

Timbuktu, Mali: Intellectual and Spiritual Capital

Few places in the world have an air of mystery as alluring as Timbuktu. The name of this city in the West African country of Mali is so wrapped in legend that many people think of Timbuktu as a mythical, timeless land rather than a city with a real history.

For West Africans, however, Timbuktu was an economic and cultural capital equal in historical importance to acclaimed cities like Rome, Athens, Jerusalem, and Mecca. Beginning in the thirteenth century, Timbuktu became the center of a thriving trade in Africa. Prosperity made by the trans-Saharan trade routes brought great wealth to the city. This wealth attracted not only merchants and traders but also men of academic and religious learning.

Timbuktu was founded around 1100 AD. as a camp for its proximity to the Niger River. Caravans quickly began to haul salt from mines in the Sahara Desert to trade for gold and slaves brought along the river from the south. By 1330, Timbuktu was part of the powerful Mali Empire, which controlled the lucrative gold-salt trade routes in the region. Two centuries later, Timbuktu reached its grandeur under the Songhay Empire, becoming a haven for scholars.

From the early part of the fourteenth century to the time of the Moroccan invasion in the late sixteenth century, the city of Timbuktu became an important intellectual and spiritual center of the Islamic world, attracting people from as far away as Saudi Arabia to study there. Great mosques, universities, schools, and libraries were built under the Mali and Songhay Empires, some of which still stand today.

Timbuktu's golden age ended in the late sixteenth century, when a Moroccan army destroyed the Songhay Empire. Portuguese navigators ensured Timbuktu's decline by establishing reliable trade with the West African coast and undercutting the city's commercial power. Around 400 years ago, European merchant ships began trading along the West African coast, and the cross-Saharan trade routes lost their importance. Having lost the source of its wealth, Timbuktu declined and became known as a lost city.

From Trading Post to Commercial Empire

Around 1100 C.E., a Tuareg woman called Buktu the settled Timbuktu as a seasonal camp. Grazing her herds and flocks during the dry season not far from the Niger River, she discovered an oasis and decided to set up a tented camp and dig a well there. Very soon, the little seasonal camp, called Timbuktu (literally Buktu's well) became an important stop for other nomads as well as the caravans travelling along the trans-Saharan route.

Towards the end of the first millennium C.E., the West African kingdom of Ghana, the region's first great empire, had organized and taken control of the long-distance trade of gold and salt, along with slaves and valuable goods such as kola nuts. From the north, thousands of camels in caravans carried salt from deposits to the city where merchants would transport it down the Niger to other parts of Africa. At the same time, goods—the most important being gold—came along the river from the south. In ancient Africa, salt was sometimes worth more than gold!

Mansa Moussa: Pilgrimage of Gold

In 1312 Mansa Moussa, the most legendary of the Malian kings, came to the throne. Mansa Moussa was a devout Muslim who built magnificent mosques throughout his empire in order to spread the influences of Islam. During his reign, Timbuktu became one of the major cultural centers of not only Africa but of the entire Islamic world.

When Mansa Moussa came to power, the Mali Empire already had firm control of the trade routes to the southern lands of gold and the northern lands of salt. Under Moussa's reign, the gold-salt trade across the Sahara came to focus ever more closely on Timbuktu. The city's wealth, like that of many towns involved in the trans-Saharan trade route, was based largely on the trade of gold, salt, ivory, kola nuts, and slaves.

Mansa Moussa expanded Mali's influence across Africa by bringing more lands under the empire's control, including the city of Timbuktu, and by enclosing a large portion of the western Sudan within a single system of trade and law. This was a huge political feat that made Moussa one of the greatest statesmen in the history of Africa. Under Moussa's patronage, the city of Timbuktu grew in wealth and prestige, and became a meeting place of the finest poets, scholars, and artists of Africa and the Middle East.

Mansa Moussa brought the Mali Empire to the attention of the rest of the Muslim world with his famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. He arrived in Cairo at the head of a huge caravan, which included 60,000 people and 80 camels carrying more than two tons of gold to be distributed among the poor. Of the 12,000 servants who accompanied the caravan, 500 carried staffs of pure gold. Moussa spent lavishly in Egypt, giving away so many gold gifts—and making gold so plentiful—that its value fell in Cairo and did not recover for a number of years!

After visiting the holy cities of Mecca and Medina on his pilgrimage, Moussa set out to build great mosques, vast libraries, and madrasas (Islamic universities) throughout his kingdom. Many Arab scholars, including the poet and architect, Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim-es-Saheli, who helped turn Timbuktu into a famous city of Islamic scholarship, returned with him.

He commissioned Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim-es-Saheli to construct his royal palace and a great mosque, the Djingareyber Mosque, at Timbuktu. Still standing today, the Djingareyber Mosque consists of nine rows of square pillars and provides prayer space for 2,000 people. Es-Saheli introduced the use of burnt brick and mud as a building material to this region. The Djingareyber's mud construction established a 660-year-old tradition that still persists: each year before the torrential rains fall in the summer, Timbuktu's residents replaster the mosque's high walls and flat roof with mud. The Djingareyber Mosque immediately became the central mosque of the city, and it dominates Timbuktu to this day.

During Moussa's reign Timbuktu thrived as a commercial center and flourished into a hub of Islamic learning. Even after the Mali Empire lost control over the region in the fifteenth century, Timbuktu remained the major Islamic center.

The Songhay Empire: The Golden Age of Timbuktu

As Timbuktu enjoyed unprecedented success under Moussa, another developing West African kingdom, the Songhay Empire, was increasing its influence over the western Sudan. In about 1464, King Sonni Ali Ber came to the Songhay throne. An able and ambitious ruler, he sent his army to capture the valuable city of Timbuktu in 1468.

In spite of his political achievements, Sonni Ali Ber was not a popular ruler. Although he was a Muslim, he distrusted and mistreated Islamic scholars and did not support the intellectual life of Timbuktu. A few months after the king's death, one of his generals seized the throne, with the support of the people. The general was a devout Muslim called Mohamed Toure, and he took the title of Askia, becoming known as Askia Mohamed.

Askia Mohamed's first ambition was to establish a state and a stable government for the empire. Unlike his predecessor, Askia Mohamed took full advantage of the scholars centered in Timbuktu and used them as advisors on legal and ethical matters. Under his reign, religion and learning once again assumed a primary place in the Songhay Empire.

Leo Africanus, a famous traveler and writer who visited Timbuktu during the reign of Askia Mohamed, wrote the following of the city's intellectual life: "In Timbuktu there are numerous judges, doctors and clerics, all receiving good salaries from the king. He pays great respect to men of learning. There is a big demand for books in manuscript, imported from Barbary. More profit is made from the book trade than from any line of business."¹ Under Askia Mohamed's rule, scholarship and Islam were once again revered and supported, ushering in a new era of stability that led to Timbuktu's sixteenth-century golden age.

Askia Mohamed had created the largest and the wealthiest of all the kingdoms of the Sudan. He had a well-administered state, probably the most highly organized of all the African states. With

a stable and efficient government and with the support of the Muslim scholars, religious leaders, and traders, Askia Mohamed had made Songhay a great trading empire and a center of Muslim scholarship and learning.

Scholars from all over the Islamic world came to the University of Sankore (as well as the city's over 180 madersas) where courses as varied as theology, Islamic law, rhetoric, and literature were taught. The university was housed in the Sankore Mosque built with a remarkably large pyramidal mihrab in the declining years of the Mali Empire. The university, one of the first in Africa, became so famous that scholars came to it from all over the Muslim world. At this period in African history, the University of Sankore was the educational capital of the western Sudan, where 25,000 students studied a rigorous academic program.

Continuous Moroccan raids emptied the schools at Timbuktu of teachers and students. Trade routes fell under local control and deteriorated beyond recovery. The Moroccans took Timbuktu in 1591 and ruled over the city until about 1780, supervising its ultimate decline. During the early nineteenth century, Timbuktu passed into the hands of a variety West African groups, including the Tuaregs and the Bamabra who founded the Bamabra Kingdom of Ségou farther to the south. In the late nineteenth century, as European powers invaded parts of Africa, French colonizers took over the city.

By the eighteenth century, the once flourishing trans-Saharan trade was greatly diminished, due in part to a shift of the gold and slave trade to the new European trading stations established on the West African coast. Despite Timbuktu's economic decline, the intellectual and spiritual life of the city continued to thrive. When the French colonized the region over fifty years after Caillié's arrival, two dozen scholastic centers still flourished in Timbuktu.

It was not until more than seventy years later that West Africans gained their emancipation from colonial control. Since 1960, Timbuktu has been part of the independent Republic of Mali, its landscape and monuments still standing in affirmation of the city's golden age and powerful cultural heritage.

Swahili

The eastern coast of Africa changed profoundly around the close of the first millennium AD. First, Bantu-speaking from the interior migrated and settled along the coast from Kenya to South Africa. Second, merchants and traders from the Muslim world and India realized the strategic importance of the east coast of Africa for commercial traffic and began to settle there. From 900 AD onwards, the east coast of Africa saw an influx of Shirazi Arabs from the Persian Gulf and even small settlements of Indians. The Arabs called this region *al-Zanj*, "The Blacks," and the coastal areas slowly came under the control of Muslim merchants from Arabia and Persia. By the 1300's, the major east African ports from Mombasa in the north to Sofala in the south had become thoroughly Islamic cities and cultural centers.

The language that grew out of the mix of Arabs and Bantu is one of the most common and widespread of the *lingua franca* (a *lingua franca* is a secondary language that is a combination of two or more languages): **Swahili** or **Kiswahili** (from the Arabic word *sawahil* which means "coast"). Swahili is primarily a Bantu language with some Arabic elements; it is written in the Arabic alphabet. Like the language, the Swahili culture was a mixture of the two cultures, Bantu and Arabic, and we call the civilizations of the African east coast "Swahili" to reflect the hybrid nature of those civilizations.

The Swahili civilizations slowly expanded southwards until they reached Kilwa in Zanzibar (from the Arabic word *al-Zanj*). Later, Swahili civilization carved out a small territory even further south around Sofala in Zimbabwe. While the northern cities remained localized and had little influence on African culture inland from the coast, the Sofalans actively went inland and spread Islam and Islamic culture deep in African territory.

The major Swahili city-states were Mogadishu, Barawa, Mombasa (Kenya), Gedi, Pate, Malindi, Zanzibar, Kilwa, and Sofala in the far south. These city-states were Muslim and cosmopolitan and they were all politically independent of one another; nothing like a Swahili empire or hegemony was formed around any of these city-states. In fact, they were more like competitive companies or corporations each vying for the lion's share of African trade. The chief export was ivory, sandalwood, ebony, and gold. These cities were also culturally cosmopolitan: they were formed from a cultural mix of Bantu, Islamic, and Indian influences, but commerce brought Chinese artifacts and culture as well as Indian culture.

While the Arabs and Persians were significant players in the growth of Swahili civilization, the cities were run by a nobility that was African in origin (with possible admixture of Persian or Arab blood). Below the nobility were the commoners and the resident foreigners who made up a large part of the citizenry. Like other Islamic African states, slavery was actively practiced.

Large Swahili communities can be found today in Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, and Comoros.

For centuries the Swahili depended greatly on trade from the Indian Ocean. The Swahili have played a vital role as middle man between east, central and south Africa, and the outside world. Trade contacts have been noted as early as 100 A.D. by early Roman writers who visited the East African coast in the first century. Trade routes extended across Tanzania into modern day Zaire, along which goods were brought to the coasts and were sold to Arab, Indian, and Portuguese traders. Materials attributed to this network of trade were also found at Great Zimbabwe. During the apogee of the middle ages, ivory and slaves became a substantial source of revenue. Many slaves sold in Zanzibar ended up in Brazil, which was then a Portuguese colony. Swahili fishermen of today still rely on the ocean to supply their primary source of income. Fish is sold to their inland neighbors in exchange for products of the interior.

It was predominately an urban living style which took great wealth, and it was the slave and ivory trade that provided it. Two story coral houses and mosques, special quarters for the women, plumbing and bathrooms of cut coral, carvings in coral and wood, products of gold and silver, fabrics of silk and cotton, leather goods, furniture, fine iron work and, if possible, Chinese porcelains were all part of this style.

Trade Routes

The climate of the Indian Ocean dictated the pattern of trade between Africa and the near East. Traders from the near East could sail to the East Coast anytime between November and February when the winds blew West. There was then a small window of commercial opportunity between March and April. By April, the winds would start blowing East and the traders would depart once again. The climate of the Indian Ocean dictated the pattern of trade between Africa and the near East. Traders from the near East could sail to the East Coast anytime between November and February when the winds blew West. There was then a small window of commercial opportunity between March and April. By April, the winds would start blowing East and the traders would depart once again.

People trading with the Swahili took advantage of the seasonal trade winds to cross the Indian Ocean. Ivory was a hugely sought after product. It was strong, easy to carve and both functional and decorative. Ivory could be regarded as the plastic of its day. After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC and the division of his empire into three, we know there was an increase in ivory imports from Africa. This was because trade with India, the other main source of ivory, became subject to higher tariffs.

The African coast of the Red Sea (in the North East) became staked out for delivery and consignment of elephant tusks. Gold from southern Africa was also much sought after in the Near East and in North Africa. Coins from Northern Africa and Persia, dating back to the 3rd century AD have been found in Zanzibar and Northern Tanzania, suggesting a strong tradition of trade between the Mediterranean world and the African world.

Textiles

The people of the Empire of Aksum (modern-day Ethiopia) traded with the people of the East Coast for gold. There is a vivid description of this in the 6th century account of the Greek merchant, Cosmas Indicopleustes:

They take with them to the mining district oxen, lumps of slate, and iron, and when they reach its neighbourhood they make a halt at a certain spot and form an encampment, which they fence round with a great hedge of thorn.

Within this they live, and having slaughtered the oxen, cut them in pieces, and lay the pieces on the top of the thorns, along with the lumps of salt and the iron.

Then come the natives bringing gold in nuggets like peas, called tancharas, and lay one or two or more of these upon what pleases them - the pieces of flesh or the salt or the iron, and then they retire to some distance off.

Then the owner of the meat approaches and if he is satisfied he takes the gold away, and upon seeing this its owner comes and takes the flesh or the salt or the iron.

Cosmas Indicopleustes in East African Coast, Select Documents.

Among the expensive textiles imported, such as embroidered silks, blue cotton cloth was hugely prized. Blue dye was unknown in East Africa and the colour was regarded as having special powers. Blue cloth was unpicked and the prized strands were woven into white cloth.

Slaves

One of the key traders with whom they did business was the Swahili traveler and trader Tippu Tip. He made himself a hugely rich and influential man in the region. A ruthless and commercially clever man, he specialised in long and dangerous treks into the interior to buy and capture slaves to sell at the coast, and had the monopoly of trade across an enormous territory stretching back from the coast. The Zanzibar slave market was only closed down in 1873.

There is little information about patterns of trade off the East Coast of Africa before the advent of Islam. One of the earliest written sources is a first century manual for travelers, the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea. Commodities referred to in the Periplus include, ivory, rhino horn, tortoise shell and coconut oil.

Asante Kingdom of Ghana

Much of the modern nation of Ghana was dominated from the late 17th through the late 19th century by a state known as Asante. Asante was the largest and most powerful of a series of states formed in the forest region of southern Ghana by people known as the Akan. Among the factors leading the Akan to form states, perhaps the most important was that they were rich in gold.

Of the components that would later make up Ghana, the state of Asante was to have the most cohesive history and would exercise the greatest influence. The Asante (or Ashanti) are members of the Twi-speaking branch of the Akan people. The groups that came to constitute the core of the Asante confederacy moved north to settle in the vicinity of Lake Bosumtwi. Before the mid-seventeenth century, the Asante began an expansion under a series of militant leaders that led to the domination of surrounding peoples and to the formation of the most powerful of the states of the central forest zone.

Under Chief Oti Akenten (r. ca. 1630-60), a series of successful military operations against neighboring Akan states brought a larger surrounding territory into alliance with Asante. At the end of the seventeenth century, Osei Tutu (d. 1712 or 1717) became *asantehene* (king of Asante). Under Osei Tutu's rule, the confederacy of Asante states was transformed into an empire with its capital at Kumasi. Political and military consolidation ensued, resulting in firmly established centralized authority. Osei Tutu was strongly influenced by the high priest, Anokye, who, tradition asserts, caused a stool of gold to descend from the sky to seal the union of Asante states. Stools already functioned as traditional symbols of chieftainship, but the Golden Stool of Asante represented the united spirit of all the allied states and established a dual allegiance that superimposed the confederacy over the individual component states. The Golden Stool remains a respected national symbol of the traditional past and figures extensively in Asante ritual.

Osei Tutu permitted newly conquered territories that joined the confederation to retain their own customs and chiefs, who were given seats on the Asante state council. Tutu's gesture made the process relatively easy and nondisruptive, because most of the earlier conquests had subjugated other Akan peoples. Within the Asante portions of the confederacy, each minor state continued to exercise internal self-rule, and its chief jealously guarded the state's prerogatives against encroachment by the central authority. A strong unity developed, however, as the various communities subordinated their individual interests to central authority in matters of national concern.

By the mid-eighteenth century, Asante was a highly organized state. The wars of expansion that brought the northern states of Mamprusi, Dagomba, and Gonja under Asante influence were

won during the reign of Asantehene Opoku Ware I (d. 1750), successor to Osei Tutu. By the 1820s, successive rulers had extended Asante boundaries southward. Although the northern expansions linked Asante with trade networks across the desert and in Hausaland to the east, movements into the south brought the Asante into contact, sometimes antagonistic, with the coastal Fante, Ga-Adangbe, and Ewe peoples, as well as with the various European merchants whose fortresses dotted the Gold Coast.

Domestic Use of Slaves

In the 15th and 16th centuries, gold-seeking traders came to Akan country not only from the great Songhay empire (in the modern Republic of Mali) and the Hausa cities of northern Nigeria, but also from Europe. After the Portuguese built the first European fort in tropical Africa at El Mina in 1482, the stretch of the Atlantic coast now in Ghana became known in Europe as the Gold Coast. Akan entrepreneurs used gold to purchase slaves from both African and European traders. Indeed, while Europeans would eventually ship at least twelve million slaves to the Americas (the estimates vary between 20 - 40 million people who were sent to the Americas as slaves from West Africa by European slave traders), they initially became involved in slave trading by selling African slaves to African purchasers. The Portuguese supplied perhaps 12,000 slaves to Akan country between 1500 and 1535, and continued selling slaves from Sao Tome and Nigeria to the Gold Coast throughout the 16th century. Before Benin imposed a ban on slave exports, a Portuguese slave trader reported that at Benin they purchased, "a great number of slaves who were bartered very profitably at El Mina. The labour of these slaves enabled the Akan to expand gold production by developing deep-level mining in addition to panning alluvial soils. Even more importantly, slave labor enabled the Akan to undertake the immensely laborious task of clearing the dense forests of southern Ghana for farming. The most prominent historian of Asante, Ivor Wilks, suggests that while some farming on a very limited scale had probably been practiced in the Ghanaian forests for millennia, only when the Akan began importing slaves in the 15th and 16th centuries were they able to shift from an economy which relied primarily on hunting and gathering to one which became primarily agricultural. As this transition to agriculture took place, Akan communities not only planted more of their traditional crops - plantains, yams, and rice - but also adopted a wide variety of new crops from the Americas, including maize (corn) and cassava, which were brought to Africa by Europeans.

Farming led to rapid increase of population in the forest region. As the population grew, small groups migrated across the Ghanaian forest, searching for good farm land. Often these groups were led, believes Wilks, by entrepreneurs who used slave labor to do the initial work of clearing forest. Later, these entrepreneurs would invite free settlers to join them, and in this way new communities were created throughout the forest. These developments set the stage for state-building in the 17th and 18th centuries. Politically ambitious groups sought not only to establish control over gold production and trading, but also to impose their authority on the new farming communities in the forest. Consequently, formerly independent villages combined together in growing states. Whereas in the late 1500s Akan country contained at least 38 small states, by the mid-1600s it had only a handful, and by 1700 only one state Asante reigned supreme. The events which led to the foundation of Asante began with the rise of Denkyira, a

state which waged wars to gain control of the Akan gold trade between 1650 and 1670. These wars led many refugees to flee into uninhabited forest regions. Among the refugees were the clan of Oyoko, who settled at Kumasi, the town which would later become famous as the Asante capital. Initially the small town of Kumasi had no choice but to become a vassal of powerful Denkyira, a situation which required not only that it pay tribute, but also that it send a hostage to live in the court of the Denkyira ruler as his servant. The chief of Kumasi chose a nephew, Osei Tutu, to become this hostage. According to Akan traditions, after becoming a distinguished general in the Denkyira army, Osei Tutu rebelled against the Denkyira king by refusing to hand over gold booty which he had captured in war. Then Osei Tutu fled home to Kumasi. His action must have marked him as a man of exceptional courage and leadership, for when the Kumasi chief died, probably in the early 1680s, the people of Kumasi selected Nana Osei Tutu as his successor. Osei Tutu soon expanded his authority, initially by placing the communities within a radius of about fifty miles of Kumasi under his control, and eventually by challenging Denkyira itself. In wars from 1699 to 1701, he defeated the Denkyira king and forced numerous Denkyira sub-chiefs to transfer their allegiance to Kumasi. In the remaining years before his death in 1717, Osei Tutu consolidated the power of his state. Osei Tutu was succeeded by Opoku Ware, who increased Asante's gold trade, tried to reduce dependence on European imports by establishing local distilling and weaving industries, and greatly increased the size of Asante. At his death in 1750, his realm stretched from the immediate hinterland of the Gold Coast to the savannahs of present-day northern Ghana. By this time it controlled an area of about 100,000 square miles and a population about 100,000 sq. miles and a population of two to three million.

Slave Trade

When the first Europeans arrived in the late fifteenth century, many inhabitants of the Gold Coast area were striving to consolidate their newly acquired territories and to settle into a secure and permanent environment. Several immigrant groups had yet to establish firm ascendancy over earlier occupants of their territories, and considerable displacement and secondary migrations were in progress. Ivor Wilks, a leading historian of Ghana, observed that Akan purchases of slaves from Portuguese traders operating from the Congo region augmented the labor needed for the state formation that was characteristic of this period. Unlike the Akan groups of the interior, the major coastal groups, such as the Fante, Ewe, and Ga, were for the most part settled in their homelands.

The Portuguese were the first to arrive. By 1471, under the patronage of Prince Henry the Navigator, they had reached the area that was to become known as the Gold Coast because Europeans knew the area as the source of gold that reached Muslim North Africa by way of trade routes across the Sahara. The initial Portuguese interest in trading for gold, ivory, and pepper so increased that in 1482 the Portuguese built their first permanent trading post on the western coast of present-day Ghana. This fortress, Elmina Castle, constructed to protect Portuguese trade from European competitors and hostile Africans, still stands.

With the opening of European plantations in the New World during the 1500s, which suddenly expanded the demand for slaves in the Americas, trade in slaves soon overshadowed gold as the principal export of the area. Indeed, the west coast of Africa became the principal source of slaves for the New World. The seemingly insatiable market and the substantial profits to be gained from the slave trade attracted adventurers from all over Europe. Much of the conflict that arose among European groups on the coast and among competing African kingdoms was the result of rivalry for control of this trade.

The volume of the slave trade in West Africa grew rapidly from its inception around 1500 to its peak in the eighteenth century. Philip Curtin, a leading authority on the African slave trade, estimates that roughly 6.3 million slaves were shipped from West Africa to North America and South America, about 4.5 million of that number between 1701 and 1810. Perhaps 5,000 a year were shipped from the Gold Coast alone. The demographic impact of the slave trade on West Africa was probably substantially greater than the number actually enslaved because a significant number of Africans perished during slaving raids or while in captivity awaiting transshipment. All nations with an interest in West Africa participated in the slave trade. Relations between the Europeans and the local populations were often strained, and distrust led to frequent clashes. Disease caused high losses among the Europeans engaged in the slave trade, but the profits realized from the trade continued to attract them.

Atlantic Slave Trade

I. INTRODUCTION

Atlantic Slave Trade, the forced transportation of at least 10 million enslaved Africans from their homelands in Africa to destinations in Europe and the Americas during the 15th through 19th centuries. European and North American slave traders transported most of these slaves to areas in tropical and subtropical America, where the vast majority worked as laborers on large agricultural plantations. See Slavery.

Between 1440 and 1880 Europeans and North Americans exchanged merchandise for slaves along 5600 km (3500 miles) of Africa's western and west central Atlantic coasts. These slaves were then transported to other locations around the Atlantic Ocean. The vast majority went to Brazil, the Caribbean, and Spanish-speaking regions of South America and Central America. Smaller numbers were taken to Atlantic islands, continental Europe, and English-speaking areas of the North American mainland. Approximately 12 million slaves left Africa via the Atlantic trade, and more than 10 million arrived. The Atlantic slave trade involved the largest intercontinental migration of people in world history prior to the 20th century. This transfer of so many people, over such a long time, had enormous consequences for every continent bordering the Atlantic. It profoundly changed the racial, social, economic, and cultural makeup in many of the American nations that imported slaves. It also left a legacy of racism that many of those nations are still struggling to overcome.

II. SLAVERY IN AFRICA BEFORE THE 1500S

Slavery was not unique to African societies. Various forms of human bondage existed from early times. Sumerians in Mesopotamia relied on slave labor before 3000 BC, as did the ancient Egyptians. China had slavery during the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), and the societies of classical Greece and Rome made heavy use of slave labor from the 6th century BC through the 5th century AD.

Most societies in sub-Saharan Africa also used captives and dependents for labor. African slavery typically differed from others, however. Land in Africa tended to be plentiful, owned communally, and parceled out to families according to their needs based on the number of laborers they could marshal. To increase production, families had to invest in more workers. The quickest way was to buy slaves. Thus, in much of Africa, those interested in increasing their wealth through production purchased slaves. Usually, second- or third-generation slaves became recognized members of the household, no longer liable for sale. Slaves of royal families could even serve in offices of state. But no matter how integrated their situation or important

their role, in the kinship-based societies of sub-Saharan Africa, slaves remained outsiders, or at least other than full-fledged kin.

When the Atlantic slave trade began, institutions already were in place to provide slaves in exchange for commodities. Only the European shippers and the American destination were different in the beginning. What proved novel about the Atlantic slave trade was its scale: No other exporting of slaves matched the massive, involuntary movement of people out of western and west central Africa between 1440 and 1880. Although the trans-Saharan trade transported nearly as many slaves, the Atlantic slave trade took place over a much shorter period and on average moved much larger numbers of slaves per year.

III. ROOTS OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

The Atlantic slave trade began because a great demand for labor developed on plantations spread about the Atlantic, especially in the tropics of the Western Hemisphere. Most of the plantations produced sugarcane for Europe, but planters eventually grew such other products as coffee, cocoa, rice, indigo, tobacco, and cotton. The Atlantic slave trade became an integral part of an international trading system.

A. Spread of the Plantation System

Europeans craved cane sugar as soon as they encountered it in the 11th century during the early Crusades in the Middle East. Planting, harvesting, and processing sugar cane for export required a sizeable workforce. Because labor in the sugar fields was a strenuous and exhausting task, plantation owners used slave labor. Planters could work slaves in inhuman ways, dawn to dusk, to bring in the cane before it rotted in the fields. Planters could not make similar demands on typical workers of the time. Most of these workers were feudal serfs who were legally bound to work on the land owned by their landlords (see Serfdom). Sugar plantations and a related slave trade developed around the eastern Mediterranean in response to the growing demand for sugar. Among the earliest slaves on these plantations were Slavic peoples—the source of the words for slave in several European languages. As demand for sugar grew, the plantations spread westward, reaching Spain and Portugal by the 14th century.

Portuguese sailors who ventured into the Atlantic in the 15th century enabled plantation agriculture to spread to such tropical Atlantic islands as Madeira, the Canary Islands, and Sao Tome, all of which emerged as major sugar producers. The nearest labor force for these plantations was Africa's western coast. Eventually plantation agriculture spread to the Americas: After 1550, northeast Brazil became the leading sugar-producing area, and after 1640 the leading position passed to the Caribbean. Eventually, the British colonies of mainland North America imported slaves to grow tobacco, rice, and indigo. Extensive cotton production based

on slave labor did not begin in the southern United States until the beginning of the 19th century.

B. Africans as the Labor Source

New World plantation owners sought labor that was abundant and inexpensive. Native Americans were the obvious choice, but they died rapidly from such diseases as smallpox, mumps, and measles, which the Europeans introduced into the region and to which the Native Americans lacked immunity. They also could run away with ease: Their homes were usually close by, they were familiar with the land, and they knew how to survive on indigenous plants and animals. European indentured servants—criminals sentenced to labor or men obligated to work for a set time in exchange for ocean passage—also fell victim to diseases, mostly tropical malaria and yellow fever. They could also escape and easily blend in as members of the colony's white ruling class.

But Africans were different: They came from an environment where those who survived into adolescence acquired some immunity to such "Old World" diseases as smallpox, mumps, and measles, as well as to such tropical maladies as malaria and yellow fever. This meant they lived three to five times longer than white laborers under the difficult conditions on plantations, and longer still than Native Americans. Also, when Africans ran away they could neither go home nor be mistaken for members of the planters' society.

The Atlantic slave trade began as a trickle in the 1440s and grew slowly through the 17th century. By 1700, 25,000 slaves, on average, were crossing the Atlantic every year. After 1700 the trade grew much more rapidly to a peak in the 1780s, when an average year saw 80,000 African slaves arrive on American shores. Then the trade fell off more slowly and after 1850 quickly declined.

IV. CONDUCT OF THE SLAVE TRADE

The first Europeans to sail down Africa's west coast in the mid-15th century attempted to steal Africans from their homes. Several violent confrontations showed Africans' strength, however, and African boycotts proved how dependent Europeans were for such necessities as food and water. It became evident that the only practical way to obtain slaves or other commodities was to bring items the residents wanted in exchange. Within a short time, Europeans and Africans established a systematic way of trading that changed little over several centuries.

Inland, Africans developed various commercial networks for supplying slaves and moving them to the coast. Across the interior of West Africa, Muslim families organized slave caravans and

moved them from the interior to the coast. Along the Gold and Slave coasts (an area now comprising the nations of Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria) the rulers of large states such as Ashanti, Dahomey, and Oyo obtained slaves through tribute, which was provided by the rulers of less powerful states in exchange for protection or as a symbol of allegiance. East of the Niger Delta, African commercial associations (known as trading houses) controlled slave procurement and delivery. Along the Angolan coast, officials of the Portuguese crown first organized inland slaving, but by the 18th century private Portuguese, mulatto (individuals of mixed African and European descent), and African traders were taking trade goods to interior markets and returning with slaves.

At various points along the coast, buyers and sellers met and struck deals. Europeans examined slaves; Africans looked over merchandise; and then the parties haggled to set the values of each. The assortment of the Europeans' trade goods was always an important factor. Any notion that Africans were duped into accepting trinkets of little value is incorrect. Most knew what they wanted and could hold out for good terms. Typical commodities exchanged for slaves included cloth, metals and metalware, firearms and gunpowder, spirits, cutlery, coins, decorative wear, horses, salt, cowrie shells, and paper. The prices Europeans paid for slaves rose steadily through the years. An English buyer could obtain a healthy slave for 5.5 pounds worth of commodities in 1690 and 14 pounds worth in 1760. The same slave sold in Virginia for 15 pounds in 1690 and 45 pounds in 1760.

Slaves were not distributed evenly around the Atlantic. Roughly 40 percent of the total went to the Caribbean islands; another 38 percent went to Brazil; and Spanish America accounted for 17 percent. Only about 6 percent entered what would become the United States. Mortality factors affected the various populations' abilities to reproduce, however, so the geographical distribution of African slaves does not correspond to today's population of African descent in the western hemisphere. Slaves working on Caribbean and South American sugar plantations faced higher mortality rates as a result of harsh labor conditions and exposure to tropical diseases. As a result, slave populations in many sugar-producing areas grew steadily only because planters imported a continuous supply of new slaves from Africa. Slaves in what were the British North American colonies tended to live longer, healthier lives due to less brutal working conditions and a climate less hospitable to tropical diseases. As a result, slave populations in those areas continued to grow even after Britain and the United States abolished the importation of slaves in the early 1800s.

The Portuguese transported the greatest number of slaves in the early years of the slave trade, exercising a near monopoly well into the 17th century. Portugal had several advantages because of its early expansion into Africa and the ease of transporting slaves over the relatively short distance from Africa to the Portuguese colony of Brazil. The annexation of Portugal by

Spain, from 1580 to 1640, tightened the Portuguese hold over the slave trade. Phillip II of Spain granted Portuguese merchants a monopoly on the importation of slaves to Spain's colonies in America.

Portuguese influence declined after it gained independence from Spain in 1640. This coincided with the establishment of sugar plantations in the West Indies by the British, French, and Dutch. These nations began to claim larger parts of the slave trade during the 1640s, and by the 18th century the British were the dominant slave traders.

The Atlantic slave trade became part of a prosperous trading cycle known as the triangular trade. In the first leg of the triangle, European merchants purchased African slaves with commodities manufactured in Europe or imported from European colonies in Asia. They then sold the slaves in the Caribbean and purchased such easily transportable commodities as sugar, cotton, and tobacco. Finally the merchants would sell these goods in Europe and North America. They would use the profits from these sales to purchase more goods to trade in Africa, continuing the trading cycle.

V. FINAL DESTINATION

Slaves faced a variety of experiences in the Americas, but nearly all involved heavy physical labor, poor housing, and insufficient medical care. Sugar plantations were the norm from northeastern Brazil through the Caribbean islands and plantation conditions brought the highest mortality rates. For example, British planters imported about 264,000 slaves into the Caribbean between 1640 and 1700, but high mortality rates reduced the number of slaves on the islands to about 100,000 by the time of the 1700 census. In the French colony of Saint Domingue, about 860,000 slaves arrived between 1680 and 1791, but the black population was only 480,000 in 1791. Slaves also worked mines in Peru or Mexico and labored to produce tobacco, indigo, rice, or cotton on the British North American mainland. In the few places where plantation agriculture was not profitable, they did a variety of tasks for their masters, from working as house servants to practicing a trade.

VI. ABOLITION OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Ending the Atlantic slave trade was a long process that involved changing economic circumstances and rising humanitarian concerns. In the late 18th century, European economies began to shift from agriculture to industry. Plantations remained profitable, but Europeans had promising new areas for investment. The slave-operated American plantations had to compete for capital and preferential laws with textile mills and other industries that hired free laborers.

Also, the need for the slave trade lessened as American slave societies approached the point where they could reproduce enough offspring to meet labor needs.

But the humanitarian motive was strong, too. Antislavery sentiments began to appear in Europe in the 18th century with roots in Christian religious principles and in the egalitarian philosophy that emerged during the Age of Enlightenment. By 1750 abolitionists were devoting money and time toward ending the slave trade and slavery itself. Their efforts were aided by the egalitarian ideals of the American Revolution (1775-1783) and the French Revolution (1789-1799) and by such bloody slave rebellions as the Haitian Slave Revolt on the French island of St. Domingue in 1791.

Britain outlawed the slave trade in 1807, as did the United States in 1808. The Netherlands followed in 1814, France in 1815, Spain in 1820. It remained for the British, who controlled the world's most powerful fleet, to enforce antislave trade laws, and that was difficult. The Atlantic slave trade continued, with declining numbers, through most of the 19th century. The movement of African slaves across the Atlantic did not end until slavery was outlawed everywhere in the Americas. Cuba was the last to outlaw slavery, in 1888.

THE EAST AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

SLAVE-CATCHING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN—A RECORD OF NAVAL EXPERIENCE. By Capt. COLOMB, R. N. London: LONGMANS, GREEN & Co. New-York: SCRIBNER, WELFORD & ARMSTRONG.

DHOW-CHASING IN ZANZIBAR WATERS AND ON THE EASTERN COAST OF AFRICA. Narrative of Five Years' Experience in the Suppression of the Slave Trade. By Capt. G. L. SULLIVAN, R. N., late Commander of H. M. S. Daphne. With maps and illustrations from photographs and sketches taken on the spot by the author. London: SAMSON LOW, MARSTON, LOW & SEARLE. New-York: SCRIBNER, WELFORD & ARMSTRONG.

The conclusion of the treaty between the British Government and the Sultan of Zanzibar for the complete suppression of the slave trade between the island of Zanzibar and the African coast, marks an epoch in the history of civilization all the more important because it has been so tardily accomplished. Why the Christian nations should not long ago have taken concerted action with the object of at once and forever putting an end to the inhuman traffic in that region might perhaps be explained with slight investigation, but this is not the proper place for the inquiry. It is enough to know that the desired consummation has been reached, and that the same half century which has witnessed the emancipation of the Russian serfs and the complete abolition of slavery in our own land, has also seen this effective blow struck in the home and birthplace of that foul relic of barbarism. If, as Americans, we may not congratulate ourselves upon having had any immediate part in the conclusion of the treaty to which Sir Bartle Frere, or Dr. Kirk, acting under this instructions, compelled the Sultan of Zanzibar to see that it was for his best interests to accede, we may at least claim to have had an important indirect agency in precipitating the result. The two volumes whose titles are above quoted give all the proof that every need be adduced of the utter inefficiency of the attempts which had previously been made by the British and American Governments to suppress the traffic in negroes between the African coast and Zanzibar. Every year had seen dhows destroyed, and a few hundred negroes set free; but the narratives of Capts. Columb and Sullivan both make it painfully apparent that it was all the time a serious question whether, taking the sum total of these efforts, the true interests of humanity were, after all, much promoted. It was a common occurrence when a dhow laden with negroes was chased by a British cruiser or its boats, for the Arab captain to beach his clumsy craft, preferring to run the risk of losing a large proportion of his human cargo by drowning in the breakers rather than have the whole condemned. From

the frequency of these disasters it may be doubted whether there may not have been as many negroes driven to death as were rescued from prospective bondage.

The fact that the trade in negroes between Zanzibar and the coast of Africa is now a thing of the past, gives historical value to the works of Capts. Columb and Sullivan, and it is not a little curious that they should be the first works published devoted to this important part of a question in which humanitarians the world over have, for so many years, taken such a lively interest. Each of the officers named complains that in taking charge of his cruiser on the African coast, he was compelled to work out from his own experience the best method of accomplishing the duties to which he had been detailed. Whatever reports his predecessors may have made were buried in department files. All that either knew was that he was to do his utmost for the suppression of the East African slave trade, that he was to capture all the dhows he could, but how this capturing was to be done, or precisely what a dhow was, neither knew until personal experience or observation taught him. Capt. Sullivan's experience was, to be sure, more extensive and varied than that of Capt. Colomb. He cruised in the *Castor*, the *Pantaloon*, and the *Daphne* at intervals from 1849 to 1870, while Capt. Colomb had command of her Majesty's steamer *Dryad* only for some twenty years succeeding 1868. Capt. Sullivan's story, however, is just as inferior to Capt. Colomb's as his opportunities for observation were greater. He writes awkwardly, tells very little that one who is in search of information upon the subject would care to know and had it not been for the necessity under which his publishers had laid him of making a book, would have been content with a bare transcript of his, supplementing it with sundry extracts from official documents. Capt. Colomb, however, works out exceedingly interesting narrative, and writes with more than ordinary skill, describing the striking incidents of his cruise, occasionally with much graphic power.

It has been said, and Capt. Colomb thinks with much exaggeration, that "the whole of the negro population of Eastern Africa are liable to capture and sale." "The exceptions," he adds, "omitting Egyptian territory, are the Somali tribes, who inhabit the country about Cape Guardafui and cohabit the coast line much farther south, who are not lawfully held in bondage by Mohammedans, and few of mixed races who live under the protections of the Portuguese flag. The remaining population, at the mercy of the Arab or negro sportsmen, sell themselves, are shot down, netted deco-speared, bought, or kidnapped, with the intervention of any game laws or regulation for the preserving of the breeds." The horrors of this traffic in the interior of Africa have never yet been, from the nature of the case can never be adequately described or fully appreciated; but the statement of Dr. Livingstone and other explorers give glimpses quite sufficient to indicate the horrible cruelties with which the traffic is accompanied. The persons by whom it is carried on are for the most part Arabs, subjects to the Sultan of Zanzibar. These

slave dealers start for the interior, armed and provided with articles for the bartering of slaves, such as beads and cotton cloths. When they have penetrated the country far enough for their purpose they incite the natives to war upon each other, and finally assist one side or the other. Their support invariably decided the struggle, and the captives, either by force or purchase, become their property, the price in the latter case being a few yards of cotton cloth. In these conditions thousands are killed or mortally wounded, whole villages are burned, and large extents of country devastated. The younger negroes, whether male or female, are generally preferred by the slave-dealers, but whole tribes are sometime swept away in raids. Having obtained a sufficient number of slaves, to give a wide margin for heavy losses on the return, the slave dealers start for the coast. The slaves march in gangs, the males with their necks in heavy forked sticks, which at night are fastened to the ground or lashed together so as to make escape impossible. The women and children are held with thongs. Any attempt at escaping is punished with death; any who may become sick on the way are left behind to die, and the remnant arrive at their destination in the greatest miserable destitution. The horrors of this march to the coast in their way quite equal those of the fearful "middle passage" across the Atlantic, as it was in the days of the slave traffic.

Kilwa, or Quiloa, as it was formerly spelled, point on the coast upon which these caravans of slaves converge, and whence they are shipped in small proportion to the northern ports, but all to Zanzibar, whence they are distributed to the dominions of the Sultan, on the shores, on to the interior of Arabia or Persia.

It is during the passage from Kilwa to Zanzibar that the British cruisers have heretofore had with these unfortunate Africans, and it is of experiences in these waters that Capts. Sullivan and Colomb tell us in the volumes now under review. The monsoons which blow with such wonderful regularity in the Indian Ocean are the great regulators of traffic in that region. From October until April, wind and current sweep across from the south of India and the southern coast of Arabia, and in this season the Arab traders have been accustomed to run down to Zanzibar with their dhows with their human cargoes, returning any time between April and September when the trade winds have changed. With ordinary skill the return from Kilwa to Zanzibar might be easily made in three days, but the Arab navigators, with characteristic shiftlessness, frequently take ten... days for the trip. Their dhows are barely adequate for the voyage. They are rarely ever of more than 350 tons burden, and the majority are of much less capacity.... The greater number of them are not decked at all, while they are occasionally decked over entirely. Cross-beams at intervals strengthen the craft, while strips of bamboo over these answer the purpose of planking. Sometimes a light super-structure of great size forming a poop is added at the stern, and serves as a dwelling for the captain and his family or the crew. The dhows carry only one mast, a heavy, rough spar slightly tapered, and leaning over toward the bow instead of raking toward the stern. If a second mast is used, it is much shorter than the

foremast, and is near the stern. The sails are neither exactly like the lateen sail of the Mediterranean nor the lug sail of the English Channel, but resemble both, and are apparently altogether too large for the size of the vessel. They are so poorly built that to two them at any speed would pull them to pieces; yet they are swift sailors, frequently making ten miles per hour. Their outfit is invariably of the rudest description. The wood-work is either bare or smeared with oil of an unearthly smell. Sand or shingle serve ordinarily for ballast, and the cargo, food, ballast, and raiment form a conglomerate at the bottom of the vessel not unlike the debris of a dust-heap. Ropes made from cocoa-nut fibre are used in the rigging. They ordinarily carry arms—seldom or never cannon, but invariably muskets, swords, spears, and shields. Water is carried in large, square, wooden tanks, commonly two or three, holding, perhaps, 100 to 150 gallons. These tanks, like the ships, are ordinarily leaky, and while one lets out the fresh water the other lets in the salt.

The number of negroes which these dhows carry varies greatly. One of 80 to 100 tons will carry from 100 to 150 slaves, and as many as 420 have been taken in two vessels measuring in the aggregate but 340 tons. Comfort for the living cargo is, of course, not at all aimed at by the masters of these dhows, but Capt. Colomb does not coincide with those who make much of the fearful sufferings which the slaves endure on the voyage from Kilwa to Zanzibar. The master of the craft, he says, submits to much the same discomfort as his involuntary passengers, and in confirmation of this he quotes the official statement of the Resident of the Persian Gulf, who, as long ago as 1844, wrote: "The treatment of the African slaves is at no time either severe or cruel. During the sea voyage they are not bound or kept under particular restraint. Rice, dates, and fish in sufficient quantities form their food, and a coarse cloth round the middle of the body constitutes their only clothing." If disease, want, and crowding come together, however, the suffering must be as intense as it is possible to conceive.

Many Arab merchants, Capt. Colomb thinks, ship a cargo of slaves just as they would any other merchandise, and with hardly any conception of the real infamy of the traffic; nor can they form any conception of the sentiments of Christian nations regarding slavery, as "no more moral pressure is put upon them to abjure slavery than there is on a Christian to build a church."

The data for determining the exact extent to which the slave trade has been prosecuted between the east coast of Africa and Zanzibar are by no means as definite as it would seem might have been collected during the many years that efforts have been made for its suppression. It is estimated that 15,000 head of slaves are—or rather were—exported annually from Kilwa, and probably 2,000 more were issued each year from other ports. All of these, however, do not go beyond the dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar. Some of them remain in the islands of Zanzibar, or Pemba, or go to Mobas or Lamoo. Dr. Kirk estimated the

requirements of the island and town of Zanzibar at about 1,700 yearly, and if this estimate were doubled for the whole of the Sultan's dominions the western slave trade has involved the fortunes of about 13,000 slaves annually. Capt. Sullivan, basing his estimate upon the revenue of the Sultan of Zanzibar from the tax on slaves, varies widely from Capt. Colomb. The highest tax, he says, amounts only to sixteen shillings per head, and as the Sultan's income from this source has been stated at £20,000, it follows that this represents an export of 25,000 slaves. A statement in Dr. Kirk's returns, quoted by Hon. C. Vivian, in his examination before a committee of the House of Commons, puts the revenue of the Sultan from this source, between 1867 and 1868, at £56,000. This would represent 70,000 slaves, but as Capt. Colomb very clearly shows that the capacity and number of the dhows engaged in the trade would not be equal to the transportation of 20,000 slaves per annum, the extent of this overestimate is at once apparent.

That considerable numbers of slaves have been imported as well as exported via Zanzibar Capt. Colomb concedes, while he acknowledges himself at a loss to estimate the extent of this traffic or its precise course. "We can trace the unfortunate `desirability,'" he says, "from his first acquirement in the lake district of Africa to the port of export, through the general market, all along the coasts of Africa and Arabia to the vicinity of Ras-al-Hadd; but there we lose him. How it is we know so little of his destination I have never been quite able to comprehend. We, however, find him after his final sale, as a pearl-diver in the shallows of the green waters of Oman; as the familiar dependent and domestic of the Arab gentleman; as the servant of the Persian merchant. They go even up to Bussorah and Mohamrah, and from thence I have no doubt some find their way into Turkish harems. It does not seem to be quite known, or if known, it is not published, where the central depot for the receipt of slaves lies, or if there be a central depot anywhere on the shores of the Persian Gulf." It has been stated in Parliamentary reports that there is a slave market at Muscat itself, but Capt. Colomb does not credit this. All that he considers as definitely settled is that while "the whole coast line of Asia, from Suez to, say Guadir on the Beloochistan shore, 'furnishes ports of import,' the smallest numbers are probably disembarked between Bab-el-Mandeb and Ras-el-Hadd; a larger number in the Red Sea, and the largest of all beyond Ras-el-Hadd."

Another very interesting branch of this investigation is the profit made in the course of this slave traffic. "The price of slaves," Capt. Colomb sententiously remarks, seems to be as capricious as that of horses." A ten-year old negro in Central Africa has been rated, on good authority, as worth two yards of calico—say ten pence sterling, just the price of one goat or of ten fowls in the same locality. Say that the chances of his reaching Kilwa are one in four, and his value at the coast will be four shillings and two pence. If the cost of his food for the month's journey be two shillings, and that of his fellows who die on the way eight shillings, the export duty \$2, and the freight to Zanzibar four shillings, he will have cost the dealer by the time he reaches the market, £1 6s. 6d.—say \$7. Such a slave Capt. Colomb has seen offered in the

Zanzibar market for \$20, while \$16 was refused for him. If the charges for outfit, labor, etc., in collecting the slaves from the interior be \$5 per head, the auctioneers in the market would be asking a profit of sixty-six per cent, and refusing a profit of thirty-three per cent. So far as rather imperfect and unsatisfactory data give any ground for general inferences, there does not seem to have been any very marked or general variation in the price of slaves during the last thirty years; but perhaps the abolition of the centre for distribution at Zanzibar, and the consequent increased difficulty in procuring them, will tell a different story during the next few years.

It would be premature to conclude that with the ratification of this treaty all traffic in slaves through Zanzibar will at once and forever cease. As long ago as 1865 a most comprehensive treaty was concluded between the British Government and the Queen of Madagascar. Under it the Queen engaged to do all in her power to suppress the trade in slaves. She gave her formal consent to the searching by British cruisers of any Malagash or Arab vessels suspected of being engaged in the slave trade, whether under sail or at anchor in the waters of Madagascar; and, further, she agreed that if such vessels or their crews should prove to be engaged in the slave trade, that the cruisers of her Britannic Majesty might deal with them as if they had been caught in a piratical undertaking. More than this, slaves must not even be landed from beyond sea in Madagascar, and if brought in surreptitiously or otherwise they must be surrendered to the British Government. No more ample powers could be asked or given than these, and if the Queen of Madagascar had been sincere in the concessions, and co-operated cordially in carrying them out, the prosecution of the slave trade within her territory would, of course, be an impossibility. In point of fact, however, Capt. Colomb thinks that the import of slaves into Madagascar from the mainland still amounts to many thousands annually. Some such result is likely to follow at Zanzibar, at least for a short time to come. The Sultan, however, is more susceptible to the influences and demands of civilization than his semi-savage contemporary, and it is to be hoped that the provisions of the treaty just signed shall be sincere, cordial, and thoroughly effective.

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