chiefs keep them by dozens."[123] This was the case, he adds, "as high up the Nile as Sennaar... as well as westwards to Kordofan, Darfour, and thence towards Bornou. All the Bedouin tribes also who surround those countries are well-stocked with slaves."[124] Slaves were as numerous in the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century as they had been earlier. It was noted that in the 1860s the greater part of the laborforce of Kordofan was composed of slaves,[125] and at El Obeid it was thought that the slaves there were more numerous than the free.[126] This seemed to be true also of Khartoum,

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[121] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 285; cf. also p. 344.

[122] Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Tunisi, Voyage au Ouaday (Paris: B. Duprat, 1851), p. 164n. (Hereafter cited as Ouaday.)

[123] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 343.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 35.

[126] Ibid., p. 36.

where in 1883, it was estimated that of the total population of 50-55,000, some two-thirds were slaves.[127] In 1878, Colonel Gordon reckoned that most or all the 25,000 troops he had under his command were slaves, conscripted into the army in one way or another.[128]

Thus it was, in the words of a French historian, that the sale of slaves in Egypt and the Sudan was "intimement liée au régime social, militaire, économique du pays..." so that it was "impossible de bouleverser du jour au lendemain des habitudes séculaires."[129] It is not therefore difficult to understand why public opinion in these countries resisted the attempts made by their rulers, with European encouragement, to repress the slave-trade. The treatment of slaves by their Muslim masters was generally humane; thus, one of the principal factors which stimulated opposition to slavery in the Western world, namely, the revulsion against the often hard treatment of negro slaves in the plantation economies of North and South America, was not to be expected in Muslim attitudes. In

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[127] Hill, op.cit., p. 162n

[128] G.B.Hill, (ed.) Colonel Gordon in Central Africa, 1874-1879... from Original Letters and Documents. (London: Thos. de la Rue, 1881), p. 351. (This book is a collection of letters written by Colonel Gordon to various persons not identified, as well as of a number of other documents by Colonel Gordon's hand relating to Sudanese affairs.)

[129] Douin, loc.cit., p. 465.

addition, many people were economically interested in the maintenance of slavery and the trade. And the association of slavery with traditional Muslim society made the idea of abolishing it seem like "a reprehensible innovation, contrary to the letter of the holy Book and the exemplary practice of the first Muslims,"[130] as well as opposed to the whole practice of the Community since then.

The Slave-Trade Before 1821

The importation of slaves from the lands of the south into the Sudan had been carried on for centuries before the period we are about to discuss,[131] to such an extent that the racial type of the Arabs who settled in the Sudan in the Middle Ages had been profoundly modified, owing to their mixing with slave women.[132] From a very early period, slaves were sent also from the Bilad al-Sudan to the lands of northern Africa, to pharaonic Egypt and Carthage, and later to the cities under Greek and Roman rule.[133] This traffic continued into the Islamic period, down to the nineteenth century, at which point our study takes it up. We

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[130] Brunschvig, loc.cit., p. 38.

[131] H.A. Macmichael, A History of the Arabs in the Sudan... (London: Frank Cass, 1967), I, 13.

[132] Ibid., I, vii, 290.

[133] M. Delafosse, "Sudan," E.I.(1st ed.), IV, 495.

may anticipate some of the remarks made below by briefly noting circumstances in the Sudan before 1821, and indicating how changes in these under Egyptian rule tended to encourage the slave-trade.

Conditions of trade were rather unfavorable in the Sudan during the half-century before 1821. We have seen how the region was divided among a number of tribes and petty states, and noted the conditions of insecurity which adversely affected travel. Moreover, the Nile, potentially an artery of trade, was little used for this purpose before the conquest. It was to be the achievement of the Egyptians, with their superior weaponry and organization, to bring the Sudan under a single government, and as will be seen, to impose an unprecedented degree of public security, to establish commerce on the Nile, and to open up the regions of the Upper Nile to trade and settlement. All these things were to encourage trade, including the trade in slaves.[134] This superiority in weapons and organization was also to make possible a more effective prosecution of hunts for slaves than had been the case before 1821. This was to be true both of the Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan and later on of the settlers in the newly-opened regions of the Upper Nile.[135]

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[134] Cf. infra, pp. 137, 154-6.

[135] Cf. infra, pp. 64-5, 83ff.

CHAPTER II

THE TAKING OF THE SLAVES

We have seen that slavery was widely spread and deeply rooted in the countries of North-East Africa. Our concern here is with the slave-trade of Egypt and the lands from which she drew her supplies of African slaves. Where did these slaves come from, and how did they come to be in slavery? This is the question to be considered in this chapter.

According to the Shari'a, the Law of Islam, a slave is defined as either (a) "a person taken captive in war, or carried off by force from a foreign[1] hostile country, and being at the time of capture an infidel;"[2] or (b) "the offspring of a female slave by another slave, or by any man who is not her owner, or by her owner if he do not acknowledge himself to be the father;..."[3] Early in the history of the Islamic Community, "the principle was established that there was to be no taking of

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[1] 'Foreign' must, in this context, be understood as 'non-Muslim.' Cf. Gibb and Bowen, op.cit., I, 21

[2] Lane, op.cit., p. 103; cf. Brunschvig, loc. cit., p. 26

[3] Lane, loc. cit.

captives from amongst Muslims... the principle being doubtless evolved from actual practice."[4] We shall be concerned here with slaves of the first category, viz., infidels seized in a foreign hostile country. The taking of infidels in this manner probably had its origins in a right granted by the Koran of claiming as slaves those non-Scriptuary unbelievers (i.e., those who were neither Jews, Christians, nor Sabians) who had been defeated in the course of a jihad, or war for the Faith.[5] (In the same manner, it was, until comparatively recently, generally held in Christendom that the forcible enslavement of infidels by Christians was not only a just punishment inflicted on perverse unbelievers, but also a means of "procuring new souls for the Church to win."[6]) As time passed, the right granted them by the Koran came to be more broadly interpreted by Muslims. Eventually it came to be used as a kind of legal fiction to cover the taking of any

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[4]Levy, op.cit., p. 75. The enslavement of non-Muslims living in countries ruled by Muslims was also forbidden; Gibb and Bowen, loc.cit.

[5]Tunisi, Ouaday, pp. 485-6; cf. also E. Tyan, "Djihād," E.I. (2nd ed.), II, 538.

[6]David B. Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 100-1, 222.

non-Muslims outside the Domain of Islam and their sale as slaves, whether a jihad in the strict sense had actually been fought or not[7].

Further on in this paper, it will be shown how, despite the steady flow of slaves into Egypt from the surrounding countries over many centuries, the slave population of Egypt had constantly to be replenished from outside, its own natural reproduction being insufficient to meet the demand for slaves there, or even to prevent its numbers from declining. There were three factors constantly at work to diminish the slave-population of the Muslim world in general, viz., (a) the strong emphasis laid by Islamic ethics upon the meritorious quality of acts of manumission; and the Shari'a principles that (b) a child borne by a slave woman to her master is ipso facto free, and that (c) such a woman is entitled to emancipation upon her master's death.[8]

In addition to these factors at work in the Muslim world generally, two others seem to have worked

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[7] Brunschvig, loc. cit., p. 26; cf. Tunisi, loc. cit., p. 486

[8] Gibb and Bowen, loc. cit., pp. 41-2; Lane, op.cit., p. 104

to the same end in Egypt particularly during the period under discussion. These, as we shall see, were (a) the low birth-rate and (b) the high rate of mortality which prevailed among the slave population of Egypt.

In consequence of all these circumstances, it would appear that slavery could scarcely have continued to exist in Egypt, or in the Islamic world generally, "without the constantly renewed contribution of peripheral or external elements, either directly captured in war or imported commercially, under the fiction of the Holy War, from foreign territory (dār al-ḥarb)."[9]

In the case of Egypt and the Sudan, the foreign territories which served as reservoirs of slaves were the regions adjacent to the southern and south-eastern reaches of the Sudan. The peoples of these southern borderland districts were pagans for the most part, although there was a considerable Christian population in the mountainous heartland of Abyssinia,[10] and there

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[9]Brunschvig, loc.cit., p. 26.

[10]Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 15.

were other smaller Christian peoples living in the mountain marches between north-west Abyssinia and the Sudan.[11] These borderland territories, although diverse enough in other respects, all had two striking characteristics in common. The first of these was a high degree of what may be called ethnic fragmentation; that is, the entire borderland region was inhabited by a very large number of tribes and peoples of varying sizes. This was in fact quite as true of the Bilad al-Sudan as a whole, as of its eastern reaches. Tunisi describes the pagan regions to the south of the geographical Sudan as being composed of

> une immense agglomération de populations dont personne que Dieu ne sait le nombre, divisées en une quantité incroyable de tribus et de sous-tribus, et dispersées sur une zone presque droite, dans les vastes espaces qui forment le Soudan idolâtre, depuis le sud au-delà du Sennâr jusqu'au sud du Kechnah dans le Soudan occidental.[12]

The second of these characteristics, which perhaps grew out of the first, was the considerable animosity and friction which existed among the different tribes of a given region. We find this to be true of all the five broad

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[11] F.O. 1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854.

[12] Tunisi, loc.cit., p. 272.

areas which bordered on the Sudan, and which were the principal reservoirs of African slaves for Egypt, the Sudan, Turkey, and other countries. These areas were: (1)Ethiopia; (2)Dar Funj, the hilly region to the south of the peninsula between the Blue and White Niles;(3) the Nuba hills of southern Kordofan; (4) the regions of the Upper Nile, the basins of the Bahr al-Ghazal and the Bahr al-Jabal; and(5) Dar Fertit, the pagan region to the south of Darfur. We may describe the relevant circumstances in each of these briefly.

Dar Fertit was the name used at the time of our study to denote the region of pagan tribes south of Darfur, below the upper reaches of the Bahr al-Arab.[13] The ethnological composition of this area was quite complex. According to Tunisi, the peoples of Dar Fertit "constituent une immense population, composée d'une foule de tribus."[14] His statement is confirmed by Georg Schweinfurth, a German naturalist who travelled in Dar Fertit and the Bahr al-Ghazal about 1870. "Ethnographically considered," Schweinfurth says, "Dar Ferteet presented

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[13]Tunisi, Ouaday, pp. 273-4

[14]Ibid., p. 280

a wondrous medley. Perhaps nowhere else, in an area so limited, could there be found such a conglomeration of the representatives of different races..."[15]

A similar ethnic diversity prevailed in the basins of the Upper Nile, the Bahr al-Jabal and Bahr al-Ghazal, Since the sixteenth century at least, successive tribal migrations had inundated these regions.[16] A recent student of the area writes:

> Just as the Nile spilt its waters across the plains, so waves of migrations spread their ripples throughout the area, setting up continual eddies, and leaving behind small stagnant remnants. This unsettled history, together with material conditions unfavourable to the formation of large-scale political systems, resulted in large numbers of small tribal or kinship groups...[17]

A comparable situation, again, existed among the peoples of the "isolated hills and ranges of the southern Kordofan plain,..."[18] a region known as Dar Nuba.[19] The tribes of this region, who "may be regarded as the

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[15]Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 220

[16]Gray, op.cit., pp. 12, 14

[17]Ibid., p. 10

[18]J.S. Trimingham, Islam in the Sudan (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), p.34

[19]C.G. Seligman and B.Z. Seligman, Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1932), p. 366.

Negro aborigines of Kordofan,"[20] are not a homogeneous group "for they are the backwash of many African tribes who have sought refuge in the hills, so they differ profoundly in physical type, language, and culture."[21] It has been said that one of the most remarkable features of this region

> is the multiplicity of languages spoken within its bounds. The inhabitants of hills only a few miles apart may speak languages mutually unintelligible, and even on the same massif -- when this is of moderate size -- there may be two or three communities speaking different languages and coming little in contact with one another, though their habits, customs, and beliefs are fundamentally the same.[22]

The country south of the peninsula between the White and Blue Niles, sometimes known as Dar Funj,

> is of the same general character as central and southern Kordofan, consisting of a flat open plain diversified by rocky hills... Many of these [hills] are of considerable size, and whenever there is water on or near them they support settlements ... Moreover the hills between the

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Trimingham, Islam in the Sudan, p. 34.

[22] C.G. Seligman and B.Z. Seligman, op.cit., p.370

> White and Blue Niles are as much an area of linguistic confusion as are those of southern Kordofan...[23]

Such conditions of ethnological diversity were characteristic of Ethiopia as well, to an even greater degree, it may be, than of the other borderlands of the Sudan. Ethiopia, according to Trimingham,

> presents a heterogeneous variety of ethnical, cultural, and linguistic types, and Abyssinia has been well styled by C. Conti Rossini un museo di popoli. This diversity is in keeping with its morphological and climatic conditions. Although the Arabic term for the Abyssinians, habash which means 'a mixture', is not the actual derivation of the word, it does show how they presented themselves to the Arabs.[24]

This ethnic and cultural complexity was characteristic not only of Abyssinia, but of the whole Ethiopian region, which was a welter of Muslim, Christian, and pagan tribes of widely differing economic and social organizations.[25]

Thus fragmented, the different peoples of the borderlands were not only largely unable to establish any real forms of active cooperation, but they very often lived

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[23] Ibid., p. 413.

[24] Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 5.

[25] Ibid., pp. 9-31.

in a continual state of mutual tension and antagonism. The consequences of this will be seen when we come to consider some of the circumstances in which people in those regions were taken into slavery.

These circumstances were diverse enough. It sometimes happened, for example, that individuals were sold into slavery by their own kinsmen. Bayard Taylor, who travelled in the Egyptian Sudan in 1852, writing of the female Ethiopian slaves, "who are in great demand among the Egyptians, for wives,"[26] tells us that these girls were "frequently sold by their own parents."[27] Some of these may well have been Gallas, for the Galla father, like the Roman paterfamilias, had the legal right to sell his own children into slavery.[28] Such incidents were also reported to occur among the Gurage, like the Galla, a Hamitic people of Ethiopia, and like them noted for their handsome women.[29] Major W. C. Harris, who visited the

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[26] Taylor, op.cit., p. 389.

[27] Ibid.

[28] C.G. Seligman, Races of Africa (3rd ed.; London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 109.

[29] William A. Shack, The Gurage: a People of the Ensete Culture (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 7.

Gurage country in the earlier 1840s, noted the attraction for the inhabitants of the wares brought by the slave-traders, "glittering gew-gaws," as he calls them, "the...love of which induces brother to sell sister, and the parent to carry her own offspring to the market."[30] Such circumstances were known in the region of Taka,[31] and were also widespread among the tribes who dwelt in the Nuba hills of Kordofan, where they seem to have occurred frequently in connection with conditions of scarcity or famine. W.G. Browne, who has been mentioned, wrote that it was "said to be a common practice," among the people of Jabal Shaybun, a hill south-east of El Obeid, "for the father in time of scarcity to sell his own children."[32] We learn from Ignaz Pallme, an Austrian merchant who lived in Kordofan in the late 1830s, that

> it frequently happens that a drought destroys the harvest, or that it is eaten up by the locusts, so common in these regions... [In such cases] a great dearth of bread... is generally the result; instances are then known of parents selling their children for a few handfuls of dockn[33]... A brother will,

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[30] W. Cornwallis Harris, The Highlands of Ethiopia (London, 1844), III, 313; quoted in Shack, op.cit., p.144

[31] F.L. James, The Wild Tribes of the Soudan (London: John Murray, 1883), p. 242.

[32] Browne, op. cit., pp. 461-2.

[33] Dukhn, a form of millet. Cf. Pallme, op.cit., p.223.

> on these occasions, sell his sister to obtain a little flour, and thus to supply himself and his people with bread for a few days...[34]

Eduard Rüppell, who travelled in Kordofan shortly after conquest of that country by the Defterdar, wrote that men might even sell themselves to the slave-traders in order to obtain food.[35]

It appears that men might also suffer enslavement as a penalty for certain offenses. In the Galla kingdom of Jimma in south-west Ethiopia, for example, men might be enslaved "as punishment for crimes or for failure to fulfill certain duties to the state."[36] Enslavement seems to have been prescribed as a penalty for certain kinds of crimes in Darfur and Wadai,[37] and among the Shilluk tribesmen, who dwelt along the White Nile.[38] Among the people of Senheit, in north-west Ethiopia, enslavement was the penalty for some kinds of debts.[39]

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[34]Pallme, op.cit., p. 159

[35]Rüppell, loc.cit., pp. 302-3

[36]Lewis, op.cit., p. 66

[37]Browne, op.cit., pp. 308-9; Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 487

[38]John Petherick, Travels in Central Africa, and Explorations of the Western Nile Tributaries (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1869), II,3 (Hereafter cited as Travels.)

[39]James, op.cit., p. 245

Again, many individuals were simply abducted and sold into slavery. Speaking of Gurageland, Major Harris tells us that "a multitude of private feuds animate the turbulent population; and there being neither king nor laws, it is not surprising that every man should stretch forth his hand to kidnap his neighbour."[40] This statement may seem rather melodramatic, but it is confirmed in all essentials by J.S. Krapf, a Swiss missionary who travelled in Ethiopia about the same period. Krapf writes that in Gurageland, many people

> on their way from one village to another are stolen and sold by their own relations, and houses are frequently set on fire at night and the inmates, in endeavouring to escape, are seized and sold into slavery. Sometimes children are stolen at night from their homes, while their parents are asleep...[41]

P.S. Girard, one of the French *savants* who accompanied the French expedition to Egypt in 1798, learned at Cairo that among the slaves brought to Egypt by the yearly caravan from Darfur, there were children of both sexes who had been "dérobés dans les villages du royaume de Dârfour par des gens qui font métier de ces

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[40] Harris, *loc.cit.*, quoted in Shack, *loc.cit.*

[41] Krapf, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

sortes d'enlèvemens..."[42] Pallme too describes "a species of kidnappers, who think very little of stealing the children of their own countrymen for a trifle, and bringing them to a preconcerted spot for barter."[43] Browne, speaking again of Jabal Shaybun, states that "the slaves, which are brought in great numbers from this quarter, are some prisoners of war among themselves, (for their wars are frequent,) and some seduced by treachery and sold."[44] According to Escayrac de Lauture, who had a wide knowledge of the Sudan, this was one of the principal means by which the slave-trade was supplied, the seizure by individuals of small numbers of women and children. These abductions, he said, did not furnish more than two or three slaves each; but as they occurred "every day" throughout the negro countries, they annually furnished as many slaves as a well-directed military expedition.[45]

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[42] P.S. Girard, "Mémoire sur l'agriculture, l'industrie et le commerce de l'Égypte," Description de l'Égypte (Paris: Imprimerie de C.L.F. Panckouke, 1824), XVII, 278 (Hereafter cited as Description de l'Égypte).

[43] Pallme, op.cit., p. 293

[44] Browne, op. cit., pp. 461-2

[45] Escayrac de Lauture, Stanislas, comte d', Le Désert et le Soudan (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1853), p.471; cf.also pp.482-3.

But the means of enslavement about which we are best informed was that which occurred in consequence of open warfare. Four 'levels' of warfare may be distinguished in the period being discussed: (1) fighting between various non-Muslim borderland tribes; (2) fighting between these tribes and those nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes under the suzerainty of one of the States of the Sudan, especially of the Egyptian Sudan; (3) attacks on those independent non-Muslim tribes by the armies or subjects of the Sudan States; and (4) warfare against the pagan tribes of the Upper Nile regions carried on by ivory traders and their armed followers after about 1860.

Let us discuss the first such 'level.' P.S. Girard learned that many of the slaves brought to Egypt by the Darfur caravans had originally been "prisonniers faits dans les guerres continuelles qui divisent entre elles les nations de l'intérieur de l'Afrique voisines de Dârfour..."[46] The 'nations' he refers to were probably the tribes of Dar Fertit, where most of the slaves of Darfur originated.[47] Tunisi's remarks on the relations among the various tribes of Dar Fertit illustrate the depth of the antagonisms which existed among those tribes and gave rise to the state of continual warfare of which Girard speaks. Tunisi writes:

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[46]Girard, Description de l'Egypte, pp. 279-80.

[47]Browne, op.cit., p. 297; Tunisi, Ouaday, p. 480 and passim.

"chaque station [sic; settlement, no doubt, of a tribe or ethnic group] est hostile aux stations qui l'avoisinent."[48] To such a degree was this true, he adds, that

> quand l'ennemi vient tomber sur un village, l'attaque, en enlève les femmes et les enfants, le village voisin regarde d'un oeil indifférent et ne cherche point à conjurer l'orage. Aussi, dès que l'ennemi en a fini avec une station, il va s'adresser à une autre et la traite comme la précédente, sous les yeux des villages les plus rapprochés, qui demeurent encore spectateurs tranquilles du malheur de leurs frères.[49]

Perhaps the same could be written of the tribes of the Upper Nile. Schweinfurth, speaking of the area to the south of the lands of the Dinka tribe, says "the entire country [is] divided into a number of independent districts, all in the usual anarchy of petty African communities..."[50] In these districts, he says elsewhere, "there is an utter want of wholesome intercourse between race and race. For any member of a tribe which speaks one dialect to cross the borders of a tribe that speaks

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[48]Tunisi, loc.cit., p. 274.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Schweinfurth, op.cit., I, 112-13

another is to make a venture at the hazard of his life."[51] This testimony is well borne out by other writers.[52]

Nor were conditions among the tribes of the Nuba hills more harmonious. They were in fact especially given to internecine strife, going to war "for trifles, when the stronger tribes make prisoners of the weaker, and sell them as slaves."[53] This condition was exacerbated in times of famine, the consequences of which were "fearful," for "the Nuba negroes then sally forth in quest of prey into the neighbouring villages, where they plunder and steal ... These depredations... always lead to a war, and the conflict lasts until the weaker party is overcome, when they are all sold by the conquerors as slaves."[54]

Endemic tribal warfare was also characteristic

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[51] Ibid., p. 77

[52] Baker, op.cit., II, 212; Antoine Brun-Rollet, Le Nil Blanc et le Soudan (Paris: Maison, 1855), p. 250; Petherick, loc.cit., I, 71 and 250

[53] Pallme, op.cit., p. 156.

[54] Ibid., pp. 159-60.

pp. 159-60.

of Ethiopia. It was especially pronounced among the Gallas, a people divided into several tribes and religions.[55] They supplied, as will be seen, some of the most valuable slaves to be exported to Egypt and Western Asia. According to Walter Plowden, British Consul at the Red Sea port of Massawa (Musawwa') in the mid-nineteenth century, the Gallas were much given to "intestine wars"[56] and quarrelling with their neighbors.

> The Worroheimano and the Wallo Gallas are always in a state of more or less active warfare, as also the Wallo and Bayt Amhara, the Wallo and Borona Gallas, the Wallo and the Shoa frontier chiefs; these find their internal wars sufficient to keep them pretty constantly in the saddle...[57]

"Female prisoners taken in their constant raids," he remarks, "are... sold, the male being never spared on those occasions."[58]

Gurageland was another area of "intestine wars." Indeed, such was the "relentless character of enslavement"

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[55] Trimingham, loc.cit., pp. 187-209.

[56] F.O. 1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854.

[57] Plowden, op.cit., p. 74

[58] F.O.1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854.

in Gurageland and in the adjacent countries[59] that the Gurage people "repeatedly entreated" the king of Shoa, a neighboring country, to take possession of their country. But, says Krapf,

> he has refused the invitation, because, according to his own avowal, he would be deprived of the supply of slaves from that quarter; for in a country belonging to him he would be obliged to prohibit the making of slaves, though he and the Shoans cannot do without them.[60]

The great arc extending along the Sudan-Abyssinian marchland from Gallabat (al-Qallabat) to the neighborhood of Massawa was a no-man's land where dwelt a fair number of people who seem to have been at constant odds with their neighbors.[61] One of these peoples was the Bazen, who formed neither a nation nor a confederacy, but were merely "une agglomération de villages gouvernés par les vieillards, chaque village gardant son indépendance."[62] This lack of unity exposed the Bazen to the attacks of their neighbors, "qui les réduisent en servitude quand

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[59]Shack, op.cit., p. 143

[60]Krapf, op.cit., p. 46.

[61]F.O. 1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854.

[62]Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 42.

ils ne les détruisent pas systématiquement."[63] They were, as Samuel Baker noted on his visit to the area in 1861, "a ferocious race, whose hand was against every man, and who in return were the enemies of all by whom they were surrounded--..."[64] The tribes of Memsa, Senheit, Hallal, Maira, and Habab, Plowden says, "are all robbers beyond their own district, and of course are constantly at war with each other..."[65] One student of the region's history has pointed out that the number of the slaves brought for sale at Massawa in the 1840s seemed to vary according to the intensity of the warfare being carried on in various parts of Ethiopia.[66]

We have seen that warfare, and tension and ill-will generally, were commonplace among the borderland peoples, and that they resulted in the enslavement of considerable numbers of people. But they had further consequences in this direction, in that they must have greatly facilitated

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[63] Ibid.

[64] Samuel W. Baker, The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia, and the Sword Hunters of the Hamran Arabs (London: Macmillan, 1874), pp. 55-6

[65] F.O. 1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854.

[66] Douin, loc.cit., p. 263

the forays made against them by the armies of the Sudan States and the nomad tribes under their (often more or less nominal[67]) authority.

Burckhardt learned that the territory of the Funj king of Sennar extended to a point about ten days' journey to the south of the town of Sennar.[68] Beyond this point lived Bedouin tribes who made raids for slaves upon their pagan neighbors living in the mountains to the south.[69] This practice continued into the Egyptian period, when, for example, chiefs of the Rufa'a Abu Ruf tribe undertook annual raids for slaves, probably in the same area.[70] They and other tribes to the east and west of the Blue Nile were encouraged in this practice to some extent by the custom of some of the Governors-General of requiring payment of taxes

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[67]Browne, op.cit., p. 300, Pallme, op.cit. p. 118.

[68]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 311.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Richard Hill (ed. and transl.), "An Unpublished Chronicle of the Sudan 1822-41 (extracts)," Sudan Notes and Records, XXXVII (1956), p. 15. (Hereafter cited as "Chronicle".)

in slaves, at least in part.[71] This mode of taxation was thought by one European observer to have stimulated the slave-raiding activity of these tribes.[72]

Again the tribal group known as the Baggara,[73] who dwelt in the southern reaches of Darfur and Kordofan, lived in a state of continual warfare, among themselves and with the pagan tribes living in the Nuba hills.[74] As Pallme tells us, their horses, steeds of "remarkable fleetness," were of "the utmost service to them" in these conflicts, "especially in capturing slaves."[75] It was the Baggara, according to this same traveller, who furnished "the greater part" of the slaves who were sold to the jallabs, or slave-merchants, of Kordofan.[76]

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[71] Ibid., p. 15; Lejean, "La Traite des esclaves," p. 899.

[72] Lejean, loc.cit.

[73] More properly, Baqqara, 'cattlemen,' 'breeders of cattle'; from the Arabic baqar, 'cattle.'

[74] Pallme, op.cit., pp. 119, 293.

[75] Ibid., pp. 232-3.

[76] Ibid., p. 293.

In the case of the Baggara, we see again how the taxation practices of the Egyptian Government may have encouraged slave-raiding by some of the tribes which were compelled to pay tribute to it. The sections of the tribe who lived to the south of El Obeid were required to pay tribute to the Governor of Kordofan to the amount of "about twelve thousand oxen, a little gold, and a few slaves..."[77] Now cattle are and have long been the mainstay of the life of this people,[78] and they were reluctant to surrender any of them to the Government.[79] So an arrangement was made between the tribesmen and various slave-merchants in the neighborhood, whereby the latter bought from the Government tribute-collecting expeditions (for in the Egyptian Sudan as in other Sudanese States, the tribes rarely if ever paid the tribute required of them except upon visitation by a body of Government troops[80]) the cattle which had been taken in tribute, and sold them back to the tribesmen, in return for

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[77] Ibid., p. 118

[78] Ian Cunnison, Baggara Arabs: Power and the Lineage in a Sudanese Nomad Tribe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 28-39.

[79] Pallme, op.cit., p. 118

[80] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 115

payment in slaves.[81] Thus provided with a means of retaining their cattle, the Baggara delivered themselves with great vigor to the hunting of negroes which could then be exchanged for them.[82]

Slave-raiding was a preoccupation not only of the tribes under the suzerainty of the Sudanese princes, but of those princes themselves, or of their subjects. This was true along a great extent of the geographical Sudan, western as well as eastern. Tunisi points out that the geographical Sudan was composed of a cordon of Muslim States extending in an almost direct east-west line, from Sennar in the east to Dar Mella or the Fulani Empire in the west, and that confronting each of these States on its southern borders was an area occupied by a number, generally considerable, of pagan tribes.[83] It was among these pagan tribes, he said, that the Sudanese went to take their slaves.[84]

P.S. Girard tells us that the slaves brought from Sennar to Egypt about 1800 "sont vendus dans le pays

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[81]Henri Dehérain, Le Soudan égyptien sous Mehemet Ali (Paris: Georges Carré et C. Naud, Éditeurs, 1898), p. 190. (hereafter cited as Le Soudan égyptien).

[82]Ibid.

[83]Tunisi, Ouaday, pp. 282, 284-5

[84]Ibid., p. 285.

de Sennar par des soldats qui les ont faits prisonniers à la guerre..."[85] The wars undertaken by the ruler of Sennar, he says, "n'ont ordinairement d'autre motif que celui de se procurer cette espèce de butin: une moitié des esclaves appartient au roi; l'autre moitié, aux soldats qui ont fait l'expédition."[86] According to Mercure J. Lapanouse, another savant who came with Napoleon to Egypt, these expeditions took place annually.[87] The Funj ruler engaged in commerce,[88] and we may reasonably suppose that some at least of the slaves allotted to him may have been disposed of in trade. Others were enrolled in the army, of which slaves formed the greatest part.[89]

Browne mentions that expeditions in quest of slaves were undertaken "by the people of Fûr [Darfur] and its

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[85]Girard, Description de l'Égypte, XVII, 293.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Mercure J. Lapanouse, "Mémoire sur les caravanes venant du royaume de Sennaar,,..", Mémoires sur l'Égypte (Paris: Didot, an XI), p. 97.

[88]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 316

[89]H.A.Macmichael, The Tribes of Northern and Central Kordofan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), p.12 (Hereafter cited as Tribes).

neighbourhood ,.." expeditions which penetrated into territory "often forty or more days to the Southward."[90] Tunisi gives a description of a typical expedition and of the circumstances attendant upon it. Any male subject of the Sultan of Darfur, he said, might apply to the sovereign for permission to lead a campaign into Dar Fertit. One to whom such permission had been granted bought from the merchants of the country the provisions necessary to equip the expedition, these things being bought on credit. At the same time, he enrolled volunteers for the campaign, who were usually young men of families in humble circumstances.

Once having passed the southern frontier of Darfur, the commander of the expedition assumed the title of 'sultan'. This was in token of the absolute and sovereign authority with which he was now vested over his soldiers, and which he retained until he had re-crossed the frontier at the close of the campaign. The 'sultan' sought to lead his army asfar into Dar Fertit as he possibly could. (According to Heinrich Barth, one such expedition in 1834

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[90]Browne, op.cit., preface, p. xv.

reached as far south as the river Welle.[91]) When he felt the campaign's progress had reached its limit, he ordered a halt, and the apportioning out among the members of the army of the slaves captured during the march. To the 'sultan' belonged as a matter of custom all slaves taken without resistance, and all those given to him as presents by those tribal chiefs who acknowledged the Sultan of Darfur as suzerain. He also received a certain proportion, from one-third to one-half, of the slaves captured by each of his soldiers. With these slaves, the commander was able to pay the debts incurred with the merchants who equipped the expedition, and to make suitable presents to the Sultan and to those grandees of the Court by whose influence he had been granted permission to undertake the expedition. The remainder belonged to him; if the campaign had been fruitful, this might amount to as many as a hundred slaves. Slaves seem to have been the paramount object of these forays, for Tunisi does not mention that any other form of booty was taken.[92]

Something of the impact which these expeditions

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[91]Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 55, citing Barth (no place cited).

[92]Tunisi, Ouaday, pp. 467-78

had upon the life of Darfur may be judged by the fact that large numbers of such expeditions went out each year; according to Tunisi, some sixty to seventy were undertaken annually,[93] thus providing Darfur with a considerable quantity of slaves.[94] He points out that if all the slaves captured in the first place arrived in Darfur, the country would soon have been encumbered with them. But many died en route from their place of capture, some of exhaustion, others of illness occasioned by change of diet; in some years, epidemics such as dysentery might carry off most of the slaves being marched from Fertit to Darfur.[95] Some might die of simple fear, for, Tunisi says, the slaves dreaded the thought of being taken to Egypt or other northern countries, because they commonly believed that white people were given to cannibalism.[96]

From the foregoing, it is clear that in undertaking a program of systematic raiding for slaves, as it

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[93] Ibid., p. 480

[94] Ibid., p. 483

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid., p. 484.

did, the regime established in the Sudan by the viceroy of Egypt was carrying on a tradition already well-established in the area. However, the Egyptian regime may be said to have enjoyed a number of advantages over the indigenous Sudanese States. Most of the latter were relatively isolated from the greater world outside; the Egyptian Sudan, through its proximity to the Nile and to Egypt, was bound much more closely to the Mediterranean world than was perhaps any other Sudanese region. Moreover, because it was based upon Egypt, the Government of the Egyptian Sudan could fall back, if need be, upon resources not available to other Sudanese rulers. But what was perhaps its greatest single advantage was its possession of firearms. These had not been unknown in the Funj kingdom before 1821, but they were quite rare and were greatly feared.[97] It was, at least in part, due to their superiority of weapons that the rather small forces sent into the Sudan by Muhammad 'Ali Pasha should have been able to subdue the vast area extending from Nubia to Fazughli and westward to Kordofan.[98] And if firearms

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[97]Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 286-7

[98]Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 9, 12

were little used in the Sudan,[99] they were not used at all by the pagan peoples of the borderlands.[100] The Funj and the people of Darfur who had raided among the negro tribes must therefore have been on something like equal terms with their adversaries in respect of arms. But the troops of the Pasha of Egypt had not only muskets, but cannon, with which they were better able to impose themselves on the borderland peoples than had been the indigenous Sudanese.

It has already been described how tribute was levied by the Egyptian Government upon those tribes which it could compel to acknowledge its suzerainty. But the slaves and other contributions which were received from this source seem not to have sufficed for the Government's requirements. It was therefore felt necessary to make raiding expeditions into the borderland territories beyond Egyptian sway. These raiding expeditions, which were commonly known as ghazawat (sing. ghazwa, a word which appears in European accounts as 'gasua,' gazzua,' 'razzia,' and the like[101]), were undertaken to obtain booty, one

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[99] Richard Lepsius, Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia and the Peninsula of Sinai (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853), p. 174.

[100] Cf. Pallme, op.cit., p. 314, and Schweinfurth, op. cit., I, 18, and passim.

[101] Bowring, op.cit., p. 83; Pallme, op.cit., p. 307.

of the most important forms of which was slaves, and they came to occupy a place of considerable importance in the Government's revenue arrangements. It may be some justification for these proceedings to point out that the Egyptian Government of the Sudan, like its Anglo-Egyptian successor, was "chronically short of ready cash," and like it, tried after its own fashion to make the Sudan pay its way.[102] From the vantage-point of the present day, the means employed were rather dubious, but they were perfectly acceptable to the mores of that time and place.

The revenues derived by the Sudan Government from these borderland incursions constituted a principal source of income for it;[103] from them too it obtained the great majority, if not all, of the Sudan garrisons' negro troops,[104] to which the defense and security of the country soon came to be mainly entrusted.[105] Great interest therefore was taken in their successful prosecution. It was 'Ali Khurshid Bey (later Pasha), first Governor-General

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[102] Hill, loc.cit., p. 2

[103] Dehérain, Le Soudan égyptien, p. 174

[104] R. Hill, loc.cit., p. 46; Macmichael, Tribes, p.31

[105] R. Hill, loc.cit.

of the Sudan, who first systematically organized them into "a seasonal and well-regulated government activity."[106] The bases for raids into the borderland areas were: (1) Khartoum, from which expeditions were dispatched against the tribes of Dar Funj, the Ethiopian marches, and the White Nile region;[107] (2) El Obeid, from where expeditions went out against the Nuba hills;[108] and, after the Egyptian conquest of Taka in 1840, (3) Kasala, from whence forays were made against the northern reaches of the Ethiopian marches.[109] 'Ali Khurshid set an example to his subordinates and successors. In 1827, he led a raid against the Dinka, with the help of the Abu Ruf Bedouins; he succeeded in obtaining five hundred Dinka captives who were distributed among his officers at Khartoum.[110] His raid of 1828 had a two-fold objective: "to collect tribute from the Muslim Funj in the mountains of the Blue Nile and to raid for slaves among the pagan Ingassana."[111]

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[106] *Ibid.*, p. 62

[107] Bowring, *op.cit.*, p. 83

[108] *Ibid.*

[109] D.C. Cumming, "The History of Kassala and the Province of Taka," *Sudan Notes and Records*, XX(1937), part 1, pp. 39-41

[110] R. Hill, *loc. cit.*, p. 63

[111] *Ibid.*

At Fazughli, the taxes of the Funj were assessed at 30,000 Maria Theresa dollars;[112] Khurshid "extracted 8,000 dollars and took hostages as a guarantee for the rest." But he was unable to take any slaves among the Ingassana, who fled into the "well-watered gorges of their hills..."[113] In 1830, he raided among the Shilluks, taking 200 captives. In 1832, he again raided for tribute from the Funj, and for slaves from the pagan negroes of the same neighborhood.[114]

We speak of 'raids,' but in fact these expeditions were more like full-scale military campaigns. Ignaz Pallme describes the complement of the corps employed in raids sent out from El Obeid in the late 1830s as consisting

> ordinarily of from one thousand to two thousand... regular troops of infantry; from four hundred to eight hundred Mogghrebeen[115] armed with

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[112] The Maria Theresa dollar was worth about twenty Egyptian piasters, or four English shillings. Cf. Gray, op.cit., p. 128n.

[113] R. Hill, loc. cit., p. 63

[114] Ibid., pp. 63-4

[115] Bedouin tribesmen from the desert regions west of Egypt, loosely denoted Magharba, were used in the Sudan for slave-hunts and other duties. Cf. Macmichael, A History of the Arabs in the Sudan, I, 316-317.

> guns and pistols; from three hundred to one thousand native troops on foot, with shields and spears, each man carrying from three to five javelins... ; and from three hundred to five hundred natives mounted on dromedaries, armed with shield and spear...[116]

This considerable force was also accompanied by from two to four field-pieces.[117] The expedition which set out in January of 1843 for the hills of Dar Funj was similarly formidable, consisting of five battalions of regular infantry, roughly 2,950 men together, with about a thousand Bedouin irregular cavalry, and 6,000 camels, presumably to carry supplies for the campaign. On the march they were joined by 600 negro auxiliaries and "a number of Bedouin."[118]

The importance of these expeditions was reflected no less by the fact that they were very often led by army officers of the highest rank. We have already seen the energy shown by Khurshid Bey in this respect. The provincial

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[116] Pallme, op.cit., p. 309.

[117] Ibid., p. 310.

[118] [Weingartshoper, Leopold] "Account of a Slaving Expedition Made by the Egyptian Troops under Ahmed Pasha, in 1843," sub-inclosure in Aberdeen to Barnett, F.O., no. 90, 23/XII/1843, SP, XXXII, p. 554. (hereafter cited as "Slaving Expedition.").

governors seem to have been hardly less active. In 1850, for example, we find Ilyas Bey, the Governor of Kasala, leading a 'razzia' against the mountain tribes who lived in the northern reaches of the Abyssinian principality of Tigrai,[119] and in 1854 we find his successor, Khusrau Bey, similarly active in the same country.[120] Mustafa Bey, a Governor of Kordofan, led in person at least one foray against the Nuba hills in 1837,[121] while one of his successors, Emin Bey, led an army into the same region in 1843.[122]

These great officers raided not only for the interest of the Government, but for their own as well. Prince Pueckler-Muskau, who visited the Sudan in 1837, describes this raiding activity as being

> so profitable to the governors of these provinces, who at the same time carry on their private trade in the captured slaves, and provide themselves with as many as they want, that it will be extremely difficult for Mehemet Ali totally to prevent it.[123]

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[119] Cumming, loc.cit., p. 39.

[120] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[121] Bowring, op.cit., p. 83.

[122] "Slaving expedition," p. 559.

[123] Pueckler-Muskau, Hermann Ludwig, Prince, Egypt under Mehemet Ali (London: H. Colburn, 1845), II, 246.

Subaltern officers, "petty army commanders," also made raids on their own, although in principle these were unauthorized.[124]

Let us look at these expeditions in more detail. Generally they set out from their bases after the end of the rainy season in October or November, when there would be a relative abundance of water on the road, and returned in the spring, at the beginning of the hot season.[125] The attacks made upon the borderland tribes seem to have followed a frequently-repeated pattern. Upon arriving in the territory of one of these tribes, the commander of the expedition would send a herald to summon the people to provide voluntarily the desired number of slaves; if this summons were complied with, the tribal chief would receive a kind of robe of honor, and his people would be spared further annoyance. Such voluntary submissions, however, appear to have been exceptional.[126] Thereupon the attack was launched. If the tribe dwelt on a hill or mountain, as in many areas they did wherever possible,

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[124]A.E. Robinson, "Ahmed Pasha Abu Udan," Sudan Notes and Records, V (1922), p. 228.

[125]"Slaving Expedition," pp.558-9; Bowring, op. cit., p. 83; Pallme, op.cit., p. 307.

[126]"Slaving Expedition,"p.557; Pallme,op.cit., pp. 310-12.

an attempt might be made to scale the heights. But as the negroes fought with desperate courage, the assaulting forces usually preferred the method of blockade. Such a siege would be maintained until the negroes' supplies had given out and they had fallen prey to hunger and disease, or until the besieged were able to sally out and break up the assaulting forces. This in fact was not so difficult as might be supposed, for the viceroy's Sudanese troops were often deficient in discipline and competence in the use of their superior weapons.[127] But the troops were frequently successful in taking a negro settlement; their successes were sometimes followed by scenes of carnage, we are told.[128]

The number of slaves taken by an expedition varied widely according to the circumstances, as we might expect. Arthur Holroyd, visiting the Sudan in 1837, reported that the Governor of Kordofan obtained more than 2,000 in the 1836-37 season.[129] Ten years earlier, 'Ali Khurshid took

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[127]"Slaving Expedition,"pp.555, 557; Pallme, op. cit., pp. 313-18

[128]"Slaving Expedition," p. 556; Pallme, op.cit., p. 336.

[129]Bowring, op.cit., p. 83

500 Dinka captives, as we have noticed; in his campaign of 1830 against the Shilluks, again, he took only about 200. It is recorded of Ahmad Pasha Abu Widan, a subsequent Governor-General (who had himself been originally a Circassian slave, one of a number of his people captured in a slave-raid[130]), that after the expedition of 1843 into Dar Funj, he was "but little satisfied with the result of the campaign, the gross number of slaves being only 1875; whilst ... Emiu [sic; Emin] Bey, who had just at the same moment returned from a similar expedition into the country of the Nuba Negroes, ... had captured upwards of 5000."[131] The information presently at hand is, however, insufficient to give any kind of average number of slaves taken over a period of years in any single area, or in the Sudan as a whole, by these forays.

As was the case with the slaves captured in Fertit, a certain amount of hardship was experienced by the newly-captured slaves on their march from the places where they

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[130]Robinson, loc. cit., p. 227

[131]"Slaving Expedition", pp. 558-9

had been seized to the bases of the expeditions. For in order to prevent the adult males and the more robust females from escaping, they were secured in the following manner. The head of a slave was placed between the forked end of a pole whose length was from six to eight feet, and whose thickness was that of a man's arm. The fork was then closed with strips of fresh animal hide, so that the captive might not withdraw his head. Indeed, so closely wedged, on some occasions, was the slave's head between the two prongs of the fork that in the course of the march, the skin of his neck was chafed to the extent that infection developed. The other end of the pole was borne on the shoulder of the slave in front, or it might be tied to the saddle of a cavalryman.[132] Boys from ten to sixteen years of age, unable of course to bear the weight of the sheba, for so this contrivance was called, were secured by binding the wrists of two of them together.[133] The smaller children and the old slaves were led along usually lightly fettered.[134] In other respects, too, the

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[132] Ibid., p. 556; Pallme, op.cit., pp. 321-2

[133] Pallme, op.cit., p. 321

[134] Ibid., p. 322; "Slaving Expedition," p. 556.

condition of the slaves on this march was not an easy one. Their food consisted of millet or sorghum bread, washed down with water. At night, they often suffered from the cold, since they generally wore no clothes and were not always provided by their captors with sufficient fuel for a fire. If our sources can be relied upon, the slaves were frequently mistreated, sometimes brutally, by the soldiers who had charge of them.[135] Pallme estimated that about one in ten of the slaves captured died during the march from the Nuba hills to El Obeid.[136] Dr. John Bowring, who travelled in Egypt in 1837 and 1838, suggests a rather higher figure. He writes that "there is so much of ill-usage and brutality that I have been assured no less than 30 per cent perish in the first 10 days after their seizure."[137]

The slaves who survived were, in general, disposed of in three ways. The young and fit males among them were enrolled in the army.[138] The rest were either apportioned out among the officers and soldiers and the civilian

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[135] Pallme, op.cit., pp. 321-4; "Slaving Expedition," pp. 556, 558.

[136] Pallme, op. cit., p. 324.

[137] Bowring, op.cit., p. 84.

[138] R. Hill, "Chronicle," p. 12.

employees of the Government in lieu of pay,[139] or sold for the account of the Government itself directly on the open market.[140] A description of the way the slaves were apportioned out among the troops is given by Arthur Holroyd. He was visiting El Obeid at the moment when the Governor of Kordofan, Mustafa Bey, returned from his annual raid into the Nuba country. Holroyd describes how he found the Bey

> in the court before the divan, arranging between 300 and 400 slaves, part of the produce of his expedition, for the purpose of distributing them to the soldiers in lieu of pay. These slaves were arranged according to size and sex. In one division were placed the old and infirm women, the pregnant females, and young girls; in a second, boys about the age of from 8 to 12 years; in a third, children from 4 to 8 years old; and in a fourth, infants from 1½ to 4 years old. If they could be said to have any pretensions to beauty or utility, the women and girls were also placed according to their appearance,- but the females were the refuse of their sex, the handsome having been previously disposed of by sale for the harems... The disposition was made according to the military rank of the individual, and he was compelled to receive one-half of his arrears in human flesh, and the other half in money.[141]

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[139]Lejean, "La Traite des esclaves," p. 899.

[140]De Cadalvène et de Breuvéry, op.cit., II, 236; Hill, "Chronicle," pp. 4, 12.

[141]Bowring, op.cit., pp. 83-4

Holroyd remarks:

> Independent of the cruelty of this method of paying the troops, a very great injustice is also practised upon them. A slave, for instance, is given by the government instead of 300 or 350 piastres, which when brought to sale will not realize more than one-half or two-thirds of that sum; and thus the account of the soldier with the paymaster is made to appear considerably more than he actually receives. In other parts of Soudan, the troops are paid in part with coarse cotton manufactured in the country, but with the same degree of injustice.[142]

The means of enslavement which we have discussed up to this point may be said to have been 'traditional,' in the sense that they prevailed everywhere and had been carried on, probably, for a very long time. The taking of slaves in the lands of the Upper Nile, which will now be discussed, was different in at least two respects. First, unlike all the other regions discussed, the basins of the Bahr al-Ghazal and the Bahr al-Jabal had been virtually sealed off from the outside world until the Egyptian expeditions of 1839, 1840, and 1841.[143] Thus, while the tribesmen of these districts enslaved one another,[144] there were no slaves exported from those regions.[145] Second, the large-scale slave-trading activity there was inaugurated

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[142] Ibid., p. 84.

[143] Gray, op.cit., pp. 8-10.

[144] Baker, Ismailia, II, 209.

[145] Gray, op.cit., p. 10.

by the actions of traders and their servants who went into the southern regions originally to trade, not in slaves, but in ivory.

We have already mentioned the expeditions sent by Muhammad 'Ali Pasha to explore the upper reaches of the Nile, and what results he anticipated from them.[146] But after the resolution of the Syrian crisis in 1841, the will of the viceroy seemed to flag; he no longer devoted that close attention to the affairs of the Sudan which he had done hitherto,[147] and seemed to have lost interest in his former plans for enterprises on the Upper Nile.[148] His financial resources had in any case been severely tried by his wars in Syria.[149] The death of the Governor-General Ahmad Pasha Abu Widan in 1843 marked the beginning of two decades of administrative stagnation in the Sudan.[150]

A respected historian of the Sudan, writing of the period after the expeditions of 1839-41, has said:

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[146] Cf. supra, pp. 11-12.

[147] Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 82.

[148] Gray, op.cit., p. 20.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Holt, Modern History, p. 59

> The [Sudan] government did not attempt to administer the [Upper Nile areas]; but traders flocked there, each with his band of armed men, and established fortified posts from which they harried the countryside, driving ever deeper inland as the negroes fled from the more accessible areas... Vast regions hitherto untouched, teeming with strong, but defenceless blacks, were thus opened up to the rapacious slave-dealers.[151]

Recent research, notably the investigations of Richard Gray, has shown that this description is probably a considerable oversimplification; the actual course of events seems to have been far more complex. In fact, traders from Khartoum did begin pushing into the southern regions. But their main purpose was ivory, not slaves. Led by a number of enterprising Europeans, trading expeditions ascended the White Nile in search of ivory, for which at this time there was a flourishing market in Europe and North America.[152] For some years, the ivory trade held the center of the stage; such trading in slaves as existed was carried on on a relatively small scale. It was true that

> by 1855 many of the boats which arrived in Khartoum from the White Nile carried from ten to thirty slaves who would possibly

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[151] A.B. Theobald, The Mahdiya: A History of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (London: Longmans, 1951), p. 11.

[152] Gray, op.cit., pp. 28-9.

> fetch about £7 each, and there was little doubt that the European traders connived at these proceedings...[153]

But two things should be borne in mind. First, the profits derived from the sale of these slaves were dwarfed, during this period, by the profits drawn from the ivory trade.[154] Second, in these earlier years the slave-trade on the White Nile was

> almost entirely confined within the traditional pattern of tribal life. The slaves were generally purchased from a friendly tribe by whom they had been captured in the normal course of tribal raids. The demand for slaves was not, at first, an exacerbating factor greatly intensifying these raids.[155]

How then did the slave-trade come to reach the formidable proportions it attained in later years? The root of the matter may have lain in the behavior of the traders and of their servants towards the negroes. While some of the European traders were honorable and humane men,[156] others, "casting off the restraints... [of] European conventional morality,... were determined, often to the

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[153] Ibid., p. 45.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Brun-Rollet, op.cit., p. 291; Gray, op.cit., p. 42.

point of an unscrupulous use of force, to gain their profits."[157] Their conduct was deplored by the Roman Catholic missionaries who founded a number of stations on the Bahr al-Jabal from about 1845 to 1860;[158] and if these missionaries "had any complaint against their fellow men it was ... against the European traders on the river, whose treatment of the negroes was vile."[159]

Under these circumstances, the original friendliness shown the outsiders by the natives[160] gave way to fear, and then to hostility.[161] The traders were consequently forced to devote increasing sums to arms and ammunition to protect themselves and their Sudanese employees from attack, and their profits were thus eroded.[162]

Other developments also tended to wear away their profits. Originally, the commodity in great demand among the negroes was glass beads,[163] for a small quantity

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[157] Gray, loc. cit., p. 29

[158] Ibid., pp.23-26, 38-40, and passim.

[159] R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 162

[160] Cf. supra, p. 11.

[161] Gray, op.cit., pp. 36-37, 40-44.

[162] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 11

[163] Guillaume Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil et le Soudan", Revue des deux mondes, XXXVIII,(1862), p.747 (Hereafter cited as "Le Haut-Nil").

of which, in the beginning, they would exchange a valuable quantity of ivory.[164] But as time passed, an increasing number of traders, attracted by the large profits made by the early traders, came to engage in the ivory trade themselves. The price of ivory, in terms of beads, began to go up.[165] Eventually, the native market for beads was sated, and, such was the simplicity of life of most of the native tribes that there was no other commodity which could economically be brought to the region and exchanged for ivory.[166]

There was, however, something which the traders could obtain in the area of the Upper Nile itself which could be exchanged for ivory. The basis of the economic and social life of many of the negro tribes was cattle, and several European travellers in those regions noted the great value placed by the people of those tribes upon their cows.[167] Those traders whose beads were not wanted

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[164] Gray, op.cit., p. 31

[165] Petherick, Egypt, the Soudan and Central Africa, p. 418; Petherick, Travels, I, 228-9

[166] Gray, op.cit., pp. 48-9

[167] Samuel W. Baker, The Albert Nyanza: Great Basin of the Nile and Explorations of the Nile Sources (London: Macmillan, 1888)(henceforth cited as Albert Nyanza), p. 14; Lejean, loc.cit., p. 743.

could and did accept an invitation from a friendly chief to make a raid on his neighbor's cattle, the booty of which would be an acceptable medium of exchange for ivory or the service of any porters the trader might require.[168]

The evidence seems to indicate that it was the French trader Alphonse de Malzac who took matters in hand between 1854 and his death in 1860 and "initiated the intensive exploitation" of the area of the Bahr al-Jabal[169]. First, he originated the practice of building encampments, protected by fences or palisades of thornbushes, known as zaribas, to serve as fortified bases for his activities in the interior, away from the river.[170] Secondly, he made raids for cattle and slaves an essential part of his business activities.

> [De Malzac] stimulated the existing tribal rivalries and stabilized their shifting antagonisms by forming alliances with certain tribal sections... The chaos of tribal warfare ... was exploited and transformed into the means of extending his power over a vast region. A firm pattern of alliances, subjection and hostility was established.[171]

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[168] Gray, loc. cit.

[169] Gray, loc. cit., p. 47

[170] Ibid.

[171] Ibid., pp. 47-8

Thirdly, although others had from time to time paid their employees in slaves, "it was de Malzac who first systematically exploited this situation."[172] Thus he found he could sharply reduce the costs of maintaining large bodies of armed men.[173] Some of the slaves paid to his men became wives; slave-children were trained in various ways to make themselves useful; other slaves, again, were sold to dealers who took them down the Nile to sell them at large profits.[174] De Malzac's example was followed by many other traders; indeed, had they not done so, the majority of them would probably have been forced out of business.[175]

By 1860, the date of de Malzac's death, it would appear that his system prevailed throughout the regions around the Bahr al-Jabal. Samuel Baker, who travelled from Khartoum to the headwaters of the Bahr al-Jabal, the Albert Nyanza, from 1863 to 1865, witnessed the activities

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[172] Ibid., pp. 51-2.

[173] Ibid., p. 51.

[174] Ibid., p. 52.

[175] Ibid.

of these ivory- and slave-traders. He describes the proceedings of a typical example of one of them. According to Baker, a trader, engaging from 100 to 300 men whom he provides with arms and ammunition, and buying several hundred pounds of glass beads, leaves with his followers from Khartoum about the month of December. Arriving at a landing-place on the upper reaches of the Nile, the party disembark and march into the interior to meet some native chief,"with whom they establish an intimacy." An agreement is reached under which the trader's party is to attack the village of a neighboring tribe. This is done; the adult males of the village attacked are shot or driven off, while the women and children, together with the cattle and any ivory to be found in the village, are taken to the camp of the trader's negro ally. There the cattle, much coveted by the chief, are exchanged for ivory, "a tusk for a cow, according to size -- a profitable business, as the cows have cost nothing."[177] The slaves, Baker says,

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[176] Baker, Albert Nyanza, pp. 12-14.

[177] Ibid., p. 14.

belonged to the trader. They were put up to public auction among the men, who bought what they needed, "the amount being ... reckoned against their wages."[178] He added:

> A good season for a party of a hundred and fifty men should produce about two hundred cantars (20,000 lbs.) of ivory, valued at Khartoum at £4,000. The men being paid in slaves, the wages should be nil, and there should be a surplus of four or five hundred slaves for the trader's own profit -- worth on an average five to six pounds each.[179]

The ivory and slaves were taken down the Nile in the trader's boats, Baker said, the slaves being landed at points within a few days' travel of Khartoum to avoid open violation of the prohibition then in force against the importing of slaves into Egyptian territory,[180] and the ivory being landed at Khartoum. Meanwhile, some of the trader's armed men remained behind. While awaiting their employer's return in the following season, they formed a settlement in the country, which served as a base for further incursions of a similar kind.[181] Baker

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[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid., p. 15

[180] Cf. infra, p. 219.

[181] Baker, loc. cit.

points out, however, that in all this, the negroes were by no means wholly deserving of sympathy, for they did much to bring their misfortunes on themselves. He describes the negroes as being

> worse than vultures, being devoid of harmony even in the same tribe. The chiefs have no real control; and a small district, containing four or five towns, club together and pillage the neighbouring province. It is not surprising that the robber traders of the Nile turn this spirit of discord to their own advantage, and league themselves with one chief, to rob another, whom they eventually plunder in his turn.[182]

The wages of the followers of the Upper Nile traders were not paid only in slaves, however, but also in other merchandise supplied to them by their employers. It came to pass, therefore, that "the profits of the traders... became dependent not only on the export of ivory but also on their position as traders with their own servants and stations.."[183] A kind of mixed society began to grow up in the pagan regions south of the Sudan, composed of the employees of the traders recruited in the Sudan, on the one hand, and their wives, children, and slaves, on the other.[184] Large numbers of men, vexed by the

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[182] Ibid., p. 223; cf. Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil," p. 747.

[183] Gray, op. cit., p. 51.

[184] Ibid., pp. 46, 113.

oppressive taxation of the Egyptian Government in the Sudan, left their homes and went to work in the south.[185] A very prominent part in this population movement was played by Danagla and other natives of Nubia, and by Ja'liyin. These were the men who, for the greater part, furnished the soldiers and boat-crews, the ivory hunters and the slave-merchants who penetrated into the Upper Nile regions.[186] A prominent part was also played by Baggara tribesmen, as soldiers and hunters of slaves.[187] They carried on the latter activity, Schweinfurth says, in their customary way, "with sword and lance, disposing of their spoil at the nearest Seribas [zaribas], where their activity was much appreciated."[188]

But while Sudanese were penetrating in increasing numbers to the southern regions, the Europeans, who had played such an active role in earlier years, were finding it increasingly hard to carry on. For reasons which will

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[185] James Hamilton, Sinai, the Hedjaz, and Soudan: Wanderings Around the Birth-Place of the Prophet, and Across the Aethiopian Desert, from Sawakin to Chartum (London: Richard Bentley, 1857), pp. 381-3; G.B. Hill, op.cit., 281-3

[186] Lejean, loc. cit., p. 742; Gray, op.cit., p. 123 and passim; Holt, Mahdist State, p. 10

[187] Baker, Albert Nyanza, p. 23

[188] Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 240-1

be discussed further on, the Khedive Isma'il took steps whose effect was to impel the Europeans to sell their properties in the south and to leave. The last European traders left in 1867; thereafter the Upper Nile traders were composed exclusively of Sudanese, Egyptians, and other Ottoman subjects.[189] Of these, the principal was Ahmad al-'Aqqad, a wealthy Egyptian who was able to buy out many of the establishments of his rivals.[190] But despite the commanding commercial position he thus obtained, he encountered the same difficulty as his predecessors. His expenses, particularly those of equipping his boats and employees with arms, were enormous, and threatened to render his operations wholly uneconomical.[191] Inevitably he was impelled to follow the same path as those who had gone before, to supplement his ivory trading by trading in slaves. It was said that Aqqad "aurait dix fois fait faillite sans l'apport de l'esclavage..." "L'expérience," wrote a French merchant settled at the Sudanese town of Berber, "démontre suffisamment que le commerce de l'ivoire

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[189] Cf. infra, pp. 229-30.

[190] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 473.

[191] Ibid.

pratiqué sans ce dernier et intéressant supplément est un commerce ruineux, quelle que soit la quantité que l'on exporte."[192]

If this could be said of a man of 'Aqqad's position, how much more would it apply to men of smaller resources? It certainly applied to the traders who after the discovery of the river route into the Bahr al-Ghazal in 1855, penetrated into that region, and beyond into Dar Fertit, as Schweinfurth found when he visited those regions in the years from 1868 to 1871. There, he says, the various Khartoum traders and trading companies sent out expeditions every year, very extended expeditions, "to the remotest of the Kredy tribes in the west, and even penetrated beyond them to the Niam-niam [Azande tribe] in the south-west ..." in search of ivory.[193] But, he adds,

> it did not take them very long to discover that the annual produce of ivory was altogether inadequate to defray the expenses of equipping and maintaining their armed force. Finding, however, that the region offered every facility for the sale of slaves, they began gradually to introduce this unrighteous

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[192] Ibid., p. 474.

[193] Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 220

> traffic into their commercial dealings, until at length it became, if not absolutely the prime, certainly one of the leading objects of their expeditions...[194]

It was this activity which was to make the Bahr al-Ghazal one of the principal theaters of the slave-trade in North-East Africa after about 1860, far out-distancing the Bahr al-Jabal.[195] This was probably due to the greater proximity of the Bahr al-Ghazal to the traditional slave-raiding area of Dar Fertit, and to Kordofan and Darfur, where the slave-trade had long been well-established, and due also to the fact that the native tribes of the Bahr al-Ghazal were brought under much firmer control by the Sudanese settlers and traders than were those of the Bahr al-Jabal.[196] The consequences of this latter circumstance will be seen in a moment.

We have already seen how considerable numbers of Sudanese were impelled by the heavy taxes laid upon them in their homelands by the Egyptian Government of the Sudan, to emigrate to find work with the ivory enterprises in the south, outside the limits of Egyptian control.

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[194] Ibid.

[195] Gray, op.cit., pp. 65, 107

[196] Ibid., p. 65

In time, a process of colonization began in the south, as a complex system of trading arrangements developed whereby, as we have seen, the profits of the ivory enterprises in Khartoum came to depend as much on their trade with their employees and others settled in their southern trading posts, as upon exports of slaves and ivory to external sources.

Schweinfurth makes some remarks on the organization of the settlements so established in the Bahr al-Ghazal and in Dar Fertit and how it facilitated the taking of slaves. These settlements, called zariba(s), or in Fertit, daym(s),[197] were the properties, in Schweinfurth's day, of eighteen Khartoum traders or trading enterprises.[198] The colonists in these settlements had succeeded in many cases in reducing the negro tribes in their neighborhood to a condition of vassalage.[199] This had been possible, Schweinfurth says, because in most parts of Bahr al-Ghazal there was

> nothing anywhere like an organised commonwealth such as may be found amongst the Dinka... The Nubians, consequently, never had to

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[197] Schweinfurth, loc. cit., p. 212

[198] Ibid., I, 6

[199] Ibid., p. 113.

> contend against the unanimous hostility of a powerful or well-disciplined people, and only in a few isolated places had to encounter much resolute opposition.[200]

Once they had established control over a particular area, Schweinfurth goes on, the settlers enjoyed virtually sovereign rights over the land and the natives who dwelt there. The natives could be required as the occasions arose to till the land for the benefit of the zariba settlers and to furnish porters for the trading and military expeditions organized by the wakil(s), the agents charged with supervising the zaribas for their principals, who were generally resident in Khartoum.[201] These virtually sovereign rights exercised over the surrounding countries and peoples by the settlers under the direction of a particular Khartoum principal were generally recognized by the agents and settlers of other principals, and no Sudanese not in the employ of a particular enterprise might trespass with impunity upon the lands claimed by the enterprise.[202]

The focus of a particular territory was of course the zariba itself, the garrison settlement which served

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[200] Ibid., pp. 112-13

[201] Ibid., I. 7; II, 164

[202] Ibid., I, 201

as a depot for "ivory, ammunition, barter-goods, and means of subsistence..."[203] The nucleus of a zariba community was its garrison. This was generally composed of both Sudanese and native African troops, in roughly equal proportions, the African troops being recruited from among the domestic slaves of the zariba.[204] The remainder of the population was composed of the wives and children of the troops, other employees of the trading principal and their families, the domestic slaves of the settlers, and slave-dealers, numbers of whom were always in residence at the settlement.[205] Schweinfurth estimated that of the whole zariba population of the areas he visited, the domestic slaves were perhaps four-fifths of the total.[206]

The zariba was also the base for the armed expeditions sent out either to trade or to make raids on hostile tribes for cattle, slaves, and other booty such as copper and grain. The cattle were used to buy ivory from other

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[203] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[204] Schweinfurth, op.cit., cited (no page given) in Douin, loc.cit., part 2, note, pp. 126-7.

[205] Ibid.

[206] Ibid.

tribes and to pay the native porters who accompanied the expeditions. Such cattle as remained after payment for ivory and porterage were taken as provision for the zariba, as was the grain, or distributed among the soldiers, who also received the captured slaves as part of their wages. Of these slaves, some were kept at the zariba as servants, while others were sold to slave-merchants.[207]

Not all the slaves taken were seized in raids against hostile tribes. In some cases, they were taken from among the 'domesticated' tribes who dwelt on the lands ruled by a zariba.[208] In some places, the number of slaves taken from this source was large. Schweinfurth states that in the early years of the settlement of the Bahr al-Ghazal,

> boys and girls were carried off by thousands as slaves to distant lands; ... In course of time they [the settlers] came to know that the enduring value of the possessions which they had gained depended mainly on the physical force at their disposal; they began to understand how they must look to the hands of the natives for the cultivation of their corn ... Meanwhile, altogether, the population must have diminished by at least two-thirds.[209]

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[207] Ibid., pp. 134-5

[208] Ibid., p. 128.

[209] Schweinfurth, op.cit., I, 144

The behavior of the settlers towards the negroes generally was characterized, in Schweinfurth's view, by a want of foresight which had had regrettable consequences for them:

> The Nubians [i.e. the Sudanese colonists in the Upper Nile districts], too shortsighted to foresee the consequences of their folly, are accustomed... to commence... depredations upon any land from which they have no longer anything to gain by an amicable trade... In their repeated razzias against the surrounding nations they have been addicted to the practice of carrying off the women and girls, and this has roused the Niam-niam... to the last degree of exasperation. It is this... traffic in human beings that acts as the leading incentive to these... Nubians, and has caused so much detriment... to their possessions. In one part, as amongst the Bongo [one of the 'domesticated' tribes], it has resulted in bringing about an insufficiency of labour, and in another, as amongst the Niam-niam, it has thrown a barricade of hostility across their further progress.[210]

Schweinfurth's writing, it is true, betrays a certain cold dislike of the general mass of settlers whom he observed in the course of his travels. But it seems unlikely that this prejudice was so strong as to vitiate the accuracy of his observations. His dislike was not absolute; he was ready freely to give praise or commendation to individual settlers to whom

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[210] Ibid., II, 189.

he thought it due.[211] His remarks on the slave-raiding and slave-trading carried on in the Bahr al-Ghazal, moreover, do not seem to have been colored by any spirit of sentimental humanitarianism for the pagan natives, in whom his interest was purely anthropological and ethnological. He had a considerable reputation as an acute and accurate observer,[212] with interest in and knowledge of several different fields of science besides botany, his specialty.[213] If fault may be found with his remarks on the slave-trade, it might be in a slight tendency to exaggerate the extent of the trade or the numbers of slaves involved. Aside from this, one feels that his account is essentially accurate.

In consequence of the settlers' slave-taking activity, the dayms and zaribas were filled with large numbers of domestic slaves, most of them females, and with slaves of both sexes engaged in agricultural work.[214] In the next chapter, we shall describe the

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[211] Ibid., I, 200, 192-3.

[212] Gray, op.cit., p. 61; cf. Richard Hill, Biographical Dictionary of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 334.

[213] Schweinfurth, op.cit., passim.

[214] Schweinfurth, op.cit., cited (no page given) in Douin, loc.cit., p. 128.

circumstances in which some of these slaves, as well as other slaves taken in the Sudan's borderlands, found their way into the currents of trade to the Sudan and to Egypt.

CHAPTER III

THE TRANSPORT OF THE SLAVES TO MARKET

In the chapter preceding, we tried to show why and in what manner people were enslaved. In the present chapter, we shall describe the processes by which some of them entered the flow of trade, by which they came to be bought and sold.

Some of those who enslaved others also habitually engaged in the trade in slaves. Such for example were the kings of Gomma, Enarya, and Jimma, Galla states in southern Ethiopia.[1] Such also were the Baggara chiefs, who "carry on a considerable trade in cattle, butter, and slaves, the latter of which they steal from the bordering countries,"[2] as well as the great traders of Dar Fertit and the Bahr al-Ghazal, like Zubayr Rahma Mansur, who in 1870 exported about 1,800 slaves, which Schweinfurth estimated would fetch him about £ 14,000 at Khartoum.[3]

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[1] F.O. 1/8, Plowden to Clarendon, Massawa, 9/VII/1854. This dispatch contains an extensive report on internal conditions in various parts of Ethiopia.

[2] Pallme, op.cit., p. 119.

[3] Schweinfurth, op.cit.(1873 ed., unabridged), cited in Gray, op.cit., p. 69n.

The Rufa'a Abu Ruf Bedouins customarily took the booty of their raids first to the town of Sennar, where the best of the slaves were sold for their own profit. The remainder they brought to Khartoum where they surrendered them to the Egyptian Government. "The Pasha [the Governor-General] chose the best of these for himself," while the rest, if fit males, were taken into the army.[4] We have already noted that the Government of the Egyptian Sudan also made a practice of selling some of the slaves acquired in its razzias.

Generally speaking, however, the slave-trade was in the hands of intermediaries, merchants who were professionally engaged in the trade. These dealers were known in Arabic as jallaba (sing. jallab), a word whose general meaning was 'importer' or 'trader,' especially of livestock, and which was commonly used in the nineteenth century with the more restricted meaning of "one who brings slaves from foreign countries, particularly from African countries, for sale."[5] The jallabs of Egypt and the Sudan no doubt came from many different areas, but

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[4]R. Hill, "Chronicle," p. 15.

[5]Lane, E. W., An Arabic English Lexicon...(London: Williams and Norgate, 1863), Book I, part 1, p. 440.

it appears that the greater number of them were Sudanese, of those groups known as Danagla, Ja'liyin, Baggara and Shaygiyya (Shayqiyya).[6] Their capital investment was minute,[7] and their circumstances of life humble.[8] They were in fact small itinerant merchants, dealing in a wide variety of articles in addition to slaves, such as cotton cloth, soap, mirrors, onions, copper rings, and amulets, as well as larger wares like firearms and even livestock.[9]

These jallabs penetrated to the borderlands between Muslim and pagan, travelling on donkeys or on cattle furnished them by the Baggara.[10] The slaves they acquired there were not to be obtained for money, for, as Pallme says of the pagan tribes of southern Kordofan, they "do not know the value of money, and always accept such goods as they reckon among their wants for their commodities."[11] This was true of all the borderlands beyond the control of

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[6]G.B. Hill, op.cit., p. 372; Schweinfurth, op.cit. II, 194-5; Holt, Mahdist State, p. 31.

[7]Gray, op.cit., p.5.

[8]Bowring, op.cit., p. 84; Combes, op.cit., I, 317; Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., p. 505.

[9]Schweinfurth op.cit., II, 217; Douin L'Empire africain, part 2, p. 347.

[10]Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 209, 241.

[11]Pallme, op.cit., p. 160.

the Egyptian Government.[12] To obtain slaves, therefore, the jallabs brought articles such as those we have mentioned, as well as others like brass and iron wire, grain, and glass beads.[13] This last article came in a wide variety of different colors, and was popular also in the Sudan itself.[14] They were commonly imported from Europe and were very much sought after among the people of the borderlands along the length of the whole geographical Sudan.[15]

Some jallabs were in the habit of frequenting encampments of the Baggara for the purpose of buying slaves from them.[16] The manner in which the jallabs recovered cattle seized from the Baggara as tribute and sold them to the tribesmen in exchange for slaves has been described. We have already noted the presence of jallabs in the settlements of Dar Fertit and the Bahr al-Ghazal. It was also common praetice for merchants trading in the borderlands to conduct their trade under a kind of 'treaty-arrangement,'

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[12] R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 38.

[13] Brun-Rollet, op.cit., pp.98-9; Burckhardt, op. cit., p. 325; Pallme, op.cit., p. 160.

[14] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 303; Tunisi, Voyage au Darfour, pp. 41-2.

[15] Brun-Rollet, op.cit., pp. 116, 230; Plowden, op. cit., p. 132.

[16] Petherick, Egypt, the Soudan and Central Africa, p. 223.

concluded directly with a local chief or ruler. Such an arrangement, not too clearly defined, seems to have existed between the reth (king) of the Shilluks and the merchants from the towns of Kurum and Taqali in Kordofan. These merchants received, in return for payment of some kind, the reth's permission to carry on trade at his seat, at which they were under his protection and where they received food and lodging from him.[17] In trading with some of the Nuba tribes, the jallabs were compelled similarly to purchase the protection of the chiefs, with whom alone they might do business.[18] Comparable arrangements were common among the Gallas and elsewhere in Ethiopia,[19] and in the upper reaches of the Blue Nile, the country known as the Bani Shangul.[20] Sometimes, indeed, merchants from the Sudan went to live among the pagan peoples with whom they habitually traded, settling down more or less permanently, taking local women as wives.[21]

Many jallabs, again, made a practice of accompanying the expeditions sent out both by Governors and

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[17] Brun-Rollet, op.cit., p. 95.

[18] Rüppell, loc.cit., p. 298.

[19] Krapf, op.cit., p.69; Plowden, op.cit., p. 129.

[20] Gray, op.cit., p. 66.

[21] Rüppell, loc.cit., p. 288.

subordinate officers in the Egyptian Sudan, and by the wakils of the settlements in Fertit and the Ghazal to take slaves and other booty. A fair number of slave-dealers followed Ahmad Pasha's expedition into Dar Funj in 1843. After a successful assault on a negro hill or village, those slaves remaining after the army had received its share were apportioned out, while the force was still on foot, to the officers and men in lieu of cash payment of wages. Those who did not wish to be encumbered with slaves would sell them to a jallab.[22] Speaking in 1877 of the raids carried on in the Ghazal, Colonel C.G. Gordon, the Governor-General, says, "With all these expeditions there go a flock of Gallabats [sic; jallaba] -- little petty merchants on donkeys. It is they that take down the slaves from those who make the raids."[23]

We are told that slave-traders, some of them armed, had been coming to Dar Fertit from Darfur and Kordofan every winter, the dry season, long before the opening of the Bahr al-Ghazal by the ivory traders. There,

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[22] "Slaving Expedition," p. 557.

[23] G.B. Hill, op.cit., p. 252.

according to Schweinfurth, "under the sanction of the more influential chieftains," they founded "large establishments (Dehms) to serve as marts or depots for their black merchandise."[24] To do so, they were required by those chieftains to pay "heavy imposts" for the privilege of trading there.[25] When in the late 1850s and early 1860s, the agents of the Khartoum ivory enterprises penetrated into Dar Fertit, along with their armed men, they joined forces with the jallabs they found established there. The dayms of the jallabs were converted into fortified settlements on the pattern of the zaribas of the Bahr al-Ghazal. In the course of time, "these places assumed the appearance of the market towns of the Soudan."[26] The largest and wealthiest of these settlements was that of Zubayr Rahma Mansur, an able and resourceful trader of Ja'li (Ja'liyin) extraction.[27] It was called simply Daym Zubayr, and Schweinfurth describes it as being

> enclosed by a palisade 200 feet square; hundreds of farmsteads and groups of huts were scattered round, extending far away along the

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[24] Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 219.

[25] Ibid., p. 220.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Holt, Mahdist State, p. 10.

> eastern slope of a deep depression... The whole place, in all its leading features, had the aspect of a town in the Soudan, and vividly reminded me of Matamma, the great market town in Gallabat, where all the inland trade with Abyssinia is transacted.[28]

The jallabs of Dar Fertit, says the same traveller,

> by remaining in their old quarters reaped a twofold advantage: in the first place, the large contingents of armed men that were now introduced into the country relieved them from the necessity of maintaining troops of their own; and, secondly, they were exonerated from the heavy imposts that they had been compelled to pay to the native Kredy chieftains, as these were very speedily reduced by the Nubians to the subordinate position of mere sheikhs or local overseers of the natives.[29]

In the course of his travel through Dar Fertit, Schweinfurth visited five of these dayms, which represented "so many centres of the slave-trade in this part of the country."[30]

Under the security established by the northern settlers, "the itinerant Jellaba were soon able to travel freely throughout the Bahr al-Ghazal, effecting a rapid

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[28] Schweinfurth, op.cit., p. 212.

[29] Ibid., p. 220.

[30] Ibid.

extension of the network of overland trade."[31] Many hundreds of them arrived from Darfur and Kordofan; Schweinfurth estimated the number of those who arrived for the winter season of 1870-71 to have been 2,700.[32] In addition to these, there were about a further 2,000 who were permanent residents in the settlements.[33] Many of them travelled up and down the country, stopping at different settlements, "où ils trouvaient d'abondantes provisions de garçonnets et de fillettes..."[34] This flow of slave-traders into the Bahr al-Ghazal by the overland routes increased after the Khedive Isma'il had established a river police on the White Nile to check the slave traffic on the river.[35] The traders were attracted by the large margin of profit which might be made. For, Schweinfurth says, a jallab who in 1870 arrived with an investment of about thirty-five Maria Theresa dollars in the form of a donkey, and, say, cotton goods, could return to the Sudan

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[31]Gray, op.cit., p. 67

[32]Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 213.

[33]Gray, loc. cit.

[34]Schweinfurth, op.cit., cited (no page given) in Douin, loc.cit., p. 128.

[35]Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 213.

with at least four slaves who, if they survived the arduous journey, could fetch $MT 250 at Khartoum.[36] Not all the slaves did survive, and there was always the risk to the trader that his slaves might break free and take flight with his provisions, leaving him to face starvation as well as the loss of his merchandise.[37]

From all these places in or near the borderlands, the slaves acquired by the jallabs were conveyed over a number of routes to Egypt and beyond. In the rest of this chapter, we shall briefly describe these routes, the main slave-markets on them, and some of the conditions which affected the movement of the trade.

The most western of these routes was that which linked Egypt with Dar Fertit by way of Darfur. This road had already been in use for some time at the beginning of the period we are discussing. In the late eighteenth century, according to W.G. Browne, slaves were commonly

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[36] Schweinfurth, op.cit.(unabridged ed.), II, 347, cited in Douin, loc.cit., p. 129. The Maria Theresa dollar ($MT) being worth about four shillings, this would have amounted to about £50 sterling, or $US 120.

[37] Douin, loc.cit., p. 131.

brought to Darfur not only from Fertit, but also from the country of the Azande,[38] a tribe dwelling on either side of the Nile-Congo watershed. According to E.F. Jomard in 1845, the trade in slaves and other commodities had been carried on between Egypt and Darfur for "several centuries."[39] The Muslim Sultanate of Darfur was established probably sometime before the middle of the seventeenth century as we have seen, and it is possible that the Fertit-Darfur-Egypt route was in use as early as this period, and perhaps earlier.

Wherever were the main staging-points in Fertit for merchants travelling to Darfur, it seems highly probable that the first Darfur town they encountered was Hofrat al-Nahas, a settlement devoted to copper-mining[40] and to trade. From the late eighteenth century, at least, until it was annexed to the Egyptian Sudan in 1874, Hofrat al-Nahas was under the nominal sovereignty of Darfur, and was an entrepot between Darfur and Dar Fertit.[41] From

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[38]Browne, op.cit., pp. 297, 310.

[39]Jomard, E.-F., "Preface," Tunisi, Ouaday, p.iii.

[40]Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 224.

[41]Gray, op.cit., pp. 65-6.

Hofrat al-Nahas, this road led northward to Kubayh, the commercial metropolis of Darfur.[42] Dr. Charles Cuny, a French officer in the Egyptian medical service about 1854, calls Kubayh

> la ville des djellabs, c'est-à-dire celle qui leur est assignée pour demeure et la seule place de commerce d'où ils ne peuvent point s'écarter, si ce n'est pour [sic] aller au Facher ou ... Dar-es-Sultan, à la demeure royale quand ils y sont appelés...[43]

It was remarkable that few if any of the people of the town were natives of Darfur; the population, Browne says were "all merchants and foreigners..."[44] of whom "the generality" were engaged in trade with Egypt.[45] Some of these merchants were Egyptians, a few were from Tunis or Tripoli of the West,[46] but "the greater number" came from the riverain lands of the Sudanese Nile.[47] It would appear that the majority of these came from the Nubian

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[42]Browne, op.cit., p. 234.

[43]Dr. Charles Cuny, "Notice sur le Dar-Four, et sur les caravanes qui se rendent de ce pays en Egypte,.." Bulletin de la Societé de Géographie, VIII (August-September, 1854), p. 88.

[44]Browne, op.cit., p. 236.

[45]Ibid., p. 240.

[46]Ibid., p. 241.

[47]Ibid., p. 240.

regions south of Hannak, notably the regions of Dongola and the Mahass, since the general name applied to them was 'Danagla,' and Browne tells us that among themselves they spoke Barabra, or Nubian, although they also knew Arabic.[48] They had emigrated to Darfur to escape the turmoil of their homeland, convulsed by the raiding activity of the warlike Shaygiyya and other tribes and the lack of any government able to maintain order.[49] To this factor, we might add that the people of Nubia had a tradition of emigration. The Nile Valley,

> très resserrée dans la province de Dongola, ne livre à la culture qu'un sol exigu... Désertant ce territoire d'extrême pauvreté, les habitants, Barabra au nord, Danagla au sud ont emigré, les premiers vers l'Egypte où ils louent leurs services, les secondes vers les villes du Soudan et du Darfour.[50]

The Danagla of Darfur were "generally remarked as indefatigable in commerce," and owing to this spirit of enterprise had done much to stimulate commercial activity between Egypt and Darfur.[51] The Danagla established a strong position for themselves in Darfur which lasted far into the nineteenth century. In the 1860s, they were said to have

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[48] Ibid., p. 242.

[49] Ibid., p. 241.

[50] Douin, loc.cit., part 1, pp. 2-3.

[51] Browne, op.cit., pp. 241-2.

> le monopole du trafic dans le Darfour; ils y forment un pouvoir compact, fort, qui s'impose au gouvernement lui-même et lui dicte... mesures d'exclusion qui ont fermé le pays à tout commerce européen.[52]

As foreigners, the jallaba of Kubayh seem to have been unpopular with the people. According to Cuny again, "Les djellabs sont très mal vus par les habitants du Dar-Four; mais le sultan les protège à cause des revenus que lui procure le commerce qu'ils font, soit en exportation soit en importation."[53]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, slaves were said to be an export of considerable importance in Darfur, and one from which the Sultan derived a rather sizeable revenue. Browne describes the Sultan as "chief merchant in the country, [sending] with every caravan to Egypt a great quantity of his own merchandise..."[54] In 1854 too, the Sultan derived revenue from slaves not only by levying duty on the caravans setting out for Egypt, but also by the selling of slaves captured by his subjects in warfare.[55]

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[52]Douin, loc. cit., p. 36.

[53]Cuny, loc. cit., pp. 88-9

[54]Browne, op. cit., p. 301.

[55]Cuny, loc. cit., p. 118.

Kubayh was the southern terminus of the road between Darfur and Egypt, a road known as the Darb al-Arba'in, literally, 'the road of forty (days),' which was the length of time supposed to be required for a caravan to traverse its length.[56] In fact, longer periods of travel were often reported: Browne and Tunisi required about sixty days each, and many caravans required as many as ninety days for the journey.[57] One must therefore assume that the name implied forty marching days, and excluded halts.[58] The annual caravan left Kubayh sometime during the period from November to February, for Asyut, in Upper Egypt.[59] It carried with it, inter alia, a considerable number of slaves. The number of these slaves varied from one year to another, often considerably. According to Browne, the people of Darfur "esteem two thousand camels, and a thousand head of slaves, a large caravan."[60] But

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[56]W. B. K. Shaw, "Darb el Arba'in. The Forty Days' Road," Sudan Notes and Records, XII (1929), p. 65.

[57]Cuny, loc.cit., p. 87.

[58]Shaw, loc.cit.

[59]Henri Dehérain, "Siout (Haut-Égypte): son commerce avec le Soudan," La Nature, XXIV (1896), p.259. (Hereafter cited as "Siout.")

[60]Browne, op.cit., p. 249.

according to Girard a few years later, each caravan generally brought as many as five or six thousand slaves;[61] on occasion, however, it might bring as few as 945, as in 1850.[62]

From Kubayh, the caravan moved across the desert to the oasis of Salima, thence to Shabb, thence to the oasis of Kharja, an outpost of Ottoman Egypt.[63] The caravan was met in the oasis by a kashif, an official dispatched by the Governor of Upper Egypt, on the latter's learning of the imminent arrival of the caravan in Egypt.[64] The kashif was accompanied by a scribe, and it was at Kharja that the amount of customs duty which the caravan merchants were to pay was arrived at.[65] The procedure followed in the reign of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha and afterwards may have been similar to that followed at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

> Suivant l'usage général de l'Orient, où l'on entre en négociation d'affaires par des présens

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[61] Girard, Description de l'Égypte, p. 282.

[62] Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., p. 580.

[63] Browne, op.cit., pp. 184-9; Girard, loc.cit., pp. 281-2.

[64] Cuny, loc. cit., p. 96.

[65] Ibid.; Girard, loc.cit., p. 282.

> mutuels, il était offert, de la part du roi de Dârfour, au kâchef qui venait reconnaître la caravane..., deux esclaves et deux chameaux, et ... au moment même du règlement des droits de douane ... quatre esclaves et quatre chameaux. Le chef de la caravane recevait en retour, du kâchef, de la part du bey gouverneur de la province de Syout, un habillement complet.[66]

These formalities having been completed, the caravan proceeded from Kharja to Asyut, the capital of Upper Egypt, and a city with strong commercial ties with Darfur.[67] According to custom, the merchants did not enter the town itself, but raised their tents in a sandy plain near the town.[68] It was here that the duties agreed upon at Kharja were paid, for the acquitment of which the merchants were obliged to sell some of their goods.[69] They remained at Asyut from two to five months, after which they proceeded to Cairo, stopping on the way at Bani 'Adi, Manfalut, and perhaps other Nile towns, where they engaged in trade.[70]

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[66]Girard, loc. cit.

[67]Cuny, loc.cit., p.97; Dehérain,"Siout,"pp. 259, 261.

[68]Dehérain, loc.cit., p. 259.

[69]Girard, loc.cit.

[70]Ibid., p. 283.

To the east of the road just described was another route, over which goods were transported from the Bahr al-Ghazal and, to some extent, from Dar Fertit. This route, whose earlier staging-point was the town of Talqawna,[71] near the southern edge of the Kordofan steppe, and whose main starting-point in the 1870s was Daym Zubayr,[72] led northwards across the steppe to Shakka. Schweinfurth calls this "an important market-place and rendez-vous for the itinerant slave-dealers..."[73] But that for which it was "notorious" in 1870 and for some years afterwards, was its "being beyond the jurisdiction of Egypt and its arbitrary officials,"[74] who, because of the khedivial bans on the importation of slaves into Egyptian territory after 1854,[75] were "in the habit of extorting a specific sum per head for hush-money on every slave that [was] conveyed into the country..." Thus the traders were enabled "to transact their nefarious business free from the burdensome imposts, and to transmit their living merchandise in whatever direction [might] suit them, all over

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[71] Gray, op.cit., p. 66

[72] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 2, p. 130.

[73] Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 223.

[74] Ibid.; G.B.Hill, op.cit., p. 225 et passim.

[75] Cf. infra, pp. 219-20.

the provinces of the Soudan."[76]

North of Shakka on this route was El Obeid. While the southern reaches of the route were opened only in the early 1850s, when a group of jallabs from Kordofan had settled at Talqawna,[77] El Obeid had carried on trade with Egypt before the conquest of the country by the Defterdar.[78] It was an entrepôt of trade for the peoples living in the southern reaches of Kordofan, as well as for traders from Darfur and even from countries farther west. Pallme tells us that the town "offers many spectacles rendering it interesting to the traveller, the chief of which is the concourse of men from the most distant parts of Africa, even from Timbuctoo, and other negro states as yet totally unknown to Europeans."[79] Danagla merchants played a great part in the commerce of El Obeid, as in that of Kubayh. The Danagla, who were "the most opulent inhabitants of Kordofan," had control of "nearly the whole of the export trade..."[80] They also carried on "the less important home trade with the negroes in the hills, with whom they barter[ed]

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[76]Schweinfurth, loc.cit.

[77]Gray, op.cit., p. 66.

[78]Rüppell, loc.cit.,pp. 169-70

[79]Pallme, op.cit., p. 277.

[80]Ibid., pp. 116-17.

for slaves, ivory, etc."[81]

During the period under discussion, slaves seem to have been an article of paramount importance in the commerce of El Obeid.[82] Slaves were brought to the town not only from the neighboring countries, but "even from Kulla, Banda, Wuanga, Bachermi, Bergu, Pegu, and more distant states [of the geographical Sudan], but not in such large numbers as from the borders [of Kordofan]."[83] Although there was a considerable demand for slaves in Kordofan, where many of those imported were retained, the majority were exported, "in larger or smaller convoys, to Egypt and the Levant."[84] These 'convoys' or caravans travelled from El Obeid to the Nile town of Dabba by way of Simri.[85] At Dabba, the slaves and other merchandise were usually embarked in boats and carried down the river to the town of Dongola. Here a flourishing trade in slaves

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[81] Ibid., p. 117.

[82] Combes, op.cit., II, 50; Pallme, loc.cit., p. 292. Combes calls Kordofan "un vaste entrepôt d'esclaves..."

[83] Pallme, op.cit., p. 293.

[84] Ibid., p. 294. Burckhardt, however, speaking of the Sudan as a whole, believed the number of slaves exported to Egypt, Arabia, and the Barbary States to be "very greatly below" the number retained in the Sudan; op.cit., p. 343.

[85] Rüppell, loc.cit., pp. 200, 266-74.

was carried on; caravans arrived not only from Kordofan, but also from Khartoum, and their merchants were "obliged to dispose of a few head of slaves to pay the duties imposed upon them here."[86] The bazaar of Dongola, Holroyd says,

> is most amply supplied with slaves about the months of May, June, October, and November; in May and June the caravans proceed to Cairo from Senaar and Kartoom; the merchants having purchased from the government or soldiers part of the produce of the Gazzua, and the caravans from Kordofan, which pass the Desert of Simrie to Debbah, do not generally leave until the autumn, as they are in a measure indebted to the periodical rains for a supply of water along this line of road.[87]

From Dongola the traders proceeded along the Nile to Wadi Halfa, moving by land along the west bank to avoid the Third and Second Cataracts. The journey to Wadi Halfa was accomplished in nine or ten days, Holroyd says, and the slaves were made "to walk the whole of the distance, unless under four years of age, and suffering from sickness."[88]

The Bahr al-Ghazal was connected with the Sudan not only by the overland route just described, but also

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[86] Arthur T. Holroyd, "Report of Arthur T. Holroyd, Esq., on Nubia, Soodan, Kordofan, &c.," Appendix E, Bowring, op.cit., p. 204.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

by the water route of the Nile, by which the Bahr al-Jabal region also communicated with the outside world. The various settlements established in the interior, as have been described, by the ivory traders were linked by tracks to landing-places called mashra'(s), from which they were always a distance of some days' journey.[89] The sole mashra' to be found in the Bahr al-Ghazal was known as Mashra' al-Riqq.[90] This was located on a patch of firm ground surrounded by water and marsh, at the end of a kind of cul de sac formed by an arm of the Bahr al-Ghazal river channel.[91] It was situated in the land of the Riqq, a section of the great Dinka tribe, from which fact it derived its name.[92] Not only was it the only suitable landing-place in a large area of permanent marsh and swamp,[93] and easily defended from attack, but the local Riqq tribesmen had shown themselves friendly to the earliest traders from Khartoum, being the first native allies whom the traders had acquired in the Bahr al-Ghazal.[94] Mashra' al-Riqq

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[89] Schweinfurth, op.cit., I, 7.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., pp. 7, 36-7.

[92] Ibid., p. 35.

[93] Gray, op.cit., p. 58.

[94] Schweinfurth, loc.cit.

was the starting-point for expeditions into the interior from the Nile, and the point of embarcation for those returning to Khartoum by river.[95]

The principal mashra's on the Bahr al-Jabal were Shambe, Eliab, Ulibari, and Gondokoro.[96] Of these, Gondokoro, situated at the extreme limit of navigation on the river from the north,[97] was the best known. It was the point at which, owing to the welcoming hospitality of the powerful Bari tribe which dominated the country round, and the apparently good prospects for trade, the earliest expeditions to the area from the Sudan had decided to make the center of their commercial activities.[98] By 1860, Gondokoro had become the focus of the trading and raiding activities of the ivory traders and their armed followers. According to Samuel Baker, it was only occupied for about two months during the year, after which time it was deserted, when the annual boats returned to Khartoum and those remaining departed for the interior.[99]

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[95] Ibid., I, 37; II, 270.

[96] Cf. Gray, op.cit., map, p. 55, and passim; Schweinfurth, II, 276.

[97] Schweinfurth, I, 7.

[98] Gray, op.cit., pp. 8, 34.

[99] Baker, Albert Nyanza, p. 56.

This period of occupation probably occurred between November and March. In November, the traders' vessels, taking advantage of the north winds which began to blow at that time, could leave Khartoum for the Upper Nile.[100] They had however to return to Khartoum by March, before the rainy season began, making all movement on the river extremely difficult.[101] But although empty most of the year, during the period of its occupation Gondokoro was "a sprawling insanitary settlement" with a population of some seven hundred armed men, "most of whom collected numerous wives and servants from the local tribes."[102] It functioned as "the central supply base" of the traders, and the place from which their merchandise, slaves and ivory were sent to Khartoum.[103]

The numbers of slaves sent to the Sudan by river from these two regions seem to have been small compared with the numbers sent by other routes. It was true that even in the 1850s, "many" of the boats which arrived at Khartoum from the Bahr al-Jabal carried from ten to thirty

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[100] Brun-Rollet, op.cit., p. 38.

[101] Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil," p. 744.

[102] Gray, op.cit., p. 57.

[103] Ibid.; Baker, loc.cit., p. 61.

slaves;[104] nevertheless, compared with sources of slaves like the Nuba hills, Dar Funj and other borderland regions which had furnished slaves for some time past, the contribution of the Bahr al-Jabal was "insignificant."[105] This was no less true in the 1870s, both of the Bahr al-Jabal and of the river-route from the Bahr al-Ghazal; one estimate places at roughly 2,000 the number of slaves exported annually from both areas together by river,[106] a figure "completely dwarfed" by the 12-15,000 sent north from the Bahr al-Ghazal via the Kordofan route alone.[107]

The Blue Nile too was a route of some interest to the slave-trade. At or near the very limits of Egyptian rule was the river town of Fazughli. Jallabs from the north, coming up the Blue Nile by boat as far as Roseires (Rusayris), made a practice of coming to Fazughli and to the mountainous region of Bani Shangul (Shanqul), a part of Dar Funj, to barter with Galla tribesmen from the highlands to the east and south-east. The Gallas brought

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[104] Gray, op.cit., p. 45.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid., p. 68n.

[107] Ibid., p. 68.

coffee, horses, gold, ivory and slaves, which they exchanged for glass beads, cloth and, especially, salt.[108] The dealings in slaves, at least, seem to have been quite profitable. For example, a young, attractive Galla girl might be had in Bani Shangul for a quantity of salt worth 150 to 175 Egyptian piasters. Taken down the Blue Nile, she might later be sold at Sennar or Khartoum for 70 to 100 Maria Theresa dollars, that is, about 1,400 to 2,000 piasters.[109]

It is difficult to discover just how extensive the slave-traffic between this region and the Sudan was during the period under discussion. But recently, it was said that as late as the early 1930s, this traffic was still one of the most important activities of the people of Bani Shangul, after their basic agriculture.[110] It is perhaps not without interest to note that in the 1830s, there were many Danagla traders in the country.[111]

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[108] Brun-Rollet, op.cit., p. 311; Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 444.

[109] Douin, loc.cit.

[110] Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 220.

[111] Ibid., p. 219.

A very important route, or complex of routes, was that which linked the slave-sources of Ethiopia with Egypt and the Sudan. In many parts of Ethiopia, there were to be found market-centers where slaves were in considerable supply, such as Fadassi, Enarya and Jimma in the Galla country, or Basso in the province of Gojam.[112] Of these, the most important seem to have been Enarya, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century, and later, Jimma.[113] Enarya, according to Walter Plowden, for several years British Consul at Massawa, was "frequented by traders from Zanzibar and Tajura, from Massowah and Khartoom, from Darfur and Kordofan...," and its slave-trade was in consequence "a great source of revenue..."[114] After about 1860, Jimma eclipsed Enarya in commercial importance, becoming the greatest slave-market in south-western Ethiopia.[115] The slave-trade with Arabia and the Sudan formed a large part of the town's trade.[116]

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[112]Lejean, "La Traite des esclaves," p. 903.

[113]Krapf, op.cit., pp. 65-6; Plowden, op.cit.,p.126.

[114]Plowden, op.cit., p. 128.

[115]Trimingham, loc.cit., p. 203.

[116]Ibid.; Lewis, op.cit., pp. 48-9, 57.

The roads which linked the different market-centers of Ethiopia with one another, and Ethiopia with her external markets, were not easy of passage. The political anarchy of the country had its effect on trade. Merchants had to travel heavily armed to protect themselves against attack by innumerable bodies of armed men at large in the country. Plowden says that the merchants of Abyssinia were accustomed to "perilous encounters," to guard against which they travelled sometimes with a force of several hundred armed guards, so that they might not be molested.[117] There was also the vexation of frequent payment of tolls. Plowden remarks that "when the caravans, having left the dominions of the King of Enarea, on the road for Massowah, enter the territories of the republican Gallas, not only each tribe, but each influential individual ... must be propitiated."[118]

Simplifying matters somewhat, it may be said that the Ethiopian export trade in slaves with Egypt and the Sudan followed two 'streams.' The first of these led to

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[117] Plowden, op.cit., p. 364.

[118] Ibid., p. 129; cf. also p. 308.

one of the ports of the Red Sea, whence the slaves were shipped to Arabia, and thence, many of them, to Egypt. The more important of these ports were Zayla, Tajura, Berbera, Suakin, and Massawa.[119] In the light of the general anarchy in Ethiopia and the widespread propensity to the seizing of slaves there, the slaves shipped through these ports may have come from almost every ethnic group in the region.[120] But three groups seem to have been best represented, viz., Gurage, Abyssinians, and Gallas, the last being perhaps most numerous of the three.[121]

Of the seaports named, perhaps the most important for the slave-trade with Egypt was Massawa. Many of the slaves sent from Tajura, on the Somali coast of the Indian Ocean, were destined for Muscat and the Hadramaut,[122] and it seems probable that this was the case also in respect of those slaves exported from the other two Somali ports

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[119] Burton, op.cit., II, 233; Douin, loc.cit., p. 265.

[120] Cf. Douin, loc.cit., p. 263, for a random list of the various ethnic groups represented among the slaves sold at Massawa in the 1840s.

[121] Burton, op.cit., II, 13n. and 233; Krapf, op. cit., p. 21; Lejean, "La Traite des esclaves," pp. 903-5.

[122] Douin, loc.cit., pp. 265-6.

nearby. Suakin was in the early nineteenth century "one of the first slave-trade markets in Eastern Africa," the equal of Asyut and Massawa.[123] But its commercial role declined during Muhammad 'Ali's reign,[124] and it was only in the 1860s that it regained something like its earlier importance.[125] This seems to have been due mainly to two things: the effect of the measures taken to prevent slaves being imported into Egypt by way of the Nile,[126] and the increased demand for slaves from the Sudan and the Upper Nile in Arabia and the Persian Gulf, owing to the action taken to stop the export of slaves to these areas from East Africa, their major source of supply.[127] But while Suakin's importance varied, that of Massawa appears in general to have retained throughout much the same importance it had in Burckhardt's time.[128] As the chief port of northern Abyssinia and the outlet for the Sudan's

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[123] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 442.

[124] Combes, op.cit., II, 336.

[125] Gray, op.cit., p. 68n.

[126] Ibid., p. 126.

[127] Ibid.; cf. Coupland, op.cit., pp. 212-18.

[128] Thomas E. Marston, Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area 1800-1878 (Hamden: The Shoe String Press, Inc., 1961), pp. 178, 182, 468.

commerce with India,[129] it was the greatest port on the African shore of the Red Sea, a port at which the slave-trade was of considerable importance.[130]

The Red Sea in the nineteenth century was "un foyer actif de la traite [des esclaves] ... [et] la grande voie de communication entre l'Afrique qui produit les esclaves et l'Asie qui les consomme."[131] Arabia, and especially Jedda,[132] provided a great market for African slaves, and Massawa alone in the late 1840s and early 1850s provided Arabia, through Jedda, with large numbers of these every year.[133]

The Hijaz no doubt had 'the pick' of the slaves brought from Africa.[134] But a considerable number were sent from the Hijaz to Egypt.[135] Burckhardt noted that

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[129] Douin, loc.cit., p. 253.

[130] Ibid., pp. 253-4, 263.

[131] Ibid., p. 261.

[132] Hamilton, op.cit., pp. 62-3

[133] Douin, loc.cit., pp. 261, 263.

[134] Burton, op.cit., II, 233.

[135] Ibid.; Hamilton, op.cit., p. 64.

in 1814 the number of Ethiopian slaves sent to Egypt by way of the Sudan was small, partly because the Sudanese chiefs and notables bought up the better ones for themselves.[136] It was in any case cheaper for Egyptian merchants to buy Ethiopian slaves from Jedda.[137]

A considerable fillip was given to this route of the trade when in 1864 the 'Aziziya Misriya Steamship Company began sailings in the Red Sea. The slave-traders were quick to avail themselves of the new convenience to transport their slaves from Jedda to Suez.[138]

The other 'stream' of commerce from Ethiopia to her foreign markets was that which led to Egypt by way of the Sudan. This route started from Gondar, the seat of the Emperor, by way of Wahni to the town of Matamma, center of the small city-state of Gallabat (al-Qallabat).[139]

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[136] Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 310-11.

[137] Ibid., p. 311.

[138] Douin, loc.cit., p. 267. A certain number of slaves were also sent from Massawa to Suez directly; Burton, loc.cit., p. 13n.

[139] Krapf, op.cit., p. 466.

This route, or one running near and parallel to it, had been a commercial highway linking the Sudan with Gondar and Abyssinia since at least the end of the seventeenth century.[140] Gallabat, which maintained a precarious independence as a buffer state on the frontier between Abyssinia and the Sudan,[141] was, in the words of one traveller, "the principal mart for exchanges betwixt Abyssinia and Sennar, and much resorted to by traders from Dar Fungi [Funj] and Fazoghli."[142] The principal commodity in their dealings was slaves, generally Gallas, brought by the Ethiopian slave-dealers here to be sold to the Sudanese jallabs.[143]

From Gallabat, the main road led to Gedaref (al-Qadarif), a less important market. At Gedaref, the road

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[140]Charles-Jacques Poncet, "The Journey of Charles-Jacques Poncet from Cairo into Abyssinia and Back," The Red Sea and Adjacent Countries at the Close of the Seventeenth Century, ed. Sir William Foster (London: the Hakluyt Society, 1949), pp.107-115.

[141]Krapf, op.cit., p. 468.

[142]Hamilton, op.cit., p. 256.

[143]Douin, loc.cit., p. 159.

divided, one branch leading to Kasala, the other to Khartoum.

Soon after its founding in 1825 by Muhammad 'Ali's commander-in-chief in the Sudan, Khartoum was made the seat of the viceroy's civil and military power in the new provinces, and became as well the leading commercial center in the country.[144] A visitor in the mid-nineteenth century describes the excellence of its geographical position in this rather lyrical appreciation:

> Standing at the mouth of the Blue Nile, which flows down from the gold and iron mountains of Abyssinia, and of the White Nile, the only avenue to a dozen Negro kingdoms, rich in ivory and gum, and being nearly equidistant from the conquered provinces of Sennaar, Kordofan, Shendy, and Berber, it speedily outgrew the old Ethiopian cities, and drew to itself the greater part of their wealth and commercial activity. Now it is the metropolis of all the eastern part of Soudan...[145]

The commercial importance of the town was signalized by the presence there of considerable numbers of those indefatigable trading nations, the Ja'liyin and the Danagla.[146] The latter in particular were as important

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[144]Dehérain, Le Soudan égyptien, , p. 141.

[145]Taylor, op.cit., p. 276.

[146]Douin, loc.cit., pp. 7-8.

at Khartoum as they were at El Obeid and Kubayh. We are told that at Khartoum they constituted the majority of the more affluent merchants, even coming, in the 1850s and 1860s, to hold "en quelque sorte le monopole du commerce sédentaire."[147] They may well have held this position in earlier years for they had dominated to a comparable degree the trade of Shendi, a focal point of the trade of the Sudan before the conquest of 1821. "The wholesale trade at Shendy," Burckhardt says, "is principally concluded through the agency of brokers. Most of these are Dongolawy, who seem, in general, to be the most acute and intelligent traders in this part of the country."[148]

But the Danagla were probably not much different from the people of Berber and Shendi generally, whom Burckhardt describes as "a nation of traders in the strictest sense of the word."[149] And just as the slave-trade was "the most important branch of their commerce" at Shendy in 1814,[150] so it was later in Khartoum, where, "comme sur tous les marchés d'Afrique, c'était la vente d'esclaves...

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[147] Ibid., p. 7.

[148] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 298.

[149] Ibid., p. 324.

[150] Ibid.

qui provoquait le plus gros trafic."[151] This estimate receives some confirmation from Holroyd, who noted that "much traffic in slaves is done in the bazaar [at Khartoum]; but besides public sale many are also sold by private contract."[152] Slaves, he adds, "are most abundant after the gazzua and during the commencement of the khareef or rainy season in the months of May, June and July."[153] The economic policies of the viceroy had played a part in stimulating this trade, in Holroyd's view: the viceroy "having monopolized all the exports of Soodan, nothing is now left for the merchant to bring to Cairo except slaves.."[154]

It was not the slave-trade, however, despite its importance, but the trade in ivory which brought about the opening up of the Nilotic regions south of the Sudan. But circumstances were such, as we have seen, that the trade in ivory was to bring that of slaves in its train.

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[151] Dehérain, loc.cit., p. 142.

[152] Holroyd, loc.cit., p. 208. The "greater part" of these were Gallas and Shangallas from the border marches between the Sudan and Abyssinia, and Shilluks and Dinkas from the White Nile; Taylor, op.cit., pp. 389-90.

[153] Holroyd, loc.cit.

[154] Ibid.

Khartoum was not only the starting-point for the expeditions which set out for the Upper Nile,[155] and a market for the slaves and ivory taken in those regions, but the headquarters of many of the Upper Nile traders, where their credit arrangements were made and their expeditions fitted out.[156] The importance of Khartoum to the ivory/slave trade was perhaps suggested by the fact that frequently throughout his book, Schweinfurth refers to the Sudanese settlers he encountered in his travels as 'Khartoomers'.

Merchants travelling from Khartoum to Egypt might use one of two routes. By the western route, they went by boat to Matamma, thence overland across the Bayuda Desert to Ambukol or Marawi, thence by water to Dongola.[157] By the eastern route, they went down by water to Berber, from whence they went by land across the Nubian Desert to Korosko (Kurusku), thence by water to Egypt proper.[158] The movement of trade on these two routes illustrates one of the changes wrought in the commercial life of the Sudan

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[155] Baker, The Albert Nyanza, p. 12.

[156] Baker, loc.cit., pp. 12-13, 15.

[157] Combes, op.cit., II,73; Holroyd, loc.cit, p.208.

[158] Holroyd, loc.cit., p.208; Taylor, op.cit., pp.384-5.

by Muhammad 'Ali's conquest. For before that conquest, a thriving trade had been carried on along the west to east route across the Sudan, from Darfur to Suakin by way of Kordofan and Shendi.[159] Shendi itself, the point of intersection of this route and that extending from Egypt to Sennar and Abyssinia, was estimated by Burckhardt to be "the first commercial town, perhaps, of Africa, south of Egypt, and east of Darfur."[160] But Shendi's prosperity was dealt a mortal blow by the devastation of the Defterdar, and in 1837 it was but a shade of its former self.[161] As for Suakin, a visitor in 1834 found that it had lost most of its old prosperity. The few travellers who continued to follow the west to east route did so only for the pilgrimage journey to Mecca.[162] The greatest part of the Sudan's external trade was now carried on with Egypt by way of the Nile,[163] a situation which continued until the 1860s, when the establishment of steamship services in

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[159] Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 316-20.

[160] Ibid., p. 235.

[161] Holroyd, loc.cit., p. 207.

[162] Combes, loc.cit., II, 336.

[163] R. Hill, Egypt in the Soudan, p. 60.

the Red Sea made the journey from Khartoum to Cairo about a month shorter by sea than by land.[164] By about 1880, the Berber-Suakin-Suez route was carrying a greater volume of trade between the Sudan and Egypt than was that of the Nubian Desert.[165]

A considerable innovation made in the commercial life of the Sudan under Egyptian rule was the introduction by the Egyptians of shipping on the Sudanese Nile. The general anarchy of the last years of Funj rule had prevented long voyages or any considerable trade by river. Burckhardt wrote that in 1814 there was no communication by water between Sennar, Shendi, and Berber, and that boats were only used as ferries. Even these, he said, were very rare; the usual mode of crossing the river was by means of small reed rafts.[166] But for the Egyptians, "the river was a vital means of communication with... the Lower Nile, and when trade expanded under their dominion it was the Nile that carried the bulk of the cargo..."[167] Muhammad 'Ali Pasha told Prince Pueckler-Muskau that there were

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[164] Petherick, Egypt, the Soudan and Central Africa, p.133.

[165] James, op.cit., p. 12.

[166] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 350.

[167] R. Hill, loc.cit., p. 60.

about 6,000 boats plying the Nile, of which about two thousand belonged to him, that is, to the Government.[168] But Government boats were often rented to private persons by the Governors of provinces.[169]

Few slaves were imported into Egypt without having changed masters several times en route, as Burckhardt says, "before they were finally settled in a family."[170] For example, he says,

> those from Fertit are first collected on the borders of that country by petty merchants who deal in Dhourra [durra, Sorghum vulgare, a staple cereal of the Sudan]. These sell them to the traders of Kobbe [Kubayh], who repair to Fertit in small caravans for that purpose. At Kobbe they are bought up by the... Kordofan traders, who transport them to Obeydh..[171]

For it was the practice of the Sudan merchants to "limit their speculations to a single market;" thus, "the Kordofan people who trade to Darfour are different from those who visit Shendy, while... the Egyptians who trade to Shendy only, are different from those who proceed forward to Sennaar;..."[172] This process of passing from one owner to

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[168] Pueckler-Muskau, op.cit., I, 317.

[169] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., II, 171-2.

[170] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 325

[171] Ibid., pp. 325-6

[172] Ibid., p. 326.

another did not end even when the slave had arrived in Egypt.

> Upon his arrival in Upper Egypt [says Burckhardt], he is disposed of either at Esne, Siout, or Cairo. In the first two places, entire loads of slaves are taken off by merchants, who sell them in retail at Cairo, or in the small towns of Upper Egypt, in each of which they stop for a few days, in their passage down the river.[173]

Even at Cairo, the slave was not always "disposed of in the first instance." Burckhardt describes the Wakalat al-Jallaba, for example, one of the chief slave-markets in the city, as

> crowded with pedlars and petty traders, who often bargain with the merchants of Upper Egypt for slaves immediately after their arrival, and content themselves with a small profit for the re-sale... Such is the common lot of the unfortunate slave...[174]

But Egypt was not only itself a market for slaves from the interior of Africa, but also an entrepôt from which they were exported to foreign markets. The principal of these seem to have been the Ottoman provinces in Europe and Asia Minor. Burckhardt again:

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[173] Ibid.

[174] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 326.

> there are merchants from Smyrna and Constantinople residing constantly at Cairo, who deal in nothing but slaves; these persons export them from Alexandria ... [to] their final destination in the northern provinces of Turkey.[175]

Bowring thought that for Turkey, Egypt was, "from the facility of shipments to the various parts of the Ottoman Empire the principal source of supply." The Barbary States, he adds, "have not the same means of communication with inner Africa, nor the same advantages for sending to European and Asiatic Turkey."[176] In 1869,

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[175] Ibid., The provinces of Baghdad and Basra appear to have had a not inconsiderable number of African slaves. The great majority of these in the nineteenth century came either by way of the Hijaz or through the port of Basra, to which city they were transported from Zanzibar and other East African ports. (Burckhardt, op. cit., p. 325) (F.O. 84/1305, Herbert to Clarendon, Baghdad, 26/XI/1869, cited in Douin, L'Empire africain, part 2, pp. 661-2.) In the provinces of geographical Syria, Burckhardt says, "few slaves are kept; those which I have seen are, for the greater part, imported... from Baghdad.." The case was similar much later in the century. Jerusalem received slaves from Egypt over the ancient caravan road, but not more than about a score a year. At Beirut in the same period, the slave trade seems to have been negligible. (Burckhardt, op. cit., p. 325) (F.O. 84/1305. Moore to Clarendon, Jerusalem, 28/X/1869; Elridge to Clarendon, Beirut, 12/X/1869, both cited in Douin, loc. cit., p.660.)

[176] Bowring, op. cit., p. 100.

too, the British Consul at Smyrna wrote that the majority of the African slaves in his consular jurisdiction had been brought by sea on the steamers of the 'Aziziya Misriya Line from Alexandria, though some had also come from the Regency of Tripoli. The slaves brought from Egypt, he said, were generally destined for Constantinople, but many were landed also in various parts of Asia Minor. The only change in this situation from earlier years, he said, was that now the transactions took place rather less openly than before, since the firmans suppressing the importation of slaves from Africa had been issued.[177] A fairly considerable number of slaves was also conveyed from Alexandria to Salonica at the same period.[178]

It must not be supposed that travel on the overland routes was a matter-of-fact affair. Indeed, they always involved hardship, if nothing more, for both the merchants and their slaves. This was perhaps most true in regard to travel through the deserts. Three desert areas

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[177] F.O. 84/1305. Cumberlatch to Clarendon, Smyrna, 24/VIII/1869, cited in Douin, loc.cit., pp. 660-1.

[178] F.O. 84/1305, Wilkinson to Clarendon, Salonica, 11/X/1869, cited in Douin, loc.cit., 659-60.

were traversed by the great trade-routes of the area, viz., the Bayuda, the Atmur or Nubian, and the Libyan Deserts. Of these, the Libyan Desert presented the greatest difficulty to travellers. For, in the words of a geologist well-acquainted with the area, "in point of desolateness, in the absence of animal and vegetable life, there is probably nothing to rival the greater portion of the Libyan Desert, on the west side of the Nile. Its barrenness is aggressive..."[179] A French traveller of the late seventeenth century, who traversed part of the Darb al-Arba'in, describes the Desert in these words:

> Those vast wildernesses, where there is neither to be found bird nor wild beast nor herbs--no, nor so much as a little fly--and where nothing is to be seen but mountains of sand and the carcasses and bones of camels, imprint a certain horrour in the mind, which makes this voyage very tedious and disagreeable.[180]

The worst stretch of the Darb al-Arba'in was the road between the Kharja Oasis and Asyut. This was a stretch of about two hundred kilometers, Beadnell tells us,

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[179] H.J.L. Beadnell, An Egyptian Oasis: an Account of the Oasis of Kharga in the Libyan Desert... (London: John Murray, 1909), p. 1.

[180] Poncet, loc.cit., p. 96.

> with a steep ascent to the plateau at the outset, and thence for a considerable distance over the very worst surfact imaginable--loose aand full of sharp angular blocks and fragments of flint and cherty limestone.. Along most desert routes the dried bones of camels are of fairly frequent occurrence, but on the Derbel Arbain, between Kharga and Assiut, the skeletons of these poor beasts.... must number hundreds and thousands.[181]

Nor were natural hazards alone to be apprehended; there was also the possibility of attack by robbers. This was especially true before Muhammad 'Ali extended his rule over these countries, bothofthe Sudan and of Egypt. Girard and Burckhardt both give graphic accounts of the dangers to travel, in Egypt before 1805, and in the Sudan before 1821.[182] By contrast, Bowring describes matters in 1837 in these terms:

> The security which is now universally established in every part of Egypt... is one of the most remarkable results of the pacha's policy. Before his time, neither on the river, villages [sic], nor open country was there safety for travellers... Now the whole of Egypt, from Nubia to the Mediterranean, is perfectly safe; a robbery by violence is scarcely ever heardof...[183]

This situation in Egypt was matched by exactly similar

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[181] Beadnell, op.cit., pp. 33-4

[182] Burckhardt, op.cit.,pp. 148, 163-4,371-2; Girard, Description de l'Egypte, p. 268.

[183] Bowring, op.cit., p. 123.

conditions in the greater part of the Sudan under the viceroy's rule.[184]

What has been said so far of the hazards of travel has applied to travellers in general. But it might be said that there was another 'hazard' to which the slaves alone were subject -- the behavior of their jallab masters. In part, this was due to the fact that most jallabs were men of straitened circumstances, as we have noticed. For slave-dealing was an uncertain business, financially speaking. A French observer, F.-B. Garnier, who on behalf of the French Government studied the slave-trade in the Egyptian Sudan in the 1860s, noted both the attractions of the trade and its risks:

> Le trafic des esclaves est le genre de commerce qui offre le plus d'attrait aux gens du Soudan... Acheter ici des esclaves, ailleurs les voler et réaliser à leurs dépens de gros benefices, ou bien s'approprier quelques belles filles, faire travailler des nègres, s'entourer d'Abyssins, tel est le rêve qui flatte le plus l'imagination des Soudaniens; mais, à l'exception des traitants du Nil Blanc, fort peu d'entre'eux l'ont realisé, car une sorte de malédiction semble s'attacher

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[184] Combes, op.cit., II, 50; Dehérain, Le Soudan égyptien, pp. 204, 215.

à ceux qui se livrent à cette speculation.[185]

Garnier adds that he had encountered

> nombre de djellabs, qui, après avoir parcouru tous les sentiers du Soudan, finissaient comme ils avaient commencé, par un petit commerce d'épicerie. Les maladies contagieuses que prennent les esclaves et qui les déciment, les fatigues, les privations des longs voyages qu'ils doivent faire avant de passer aux mains du maître qui les gardera, les attaques des coupeurs de grands chemins rendent, en fin de compte, ce commerce plus chanceux que lucratif.[186]

In these circumstances, it is not difficult to see why the impulse of the slave-traders might have been to exercise their ingenuity "not in alleviating their [slaves'] pains, but in devising how to economise their own purses..."[187] Bowring too speaks of "the poverty of the Jellabs, and the insufficiency of the caravans, which are frequently charged with an excessive number of slaves -- an estimate being made of the greatest number which it is possible to preserve with the supply of water that remains...."[188]

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[185] F.-B. Garnier, Rapport de Mission, cited in Douin, Loc.cit., part 1, p. 161.

[186] Ibid.

[187] G.A. Hoskins, Travels in Ethiopia above the Second Cataract of the Nile..(London: Longman, Rees, ... & Longman, 1835), p. 345.

[188] Bowring, op.cit., p. 84.

But the dealers' treatment of their slaves cannot have been merely a question of economics. In the slave-holding regions of the United States before the Civil War, it was the case that generally "the business of trading in human beings was left to men of low character and social standing."[189] So it seems to have been in Egypt, for, as Burckhardt tells us, "... in general, the traffic in slaves, or, as it is often called in Egypt, the trade in human flesh (al-tasabbub fi lahm bani Adam) is by no means thought creditable..."[190] Schweinfurth too says that "Orientals" "look upon the regular slave dealer's calling as the vilest and most degrading of all professions..."[191] The testimony of most of the European observers we have examined does little to contradict the validity of this judgement. There were of course exceptions. André Melly tells of his encounters with parties of slaves, composed mostly of young girls, on their way down to Cairo. Remarking on the gaiety and high spirits of most of them, he wrote that "... one might have thought--

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[189] H.B. Parkes The United States of America: a History (2nd ed. rev.; New York: Alfred Knopf, 1960), p. 207.

[190] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 305.

[191] Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, 271.

what perhaps was not very far from the truth -- that in place of now entering the house of bondage, they had left it behind in their own country." He adds:

> their masters, from all we could learn, are uniformly kind to them; and whenever we encountered a party, we found that the girls were much attached to the head of their caravan.[192]

Bowring too heard of instances of compassion shown by slave merchants for their charges.[193]

But the evidence seems to indicate that these were rather exceptional. Combes remarks that the jallabs with whom he travelled refused to concede their slaves "le titre d'enfants d'Adam."[194] Cuny says that in the eyes of the jallabs of Darfur, slaves "ne sont que des brutes, qu'ils mènent au marché..."[195] Burckhardt writes that

> slaves are considered on the same level with any other kind of merchandize... The word Ras (head) is applied to them as to the brute species; and a man is said to possess ten Ras Raghig [raqiq, slave]..., in the same manner as he would be said to possess fifty Ras Ghanam,

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[192] Melly, op.cit., I, 206.

[193] Bowring, op.cit., p. 84.

[194] Combes, loc.cit., p. 228.

[195] Cuny, loc.cit., p. 100.

or head of sheep...[196]

Another aspect of the traders' character is seen in Burckhardt's remark that female slaves long in the company of slave-traders acquired "the most depraved habits,." Many of the dealers, he says, "engage their female slaves to turn their beauty to profit, which they afterwards share with them." It is "not uncommon," he notes, "to hear of a slave-dealer selling his own children born of Negro women; and instances occur daily of their disposing of female slaves who are pregnant by them; in such cases the future child of course becomes the property of the purchaser."[197]

These attitudes and actions indicate rather a callous meanness or indifference in the generality of the traders, if the opinions cited are any guide, than positive or active cruelty, of which we found very little indication. Burckhardt, in general a severe critic,[198] concedes that "the treatment which the slaves experience from the traders is rather kind than otherwise." But this, he adds, " results not from humanity in the traders, but from an apprehension that under different treatment

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[196] Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 326-7.

[197] Ibid., pp. 336, 337, 335. 336, 337, 335

[198] Ibid., p. 335.

the slave would abscond..."[199] and no doubt from the need to keep them in reasonably good health, especially those most likely to fetch a good price, until they could be sold.[200] Here we should note a difference in the behavior of the jallabs towards their charges, and that of the Government slave-agents towards theirs. Pallme notes that the slaves of the private traders "are always treated with more forebearance than those of the government..."; the former "are compelled to use them more leniently, as the death of each slave entails the loss of a small capital."[201] The agents and soldiers of the Government, not being themselves financially interested in the well-being of the slaves in their charge, "are not very particular about losing several hundred...by positive ill-treatment, or no less blameable neglect."[202]

Everything considered, there is no doubt that the slaves underwent considerable hardship in being conveyed to market. On the overland journey, they were often

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[199] Ibid., pp. 332-3.

[200] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., II, 120.

[201] Pallme, op.cit., p. 293.

[202] Ibid.; cf. Combes, op.cit., II, p. 60; R. Hill, "Chronicle", p. 12.

made to wear the sheba,[203] a contrivance already described. They were often obliged to walk long hours over difficult country, often carrying some article of provision.[204] Although their masters did what they could to keep them in health,[205] they were usually unable, from their own poverty, to provide them with more than scanty rations.[206]

To these physical hardships were added others of a psychological kind. Burckhardt says that the fear of being made eunuchs upon their arrival in Egypt "operates powerfully... upon the minds of the young slaves..."[207] There was also a curious idea held among the slaves and in the negro countries generally, "that the... children of Rif, as the Egyptians are there called, devour the slaves, who are transferred thither for that purpose."[208] Naturally, he

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[203] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 335; Hamilton, op.cit., p. 275.

[204] R. Hill, "Chronicle," p. 12; Cuny, loc.cit., p. 100.

[205] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 333.

[206] Louis Frank, "Mémoire sur le commerce des Nègres au Kaire...," Mémoires sur l'Egypte (Paris: Didot, an IX), pp. 237-8.

[207] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 334.

[208] Ibid., p. 334; cf. Tunisi, Ouaday, p. 484.

points out, "the traders do everything in their power to destroy this belief...," which induces "that horror which the Negroes all entertain of Egypt and of the white people."[209]

It might be thought that travel by boat would have been less taxing to the slaves than the march overland, and this may have been so to a considerable extent; for it was reported that the rate of attrition of slaves travelling by boat was so much less than that of those who travelled by land, that the saving thus incurred more than compensated the jallabs for the extra cost of renting the boats.[210] But there were drawbacks. In some cases the boats were loaded with a far larger number of slaves than considerations of health would have advised. On the White Nile, Schweinfurth encountered two vessels carrying slaves from the Bahr al-Jabal. They carried 800 persons between them, of whom about 600 were slaves; "it may be imagined," he says, "that the most crowded cattle-pens could hardly have been more intolerable than the vessels throughout their voyage."[211] Six years earlier, in 1865,

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[209] Burckhardt, loc. cit.

[210] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., II, 120n - 121n.

[211] Schweinfurth, op.cit., II, p. 276.

the Egyptian Government's slave-trade patrol on the White Nile had seized and brought to Khartoum two slave-carrying vessels containing 850 persons, "packed together like anchovies, the living and the dying festering together, and the dead lying beneath them."[212] In conditions like these, disease could break out easily, and did.[213]

Differing estimates have been made of the rate of mortality among the slaves during the journey to market.[214] Writing of the slaves marched across the Sahara from the central regions of the geographical Sudan to Tripoli and Benghazi, A. Adu Boahen estimates that "it may not be too wide of the mark" to place the rate of mortality for slaves transported by this route at about twenty per cent.[215] Bowring said he doubted if more than two-thirds of the

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[212] Baker, Albert Nyanza, p. 463.

[213] Combes, op.cit., II, 183; Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil", p. 757.

[214] Cf. for example Thomas Fowell Buxton, The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy (London: John Murray, 1840.), pp. 199-201.

[215] A. Adu Boahen, Britain, The Sahara, and the Western Sudan 1788-1861 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 154.

slaves captured in the borderlands finally arrived in Egypt, giving a mortality-rate of about thirty to thirty-five per cent.[216] These figures are given by careful, sober sources, the one a historian, the other an observer on the spot, and although it is not possible to corroborate them, it seems probable that they are as accurate as any figures which might be put forward. On the basis of these figures then, we might say tentatively that the rate of mortality of those slaves transported from the place of procurement to markets in Egypt probably ranged, in general, from twenty to thirty-five per cent of the full number of slaves transported.

A student of Egyptian social history has pointed out that it is "definitely impossible to establish the exact number of slaves in Egypt at any time in the nineteenth century."[217] This certainly applies also to establishing the number of those imported into the country. The most reliable figures available are few, scattered and uncertain; nevertheless, they suggest an outline of

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[216] Bowring, op.cit., p. 100.

[217] Baer, loc.cit., p. 152.

how the volume of trade may have fluctuated. We can put forward this outline as only a tentative guess.

P.S. Girard thought that, on an average, between 5,000 and 6,000 slaves were brought annually from Darfur to Egypt about the year 1800.[218] Burckhardt estimated, on the basis of his observations in 1814, that some 5,000 slaves were sold each year at Shendi. Of these, about 1,500 were taken to Egypt directly; of the rest, about 2,500 were bought by merchants from Suakin. An unspecified number was also sent to Egypt from Massawa and Jedda, he adds.[219] If these figures have any considerable degree of accuracy, we might say it is possible that the number of slaves imported into Egypt each year from the Sudan and Ethiopia, her principal sources of supply, from about 1800 to 1825 varied between 7,000 and 8,000 individuals. Bowring estimated the number imported in the mid-1830s to be between 10,000 and 12,000 annually; these increased numbers may well have reflected the expansion in Sudanese trade generally during the period of Egyptian rule.[220] Gabriel Baer estimates that during the 1840s

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[218] Girard, Description de l'Egypte, p. 282.

[219] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 324.

[220] Bowring, op.cit., p. 100; R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 60.

and 1850s, however, the number of slaves imported declined to about 5,000 a year.[221] But in the 1860s there was a sudden sharp increase which arose indirectly from the civil war being fought (partly on the question of slavery) in the United States. For while the war went on, there was no American cotton in the world market, and during the consequent world shortage, Egyptian cotton-growers were able to profit greatly by their sales of the commodity.[222] There was a wave of prosperity in Egypt, one consequence of which was a considerable rise in the demand for slaves. F. Lafargue, a French merchant settled in Berber, writes of this period:

> Nous avons eu notre petite part de cette masse de numéraire qui a inondé l'Egypte pendant la guerre américaine. Les riches négociants ou cultivateurs de la Haute-Egypte apportèrent [au Soudan] des métaux précieux et reçurent en échange des esclaves et du bétail... [223]

He estimates that in the course of three consecutive years, 50,000 negro slaves and 30,000 'Abyssinians' had been sold

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[221] Baer, loc.cit.

[222] R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 115.

[223] France. Ministère des Affaires étrangères. Correspondance consulaire, Alexandria, 1867-68; lettre de Lafargue, 11/VII/1867, quoted in Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 139.

in response to this demand,[224] or an average of 27,000 slaves a year.

After the American war ended in 1865, American cotton began returning to world markets, forcing down cotton prices and thus, eventually no doubt, the demand for slaves in Egypt. In 1869, the British Consul at Jedda wrote that there had lately been a great decline in the numbers of slaves imported into the Hijaz, a decline he attributed principally to the decreasing demand for slaves in Egypt.[225] By 1878, imports of slaves into Egypt may have declined to only a few hundred a year, due in part to the increasingly rigorous measures taken by the Egyptian Government to repress the trade.[226]

The governing authorities of Egypt and the Egyptian Sudan derived a certain revenue in the form of customs-dues and market-taxes, levied on the sales of slaves.

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[224] Ibid.

[225] F.O. 84/1305. Raby to Clarendon, Jedda, 10/XII/1869, cited in Douin, loc.cit., part 2, p. 669.

[226] Baer, loc.cit.

Before the conquest of 1821, a variety of charges were levied, often in a capricious fashion, by the various petty rulers of the Sudanese Nile, from Dongola to Sennar,[227] for despite their theoretical subjection to the Funj king, these small meks did more or less as they pleased in practice. Nor was there much improvement in the situation for some time after the conquest; according to Richard Hill, the growth of a regulated customs system was slow.

> As early as 1825 there was a taxing station at the junction of the two Niles where dues were paid in goods from Kordofan via the White Nile. Other posts were situated at al-Matamma and Berber. No fixed tariff, but rather the whim of the local superintendants, set the dues.[228]

Tariff-schedules were later introduced, but

> merchants complained that the dues were exorbitant; separate sums were paid at each of the chain of customs houses until the arrival of the goods at... Cairo where the final impost was charged.[229]

Even as late as the 1860s, the collection of customs in the Sudan was erratic; complaints made by merchants to the

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[227] Burckhardt, op. cit., pp. 236-7, 260, 279.

[228] R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp. 41-2

[229] Ibid., p. 42.

Government at Cairo seem often to have been ineffectual, since the local authorities in the Sudan felt able to ignore, on occasion, instructions sent to them from Cairo.[230] Another thing which tended to confuse matters was the fact that taxes could be paid in the Sudan either in currency, that is, in Egyptian piasters or in Maria Theresa dollars, (widely used in the Sudan, as we have seen), or in kind, as in cattle or slaves.[231] Under these circumstances, we shall simply set down such facts as are available to us.

De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, who visited Egypt and the Sudan in 1830 give the following list of taxes levied on slaves in a number of towns. At El Obeid, a tax of 45 piasters was levied upon the buyer of a slave, and one of 30 piasters upon the seller; at Dongola, a tax of 15 piasters per slave was levied; at Darraw, 34 piasters; and at Old Cairo, 11½ piasters per slave.[232] These figures are confirmed by Holroyd (1837), who adds the following information: at Khartoum, the duty was "for

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[230] Douin, loc.cit., part 1, pp. 169-70

[231] R. Hill, loc.cit., pp. 38, 40.

[232] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., note, pp. 234-5.

a very pretty black or Abyssinian, 60 piasters; for ordinary slaves, 45 piasters." If a slave were brought to Khartoum from El Obeid, and had paid the tax at the latter place, an additional tax of 25 piasters was to be paid for him, unless he were in transit, in which case no tax was levied. Further, for those slaves taken from Khartoum to Egypt by way of the Nubian Desert, no tax need be paid at Berber or Matamma (on the Nile). If however any slaves were sold in these two places, they were taxed at 25 piasters apiece. At Abu Hamad, a tax of 1½ piaster was paid for each slave, while at Asyut, slaves from Darfur were taxed at 25 piasters each. Holroyd tells us that the duty levied upon eunuchs was the same as that upon other slaves. All the taxes described, he adds, were "generally paid by the vendor."[233]

Our information as to the revenue derived from these dues is sparse. We learn from Bowring that the revenues of the viceroy from the taxes levied upon slaves did not exceed £ 10,000 or £ 12,000 a year.[234] According

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[233]Holroyd, loc.cit., pp. 209-10.

[234]Bowring, p. 85.

to Escayrac de Lauture, Muhammad 'Ali, seeking for new sources of revenue in the last years of his reign, imposed new and rather high customs-taxes on slaves imported into Egypt. This measure, taken when Egypt was "encombrée d'esclaves," helped sensibly to reduce the volume of the slave-traffic.[235] Another observer, writing of conditions during the reign of Muhammad 'Ali's successor, 'Abbas Pasha, states that "the traffic in slaves has decreased very much of late... the tax on [slaves] has been greatly increased, so that merchants find the commodity less profitable than gum or ivory."[236] While in 1842, he notes, the duty paid at Aswan was 30 piasters for a negro slave and 50 for an Abyssinian, in 1852 it was 350 for the former and 550 for the latter.

> Prices have risen in consequence, and the traffic is proportionately diminished. The Government probably derives as large a revenue as ever from it, on account of the increased tax, so that it has seemed to satisfy the demands of some of the European powers by restricting the trade, while it actually loses nothing thereby.[237]

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[235] Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., pp. 481-2.

[236] Taylor, op.cit., p. 389.

[237] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE SALE OF THE SLAVES

Thus far, we have seen the slaves taken and conveyed to market. In this chapter, we shall make some remarks on their disposal in the market place. We have already noted that slaves were sold in many of the towns of Egypt and the Sudan. In some towns of Egypt, at least, special quarters were set aside especially for the buying and sale of slaves. At Asyut, slaves were "exposés ou bien sous des tentes, dans le campement même de la caravane, ou bien à l'intérieur de la ville, dans des locaux spéciaux, qui appartenaient aux grands négociants."[1] At Cairo too, although slaves might be 'exposed' in the open, outside the walls of the city,[2] they seem to have been more commonly taken to one of the "locaux spéciaux" set aside for them. These buildings, known generally as wakalas, were chiefly designed for the accommodation of merchants, and for the reception of their goods. The wakala

> is a building surrounding a square or oblong court. Its ground-floor consists of vaulted magazines for merchandise, which face the

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[1] Dehérain, 'Siout', p. 261.

[2] Gerard de Nerval, The Women of Cairo: Scenes of Life in the Orient (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1930), I, 85.

> court;... Above them are generally lodgings,..or, in the place of these lodgings, there are other magazines...[3]

In general, a wakala

> has only one common entrance; the door of which is closed at night, and kept by a porter. There are about two hundred of these buildings in Cairo...[4]

This description is substantially that given by Richard Burton, who adds these details:

> in the courtyard the poorer sort of travellers consort with tethered beasts of burden.. and slaves lie basking and scratching themselves upon mountainous heaps of cotton bales and other merchandise.[5]

Several of these buildings at Cairo were especially devoted to the receiving and sale of slaves. Gerard de Nerval, who visited Cairo in 1843, names three: the Wakalat al-Jallaba, the Kouchouk' [Küçük] Wakala

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[3]Often called by Europeans 'okelles,' 'occals,' etc. Cf. Lane, op.cit., pp. 320-1.

[4]Lane, op.cit., pp. 320-1; cf. Nerval, op.cit., p. 85. Similar buildings were found not only at Cairo, but in Constantinople, Damascus and Aleppo. Burton, op.cit.,I,41; Benoit de Maillet (Jean Baptiste Le Mascrier, ed.), Description de l'Egypte, contenant plusieurs remarques ... sur la géographie ancienne et moderne de ce pais.. (Paris: Louis Genneau, 1735), I, 207.

[5]Burton, loc.cit., pp. 41-2.

and the Ghafar Khan.[6] In the 1860s, there may have been a great increase in the number of wakalas where slaves were sold, for in 1867 in Cairo alone there were reported to be about a score of these establishments in various quarters, while others were found at Bulaq and Old Cairo.[7]

The Wakalat al-Jallaba seems to have been the one most visited by Europeans and was no doubt as typical an example of one of these establishments as any of them. The slaves brought to this wakala were exhibited either in the central court (known as the hawsh,)[8] near or even upon their masters' other merchandise,[9] or in the rather small chambers which surrounded the court.[10] Some slaves were exhibited in the upper apartments of the building.[11] At times the number of slaves there was fairly large:

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[6]Nerval, op.cit., I, 85. Khan is an alternative name for such an establishment.

[7]Douin, L'Empire africain, pp. 463-4.

[8]Burton, loc.cit., p. 41.

[9]Frank, loc.cit., pp. 239-40.

[10]Bowring, op.cit., p. 92; Nerval, op.cit., p. 83

[11]Bowring, op.cit., p. 93.

Bowring says that he seldom saw there "less than from 100 to 200 slaves,"[12] and according to Combes, the Cairo slave-market was "en fait de Noirs... le mieux pourvu de tout le Levant..."[13] European observers were consistently struck by the demeanor of the slaves being shown for sale. André Melly, for example, visited a Cairo slave-market in 1851, a place he says, "which by its very name excites in an Englishman such curiosity and such horror."[14] He found there little to excite horror; indeed, he was pleased to find, "not the less because it was unexpected,... the good understanding that seemed to subsist between the slaves and their masters..."[15] According to Prince Pueckler-Muskau, the slaves

> evince not the slightest indication of grief or sorrow in their manner, which is certainly the most varied and original in the world. They are seated in scattered groups, in the open apartments and in the large court, laughing and talking...[16]

Bowring noted that, despite the presence on the floor of the kurbaj, "the hard whip... with which they are flogged,"

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Combes, op.cit., I, 101.

[14] Melly, op.cit., I, 63.

[15] Ibid., p. 65.

[16] Pueckler-Muskau, op.cit., I, 185.

only one or two of "some scores who were gathered together.. appeared either sullen or sorrowful; many indeed had a vacant, and some almost an idiotic look, but, generally speaking, the slave-market is a scene of gaiety!"[17] Other writers speak in the same sense.[18] Though this was at first sight remarkable, Bowring points out that "the jellabs or dealers have motives for indulgence and attention to their slaves, as a healthful and cheerful appearance naturally predisposes and encourages purchasers."[19]

Not all the slaves were exhibited in the court or its adjacent chambers. The more valuable slaves were generally kept in the upper apartments. Among these were white female slaves, generally Caucasians (Circassians, Georgians, Mingrelians)[20] and at the time of the Greek war of independence (1821-29), perhaps a few Greeks.[21] These

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[17]Bowring, op.cit., p. 93.

[18]Frank, loc.cit., pp.239-40 ; Nerval, op.cit., p. 83; Olin, op.cit., p. 61.

[19]Bowring, loc.cit.

[20]Ibid., pp. 9, 93.

[21]Ibid., p. 9; Lane, op.cit., p. 191.

white females, Bowring remarks, "are seldom shown, and seldom sold to European Christians."[22] Other slaves kept in the upper apartments were black slaves "such as have learned Arabic, have been trained to be domestic servants, or have been the inmates of the harems ..."[23] Among this group, "persons very handsomely dressed are sometimes found who have been dismissed from the harems of the opulent." Of these slaves, he "learned that opinion was most unfavourable, many of them being sent for sale in consequence of acts of dishonesty, violent temper, or other defects of character." These "appeared to consider themselves as a race completely distinct from, and superior to, the poor naked, uninitiated slaves who were huddled together in the court below."[24]

But not all of these had necessarily been dismissed from their situations; some of them may have been sent for sale at their own request. Islamic law gives a slave the remarkable right to detach himself from the control of a master he dislikes. Burckhardt writes that if slaves

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[22] Bowring, op.cit., p. 93. Lane says that most of these were sold to wealthy Turks. Lane, op.cit., p. 190.

[23] Ibid., p. 94.

[24] Ibid.

were discontented with their masters,

> and decidedly determined not to remain with him, they have the right of insisting on being sent to the public slave market... to be resold... If, having overcome the fear of exposing himself to the effects of his master's rage, the slave finds an opportunity of making his demand, in presence of respectable witnesses, and perseveres in this conduct, he must at last effect his purpose.[25]

These statements are confirmed by other sources.[26]

We have up to this point spoken of 'slaves,' as if we were discussing a single, fairly uniform group of persons. This however was far from being the case. We have already noted a difference in the position of white slaves and black, and, among the black slaves, who chiefly concern us, in the position of those with some experience of life in Egypt and those with none. There were other differences too, of ethnic origin, age, and sex, the effects of which on the trade may now be briefly considered.

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[25] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 342.

[26] Browne, op.cit., pp.48-9; Lane, op.cit., p. 159. Some slaves however "are less able to take advantage of this privilege, which the law grants to all, from being shut up in the harem, where no one hears their complaints except those who are the cause of them." Burckhardt, loc.cit.

Burckhardt tells us that in their buying and selling of slaves, the dealers attached great importance to the matter of the tribal or ethnic origins of their charges. It was, he says, a common opinion among the jallabs that each negro ethnic group or tribe possessed certain well-defined personality traits, which were shared more or less uniformly by all the members of the tribe.[27] On this basis, an "elementary and traditional kind of comparative psycho-physiology" was elaborated, which "decided the typical qualities and defects assigned, in popular lore, to representatives of the various races and, in consequence, the functions for which they were considered best suited."[28] So, for example, Tunisi states that the male slaves of Goula, a country to the south of Darfur, "are much sought after because of their fidelity and their good and tractable character."[29] Again, although Dinka women were considered very desirable because of their housekeeping talents, they were supposed to cause their masters more nuisance ('embarras') than slaves of other nations.[30]

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[27] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 327.

[28] Brunschvig, loc.cit., p.32.

[29] Tunisi, Voyage au Darfour, note on end-paper map.

[30] Douin, loc.cit., part 2, p. 108

As for Dinka males, their strong attachment to their tribal customs, as well as their general character, made them quite valueless as slaves.[31] The slaves who came from the neighborhood of Sennar were said to have the best dispositions, being in this second only to the Abyssinians and the Gallas,[32] while the 'Kostanis' who came from the marchlands between Ethiopia and the Sudan were said to be treacherous and malicious.[33]

The African slaves with the best reputation were undoubtedly those known as 'Abyssinians' (in Arabic, Hubush). This was a generic term applied to slaves brought from all parts of Ethiopia,[34] of whom only a small proportion were Abyssinians strictly speaking, i.e., Christian natives of the highland provinces of Tigrai, Amhara, Shoa, and Gojam. The majority appear to have come from the Gallas, a people noted for their beauty and intelligence.[35] They were, Lane says, "of a deep

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 327.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Hurgronje, op.cit., pp. 13-14.

[35] Lane, op.cit., p. 190. Many of the 'Abyssinian' women in Egypt and the Sudan may have been Gurages, another Ethiopian people celebrated for their comeliness, and often found as concubines in Arabia; Hurgronje, loc.cit.; Shack, op.cit., p. 35.

brown or bronze complexion," and "in their features, as well as their complexions" they appeared to be "an intermediate race between the negroes and white people."[36] The price of an 'Abyssinian' girl was about one-third again to twice that of a black girl.[37] This difference was reflected in their relative conditions in Egypt, the Sudan and Arabia, for while black girls were generally employed as servants,[38] the 'Abyssinians' were usually sought as concubines,[39] and this not only for their beauty but also for their intellectual capacity[40] and their 'constancy of affection'.[41]

Not all 'Abyssinian' slaves were females. Male

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[36] Lane, loc.cit.; Hurgronje says those at Mecca "represented all hues from bright yellow to dark brown...."; loc.cit., p. 13.

[37] Lane, op.cit., p. 191.

[38] Ibid.; Hurgronje, op.cit., p. 109.

[39] Hurgronje, op.cit., pp.107-8; Lane, op.cit., p.136.

[40] Krapf, op.cit., p. 74.

[41] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 311; Hurgronje, op.cit., p. 109. Cf. Tunisi, Ouaday, p.600 for a sympathetic description of an 'Abyssinian' concubine at Cairo.

slaves of this group, being considered of greater intelligence than the negroes, were better educated than the latter, and were frequently given positions of responsibility.[42] They had their shortcomings, however, for although they attached themselves willingly to their masters and served them faithfully, they could also be capricious, proud, and violent.[43]

The evidence indicates that persons of all ages were sold as slaves, from very small children[44] to adults of rather advanced age.[45] But it would seem that the greatest proportion of the slaves intended for the Egyptian and Arabian markets were below the age of fifteen years. The reason for this seems to have been connected with the fact that in these two countries, slaves were sought largely for domestic purposes.[46] For it was thought, "both in Egypt and Arabia, that no great dependence [could] be placed upon any

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[42]Hurgronje, op.cit., p. 13; Douin, loc.cit., p. 161.

[43]Douin, loc.cit.

[44]Bowring, op.cit., p. 84.

[45]Combes, op.cit., p. 59.

[46]Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., p. 506. In this respect, according to the same writer, the Egyptian-African slave-trade differed from the Atlantic slave-trade, which, because its purpose was mainly to supply hands for heavy agricultural labor, sought adult males for the most part; ibid.

slave, who had not been brought up in the owner's family from an early age."[47] Richard Burton, speaking of the custom of Medina in this regard, remarks that "the older the children become, the more their value diminishes; and no one would purchase, save under exceptional circumstances, an adult slave, because he is never parted with but for some incurable vice."[48] According to Tunisi, when male slaves in Darfur reached a height of seven spans ('empans'), they "diminuent de prix; car alors ils sont hommes, et ne doivent plus servir dans les harems ou être en domesticité aux ordres d'une femme."[49]

In the cases of younger slaves, it was not always easy to judge age with any precision. They were therefore arranged according to height, this being considered an approximation of age.[50] The measurement was taken "by the span ('empan'), from the ankle to the lower tip of the ear."[51] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, who visited Asyut in 1830,

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[47]Bowring, op.cit., p. 89; Burckhardt, op.cit. p.325.

[48]Burton, op.cit., II, 12-13.

[49]Tunisi, Voyage au Darfour, p.39n. Cf. Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil," p. 743; Petherick, Travels, I, 37.

[50]De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., I, 278.

[51]Tunisi, loc.cit.

state that it was customary there to classify slave children according to the following scheme:

(a) thalathi --- a child of either sex who was three spans in height.

(b) ruba'i --- a child four spans in height;

(c) khumasi --- a child of five spans;

(d) sadasi --- a child of six spans.[52]

Of these, the most prized were the sadasis, who cost about 900 piasters at Asyut in 1830.[53] Khumasi girls cost from 700 to 800 piasters, khumasi boys from 500 to 600; ruba'is, of both sexes apparently, from 300 to 400; and thalathis from 150 to 200 piasters.[54]

Other slaves sold at Asyut were arranged according to the following scheme:

(a) 'amrat' --- boys of fifteen to twenty years; these cost from 400 to 500 piasters;

(b) 'takhen' --- "filles qui ont la gorge naissante"; from 1,000 to 1,200 piasters;

(c) 'naet' --- "filles qui ont la gorge formée"; from 900 to 1,000 piasters;

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[52] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit., p.277.

[53] Ibid. At the rate of 100 Egyptian piasters to one pound sterling, this would of course be about £9. Bowring op. cit., p. 85.

[54] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit.

(d) 'kasser' --- girls of from eighteen to twenty years: from 600 to 700 piasters;

(e) 'umm-bekir' --- a woman who had borne one child: 500 to 600 piasters;

(f) 'umm-tani' --- a woman who had given birth twice: 400 to 500 piasters;

(g) 'ousta' --- a woman skilled in housekeeping and cookery: 1,000 to 1,500 piasters.[55]

(h) 'mourda' --- a wet-nurse: from 900 to 1,000 piasters.[56]

Burckhardt tells of a similar scheme in use at Shendi. There, as at Asyut, the sadasis were most esteemed, a male costing fifteen or sixteen dollars, "provided he bore the marks of the small pox, without which a boy is not worth more than two-thirds of that price;."[57] while a female cost from twenty to twenty-five dollars.[58] Burckhardt also mentions another category, known as 'balegh' (balig), slaves above fifteen years of age. These were uncommon, being bought largely by Bedouins, who employed them as shepherds.[59]

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[55]Women of this group were 'apprenticed' in households in Dongola, and were "eagerly sought for by all traders, as expert cooks, and good servants." Burckhardt, op.cit., p.321; cf. also p. 325, and Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil," p. 743.

[56]De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit., p. 278.

[57]Burckhardt, op.cit., pp.324-5. Cf. Bowring, op.cit, p.87.

[58]Burckhardt, loc.cit., p. 325.

[59]Ibid.

This is perhaps a good place to digress and make some general remarks in regard to the prices of slaves. These, like those of any commodity, tended to fluctuate, sometimes considerably. Of prices, Louis Frank has this to say:

> Il n'est guères [sic] possible de dire quelque chose de bien positif sur le prix des Nègres; il varie infiniment, et toujours en raison de la fréquence des caravanes, du nombre des Nègres qu'elles amènent, quelquefois en raison du nombre des Nègres qui ont péri de la peste;...[60]

Edmond Combes points out that slaves, like agricultural commodities, had their good years, when they arrived in Egypt in large numbers and were sold very cheaply, and their bad, when for diverse reasons, they were brought in small quantities and sold dearly.[61] Bowring noted that in any case, there was "little regularity or fixedness of price" generally in Egypt, especially outside the principal commercial centers.[62]

It may be said then that the prices of slaves given in any of the primary sources which have been used in this paper can only be regarded as random samples, having

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[60] Frank, loc.cit., p. 244.

[61] Combes, op.cit., I, 103-4. Cf. Pallme, op.cit. p. 271.

[62] Bowring, op.cit., p. 118.

"no real meaning unless subjected to criticism and compared with the commercial value of other commodities..."[63] It might be of interest to investigate the 'evolution' of slave prices in Egypt from the time, let us say, of the French occupation down to that of the British, and the relationship of these prices with the general economic and social conditions. A discussion of this problem is however outside the scope of the present essay, and must await a future occasion.

It will have been noticed that the prices of female slaves given here were higher than those of the males of the same class; this seems in fact to have been the general rule throughout the nineteenth century.[64] The higher prices commanded by females reflected of course a greater demand, the consequence of which was sometimes that the females brought by a caravan greatly outnumbered the males. It was, for example, reported that of the five or six thousand slaves annually imported into Egypt from Darfur around 1800, four out of five were females.[65] Of those who, at the same period, came from Sennar to Egypt, two-thirds were females.[66] In any case, women and children

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[63] Brunschvig, loc.cit., p. 32.

[64] Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 335-6; Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., pp. 506-7; Lane, op.cit., p. 192; Lejean, "Le Haut-Nil," p. 743.

[65] Girard, Description de l'Egypte, pp. 282-3.

[66] Ibid., p. 293.

together seem to have formed the majority, perhaps the great majority, of the slaves brought to Egypt for sale.[67]

A class of slaves which stood by itself was that of the eunuchs. The 'making' and use of eunuchs were quite common in the geographical Sudan.[68] The operation was performed only on the "strongest and best-looking boys,"[69] and always on those between the ages of eight and ten or twelve years,[70] for if performed upon someone of more advanced age, there was considerable risk of its proving fatal.[71] Autumn was said to be the most favorable season.[72] Barth and others emphasized the very high mortality which accompanied the performing of this operation in the central and

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[67]Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., p. 506.

[68]Bovill, op.cit., pp. 244-5. It may be remarked that the Koran forbids mutilation of this kind, regarding it as being of satanic inspiration (Sura IV:118), according to Baydawi's interpretation; cf. Levy, op.cit., p. 77 and note.

[69]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 330.

[70]Ibid.; Frank, loc.cit., p. 285.

[71]Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 329-30.

[72]De Cadalvene and de Breuvery, op.cit., I, 282.

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[69]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 330.

[70]Ibid.; Frank, loc.cit., p. 285.

[71]Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 329-30.

[72]De Cadalvene and de Breuvery, op.cit., I, 282.

western regions of the geographical Sudan.[73] This does not however seem generally to have been the case in Egypt. Burckhardt writes that in fact "the operation itself, however extraordinary it may appear, very seldom proves fatal."

> I know certainly [he continues], that of sixty boys upon whom it was performed in the autumn of 1813, two only died; and every person whom I questioned on the subject in Siout assured me that even this was above the usual proportion, the deaths being seldom more than two in a hundred.[74]

Other sources are in essential agreement with this estimate. Frank learned that the mortality-rate was "not absolutely considerable," and that the process of healing worked fairly quickly,[75] while according to de Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, such was the address of the surgeons that only about six per cent of the boys died of the operation.[76]

Egypt imported eunuchs from Bornu (now part of Northern Nigeria) and from other countries of the geographical Sudan,[77] and in the 1830s a thriving business in emasculations

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[73] Bovill, op.cit., p. 244 and note 1.

[74] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 329.

[75] Frank, loc.cit., p. 238.

[76] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit.

[77] Bovill, op.cit., pp. 244-5.

was done at El Obeid, allegedly by a brother of the Sultan of Darfur.[78] Combes claimed that eunuchs were made in many places, in Abyssinia, Darfur, Sennar, Nubia, and on the Red Sea coast.[79] But it would appear that the eunuchs for the Egyptian and Turkish markets were supplied chiefly by Upper Egypt. At the time of the French occupation of Egypt, the village of Abu Tigé was known for its eunuchs; there, according to Frank, from 100 to 200 boys were gelded annually, until the French halted the practice.[80] But after the French withdrawal, the trade was resumed. In the reign of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, this commerce was centered at the village of Zawiyat al-Dayr, near Asyut. It was this village which Burckhardt calls "the great manufactory which supplies all European, and the greater part of Asiatic Turkey with these guardians of female virtue.."[81] According to de Cadalvène and de Breuvéry again, "l'on peut considérer cet affreux commerce comme l'unique ressource industrielle de ce bourg..."[82] There, in 1814, 150

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[78]Pallme, op.cit., pp. 86-7

[79]Combes, op.cit., I, 195.

[80]Frank, loc.cit.

[81]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 329.

[82]De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit., p. 281.

eunuchs were made each year, the majority of them after the arrival of the caravans from Darfur and Sennar;[83] in 1830, the number was reported as 300.[84] Browne tells us that the operations were performed by "some families,... having the hereditary exercise of this antient [sic] practice."[85] In 1830 it was reported that priests were involved in the geldings.[86]

A boy on whom the operation had been performed was worth from two to three times the value of an ordinary slave of the same age.[87] It was this consideration which prompted the owners to have the gelding done. Burckhardt writes that the

> great profits which accrue to the owners of the slaves in consequence of their undergoing this cruel operation, tempts them to consent to an act which many of them in their hearts abhor.[88]

The industry was recognized by the Government, to whom an annual tax was paid.[89] De Cadalvène and de

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[83] Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 329, 330.

[84] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit., p. 282; cf. Bowring, op.cit., p. 95.

[85] Browne, op.cit., p. 350.

[86] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., I, 281-2.

[87] Frank, loc.cit.; Bowring, op.cit., p. 87.

[88] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 329; cf. Frank, loc.cit.

[89] Burckhardt, loc.cit.

Breuvery observed that the Pasha of Egypt levied his "droits en nature," that is, of the three hundred eunuchs said to have been made every year, he was entitled to receive eighty.[90] Some of these he kept for his own use, while others were sent as presents to the Sultan and to the numerous grandees at Constantinople.[91]

Some writers have made rather extravagant-sounding estimates of the number of eunuchs to be found in Egypt itself. Escayrac de Lauture, for example, claimed that "in the East," and by implication in Egypt, every man of wealth possessed at least one eunuch, and that no one of the rank of pasha was without two or three.[92] Even so careful an observer as Bowring states that "there is scarcely a harem of any man of rank which is unfurnished with these degraded beings..."[93] Remarks like these can be quite misleading if they are not more precisely qualified. Any discussion on the subject of eunuchs involves of course a knowledge of the private domestic life of the Egyptians, for most outsiders a knowledge which has always been extremely difficult

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[90] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, loc.cit., p. 282.

[91] Ibid. In 1812, for example, Muhammad 'Ali was reported to have sent two hundred young eunuchs as a present to the Ottoman Sultan; Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 330.

[92] Escayrac de Lauture, op.cit., p. 508.

[93] Bowring, op.cit., p.87.

to obtain until quite recently.[94] It may be better here to accept the statements of Lane and Burckhardt who, though European Christians, were able to observe closely the inner domestic life of families in Egypt and Arabia.[95] It was the case, as Burckhardt remarks, that the custom of keeping eunuchs had much declined in Egypt and Syria. In Egypt, not more than three hundred could be found, if the number kept by the viceroy and his sons were excepted. He points out that

> in these countries there is great danger in the display of wealth, and the individual who keeps so many female slaves as to require a eunuch for their guardian, becomes a tempting object to the rapacity of the government.[96]

Lane, too, says that in the Egypt of the 1830s, scarcely anyone kept eunuchs except Turks of high rank.[97] It was

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[94] Bowring remarks, "There is nothing like an approximative census of any part of the population, still less can there be of the slave-population who belong to the harems; the most inaccessible part of the social organization of the east." Loc.cit., p. 92.

[95] Lane lived in Cairo for some years between 1825 and 1840, and such was the sympathy of his character and his command of Arabic, that he was able to mix with upper-class Cairenes as one of themselves. (Cf. Lane, op.cit., pp. xii-xiii.) Burckhardt lived for some years in Aleppo, where he acquired an admirable knowledge of Arabic and Arabian lore. He later travelled in Egypt and the Sudan in the guise of an Aleppine merchant. (Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. xxv-xlii, 178).

[96] Ibid., pp. 330-1.

[97] Lane, op.cit., p. 137.

no doubt for this reason, at least in part, that almost all eunuchs made in Upper Egypt were sent to Istanbul or Asia Minor.[98]

The actual process of selling a slave was not without interest. Much of the selling of slaves as well as of other articles, was carried on by means of persons called dallals, a word which is used to denote a middleman or a broker, but which can be used to mean 'auctioneer' or 'hawker'.[99] In many of the bazaars of Cairo, Lane tells us,

> auctions are held on stated days, once or twice a week. They are conducted by "dellals"... hired either by private persons who have anything that they wish to sell in this manner, or by shopkeepers;... The "dellals" carry the goods up and down, announcing the sums bidden with cries of 'harág' or 'haráj' [auction]...[100]

Pallme describes the process of selling at El Obeid. Such was the volume of trade there that the sale of slaves took place every day throughout the year.[101] A slave to be

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[98] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 331.

[99] Hans Wehr, (J. Milton Cowan, ed.), A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1961).

[100] Lane, op.cit., p. 324.

[101] Pallme, op.cit., p. 268. Holroyd says, "Almost every person in Kordofan is a slave-merchant, and if an individual can gain only a few piasters by the sale, the unfortunate captive is sure to change hands." Loc.cit.p.209.

sold was led about by an auctioneer who shouted out the good characteristics and the current price of his merchandise as he walked through the market place. The slave was sold, "after several perambulations" of the market place, to the highest bidder. "This species of auction" Pallme says, "is the public sale in common vogue in Egypt."[102] Holroyd describes a similar mode of selling in the market at Khartoum.[103] Not all slaves, however, were sold by auction. Sometimes the sale was effected by negotiation between buyer and jallab, often with the aid of a dallal.[104]

A prospective purchaser was free to subject a slave to an intimate examination, closely examining his eyes, tongue, teeth, skin, muscles, while making enquiries about his origin, disposition, past history, and other circumstances which might influence the slave's value.[105] One thing in which buyers took great interest was whether or not a slave had had smallpox; a slave who had recovered from the disease was worth a third again as much as one who had not.[106]

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[102] Pallme, op.cit., p. 269

[103] Holroyd, loc.cit., p. 208.

[104] Bowring, op.cit., p. 94; Frank, op.cit., p. 243.

[105] Bowring, loc.cit.; Pallme, pp. 271-2.

[106] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 325.

There was another set of characteristics in which buyers took a lively interest, at least in Cairo about 1800, where it was widely believed there that these characteristics were a good guide to the character of a negro. If the whites of the eyes were unblemished, the tongue and gums of a bright red color, the palms and soles of the feet of a distinctly pinkish color, and the finger-nails of good quality, then the slave was, according to this view, assumed to be of generally good character. But a slave the whites of whose eyes were blemished with traces of red or brown, and whose tongue and gums had traces of black, was assumed to be "d'un mauvais caractère et absolument incorrigible."[107]

This very close physical inspection of slaves on sale often aroused feelings of repulsion in Europeans, who compared this proceeding to the process of inspecting livestock on sale in Europe.[108] Snouck Hurgronje, who lived in the Hijaz in 1884-85, also felt such repulsion on watching sales of slaves at Mecca; but, he points out,

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[107] Frank, loc.cit., p. 240.

[108] Ibid., p. 243; Hamilton, op.cit., pp. 286-7.

> from closer inquiry ..... it results that no female slave (not to speak of males) feels more dislike of such overhauling than a European lady of a medical examination. This indeed is at once apparent in the market, for the stranger has scarcely gone on a few steps before the babble starts: one slave girl is telling her sisters of the funny questions the man has put to her, how the broker tried to deceive him but she... stopped his lies, and then they are all joking and laughing together.[109]

A similar atmosphere might have prevailed at Cairo on these occasions; one observer at least noted that negroes subjected by the dealers to close inspection for the benefit of a purchaser took it all in good humor. "The poor girls," he said, "did all they were told without seeming much put out; indeed, most of them seemed to be laughing all the time, which made the whole business less painful."[110]

Certain usages connected with the buying of slaves at Mecca may be of interest. In Mecca, if a prospective purchaser were uncertain as to the state of health of a slave he wished to buy, he might consult a physician who made a practice of examining slaves for a fee.[111] Or if

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[109]Hurgronje, op.cit., p. 15.

[110]Nerval, op.cit., I, 84-5.

[111]Hurgronje, op.cit., p. 14.

he were doubtful as to some other point, he "left the choice to God by performing certain religious ceremonies and then going to sleep and letting the decision depend on his dreams,..."[112]

At Mecca, again, before a deal was closed, the customer asked the slave, "Ente radi?", "Are you willing to serve me?" And "from the answer, even though negative, experienced men can almost always understand... whether his 'No' means dislike for his future position or merely a human disinclination to any unknown change." No one, Hurgronje adds, "would buy a male slave against his will and still less a female slave against her will."[113]

The fact that these two usages prevailed at Mecca does not of course necessarily mean they were also met with in Egypt, and we have no direct evidence that they were. But the general historical and cultural links between Egypt and Western Arabia had been close ever since the Muslim conquest of Egypt. Further, and more specifically, it

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[112] Ibid. Cf. Lane, op.cit., p. 268, for remarks on the extent to which the Egyptians of an earlier epoch relied on dreams to determine a course of action, a practice known as istikhara.

[113] Hurgronje, op.cit., p. 15.

appears from Burckhardt that, not only were the slave-trades of Egypt and Western Arabia "closely allied to each other" and with the Abyssinian trade,[114] but it would seem, judging from several remarks made by the same observer, that there was a considerable similarity between the customs of Arabia and of Egypt in regard to the purchase and treatment of slaves.[115] It is not altogether improbable then that the two Meccan customs just mentioned were illustrative also of the purchase of slaves in Egypt.

When (and if) an agreement satisfactory to all concerned was arrived at, the parties went to the office at the entrance to the wakala; there a scribe would register all the relevant details of the sale decided upon.[116] In the mid-1830s it was customary for slaves to be protected from the conscription by a certificate which was given by the seller at the time of the sale.[117] A copy of the sale registration was given to the buyer, who then paid a small fee to the proprietor of the wakala[118] amounting at Cairo to three piasters per slave.[119] The fee of the broker, if

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[114] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 322.

[115] Ibid., pp. 325, 328, 340, 352.

[116] Frank, loc.cit., p. 243.

[117] Bowring, op.cit., p. 91.

[118] Frank, loc.cit.

[119] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, op.cit., II, 235n.

any, was paid by the jallab, while the purchaser might make a present to the broker if he were satisfied with the bargain.[120]

Very often, slaves were bought 'on trial'. In these cases, the buyer would pay only part of the price agreed upon.[121] He had then the right to take the slave home and observe him (or her) for a specified period of time. If the slave had certain considerable defects, he might be returned to the jallab, or exchanged for another slave.[122] Certain faults automatically entitled the purchaser to claim the right to exchange the slave or to have the deposit returned.[123] Of these faults, the principal were: (1) snoring at night ("considered as a capital defect"), (2) bedwetting, (3) sleepwalking, (4) venereal disease, (5) teeth-grinding while asleep, (6) madness, and (7) "any disease which has not been completely cured, or recurs while in the hands of the purchaser, as intermittent

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[120] Bowring, op.cit., p. 94.

[121] Frank, loc.cit. It might be as little as one-quarter of the price agreed upon; Holroyd, loc.cit., p.209.

[122] Frank, loc.cit., p. 243.

[123] Bowring, op.cit., p. 87.

fever, itch, etc..."[124]

The period allowed for trial seems to have varied from one place to another. At Shendi in 1814, a slave might be returned as long as a fortnight after purchase if one of these faults were discovered,[125] while Frank states that at Cairo he might be returned as many as twenty days afterwards.[126] Holroyd reports three days as the period generally allowed in the Egyptian Sudan,[127] while Lane says the same of Egypt.[128] In Egypt, a newly-purchased female slave was observed during the three-day period in the harem of the purchaser, to whom the women of the household made their report.[129] If a jallab suspected bad faith on the part of a purchaser who was seeking to have a slave returned, he might arrange to have the

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[124]Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 337; de Cadalvène and de Breuvery, op.cit., I, 277; Frank, loc.cit., p. 243; Holroyd, loc.cit., p. 209.

[125]Burckhardt, op.cit., pp. 336-7.

[126]Frank, loc.cit.; Nerval gives eight days as the period allowed; op.cit., I, 116.

[127]Holroyd, loc.cit.

[128]Lane, op.cit., p. 192. Three days is also the period permitted by the Maliki school of jurisprudence, which is the school most widely followed in Upper Egypt and the Sudan; cf. Brunschvig, loc.cit., p. 26.

[129]Lane, loc.cit.

slave observed in a 'neutral' household for three days; if bad faith were proved, the sale might not be annulled.[130] In some cases, young slaves were sold with the express stipulation that they might not be returned.[131]

The description given above of the sale of slaves certainly must have held good down to 1854, when the viceroy Muhammad Sa'id Pasha issued the first Egyptian anti-slave trade decree, the opening shot of a campaign which was to be continued by his successor, the Khedive Isma'il. It is difficult to discover precisely how the practices described above were modified in the course of this campaign. For many years, however, it would seem that what changes did occur were perhaps not very considerable, for in 1867, as we have already seen, there were in Cairo, the very heart of the Khedivial government, about a score of slave-trading establishments. Even as late as 1869, it could still be said that the only important change effected was that the trade was "no longer so openly carried on there as formerly," since the public markets had been closed and the traders carefully avoided Europeans.[132]

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[130] De Cadalvène and de Breuvéry, I, 277.

[131] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 336.

[132] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 2, p. 666.

Instead, during this period, slaves were sold at Cairo in private houses belonging to the dealers or their friends, whence they were conveyed from the river port of Bulaq in small numbers of two's and three's.[133] Indeed, slaves, black and white, were said to be "frequently" taken to be shown and sold to members of the family of Khedive Isma'il himself in 1869, in which year the Khedive's daughter received a wedding present of from fifty to one hundred slaves.[134] These facts suggest that whatever laws existed on paper, and however vigorous the efforts of the Khedive to enforce them, there were numerous influential personages and high officials who were interested in seeing the trade continue.[135]

Public opinion in general was much annoyed with the Khedive's measures against the slave-trade, which were regarded as being of British inspiration.[136] In this context, therefore, it seems unlikely that these measures could have been enforced with sufficient energy to have made any important alteration in the selling practices described. This is however a subject which must await further

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[133] Ibid., p. 667

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., part 1, pp. 464-5.

[136] Ibid., part 2, p. 697.

investigation.

Thus far, we have seen the slaves to their final destinations in Egypt or the Sudan, or in other parts of the Ottoman Empire, mainly the Turkish-speaking provinces. But we have to note three circumstances of life in their new homes whose consequences were ultimately to affect the slave-trade.

The first of these circumstances was the rather high mortality of the slave population of Egypt compared with that of the indigenous population. This seems surprising in view of the fact that the situation of the great majority of the slaves as domestic servants in the households of the more affluent classes was certainly superior to that of the great majority of the Egyptian population.[137] But for reasons which are still not clear, the slaves were much more susceptible to disease than were the native Egyptians. Henry Salt, who was British Consul-General at Alexandria for some time during the early nineteenth century, noted that whenever an outbreak of epidemic disease occurred, it was the negroes who succumbed most easily to it, despite their apparent health and robustness. When an epidemic appeared,

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[137] Bowring, op. cit., p. 95.

they died, he said, "as sheep die of pox." It was generally the case among the slave-conscripts of the viceroy, that they succumbed to diseases which, among Europeans or Arabs, were easily amenable to medical treatment.[138] Nicolas Perron, who was a French physician in the service of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, wrote that in general in Egypt "the negroes age and wear out (s'usent) at a surprising speed, even when they are robust and vigorous."[139] Bowring states that the mortality among black slaves in Egypt was "frightful." "When the epidemical plague visits the country they are swept away in immense multitudes, and they are the earliest victims of almost every other domineering disease."[140] He heard it estimated that five or six years were sufficient to destroy an entire generation of slaves, at the end of which time it was necessary to replenish the supply.[141] He attributed this condition

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[138] Douin, La Pénétration, p. 364.

[139] Nicolas Perron, appendix attached to Tunisi, Voyage au Darfour, p. 454.

[140] Bowring, op.cit., p. 92.

[141] Ibid. This was, he said, one of the reasons for their low market value.

and the general low life-span of black slaves in Egypt to "change of climate, altered modes of life, [and] seclusion," as well as to the "pestilential visitations."[142]

A low birth-rate combined with this high rate of mortality to decrease the slave-population. A historian of East African has remarked that

> One of the worst evils of slavery is its interference with the normal balance and relationship between the sexes; the natural increase of slave-populations has never kept pace with their masters' needs; it has always had to be supplemented by a constant flow of recruits from outside. So it had been in the West Indies, so it was in Oman.[143]

And so it was in Egypt, and perhaps elsewhere in the Near East. While many of the negro women bore children, nearly half their offspring died.[144] Lane states that although "the women of Egypt are generally very prolific... females of other countries residing here often are childless..."[145]

The third circumstance to mention in this respect

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[142] Ibid., p. 101.

[143] Sir Reginald Coupland, East African and Its Invaders (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 207 (Hereafter cited as East Africa).

[144] Bowring, op.cit., p. 92.

[145] Lane, op.cit., p. 161. According to Bowring, this applied to whites as well as to negroes; loc.cit., p. 6.

is the frequency with which slaves were emancipated. For Islamic tradition had always given the manumitting of slaves a prominent place among the acts pleasing to God.[146] This precept was so far followed in Egypt and in Arabia that a slave very seldom remained in a respectable household for a number of years without being made free.[147] A female slave received her freedom through the circumstance of bearing a child to her master which he acknowledged (as most masters generally did[148]) to be his own.[149] In this case, it was "considered discreditable, especially if the child is a male," not to grant the slave her freedom,[150] and to present her with the marriage contract, "which is the only marriage ceremony used on those occasions."[151]

Thus it was that the effect of these three circumstances, viz., the considerable mortality, the low birth-rate, and the continual process of emancipation of

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[146] The Shari'a provides numerous occasions and means whereby slaves may be emancipated; cf. Brunschvig, loc.cit., pp. 29-30.

[147] Burckhardt, op.cit., p. 340.

[148] Lane, op.cit., p. 104.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Burckhardt, loc.cit.

[151] Ibid., pp. 340-1.

individual slaves, must have tended steadily to diminish the supply of slaves locally available for purchase.[152] This diminution of the supply, with a more or less constant demand, inevitably stimulated anew the activity of the slave-dealers and their suppliers.

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[152] "The number of blacks appears to decrease, notwithstanding the perpetual immigration." Bowring, op. cit., p. 92.

CHAPTER V

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE TRADE

The background of the circumstances described in this chapter lies in events connected with the trade in slaves carried on between Africa and North and South America, a trade carried on by subjects of the greater maritime States of Europe.[1] Among these, Britons were not least active. One of the fruits which Britain had obtained from the Peace of Utrecht (1713) was the right to transport slaves in wholesale from Africa to the Spanish possessions in the New World. With this prize in hand, Britain soon took the lead of all her competitors, and by 1770 about half of the slaves imported into the Western Hemisphere were carried in British ships.[2] Slavery and the slave-trade came to play a great part in the thinking of British Ministers and merchants. Slave-labor was regarded as the pillar of the flourishing West Indian sugar industry, and the slave-trade was held to be one of the chief supports of Britain's commercial prosperity and, by providing a 'nursery' for British seamen, a prime support of

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[1] Sir Reginald Coupland, The British Anti-Slavery Movement (2nd ed.; London: Frank Cass and Co., 1964), pp. 14-22, 169-70 (Hereafter cited as Anti-Slavery Movement).

[2] Ibid., pp. 18, 22.

her naval power.[3]

But in the eighteenth century, serious opposition to the slave-trade, and to the very institution of slavery, began to appear. There had indeed been those in Europe earlier who had entertained doubts as to the ethical propriety of slavery; but before the eighteenth century, these were isolated voices.[4] To the great majority of Europeans and Americans, slavery had the sanction not only of the Christian religion, but also that of "the most illustrious writers of antiquity."[5] In the eighteenth century, however, there was a change of attitude, a change which seems to have had roots in two currents of thought: the speculations of certain 'radical' Protestant writers, and the humanitarianism which accompanied the movement known as the Enlightenment.[6] The new attitude was especially strong in England, where a growing body of opinion, led by members of the Society of Friends,[7] maintained a constant agitation against slave-holding and slave-dealing. This agitation was

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[3] Ibid., pp. 18, 22.

[4] Davis, op.cit., pp. 294-7.

[5] Ibid., pp. 92, 107, 222.

[6] Ibid., pp. 291-390.

[7] Coupland, op.cit., pp. 64, 66, 121.

greatly strengthened by the growing revulsion felt by many from the sometimes excessively hard treatment of West Indian and American slaves by their masters or overseers.[8] Public opinion was won over to the anti-slavery movement, and in 1807 an Act of Parliament outlawed "all manner of dealing and trading" in slaves, and provided heavy penalties for any violation of this prohibition.[9] The sequel to this enactment was another which in 1833 outlawed slavery itself in all overseas dependencies of the British Crown.[10]

If this movement in England to end slavery began as a "little band of propagandists," by 1807 it had come to enjoy the support of "the great body of British public opinion."[11] So strong and pervasive had this feeling become by the end of the Napoleonic wars that on the eve of the peace-settlement, the 'Abolitionists,' the advocates of the abolition of slavery, were able to present to the House of Commons 800 petitions, with a total of nearly a million signatures, calling for steps to be taken to prevent the renewal of the French slave-trade. Shortly after-

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[8] Ibid., pp. 29-34, 57-95, 101-9.

[9] Ibid., p. 109.

[10] Ibid., pp. 141-2.

[11] Ibid., pp. 111-13.

wards, the House accepted, without dividing, motions calling on the Government to take strong action on the matter of the trade at the Congress of Vienna.[12] "Never has a British diplomat taken with him to a great international conference so clear or so strong a mandate as Castlereagh took to Vienna..." There could be little doubt that British public opinion, whatever its feelings in regard to most of the other questions confronting the Congress, was "deeply, almost fiercely, interested" in "the general abolition of the Slave Trade throughout the world."[13] Partly in consequence of Lord Castlereagh's effort to this end, a Declaration was annexed to the Final Act of the Congress, signed in June, 1815. This, couched in suitably vague language, declared "the universal abolition of the Slave Trade" to be a measure "particularly worthy" of the attention of the signatory Powers, and one in which they expressed their "sincere desire of concurring."[14]

But little in fact was done in this direction by

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[12] Ibid., p. 154.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., p. 155.

the European Governments whose subjects dealt in slaves. Indeed, if anything the situation grew worse than before. "By the fourth decade of the nineteenth century the volume of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade had surpassed the highest figures of the eighteenth."[15] The demand for slaves was growing, "and the men who made their fortunes by supplying them were not to be deterred by prohibitions and penalties which existed merely on paper."[16]

It was the British representative who had been chiefly responsible for securing the adoption of the Declaration of Vienna, and it was successive British Governments whichdid much to give practical effect to the Declaration, perhaps more than any other European Government.[17] In doing so, they were reflecting a powerful expression of public opinion. According to a responsible British historian, the abolitionist movement

> had started as a national crusade. It became a national tradition... [It] had so deeply stirred the public conscience that, not content with abandoning their own part in the Slave Trade, the British people strove ... to secure its complete suppression throughout the world.[18]

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[15] Coupland, East Africa, p. 186.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., pp. 186-7.

[18] Ibid. pp. 187, 186.

It was on the great maritime nations of the North Atlantic, France, Portugal, the United States, and Spain, many of whose citizens were active in the slave-trade,[19] that the British Foreign Office exerted a continuing pressure over a long period of time, in the hope of securing their cooperation in the suppression of the trade. "Only, it was evident, by diplomatic pressure on individual Governments could any real progress be achieved, and for the first thirty years of the peace and even later the...Foreign Office was more occupied with this question than with any other aspect of international affairs."[20] This diplomatic activity was supplemented by patrols by the Royal Navy of the coasts of Africa and of the sea-lanes between Africa and the Western Hemisphere in search of illicit slave-shipping.[21]

But pressure was exerted on Eastern Governments as well upon Western. In 1822, British diplomacy secured from the Sultan of Muscat and Zanzibar a treaty in which the Sultan prohibited the export of slaves from his

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[19] Coupland, Anti-Slavery Movement, pp. 157-9, 169-73.

[20] Ibid., p. 156. This is confirmed in some degree by even a casual examination of those documents listed under "Slave Trade" in SP, Vols. II (1814-15) to XXXVIII (1849-50).

[21] Coupland, East Africa, pp. 187-8.

African territories to any place outside his own dominions.[22]

In 1841, the British Consul in Tunis secured from the Bey an order forbidding the export of slaves from that Regency, and a promise that he, the Bey, would do "everything in his power to abolish the slave trade and the institution of slavery itself as soon as possible."[23]

A serious approach to the viceroy of Egypt was made in November, 1837. This was connected with the visit to Egypt of Sir John Bowring, on an official mission of enquiry. His general purpose, he says, was "to report upon the existing state and future probable situation of Egypt, statistically considered.." To this end, Bowring said, he had "endeavoured to gather from every accessible source such information as I could obtain as to her population - her productions, agricultural and manufacturing - her revenues and expenditure - her commerce and commercial usages... and, generally speaking, on all the questions which have a statistical character, and a bearing, directly or indirectly, on the development of her resources."[24]

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[22] Ibid. p. 215.

[23] Adu Boahen, op.cit., p. 137.

[24] Bowring, op.cit., p. 3.

But inasmuch as "the question of the slave-trade and slavery is one on which so strong an interest is felt in this country, I have thought it desirable to make a special report on this subject..."[25] This report was duly drawn up and presented, and it forms part of his overall Report on Egypt and Candia.[26]

A no less important part of his mission was the discussion he had with Muhammad 'Ali on the subject of slavery and of the Pasha's raids for slaves in the Sudan.

> When we had obtained sufficient evidence [he says] to authorise our interference with the pacha on the subject of the slave-hunts carried on by his... troops in Senaar and other frontiers of his dominions, the Consul-General and myself determined to make a strong representation to him on the subject.[27]

He refers to the difficulty of addressing a Turkish Pasha "on a subject where everything we had to say would be new and unexpected..." and therefore he and the Consul-General, Colonel Campbell, thought that if their representations

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[25] Ibid., p. 83.

[26] Ibid., pp. 83-104.

[27] Ibid., p. 95.

"took the shape rather of amicable counsel than of formal diplomatic intervention, we were more likely to succeed..." For an Ottoman governor "who finds slavery interwoven with every part of the social organization around him, would undoubtedly resist...a formal interference with usages of immemorial date..."[28]

This course was adopted. After some conversation of a general kind, Campbell broached the subject of the slave-hunts. He said he "felt pain" in having to speak to the viceroy on a subject in which the latter's own army was so much involved, but explained that if the viceroy knew "how deeply the universal mind of England was moved" about the question of the slave-trade, he would consider that his visitors were rendering him a service in suggesting that, "before any official representations were made," Muhammad 'Ali should himself take the initiative and end the raids.[29]

> Fire flashed from the old man's eyes as we spoke; he grasped the sword, as he frequently does when excited, which lay upon his knees, and all his gestures showed a strong excitement, but his features gradually relapsed into a more complacent expression...[30]

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., p. 96.

[30] Ibid.

The viceroy then declared that he disliked the slave-trade himself, and would be "very happy to abolish it altogether, by slow degrees," which was, he felt, the only way it could be abolished.[31] Although he knew his officers traded in slaves, "which he much disapproved," he greatly doubted whether his troops had ever been paid in slaves, especially as no more than seventy-five piasters was owed to any soldier, while the very lowest price of any slave was 150 piasters. His visitors replied that it was the practice to give a certain number of slaves to a group of soldiers, who would then divide the proceeds of the sale thereof among themselves. They assured him also that their information had been furnished by travellers "of undoubted veracity."[32]

In response to these representations, Muhammad 'Ali declared that he would immediately forward a dispatch "peremptorily forbidding the employment of his troops in the capture of negroes, and the payment of their wages in slaves..."[33] His guests assured him that "publicity would be given" to his intentions, and that "his carrying out a purpose so humane and noble would throw the greatest lustre

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

on his administration and reputation."[34]

The following day (December 1, 1837), the viceroy dispatched a letter to Khurshid Pasha, the Governor-General of the Sudan. After noting the facts set before him by his British visitors, the viceroy said:

> I knew that slaves should not have been distributed to the soldiers, but that the officers could buy them and send them to Cairo for their own profit; and it was of this latter fact that I should naturally have believed that these gentlemen spoke, had they not assured me positively that not only did the officers buy slaves for their own profit, but that their appointments and the wages of the soldiers were paid in slaves.
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> If this be so, be it known that it is contrary to my wishes, and that it tends to dishonour me in the sight of all civilized people, and above all with the English Government, between which and my own friendly relations exist.
>
> I accordingly command you to abstain for the future from paying my officers, soldiers, and other employés, with slaves. Know, that I do not wish to derive profit from a traffic which does me no honour; and that even if its abolition shall require some sacrifices on my part I am ready to make them...[35]

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[34] Ibid.

[35] "Translation of a Letter of...the Viceroy of Egypt...to the Governor of Senaar [sic], Kourchid Pacha,..." 1/XII/1837; sub-inclosure in Campbell to Palmerston, no. 81, Cairo, 1/XII/1837, loc.cit., p. 98.

It will be noticed that, despite his promise, the dispatch quoted makes no mention of prohibiting the slave-hunts. We shall return to look at the consequences of this order later. Before we do so, however, let us say a few words about Bowring's report on the slave trade. In this report, Bowring included a number of recommendations which, if executed, he felt might put an end to the slave-trade in Egypt and its dependencies. He pointed out that Muhammad 'Ali might be reluctant to co-operate in this project. Here the political circumstances of the time might be made use of.

> The oriental Powers feel more and more that their existence depends upon the support of the courts of Europe. Now, if the overthrow of slavery were made a condition of that support, there could be no doubt they would, as they must, submit to it, and allow such measures to be adopted as would lead to its gradual extirpation."[36]

No doubt he had in mind the example of the Sultan of Muscat and Zanzibar when he wrote these words. For the Sultan had banned the export of slaves from his territories, despite his consequent loss of a considerable revenue and despite the strong opposition of his subjects, because

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[36]Bowring, op.cit., p. 99.

the security of his position was dependent on the good will of the British Government, far and away the strongest Power in the Indian Ocean, whose position of power in those waters was unchallenged and unchallengeable. To have refused to sign the treaty of 1822 would not only have jeopardized the commercial prosperity of his realm, but possibly his position on the throne.[37]

But such exertion of diplomatic pressure to induce Muhammad 'Ali to suppress the slave-trade must be accompanied by encouragement of other, more positive measures. There must be introduced into the Sudan and the borderlands "a legitimate and profitable commerce" which would enable the negro peoples to pay for what they bought from the Sudanese merchants in articles other than slaves, the importation of which into Egypt would be forbidden.[38] Were peaceful conditions established in the southern regions, the negroes would be encouraged to develop the latent resources of their own lands, those resources which had hitherto lain fallow, owing to the conditions of "general insecurity [and] perpetual war" which prevailed there.[39]

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[37] Coupland, East Africa, pp. 211-12.

[38] Bowring, op.cit., p. 102.

[39] Ibid.

All this would necessarily imply the abolition of the Government monopolies of the export of several important Sudanese products, gum, hides, indigo, and others, which had been established by the viceroy shortly after the conquest.[40] For only then would the jallabs be encouraged to deal with the negroes in these commodities, instead of in slaves. At the moment, however, slaves were the only important commodity in which the traders were allowed to deal freely. Several slave-traders had intimated to Bowring their willingness to abandon the trade in slaves if they were allowed to buy and sell other commodities "without molestation, on their own account."[41]

These recommendations seem to have made little immediate impact. The Foreign Office must have been far too preoccupied with the immense slave-trade being carried on in the Atlantic, on Britain's own doorstep, so to speak, to spare much thought for the trade in the Nile Valley. Britain did seek to put an end to the viceroy's monopolies; but her chief reason for this seems to have been that they deprived British merchants of commercial opportunities.[42]

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[40] Holroyd, loc.cit., p.210; R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 49.

[41] Bowring, op.cit., p. 100.

[42] R. Hill, loc.cit., p. 73.

But Bowring's emphasis on the need to unite the positive step of the economic development (as we would say) of the negro countries with the negative step of suppression, his belief in the necessity, if the slave-trade were to be effectively abolished, of establishing a 'legitimate' commerce, that is, a commerce in commodities other than human beings, was very much part of the climate of opinion when he wrote his report.[43] This conception was given wide currency in a book published in 1840 by (Sir) Thomas Fowell Buxton, a leading British abolitionist, entitled The African Slave-Trade and Its Remedy, in which he described how 'legitimate commerce' might be established throughout Africa.[44] This view of the problem was to figure in the thinking of those who in the reign of Khedive Isma'il were to try and suppress the Nile valley slave-trade.

But while not as concerned with the slave trade in Egypt as it was with that in places nearer home, the

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[43] Coupland, Anti-Slavery Movement, pp. 173-5.

[44] Thomas Fowell Buxton, The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy (London: John Murray, 1840), pp.303-341 and passim.

British Government did not fail to make Muhammad 'Ali aware of its sentiments in this matter. We need not go in detail into the numerous conversations carried on between the viceroy and the British representatives who discussed the question with him.[45] He was well enough aware of this peculiar tendency of the British mind, if only from his conversations with the British consular representatives, and willing enough to pay polite lip-service to it, when advisable. But he had no need to do more than that, and, as he was by no means in the same diplomatic position as the Sultan of Muscat,[46] he did little more than that. It was he, after all, who had launched two armies into the Sudan, exhorting their commanders to (among many other things) lay hold of as many suitable young blacks as possible, and to dispatch them, willing or no, to Egypt to be trained in the army.[47] It was also he who

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[45]Cf. for example, SP, XXVI, 632-635; XXVII, 717-19; XXXI, 595-7; XXXII, 549-53; XXXIII, 610-13.

[46]Muhammad 'Ali was in a position to balance various Powers against one another. He tended though to rely on the diplomatic support of France. Cf. Holt, Fertile Crescent, p. 194.

[47]Cf. supra, pp. 8-9.

sanctioned the 'razzias' carried on by his officers in the Sudan (it is impossible to conceive the great Pasha's being unaware of events of such moment in the Sudan when he was well-informed about things of much less consequence[48]), to supply manpower for the viceroy's Sudan garrisons. During the interview he gave to Bowring and Campbell, he is reported to have said he was "unfavourable to slavery itself, and desired its abolition, little by little..."[49] and on at least one occasion he made a similar remark to Campbell's successor.[50] It must be said however that nothing in the viceroy's behavior suggests that this was more than that courteous deference required of a host, especially in the East, towards a strongly held but eccentric opinion of an influential guest. It is hard to see why he, a man brought up in traditional Ottoman society, where domestic slavery was part and parcel of society and by no means thought of as inhumane or immoral, should have

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[48] R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, pp.54, 55, 60.

[49] Campbell to Palmerston, no. 81, Cairo, 1/XII/1837, cited in Bowring, op.cit., p. 97.

[50] Barnett to Aberdeen, no. 85, Alexandria, 1/VIII/1843, SP. vol. 32, p. 550.

desired its abolition, even "little by little".

He was, however, willing to act if in need of support. For example, during his visit to the Sudan in the winter of 1838-39, he sent formal instructions to his commanders in the Sudan forbidding them to engage in slave-hunting.[51] But the context of this act, and its consequences, make it almost certain that it was a mere gesture designed to impress foreign opinion. For during the whole of the summer preceding his visit, he had been actively preparing to secede from the Ottoman Empire, a step on his part which was strongly opposed by Britain.[52] It is not unreasonable to suppose that while in the Sudan Muhammad 'Ali, influenced perhaps by the European advisers in his suite like Gaetani,[53] decided to make a gesture which might weaken British opposition to his plans. This supposition is supported to some extent by Gaetani's remarks to the viceroy and to Clot Bey, the French director of the Egyptian

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[51]Henri Dehérain, "Le Soudan égyptien de Mohamed Aly à Ismail Pacha," Histoire de la nation égyptienne, ed. Gabriel Hanotaux (Paris: Librairies Plon [n.d.]), VI, 464. (Hereafter cited as: Dehérain, in Hanotaux, op.cit.)

[52]SP, XXVI, pp. 694, 696, 697, 704.

[53]Buxton, op.cit., p. 428.

medical school, and a man well-known in Europe,[54] emphasizing the necessity of making the decision widely known in Europe as quickly as possible.[55]

In fact, the announcement by Clot Bey of the viceroy's action did arouse a flurry of hopeful interest in British abolitionist circles.[56] But nothing came of it. No further mention of the affair occurs in the collection of State Papers after Campbell's dispatch to Palmerston of January, 1839,[57] or in any other source, with one exception. Ignaz Pallme, noting that the European Press were discussing Muhammad 'Ali's action, declared that the viceroy's order was "vox et praeterea nihil" ('empty noise'), and assured his readers that the slave-raids "take place as before even at the present day [about 1843]".[58]

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[54]Campbell to Palmerston, no. 11, Cairo, 10/I/1839, SP, XXVII, 723.

[55]Dehérain, in Hanotaux, op.cit., p. 464.

[56]Buxton, op.cit., pp. 434-5.

[57]SP, no. 11, XXVII, p. 723.

[58]Pallme, op.cit., p. 306.

And in fact at least two such raids subsequently took place, one in the winter of 1842-43, led by the Governor-General Ahmad Pasha Abu Widan into Dar Funj,[59] and the second led by his successor, Ahmad Manikli Pasha to an undisclosed area, early in 1844.[60] Barnett, the British Consul at Alexandria, said he understood that so great was the mortality among the viceroy's troops in the Sudan, "that it becomes necessary every year to have recourse to that mode of completing the regiments;..."[61] This dispatch enclosed a letter to Barnett from Khusrau Bey (whose identity is not made clear, but who evidently was one close to the viceroy), in which Khusrau admits that the raids continued, but explains that their purpose was solely to obtain recruits for the army, and that there was no question of taking slaves to be sold.[62] In view, however, of the fact that the taking of slaves had been commonplace in earlier raids, and in view of the financial interest which (according to Prince Pueckler-Muskau) Egyptian governors and army officers in the Sudan had in the sale of slaves

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[59]"Slaving Expedition," loc.cit.

[60]Barnett to Aberdeen, no. 27, Alexandria, 19/III/1844, SP, XXXIII, p. 610.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Khosrew [Khusrau] Bey to Barnett, Cairo, 20/II/1844, enclosed in the dispatch no. 27, just cited.

taken in these raids, it may be doubted whether the distinction drawn by Khusrau Bey between raids for recruits and raids for slaves, was more than merely theoretical.

No diplomatic records were available to the writer in regard to the approaches made on the subject of the slave-trade to 'Abbas Hilmi I, Muhammad 'Ali's successor. It would seem that the general outlook of 'Abbas Pasha might have precluded interest in Abolitionism. For he was in fact opposed to the introduction of all Western innovation, "the great disintegrator of traditional ideas of government and way of life in the Egypt he knew."[63] The reign of 'Abbas was a stagnant period in the Sudan's history and the Egyptian officials there tended to carry on as they pleased, with only perfunctory direction from Cairo.[64]

'Abbas' successor was Muhammad Sa'id Pasha, a man who was, unlike 'Abbas, genuinely sympathetic to European

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[63] R. Hill, Loc.cit., pp. 87-8.

[64] Ibid. p. 87.

Sudan,[70] and in 1861, finding that his wishes were going unheeded, he wrote to the General Governor of Sennar and Khartoum:

> Although the slave trade has long been suppressed, slaves from the White Nile are still being sold in Khartoum. This neglect of our order is amazing. Stop this trade in all your territory at once. Turn back to their ports of origin all ships carrying slaves.[71]

These orders and exhortations were not altogether without effect. It became more difficult, for a time, to bring slaves into Egypt, and some slave traders had difficulties in making a profit.[72] But "south of Khartoum the trade still flourished, for... the Arabian markets were still open."[73] The principal effect in this area of the viceroy's policy was to cause the removal of public slave-dealings from Khartoum to places "further removed from the eye of authority..." like the Shilluk village of Kaka, on the White Nile.[74] A "considerable number" of slaves

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[70] Gray, op.cit., pp. 52-3.

[71] Sa'id Pasha to the Governor of Sennar and Khartoum, 27/XI/1861, cited in R. Hill, loc.cit., p. 102.

[72] R. Hill, loc.cit.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Gray, op.cit., p. 53.

however were still smuggled into Khartoum by boat.[75]

These measures were but the prelude to the policy of the following reign. Muhammad Sa'id Pasha seems to have been entirely sincere in his expressed desire to end the trade in slaves;[76] but however sincere, his policy was perhaps vitiated by a noticeable lack of energy or resolution in his character.[77] This was not however true of the man who succeeded him, his nephew Isma'il Pasha.

The motives of Isma'il in taking steps to suppress the slave-trade have often been impugned. Lord Cromer, for example, who describes the Khedive as an "astute but superficial cynic,"[78] wonders"whether Ismail Pasha was moved by a sincere desire to abolish an infamous traffic, or whether he merely wished to throw dust in the eyes of humanitarian Europe..."[79] The members of the British Anti-Slavery Society of that epoch

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[75] Ibid.

[76] R. Hill, loc.cit., pp. 101-2.

[77] Charles-Roux, loc.cit., p. 253.

[78] The Earl of Cromer, Modern Egypt (London: The Macmillan Co., 1908), I, 23; quoted in Dorothy Middleton, Baker of the Nile (London: The Falcon Press, 1949), p. 159.

[79] Cromer, op.cit., II, 497.

that to assess the Khedive in these terms alone would be to misjudge him. Moorehead's judgement reveals in any case a certain patronizing prejudice against Eastern rulers, 'oriental potentates,' of a traditional kind.[84] In seeking to evaluate the Khedive's attitude towards slavery, we ought to divest ourselves of such prejudices, and we should be careful of importing into our evaluation certain Western presuppositions. If we say, as there is some reason to do, that Isma'il genuinely wished to suppress the slave-trade, we must not expect to find that his reasons were those of a European who wished to do so. Westerners sought to put down slavery because, in contrast to the traditional Muslim view, they conceived a slave "as a being in fundamental contrast to a free man..."[85] Slavery to them was therefore unnatural and evil, in and of itself.

If, however, we seek such an attitude of mind in Isma'il Pasha, we shall not find it. His dislike of slavery proceeded from different sources. He had spent several of his formative years studying in Paris, and was profoundly

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[84] Moorehead, op.cit., p. 143.

[85] R.Hill, loc.cit., p. 146. A comparative study of the possible theological roots of the Muslim and Christian views of slavery might be not only useful, but illuminating.

impressed with the achievements of European civilization, as he understood it.[86] That his understanding was relatively superficial can hardly be held against him, since all his roots were in an entirely different civilization. It was his wish to make Egypt over in the image of Europe, as far as possible. "His Westernization of Egypt included every kind of internal reform..."[87] barrages, telegraph lines, railways, agricultural development, remodelling of the postal and customs administrations, urban improvement (especially in Cairo), canals, water-works, and not least important, education,[88] in short, a thoroughgoing program of modernization. And here, one feels, we find the key to his feelings about slavery. He probably realized that slavery was a usage inconsistent with the Egypt he wanted to construct. As Sir Bartle Frere noted in 1872, Isma'il claimed for Egypt "the honor of being in the van of civilization in Africa..." and was, he says "well-aware of the serious obstacle which slavery and the slave-

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[86] Charles-Roux, loc.cit. pp. 284-5.

[87] Moorehead, op.cit., p. 144.

[88] Charles-Roux, loc.cit., pp. 287-8

trade presented to the maintenance of such a position and to the onward movement of civilization."[89]

In a word, he desired the end of slavery, not because it was morally evil, but because it was un-modern, un-progressive, uncivilized. But, as he told the delegates of the combined meeting in Paris in 1867 of the French Comité d'émancipation and the British Anti-Slavery Society, slavery in Egypt had deep roots in custom and tradition and could not be overthrown in a single day, or by a frontal attack. The way to eliminate it, he thought, was to strike at its root, at the slave-trade; that destroyed, the rest would follow. For, in about a score of years, he said, some of the slaves would have died while the others, in keeping with custom, would have been freed. Slavery, he thought, would thus wither away.[90]

This was to be his method of dealing with slavery during his reign, to strike at the trade at its sources, in the southern borderlands. No doubt some of the steps

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[89]John Martineau, The Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere, II, 75, cited by Douin, L'Empire africain, part 2, p. 694. (Translation.)

[90]Georges Douin, Histoire du règne du Khédive Ismail (Rome: La Reale Societa di Geografia d'Egitto, 1934,) II, 10.

which he claimed to have taken to this end were affected also by his personal ambition, like the attempt to annex the Great Lakes, or by diplomatic considerations, like the employment of Gordon. Nonetheless, several men who knew him, opponents of the slave-trade as intelligent and as diverse in character as Sir Bartle Frere,[91] Sir Samuel Baker[92] and Colonel Gordon[93] came to respect the sincerity of his professed intentions in regard to the trade. It is for this reason difficult to accept Moorehead's judgement. It may be interesting to quote part of Frere's opinion of the Khedive. During his discussions with Frere in 1872 on the problems of suppressing the slave-trade, the Khedive

> showed himself to be much better informed of the whole context of the question and its difficulties, and displayed a much more intelligent interest in the subject, than all the other public men whom I have met, Englishmen excepted; and there are not many Englishmen who could equal him in his possession of the subject.[94]

It is certainly not easy to define Isma'il's various motives in this matter with any precision. But

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[91] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 2, pp. 694-5.

[92] Baker, Ismailia, I, 154-5.

[93] Middleton, op.cit., p. 159; Moorehead, op.cit., p. 143.

[94] Martineau, loc.cit.

in the light of an assessment like that of Frere, as well as in view of the respect in which Isma'il was held by Gordon and Baker, a judgement of the Khedive's character like that of Moorehead must, until further evidence is forthcoming, be regarded as premature.

Since the campaign carried on against the Egyptian-Sudanese slave-trade under Isma'il Pasha's auspices is a thrice-told tale, we do not propose to deal with it here in any more than brief compass. Shortly after he had ascended the throne in 1863, the Khedive received in audience John Hanning Speke and J.A. Grant, who had arrived in Cairo on their way down the Nile after their discovery of the source of that river in Lake Victoria. It might be said that what was discussed in the course of this interview provided the two main themes in terms of which the history of the Sudan was to be enacted during the following two decades. For the viceroy learned from the explorers of the wealthy and highly organized African kingdoms around Lake Victoria and the other equatorial lakes of east Central Africa; and he grasped the importance of the Upper Nile as a relatively easy route into the heart of Africa, and of the desirability of having control of the

whole of that route.[95] From the explorers he learned too that not only was the slave-trade widespread in the Egyptian Sudan, but that officers of the highest rank connived at it, despite the ordinances which had been promulgated against it.[96]

Thereafter, these two questions, Egyptian expansion into Central Africa, and the campaign against the slave-trade, were to be closely linked. Certainly the Khedive took measures to try and stop, or reduce, the flow of slaves into Egypt proper, and their export from Egypt.[97] He also extended a considerable measure of cooperation to the British consular officials in various parts of Egypt in their endeavors to do the same thing.[98] But the focus of his policy in this respect was always the Upper Nile. The most effective way, in his view, of striking at the trade was to deal with it at its point of origin in the southern borderlands. If the supply were dried up at the source, slavery in Egypt and the Sudan would eventually disappear, as after a period of years, some of the slave-

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[95] Gray, op.cit., pp. 78-9.

[96] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 106.

[97] Ibid., part 2, pp. 671, 696.

[98] Ibid., part 1, p. 462.

population would die off, while the rest would be emancipated. In the meantime, steps would be taken to train free persons to carry on most of those domestic functions which had hitherto been done largely by house slaves.[99] The effective repression of the trade in the borderlands implied the extension of Egyptian control over those areas, and this project the Khedive proposed to carry through, not only to put down the slave-trade, but,it is reasonable to suppose, for reasons of a more material kind.[100]

The first great step taken by Isma'il in this direction was the expedition sent out by him to penetrate into the basin of the Bahr al-Jabal, and beyond, into the region of the equatorial Lakes of which he had learned from Speke and Grant. He had already, some years before, prepared the ground for this advance by removing the European traders from their fields of enterprise in the Upper Nile. This was done by the exertion of various forms of pressure on these traders and their Sudanese employees by

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[99]Douin, L'Empire africain, part 2, p. 695.

[100]Isma'il was also interested in the opportunities for commercial intercourse with the regions in question. Cf. Gray, op.cit., p. 116; Douin, loc.cit., part 1, p. 478

the Sudan Government.[101] It may be that the Khedive feared these traders might use the privileges granted them by the Capitulations to prevent the extension of Egyptian control over their zaribas and other property.[102] In any case, the last European traders in the Upper Nile areas left the scene in 1867.[103] Two years later, Isma'il felt that the political and financial conditions prevailing in Egypt and her Sudanese possessions were sufficiently favorable to justify the beginning of his 'forward policy.'[104] The expedition he proposed to send out was placed under the command of Sir Samuel Baker, an Englishman who was not only a man of energy and resource, but one who was well-acquainted with the region he was about to traverse.[105]

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[101] Lejean, "La traite des esclaves," pp. 896-8; Petherick Travels, II, 144-5.

[102] Europeans in Egyptian territory were exempted by the Capitulations from the workings of Egyptian law to an almost abusive degree. Cf. J.N.D. Anderson, "Law reform in Egypt: 1850-1950," Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt, ed. P.M. Holt, pp. 211-12.

[103] Douin, loc.cit. p. 473; cf. Holt, Modern History, p. 66.

[104] Douin, loc.cit., p. 478.

[105] Cf. Baker, Albert Nyanza, passim.

His mission was two-fold. First, he was to annex the regions along the Nile between Gondokoro and the equatorial Lakes, and to organize the area annexed as an Egyptian province.[106] This was an object of cardinal importance, since it was the wealth of these regions which was to compensate the great expenditure upon the expedition, and the power of the Central African kingdoms there which was to ensure the permanent ascendancy of Egypt in that part of the continent.[107] Second, Baker was to repress the slave-trade throughout the area south of Gondokoro, to accomplish which object he was not only to put an end to tribal warfare, but also to give special attention to the development of agriculture in the new province.[108] For Baker believed that only the establishment of a healthy and 'legitimate' economic and commercial life in the newly-acquired regions could be truly effective in driving out the barren dualism of the ivory-slave trade.[109]

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[106] Baker, Ismailia, I, 7.

[107] Gray, op.cit., p. 116.

[108] Baker, loc.cit., pp. 6-7; Baker to Lord Wharncliffe, cited in Middleton, op.cit., p. 165.

[109] Baker to Lord Wharncliffe, loc.cit.

But despite Baker's eminent qualifications, and the great quantity of matériel with which he was furnished, the expedition was largely unsuccessful. This was due partly to the dislike felt among the Egyptian and Sudanese members of the party for the prospect of the disappearance, through its repression, of the slave-trade,[110] and partly to certain aspects of Baker's own personality. A man of many attractive qualities, he nevertheless had a tendency to place an overstrong emphasis on the importance of discipline among the people under his authority.[111] Allied to this was a readiness to place much reliance on the use of force to gain the ends he thought necessary.[112]

In consequence of these and other factors, Baker antagonized the powerful Bari and Bunyoro tribes; meanwhile, about two-thirds of his troops deserted to Khartoum.[113] The expedition "degenerated into a sorry affair of hand-to-mouth administration, tribal warfare, and seizure of grain,"[114] Far from driving out the slave-trade, Baker

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[110] Baker, Ismailia, I, 286-7, 352-7.

[111] Ibid., p. 302.

[112] Ibid., I, 368-9; II, 19-20, 29-30.

[113] Ibid., I, 397-8; II, 317-26; Gray, op.cit., p. 98.

[114] Holt, Mahdist State, p. 27.

had brought about "an unholy alliance of the slavers and the southern tribes against the clumsy interference of the [Egyptian Government] in local politics and interests."[115]

But the Khedive persisted in his policy. In 1874, he engaged another Englishman to bring the regions of the Bahr al-Jabal south of Gondokoro under some kind of firm Egyptian control. His hiring of an Englishman was due to his desire to give to the British Government, which was deeply concerned about the continued existence of the slave-trade in Egypt and its possessions,[116] an earnest of his will to drive out that trade.[117] The man engaged was Charles George Gordon, a colonel in the Royal Engineers and a man of remarkable talents. He was given the task of extending Egyptian control over the equatorial Lakes and of repressing the slave-trade.[118] Gordon had a certain degree of success, in that he was able to establish good relations with several of the tribes along the upper Bahr al-Jabal, and to put Egyptian control on a fairly

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[115] Ibid.

[116] Douin, L'Empire africain, part 1, p. 457.

[117] Gray, op.cit., p. 105.

[118] Ibid., pp. 115-16.

firm footing along the banks of the river between Lado and the Fola rapids.[119] But other than this, he was able to accomplish little more than had Baker. Owing to the small numbers and incompetence of his troops, he could not impose Egyptian control over the zariba-settlers in the interior, who continued to carry on trading and slave-raiding in their usual way.[120] It was due to the same reasons, as well as to the astute diplomacy of Mutesa, King of Baganda, that Gordon was equally unable to extend Egyptian control over the Lake kingdoms, of which Baganda was the most important.[121] Gordon resigned in 1876 "with little to show his Khedivial master."[122]

He was however induced to return the following year. The Khedive had been impressed with his energy and integrity, and offered him the post of Governor-General of the Sudan, which Gordon accepted in 1877.[123] In the same year, Isma'il had signed a Convention with Britain in which he engaged to take strict measures to prevent the

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[119] Ibid., pp. 108-9, 112.

[120] Ibid., p. 115.

[121] Ibid., pp. 117-18.

[122] R. Hill, Egypt in the Sudan, p. 139.

[123] G.B. Hill, op.cit., pp.203-4; Holt Mahdist State, p. 30.

import into and the export from Egyptian territory of all African slaves, and in which he committed himself to end all private dealings in slaves, in Egypt not later than 1884, and in the Egyptian Sudan not later than 1889.[124] In the execution of this Convention, Gordon had a primary part to play. By 1878, he had, he believed, put an end to most slave-trading in the eastern parts of the Egyptian Sudan;[125] he felt that he could now turn his attention to dealing with it in the west.[126] By a series of severe, even harsh, steps, he was able to clear a great part of Dar Fertit and the Bahr al-Ghazal of slave-dealers and their allies, the zariba-settlers.[127] He placed the area so cleared under the authority of one of his lieutenants, Romolo Gessi, who took upon himself an ambitious project of developing the mineral and agricultural resources of his province, even as Baker had intended to do in the area south of Gondokoro.[128] But unlike Baker, Gessi had a surprising success in the enterprise. Cotton grew wild in the Bahr al-Ghazal; Gessi encouraged the cultivation

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[124] The Times (London), August, 18, 1877, p. 9; loc. cit., August 31, 1877, p. 6.

[125] G.B. Hill, op. cit., pp. 318-19, 347.

[126] Ibid., p. 347.

[127] Ibid., pp. 356, 359; Holt, Mahdist State, p. 31.

[128] Gray, op. cit., pp. 127-8.

of commercial varieties, and soon a small amount of cotton was successfully planted. Rubber, tamarinds, and honey in large quantities were sent by river to be sold in Khartoum, while other commodities such as timber were found to be producible in the Bahr al-Ghazal and could be sold in the Sudan, which had formerly had to import them from abroad. There was a desire for clothes among some of the tribesmen; Gessi set up eight looms worked by young Africans. Nor was there any problem in respect of labor; several of the tribes were adaptable agriculturalists, and "enthusiastically collected rubber and cultivated cotton."[129] In short, it appeared that a definite beginning had been made towards the establishment of a legitimate commerce and of a new economic order which would replace the old one based on the trade in ivory and slaves.[130] The slave-trading interest, if not eliminated, was in retreat,[131] and if the security established could be maintained and the momentum of development already achieved, sustained, it seemed possible that a revival of the slave-

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[129] Ibid., pp. 128-30.

[130] Ibid., pp. 134-5.

[131] Ibid., pp. 131, 134.

trade would become increasingly less probable in the country where it had once flourished so greatly.[132]

But this was not to be. Events outside the Bahr al-Ghazal were moving towards a climax which would bring to an end the order of things which had existed in the Sudan for sixty years. It will be seen that the struggle against slave-trading had been carried to even this moderately successful position mainly through the efforts of three men: Gessi in the Bahr al-Ghazal, Gordon as Governor-General, and Khedive Isma'il. By the middle of 1881, they had all left the scene. The Khedive was deposed in 1879; Gordon left Khartoum in 1880 and soon afterwards retired from the Egyptian service.[133] Gessi died in the same year.[134] The men who succeeded them, the Khedive Muhammad Tawfiq Pasha, and Ra'uf Pasha, Governor-General of the Sudan, were insufficiently energetic to maintain the momentum established by their predecessors,[135] and the condition of the Khedivial treasury forbade the execution of any but the most cautious policies.[136] Under

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[132] Ibid., p. 130.

[133] Holt, Mahdist State, p. 31.

[134] Gray, op.cit., p. 235.

[135] Holt, loc.cit., pp. 31-2.

[136] Holt, Fertile Crescent, pp. 208-9.

the government of Ra'uf Pasha, the slave-trade revived, although not on its former scale.[137]

It was not by the exertions of men like these that the slave-trade between Egypt and her neighbors was to be brought to an end, but rather as the result of the conjunction of two factors. The first of these was the Mahdist revolution, a War of the Faith proclaimed and led by a religious teacher named Muhammad Ahmad against, as he saw it, the corruption and materialism of the Egyptian Government of the Sudan.[138] His call found a ready echo in many sections of Sudanese society, not least among those considerable numbers of jallabs and settlers who had been expelled by Gordon from their homes in the south and compelled to return to the Sudan.[139] His revolt was successful. Egypt and the Sudan were cut off from each other not only politically, but also commercially. Little if any trade passed between the two countries until 1890, when the Khalifa 'Abdallahi, the Mahdi's successor, opened the door to trade between the northern Sudan and Egypt.[140] Even

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[137]Holt, Mahdist State, p. 32.

[138]Ibid., pp. 34, 42-50.

[139]Ibid., pp. 34-6.

[140]Ibid., p. 176.

then, it seems unlikely that more than a few slaves passed from the Sudan to Egypt, since home demand was sufficient to keep most of them in the Sudan.[141]

But there was another reason why very few slaves could have been imported into Egypt after the early 1880s, from the Sudan or anywhere else. One of the consequences of the second of these factors, the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, was that, enjoying the support of the occupying Power, the Egyptian authorities could take more resolute action against the slave-trade. The laws against the buying and selling of slaves were strictly enforced; the routes by which slaves had been imported into Egypt were closely watched by the police; and British squadrons patrolled the Red Sea to try to close that avenue of the trade.[142] Lord Cromer, the British Consul-General in Egypt from 1883 to 1907, writes that

> the result of these measures has been, not only that it has become year by year more difficult to obtain slaves, but that also, when any clandestine purchase is effected, a price considerably higher than that which formerly ruled has to be paid.[143]

The owner of slaves in these circumstances

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[141] Ibid., pp. 176-7.

[142] Cromer, op.cit., II, 501; Baer, loc.cit., p.153.

[143] Cromer, loc.cit.

> is....beginning to ask himself whether slave labour is not, after all, more expensive as well as more troublesome than free labour, and whether it is worth while, besides committing a criminal act for which he may be severely punished, to pay a considerable sum for a slave girl who can, on the morrow of her purchase, walk out of the harem and obtain, not only her freedom, but also the strong support of the British representative if any attempt is made to tamper with her liberty of action.[144]

Cromer goes on to say that in view of the fact that slavery had come to be connected so closely with traditional usages, as well as of the fact that "material interests of some importance" were bound up with it, "it might well have been thought that the introduction of Western ideas in connection with this subject would have encountered opposition of a somewhat specially strong description."[145] But this had not proved to be the case. In fact,

> the opposition has been mild, and has been easily overcome. A great change has been going on insensibly. It has, indeed, been almost imperceptible to those who, it might be thought, were most interested in the maintenance of the existing abuse. No heroic measures have been adopted. Nothing has been done to clash with... opinions and prejudices. Nevertheless, a considerable measure of success has been attained.[146]

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[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid., p. 502.

[146] Ibid., pp. 502-3

This "great change" Cromer attributes to the "strictly Baconian principles" on which the Convention of 1877 was framed, that is, to the means adopted by the Convention of eliminating the slave-trade, not by a frontal attack, but slowly, gradually by easy stages "in a prudent and unostentatious manner." It is, Cromer says, "due to the wise moderation of the Convention...that slavery has been gradually disappearing from Egypt."[147]

This may be too superficial a conclusion. It seems more plausible to seek the explanation in the way in which Egyptian society, especially that of the larger towns and cities, was evolving in the 1880s and afterwards. One of the most significant changes effected during this period was the coming into existence of a large mobile labor-pool in the towns, a development which was connected with the breakdown of the old guild system and with the great wave of migration to the urban areas from the countryside. It was found that free labor drawn from this labor-pool could easily replace the labor of slaves.[148]

But of even greater importance was undoubtedly

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[147] Ibid., p. 503.

[148] Baer, loc.cit., pp. 143-4, 153-6.

the change in attitudes brought about in the minds of educated Egyptians towards slavery itself.[149] The close contact of these with the increasingly attractive and pervasive ideas and concepts of the West could not fail to affect their outlook on the institutions of the traditional order.[150] In the minds of the rising generation, more fully aware than their fathers of the opportunities and horizons offered them by the modern world, slavery had come to be seen as an anachronism and an irrelevance.

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[149] Ibid., p. 154.

[150] Cf. for example, Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939 (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), ch. 7, pp. 161-92, and passim.

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