

Hunwick, John: Black Africans in the Mediterranean World. Introduction to a Neglected Aspect of the African Diaspora. In: Elisabeth Savage (Hrsg.): The Human Commodity. Perspectives on the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade. London, Portland 1992, S. 24-25.

MANUMISSION AND THE LOT OF THE FREED SLAVE

As already observed, Islamic ethics encouraged the manumission of slaves while Islamic law provided the juristic framework within which the injunctions of the Qur'an and Hadith could find practical expression. There were several ways in which a slave might obtain his freedom. Firstly, the master might free his slave as an act of piety at any time and masters did evidently celebrate important family events, such as marriages or deaths by acts of manumission. According to Morell, writing of Algeria in the 1850s, 'scrupulous Musselmans think themselves bound to offer liberty after nine years good service, because it is thought that after that time they have paid their value in labour'. Manumission at the expiry of a given term, or on repayment of the slave's value was also common. The slave could enter into a written contract with his master (*kitaba*) to buy his freedom installmentally and after this had been agreed upon he could not be disposed of. He was generally then granted the Status of a *ma'dhun* - one 'granted permission' to conduct business on his own behalf. Slaves also commonly obtained their freedom on their master's death, either by the master writing this condition into his will (as part of the one-third of his estate not subject to formal division) or in the case of a concubine who had borne him a child (the so-called *umm walad*), by the automatic process of enfranchisement that such a status guaranteed her on her master's death. The *umm walad* and the slave who had been promised freedom on his master's death (*al-mudabbar*) could not be disposed of thereafter since they were already conditionally free. When a master freed a slave during his lifetime he was under an unwritten obligation to see that the freedman was able to establish himself independently. In nineteenth-century Egypt a freed slave was given a sum of money equivalent to about half of his replacement value to set himself up in a craft or trade. A female slave would not be freed unless she could be found a marriage partner, in which case the master acted as her marriage guardian (*wali*).

[...] This brings us to what is, perhaps, the most interesting question - or series of questions - with respect to black Africans in the Mediterranean world. What became of the millions of black Africans who were taken as slaves into the Mediterranean domains of Islam over the centuries? Is it the case that, in Bernard Lewis's words, 'There is nothing in the Arab, Persian and Turkish lands that resembles the great black and mulatto populations of North and South America'? There are two answers to this. First, it is true in the sense that there do not appear to be any massive concentrations of black Africans, no ghettos, no visible struggles for civil rights, etc.

Yet, the evidence presented below and that contained in the writings of others would suggest that, at least in regard to North Africa and Arabia, the slave trade may have left behind a not inconsiderable residuum. If this is so, then it must therefore be asked whether it is the lack of contemporary visibility of such populations that makes it seem that they do not exist. A possible answer to this may be that descendants of freed slaves occupy such lowly rungs on the socio-economic ladder that they are quite marginalised both socially and physically. Dispersal or confinement to remoter suburbs and rural villages would likely result in lack of social coherence and, combined with a depressed social and economic Status, make it the more difficult for social protest to emerge and attention to be focused. Lewis offers two suggestions for the absence of large black populations: ...

Frage 1: Im Transsaharahandel wurden schwarze Sklaven aus den Gebieten südlich der Sahara vor allem in die nordafrikanischen Länder gebracht. Warum gibt es in Nordafrika keine Konzentrationen schwarzer Afrikaner, wie z.B. in amerikanischen Ghettos?

Hunwick, John: Black Africans in the Mediterranean World. Introduction to a Neglected Aspect of the African Diaspora. In: Elisabeth Savage (Hrsg.): The Human Commodity. Perspectives on the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade. London, Portland 1992, S. 31.

[...] The notion of the inferiority and ultimately the enslavability of 'un-believers' and in particular 'pagans' (*mushrikun*) was an implicit assumption of the Islamic theological-juridical system. There was never any self-generated movement for the abolition of slavery from within the Muslim world, since slavery was considered an institution sanctioned by the holy law of Islam (*the shari'a*). The medieval law books such as the *Risala* of Ibn Abi Zayd and the *Mukhtasar* of Khalil, from which I have drawn most of the points in my discussion of the legal position of slaves, are still considered fundamental text-books of Islamic jurisprudence in Africa and are studied integrally in traditional Muslim teaching circles.

Delacampagne, Christian; Die Geschichte der Sklaverei. Düsseldorf, Zürich, 2004, S. 125-127.

[...] In Ermangelung detaillierter Quellenangaben ist es schwer, sich eine genaue Vorstellung von der zahlenmäßigen Bedeutung dieses Transsahara-Handels zu machen, der neun Jahrhunderte vor dem transatlantischen Sklavenhandel einsetzte. Neben einigen anderen hat dies der Historiker Ralph A. Austen dennoch versucht, indem er die verschiedensten Informationsquellen noch einmal miteinander verglich. Ich kann seine Schätzungen hier nur wiedergeben. Selbst wenn es sich um annähernde Werte handelt, so sind sie doch erschreckend hoch (an die 7.500.000 Menschen wurden verschleppt), vor allem, wenn man bedenkt, dass sich der fragliche Sklavenhandel über zwölfhundert Jahre erstreckte. Zwei Spitzenwerte sind dabei bezeichnend: einer im 10./11. Jahrhundert, der andere im 19. Jahrhundert, in der Zeit vor der europäischen Kolonisierung Afrikas, die zwar den Sklavenhandel verbot, ohne jedoch die Sklaverei als solche auszulöschen.

[...] Offensichtlich begann die Tragödie der in die Sklaverei verschleppten Afrikaner nicht erst mit der Eroberung Amerikas - sie setzte schon viel früher ein. Dennoch ist der arabische (oder afrikaisch-arabische) Sklavenhandel auch heute noch viel weniger bekannt als der europäische. Schuld sind daran nicht nur fehlende Quellenaussagen, sondern vor allem die Tatsache, dass dieser Sklavenhandel im Gegensatz zum europäischen innerhalb der islamischen Welt niemals wirklich angeprangert wurde (nicht einmal in streng wissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen), da es dort immer noch verpönt ist, eine vom Koran gutgeheißene Praxis zu verurteilen. Die westlichen Historiker dagegen zögern, sich mit diesem Gegenstand zu beschäftigen. Handelt es sich doch um einen wunden Punkt - vor allem in den Vereinigten Staaten, wo ein Teil der afroamerikanischen Gemeinschaft (quantitativ nicht unerheblich und politisch stark engagiert, sei es auf Seiten der Palästinenser gegen Israel oder der arabischen Völker gegen den Westen) sich seit Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts immer mehr zum Islam bekehrt, ein Prozess, der noch lange nicht abgeschlossen ist.

Frage 2: Nach Meinung verschiedener Historiker wird das Thema Transsaharahandel im Vergleich zum Transatlantikhandel stark vernachlässigt. Was ist von der Erklärung Delacampagnes zu halten?

Fischer, Allan G. B.; Fischer, Humphrey J.: Slavery and Muslim Society in Africa. The Institution in Saharan and Sudanic Africa and the Trans-Saharan Trade. Guildford, London 1970.

Hurgronje described the slave market in Mecca in most amiable terms. Comparing Mecca and Cairo, in the 1880s, he said:

“No unbeliever comes to Mekka, while the Azhar Mosque [in Cairo] has been defiled by the feet of English men and women. In Mekka there is a slave market. In Egypt slaves can only be bought in secret, as if it were a sin.”

Klein, Martin A.: The Slave Trade in the Western Sudan during the Nineteenth Century. In: Elisabeth Savage (Hrsg.): The Human Commodity. Perspectives on the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade. London, Portland 1992, S. 39.

It was a tragic irony that the end of the Atlantic slave trade and the gradual closing down of markets in North Africa led not to a decline in the slave trade within Africa, but to a dramatic increase in enslavement and with it an increase in the destruction of human life. By and large, we cannot quantify that trade. The statistical data available to us are largely from the period of the conquest, when the French military tolerated and participated in the trade. The story they tell seems clear, but the data available on preceding periods is much less precise. The end of the Atlantic trade was paralleled by the gradual closing off of other export markets. At first glance, the drop in prices which followed these two developments was not as great as might have been expected.' (See prices in Table I). This can be explained only by the fact that even in the eighteenth Century, the region was absorbing a large number of the slaves being moved within Africa. The drop in prices simply made slaves more attractive.

Wright, John: The Wadai Benghazi Slave Route. In: Elisabeth Savage (Hrsg.): The Human Commodity. Perspectives on the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade. London, Portland 1992, S. 174.

The Wadai road served as an artery of the slave trade longer than any other largely because it was well beyond the control of any outside power committed to its abolition, including even the Turks. Indeed, despite official Turkish prohibitions, Benghazi remained a centre of unconcealed slavery and slave-trading until the late nineteenth century, if not later. As Gustav Nachtigal put it, 'the profit represented by the slaves, amounting to three or four times the purchase price, is so substantial that enterprising merchants do not allow themselves to be deterred even by the risk of confiscation'.

[...] For in practice it took France and Italy many years to control their respective ends of the trade route, while its middle sections were not brought under effective European authority until even later. The French were only fully in control of Borku and Ennedi after the First World War, and finally established their authority in Tibesti in 1929. The Italians did not occupy Fazzan until 1930 and Kufra until 1931. Knud Holmboe, the Danish Muslim traveller who was in Libya in 1930, learned that slavery was still endemic in Kufra. A large slave market was still held there every Thursday, and a good slave cost the equivalent of £15 Sterling.

Frage 3: Warum dauerte die Abschaffung des transsaharischen Sklavenhandels soviel länger, als die des Transatlantikhandels, der in den 1860ern nahezu beendet war?