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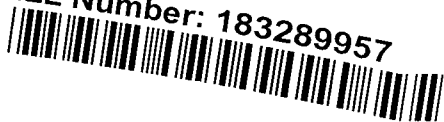
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# The Mediterranean Islamic Slave Trade out of Africa: A Tentative Census

RALPH A. AUSTEN

Efforts to tabulate the number of slaves taken from Africa by Muslims have always been a subject of political polemics and academic controversy both because of their ideological implications (were Arabs 'worse' for Africa than Europeans?) and their methodological dimensions (how can one count the uncountable and what does one accomplish by such efforts anyway?). However, the calculation of the slave trade across the Sahara Desert and down the Nile Valley has aroused far less controversy than similar efforts for the Indian Ocean Islamic slave trade.<sup>1</sup> Muslim merchants and shippers in Egypt and the Maghrib did not enter into as much direct conflict with European abolitionists as their East African brethren and the issue of slave trading is less central to colonial penetration of northern Africa. Thus, disputes among students of this commerce have few ideological overtones and major disparities among seriously documented estimates are mainly the result of differing definitions of the zones in question.<sup>2</sup>

The present paper follows the methodology of the author's previous work in this area. All significant observations of both slave trading and the presence of African slaves and/or ex-slaves in receiving Mediterranean areas are presented in tabular form (see Tables 1 to 5).<sup>3</sup> The number of observations is greatly increased by those published in 1979, and the analysis of their quantitative meaning is more developed. Nevertheless, the results are far from precise; indeed, greater sophistication has, as will be seen, often led to greater scepticism about clear conclusions.

The evidence used falls into two broad categories: literary accounts and serial data. The former, by far the most abundant, consists of statements by observers at greater or lesser distance from the trade and its aftermath (this distance is indicated in the annotations of 'original source' in the tables). Apart from the various distortions due to the ignorance or bias of the observers, such evidence usually describes the slave trade itself in the form of 'capacity estimates', that is, statements about what could be expected under maximal conditions (almost always just previous to the period actually being observed) rather than calculations of what occurred statistically over normally varying conditions.<sup>4</sup>

The serial data consists mainly of customs records from Cairo and Tripoli (Libya).<sup>5</sup> These have the advantage of relative disinterestedness, in that they were not constructed for purposes of making arguments about the scale of slave trading. However, they remain seriously incomplete in two senses. First, none of the records reveals the full scale of the trade, since much slave traffic in both places went on outside the scrutiny and particularly the fiscal capacity of relatively weak local bureaucracies. Secondly, the customs information is always given at second hand and only covers selected years. In addition to customs data, there are also some rudimentary demographic surveys and military muster rolls in Tables 3–5; these are useful but suffer from obvious limitations.

The definition of 'out of Africa' in this study includes the Mediterranean portions of the continent (Egypt, Maghrib and northern Sahara) but not the northern Nilotic Sudan. The latter was a major consumer of slaves among masters who considered themselves Arabs, but I have omitted it both because slave imports here are difficult to calculate and because, on the analogy of the East African Swahili coast, the northern Sudan is normally considered part of sub-Saharan Africa. Slave trade to such zones should be considered (as with much of West Africa) as an issue of forced internal migration and the impact of servile institutions upon indigenous African development rather than one of net demographic transfer to societies which functioned under the control of an alien Mediterranean world.

The definition of Mediterranean used here is mainly Islamic. However, it includes Europe in the cases (of limited statistical significance) where Europeans imported black slaves via Egypt or the Maghrib.

#### THE EGYPTIAN SLAVE TRADE

Egypt was, from the earliest Islamic period, one of the major centres of trade in black slaves. Not only did large quantities of Africans pass through here to the rest of the Mediterranean but also, because of Egypt's wealth and dense urban population (as well as occasional agricultural manpower needs), it absorbed many imported slaves into its own society. Egypt's location in the lower end of the Nile Valley and on the main African route to the Red Sea gave it access to major sources of slaves both originating in or passing through various portions of the Nilotic Sudan as well as those accompanying pilgrimage caravans (Table 1/A/6,9).

For the first ten centuries of Islam in Egypt, there is no serious direct statistical evidence of the scale of the slave trade, although plenty of indication that such commerce existed at a significant level. The information on the *baqt* (Table 1/A/1,3) and the tax/tribute data (Table 1/A/7,8,11)

TABLE 1  
SLAVE TRADE: EGYPT AND THE NILOTIC SUDAN

	Date	Quantity	Comments	Original Source	Reference
<i>A. Egypt</i>					
1.	650-1373	420	baqt slave tribute, Christian Nubia to Egypt; problematic data	various Arab, Coptic chronicles	Renault, 1989, pp. 10ff.
3.	831-50		baqt at 1,400 slaves; not paid for 14 years; renegotiated at 400 every 3 years	Coptic Church chronicles	Meinardus, 1966, pp. 147-8
6.	1416	1,700	Takrūr (W. Sudan) pilgrim caravan brings slaves to Cairo	Maqrīzī, d. 1442	Cuoq, 1975, p. 392
7.	1419	300	slaves seized as tax from upper Egypt bedouins	Maqrīzī, b. Hajar	Garcin, 1976, p. 479
8.	1420	1,800	slaves seized as tax from upper Egypt for Cairo	'Ayni, 1361-1451	Garcin, 1976, p. 431
9.	1439		Takrūr (W. Sudan) pilgrim caravans sells 'numerous slaves' in Cairo	Maqrīzī	Cuoq, 1975, p. 392
10.	1483		'great number' of black and white slaves in Cairo market	Fabri, Swiss traveller	Fabri, 1975, p. 436
11.	1560		black slaves in annual Egyptian tribute caravan to Istanbul via Palestine	Ottoman records	Heyd, 1960
12.	1570s	c. 5,000	'many thousands' of blacks on sale in Cairo on market days	Pinon, French traveller	Raymond and Wiet, 1979, p. 225
13.	1581		more than 400 slaves at a time in Cairo market; majority are black	Palerne, French traveller	Palerne, 1971
14.	1583	670	Cairo market; 70 men 600 women	Radzivil, Polish traveller	Radzivil, 1614, p. 170
15.	1587		'great number of black Moors' brought by annual Ethiopia caravan to Cairo	Lichtenstein, German traveller	Lichtenstein, 1972, pp. 13-14

16.	1588	annual caravan brings many black slaves to Cairo for rest of Ottoman empire	Keichel, German traveller	Keichel, 1972, p. 126
17.	1589-90	'an infinity of slave men and women' on Cairo market	Villamont, French traveller	Villamont, 1971, p. 18
18.	1598	'great quantity' in Cairo market, majority are blacks	Harant, Bohemian traveller	Harant, 1972, p. 202
19.	1608	slave cargo of 9 ships, Egypt-Istanbul, taken by Tuscan fleet	Tuscan records	Galuzzi, 1781, III, pp. 252-3
20.	1631	seen together Cairo slave market 'almost all black'; 2 annual 'Libya' caravans	Stochove, Flemish traveller	Stochove, 1975, p. 50
21.	1652	great numbers of black slaves in Cairo market	Thevenot, French traveller	Thevenot, 1689, III, p. 452
22.	1665-66*	sometimes 3-4,000 imported into Egypt p.a.; 800-1,000 seen in Cairo market 1 day	Gonzales, Spanish/Belgian traveller	Gonzales, 1977, I, pp. 37, 110
23.	1666	'little black eunuchs' shipped to Sultan in Istanbul	Gonzales	Gonzales, 1977, I, p. 264
24.	1692-1708	annual Sinnār caravan, 2-3,000 slaves	Maillet, French consul, scholar	Maillet, 1735, II, p. 197
25.	1700s*	annual Cairo slave imports	Antoine Bonnefons, French traveller	Wiet, 1943, p. 79
26.	1712-14	Nubians bring 'a quantity of black slaves' for sale in the rest of Egypt	Sicard, Jesuit missionary, scholar	Sicard, 1717, II, p. 118
27.	1714-17	3 caravans p.a. Borno and Zanfaras to Manfalant	Lucas, French traveller	Lucas, 1724, p. 32
28.	early 1750s	black and white slaves in Cairo; 'blacks cheaper: multitudes ... from Ethiopia'	Van Egmont, Dutch traveller	Van Egmont, 1759, II, p. 269
29.	1768-98*	3-4,500 = peak annual Egyptian imports	Cairo slave market overseers, clerks	Frank, 1807, p. cxxi

TABLE 1 (continued)

A. <i>Egypt</i>						
30.	1777-80*	1,750	twice annual Nubia caravans bring 1,500-2,000 slaves to Cairo market	Sonnini de Monconour, French naval engineer	Sonnini, VII/1799, II, p. 381	
31.	1783-85	1,100	1,000-1,200 annual Sinnâr caravan	Volney, French traveller	Volney, 1788, I, p. 207	
32.	c. 1788*	4,000	Dâr Fûr exports to Cairo	Venture de Paradis, French consul	Lalande, 1794, III, p. 305	
33.	1788*	7,500	total Egyptian imports for 2 to 4-year period = 20,000	Rosetti, Venetian consul	Hallet, 1964, p. 60	
34.	1789*	4,500	imports do not exceed 5,000 p. a.	Baldwin, British merchant, Alexandria	Baldwin, 1790, p. 128	
35.	1790-92	1,260	Cairo customs records for 3 years =	Girard, French traveller	Girard, 1824, p. 383	
36.	1798-1800*	1,200	average of 3-year period; 3-4 vs.	Frank, French traveller	Frank, 1807, p. ccxi	
37.	1798-1800	350	annual average of Sinnâr caravans	Lapanouse, French traveller	Lapanouse, 1801, p. 98	
38.	1799*	5,500	5-6,000 in Dâr Fûr caravan at Asyut	Girard, French traveller	Girard, 1824, p. 582	
39.	1799	150	Sinnâr caravan at arrival	Girard, French traveller	Girard, 1824, p. 93	
40.	1805	2,000	population of caravan said to have perished in Libyan desert	Minutoli, German traveller, 1820-21	Minutoli, 1824, pp. 201-02	
41.	1810		Dâr Fûr caravans small over last few years; diverted to Red Sea	Drovetti, French consul, Cairo	LaRue, n.d.	
42.	1813		Dâr Fûr slave caravan seen at Asyut	Buckingham, British traveller	Buckingham, 1855, II, pp. 138-9	
43.	1817*	3,000	6,000 slaves in biannual Dâr Fûr caravan	Trecourt, French vice-consul, Damietta	LaRue, n.d.	
44.	1817	c. 3,000	'several thousand slaves' in great Dâr Fûr caravan, interrupted several years	Roussel, French consul, Alexandria	Driault, 1927, p. 64	
50.	1830s	1,000	10-12,000 = total Egyptian imports	Bowring, British scholar, emissary	PP 1840, XXI, 'Report on Egypt', p. 85	

## B. Sudan

2.	1699	Sinnār slaves cheap; 'Egyptian merchants buy a great number every year'	Poncet, French traveller	Foster, 1949, p. 105
3.	1796	Dār Fūr caravan at departure	Browne, British traveller	Browne, 1799, p. 298
4.	1800-60	Exports from Ethiopia to Sudan	various	Pankhurst, 1964, pp. 226-7
5.	1814	Shendy (Sinnār) market 1,500 slaves to Egypt; 3,500 going elsewhere	Burckhardt, Swiss traveller	Burckhardt, 1822, p. 290
6.	1822	slaves seized in single raid by Egyptian army	Muhammad 'Alī correspondence, 19/7, 7/8/22	Prunier, 1988, p. 526

### Egypt: Totals, 1400-1900

	per annum	sub-total
1400-1820	3,000	1,260,000
1820-39	5,000	50,000
1830-39	10,000	100,000
1840-49	5,000	50,000
1850-59	3,500	35,000
1860-69	10,000	100,000
1870-77	2,000	16,000
1878-1900	500	11,000
	total:	1,622,000

suggests that slaves were an established regional commodity. Major evidence on the scale of this trade will come from military data discussed below.

We begin to obtain more information on trade with accounts left by the many European travellers to Egypt (and some in the Nilotic Sudan) from the late fifteenth through the early nineteenth centuries.<sup>6</sup> This span is treated as a single period since the recorded observations suggest a fairly consistent range of slave imports and because Muḥammad 'Alī's conquest of the Sudan in 1820 marks an obvious break in this pattern (Table 1).

Between 1483 and 1820 there are thirty-nine accounts of various aspects of the Egyptian slave trade (Table 1/A/9–44, B/2,3,5), but only ten of these (see dates marked with asterisk) give anything resembling general statistics for Egypt in that they discuss total imports or the Dār Fūr caravan, which seems to have been the main slave supplier through much of this period.<sup>7</sup> If these are simply tabulated they yield an annual average of about 3,565. However several of the figures in this series seem inordinately high (Table 1/A/33,38); the second of these may refer to the number of slaves who left Dār Fūr as opposed to those who survived the notorious *dār al-arba'in* (forty-day route). Three of the other observations are explicitly presented as capacity estimates (A/22,29,34); however, one observation (A/36) specifically takes into account the low points in the trade cycles, and several others (A/25,30,35) do so implicitly. Thus, if we make a second calculation omitting the two highest figures, the average shifts to a little under three thousand (2,831), and if this is raised slightly to account for the Sinnār imports, omitted in several accounts but still of some significance (see A/24,31,37), we arrive at a working estimate of three thousand.

This last figure is also consistent with the one set of customs figures available from the Cairo slave market in the latter eighteenth century (A/35). These data were clearly understood not to represent more than a portion of the total annual imports, since a certain percentage of the slaves entering the country remained in Upper Egypt (see Table 4/1), were sold directly in the Delta, or were purchased or requisitioned by Cairene elites without passing through the marketplace.<sup>8</sup>

Given the general consistency of conditions in Egypt between 1400 and 1820 and the evidence in the various European travel accounts and the fewer Islamic documents of a generally high level of slave trading activity, we can tentatively project the 1665–66 estimates backwards at least to the beginning of the fifteenth century. This projection will have to be reconsidered when a wider variety of conditioning factors in the areas of slave supply and demand are taken more fully into account than is possible in this essay.



For the nineteenth century, we have a great deal of information about slave trading both in Egypt itself and in the main source region, the Nilotic Sudan. Clearly, the invasion of the Sudan during this period and especially the penetration of Egyptian troops and armed private merchants into the ultimate source of slaves, the southern Sudan, vastly increased the supply to Egypt at the same time as a number of political and economic factors increased Egyptian demand for black African manpower. However, the quantitative information available to us for this later period is far less susceptible to even the rudimentary statistical methods used previously.

First of all, we cannot use observations made over several decades to establish any kind of average tendency, since the evidence clearly indicates that the scale of the slave trade changed radically from one decade to the next; also, available sources for the same decades often disagree with one another. Moreover, while the Nilotic Sudan data provides some general check against estimates of Egyptian imports, it is only useful in a very general way; a large portion of the slaves captured and even brought to markets in the Sudan did not go to Egypt but rather stayed in the Sudan itself or were passed eastward into the comparably expanding Red Sea trade (Table 1/B/5). Especially problematic are the large numbers of Sudanese captured in army raiding expeditions (Table 1/B/6). During the early 1820s a major portion of the male captives from these *razzias* (*ghazwa*) were recruited into the Egyptian army (see Table 5/B); but after 1822, the majority joined the military forces in the Sudan itself, just as many thousands of other enslaved men and women were put to work in local agriculture.<sup>9</sup> However, an unspecified proportion of the military captives were sold to merchants who made their greatest profits by export sales, especially to Egypt. The same problems arise with regard to information about Ethiopian slaves exported into the Sudan (Table 1/B/4). Finally, the ease of communications between Egypt and the Sudan in this period and the great quantities of slaves transported by a variety of means (including river boats and barges) meant that it was no longer possible to calculate the levels of the trade by observations of one or more key annual caravans.<sup>10</sup>

The Sudan data at least makes it possible to take seriously some of the higher estimates for Egyptian imports during this period. The years 1820–50 and 1860–70 represent peaks, spurred by the effects of the initial invasion, military recruitment, and agricultural-demographic factors to be discussed below (see Table 4). The 1850s apparently experienced a slowing down of the slave traffic, probably because early trade in the southern Sudan concentrated on ivory, and Egyptian military and agricultural demands were stabilized. The large numbers reported for the 1860s can be explained by the establishment of militarized *zarā'ibs* (fortified

camps) by slave-traders in the Baḥr al-Ghazāl as well as the consumer and labour demands of the simultaneous Egyptian cotton boom.<sup>11</sup>

Declining Egyptian demand and some effective measures of prohibition explain the lower figures of the 1870s. These same factors, combined with the Mahdist revolt in the Sudan, brought about a virtual termination of slave imports into Egypt between the end of the decade and the early 1880s.

#### THE MAGHRIB TRANS-SAHARAN TRADE

Table 2 provides the rather extensive data which have been found for the trade which brought African peoples across the Sahara to Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and (especially) Libya. The sources of this trade were the populations living at or (mainly) south of the Sudanic regions stretching from the Atlantic Coast of Africa as far east as present-day Chad. The western part of this zone overlapped with the Atlantic slave trade, which is only cited once (Table 2/A/8). A more complicated issue is the role of the easternmost entrepôts, Murzūq in the Fazzān and Wadai in Chad. Both of these areas supplied slaves to the Maghrib region as a whole, although not all of these desert imports are reflected in the figures for Libyan exports. Some of the differences result from the lateral movement of slaves into Egypt, which is treated here as an essentially separate slave-receiving and exporting zone. The adjustments which have been made in the total import data are not entirely satisfactory and may be improved upon in future calculations.

The period from the Islamic conquest of North Africa (667) through the second half of the sixteenth century remains too thinly documented for any direct calculation of its scale. An estimate for this period will await the examination of indirect evidence on at least military deployment and also projections from the relationship between general trends in this era with those of better documented centuries.

For those periods in which we have richer documentation — the late sixteenth century onward, it is clear that Libya was the major slave outlet. In fact, while the few pre-seventeenth-century quantitative observations which cite areas are almost entirely limited to the western Maghrib and adjacent Saharan zones, we know from extensive non-quantitative evidence<sup>12</sup> that even in medieval times the Fazzān was the principal Saharan entrepôt for Sudanic slaves, many of whom must thus have exited Africa via Tripoli, the closest Mediterranean port. Probably it was just this concentration on human exports, which did not attract the same commercial and geographical interest as gold, that made the eastern Maghrib (and its adjoining Sudanic partner state, Kanem-Borno) less visible to foreign observers

TABLE 2  
SLAVE TRADE: 'MAGHRIB' AND SAHARA

	Date	Quantity	Comments	Original Source	Reference
<i>A. General Medieval</i>					
8.	1455	900	800-1,000 in Sahara diverted by Portuguese from Maghrib to Arguîñ	Ca da Mosto, Venetian merchant	Ca da Mosto, 1966, pp. 26-7
<i>B. Libya</i>					
1.	c. 1480	201	188 'negri ... some black girls' from Tripoli to Egypt by Venetians	Venetian merchant archives	Ashtor, 1974, p. 29
3.	1585	300	slave cargo of 1 ship, Tripoli to Levant, taken by Knights of Malta	Pozzo, Maltese chronicler	Pignon, 1964, p. 106, n. 195
6.	1634	650	slave cargo (includes Berbers), 4 Tripoli ships, taken by Knights of Malta	Pozzo, Maltese chronicler	Pignon, 1964, p. 106, n. 195
7.	1638	200	Borno tribute to Tripoli of 100 young girls, 100 young men	anon. French slave, Tripoli	Fresnel, 1849, p. 254
8.	1653	125	Borno letter to Tripoli announces gift of 100 slaves + dwarfs, eunuchs	anon. French slave, Tripoli	Fresnel, 1849, p. 254
9.	1686	550	estimate of Libyan exports in war-disrupted year	Lemaire, French consul	Renault, 1982, p. 168
10.	1696	7,000	Mai Idris of Borno through Fazzân with slaves for Mecca pilgrimage	Petit la Croix, French traveller	Petit la Croix, 1697, fol. 311
13.	1722	1,750	slaves on 10 French ships	French consular records	Renault, 1982, p. 169
14.	1724	200	slaves on single French vessel from Tripoli	Martin, French consul	Renault, 1982, p. 167
15.	1725	250	slaves on single French vessel from Tripoli	Martin, French consul	Renault, 1982, p. 167

TABLE 2 (continued)

<i>B. Libya</i>						
16.	c. 1728	200	slaves on single French vessel from Tripoli	unknown	Feraud, 1927, p. 235	
18.	1753-56	1,918	average Libyan imports over three 'seasons'	Caullet, detailed report	Dyer, 1987, pp. 122-4	
19.	1753-56	1,514	average Libyan imports over 4 calendar years	Caullet, detailed report	Dyer, 1987, pp. 122-4	
21.	1763-74	1,000	estimate of p.a. exports from Libya via French ships	French consular records	Renault, 1982, p. 166	
28.	1777-93	320	estimate of p.a. exports from Libya via Venetian ships	Venetian consular records	Renault, 1982, p. 167	
31.	1780	3,000	Libyan slave exports	d'André, French consul	Dyer, 1987, p. 125	
33.	1783-87	1,000	estimate of p.a. exports from Libya via French ships	French consular records	Renault, 1982, p. 166	
34.	1786	200	slaves on single Ragusian vessel	Bellatio, Venetian consul	Renault, 1982, p. 168	
35.	1786	50	slaves on single French ship with Mecca pilgrims	Vallière, French consul	Renault, 1982, p. 168	
40.	1788+	750	Fazzān exports 7-800 slaves p.a. plus tribute to Tripoli	anon. French ms.	Renault, 1982, p. 172	
49.	1839*	2,250	2,000-2,500 exported p.a.; during periods of disorder diverted to	McCanley, US Consul, Tripoli Egypt, Tunisia	USNA, T40, Roll 7, Tripoli-US, 3 Oct. 1839	
75.	1850	2,400	slaves transported Wadai to Benghazi 2.5-3,000 lost <i>en route</i>	Sardinian consul, Tripoli	Rossi, 1968, p. 316	
76.	1850	1,200	Wadai-Benghazi caravan, only 770 arrive (30% loss)	Herman, British vice-consul, Benghazi	FO 84/815 27/5/50	

*C. Morocco*

5. 1693 Moroccan import 'great number' of blacks for military and other uses  
St. Olon, 1695
6. 1697 Sultan's Guinea trade brings 'blacks with which his kingdoms are filled'  
Abitbol, 1979, p. 199
7. 1701 Emperor Mu'lay Isma'il imports slaves from Guinea  
Cossee Brissac, 1960, VI, p. 688  
La Veronne, 1974, p. 63
8. 1708-28 Sultan regular tribute expedition gathers slaves from Sudan in 2-4 year stay  
Neant, French redemptionist priest de Leon, Spanish resident
11. 1789 Timbuktu to Morocco and Algeria  
Matra, British consul
12. 1790-91 Timbuktu to Morocco and rest of Maghrib  
Lemprière, British traveller
23. 1850 slaves in Timbuktu-Goulmine caravan  
Panet, Afro-French traveller
25. 1864 500-1,000 Timbuktu to Tuât (Morocco)  
Rohlfis, German traveller
30. 1876-78 annual imports, projected from Marrakesh market sales  
Rohlfis, 1868a, pp. 119-20  
Schroeter, 1992
33. 1887 main Timbuktu caravan at Tindouf  
Douls, 1888, p. 450
34. 1888-94 annual imports, projected from Marrakesh market sales  
Schroeter, 1992
- D. Algeria*
7. late 1840 enter Algeria via Oran  
Julien, 1964, p. 348
11. 1858 enter Algeria via Ghât; enrolled in French army  
Reade, British consul administrator  
pp. 31-33
- E. Tunisia*
4. 1724-25 2 annual caravans, Fazzân-Tunis bring slaves  
Peyssonnel, French envoy, 1724-25  
Peyssonnel, 1838, p. 79

TABLE 2 (continued)

<i>E. Tunisia</i>					
5.	1752	'fairly large revenue' from biannual Ghadâmis gold, slave caravan	Poiron, French traveller	Poiron, 1925, p. 19	
6.	1788	few slaves, Ghadâmis to Tunis	Nyssen, Dutch consul	Monchicort, 1929, pp. 23-4	
7.	c. 1788	3 caravans p.a. from Ghadâmis bring slaves; exports unmeasurable	Venture de Paradis, French consul	Venture de Paradis, 1788, Tunis, fol. 59-60	
8.	1789	Ghadâmis to Tunis; plus 2-300 sold at Ghadâmis	Traill, British consul	Hallet, 1964, p. 83	
9.	c. 1810	1,000-1,200 Ghadâmis to Tunis	Frank, French physician	Frank, 1856, p. 115	
10.	1812	annual Ghadâmis-Tunis caravan brings slaves	French consulate, Tunis	Abitbol, 1979, p. 209	
11.	1814	3 annual Ghadâmis-Tunis caravans	Macgill, British merchant	Macgill, 1811, p. 148	
13.	1896	'some bring to the number of 200 slaves slave trade via Ghadâmis continues	al-Hashaishi, Tunisian scholar	El-Hachaichi, 1912, p. 217	
<i>F. Sahara</i>					
2.	1701-2	Fazzân-Egypt caravan lost; first in 12-15 years	French consular report	Raymond, 1973, p. 163	
10.	1843*	Murzûq imports	Gagliuffi, British consul	Richardson, 1848, II, p. 323	
20.	1847*	slaves arriving Murzûq; huge deaths en route from smallpox	Gagliuffi, British vice-consul, Murzûq	FO 84/737 28/2/48	
22.	1849	1,600 slaves die of thirst in Borno caravan	Gagliuffi, British vice-consul, Murzûq	FO 84/774 9/8/49	
23.	1849*	slaves arriving Murzûq; 834 more (34% of total) die en route	Gagliuffi, British vice-consul, Murzûq	FO 84/815 20/1/50	
40.	1891	2,000 slaves from Wadai at Jale Oasis, 1/2 for Sanûsi Maqrîzi	Ricard, French vice-consul, Benghazi	MAE, Turquie: Tripoli, 27, pp. 200-201	
44.	1896	Ghât still major slave market for Sudan and Tuât	al-Hashaishi	El-Hachaichi, 1912, p. 176	

*Maghrib: Totals*

Libya, 1400-1900		Algeria, 1700-1900	
	per annum	sub-total	per annum
1550-1699	1,500	225,000	1700-1839
1700-1799	2,700	270,000	1840-1879
1800-1856	3,100	176,700	1880-1900
1857-1913	2,000	113,000	
	total	784,700	total
	rounded	785,000	rounded
			101,000
			100,000
Morocco, 1700-1890		Tunisia, 1700-1900	
	per annum	sub-total	per annum
1700-1810	2,000	220,000	1700-1799
1811-1840	3,000	90,000	1800-1850
1841-1875	2,000	70,000	1851-1900
1876-1895	5,000	100,000	
	total	480,000	total
			125,000

*Adjustment for Death Rates*

	adjusted total	arrival total	death rate
Libya	785,000	785,000	20%
Morocco	480,000	480,000	6% <sup>2</sup>
Algeria	100,000	100,000	10% <sup>3</sup>
Tunisia	125,000	125,000	15% <sup>4</sup>
			942,000
			509,900
			110,000
			144,000

1. All percentages based upon Gagliuffi in F10 with adjustments as indicated.

2. Based on the western Sudanic rate given by Gagliuffi but using it's lower range on the assumption that the Moroccan desert entrepôts were easier to reach than Murzûq.

3. Assuming a majority coming via Morocco.

4. Assuming Libya as main source, but mixture of Sudan and Borno without Wadai-Benghazi.

than the western Sahara and the neighbouring Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires. For the post-medieval period, I have tried to distinguish the estimates of Libyan exports (equated here with arrivals on the coast) from arrivals in the Fazzān, for reasons explained in the discussion of the Sahara below.

The figure of 1,000 for Libya from the end of the sixteenth through the end of the seventeenth century is not based directly upon the observations available, since none (except for the unrealistically high 1696 pilgrimage account, Table 2/B/10) add up to this amount. However these records (except for the 1686 French estimate, Table 2/B/9) also describe only part of the trade, mainly the slaves collected in tribute from the Fazzān and Borno. However, just as with the Egyptian *baqt*, such evidence indicates that slaves were a major regional commodity who must have moved through market as well as prestatinal channels.

In periods of political disorder, the tribute and markets must both have declined, leading to reduced totals such as that given by Lemaire for 1686, but in normal periods the total should have been a significantly higher than the tribute amounts. The absence of regular European representation before the 1680s may indicate a lower level of trade in general, including slaves, than in the subsequent century, although this provisional estimate will have to be reconsidered when indirect factors are taken into account.

The calculations for the Libyan trade from 1700 to 1800 are largely based on Renault's very valuable 1982 article.<sup>13</sup> I have raised the quantity slightly, from 1,500 per annum to 1,700 because: (a) I have somewhat more confidence in the shipping data (Table 2/B/13-16, 21, 28, 33-35) than Renault does, especially when comparing it with the three additional accounts from the late fifteenth and sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (Table 2/B/1-3, 6); (b) Dyer's additions to this set of data all indicate a slightly higher average.<sup>14</sup>

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Libyan slave trade reached its historical peak. The cut-off date of 1856 is chosen because in 1857 the Ottoman government formally prohibited slave trading within its realms (which included Libya). The suppression was not initially anywhere near complete, but it had a very direct effect on Libyan exports<sup>15</sup> as opposed to imports into the Fazzān and the interior of Cyrenaica, as indicated below.

There are enough estimates of annual export figures for the 1800-56 period (see items marked with an asterisk in original tables) to do an actual calculation. The result (2,075 rounded up to 2,100) is hardly precise, since it includes reports for only 28 per cent of the years covered and comprises estimates of very varying reliability. There is some balance, however, between the likely exaggerations of some of the larger appraisals (particularly



Table 2/B/40, 1819 by Ritchie who was not actually on the coast) and the probable underestimates in the United States consular accounts and all later figures based only on exports reported to local customs officials. The results significantly reduce the previous estimates of Boahen, myself and Lovejoy because those accounts all tended to treat the highest export years as normal, thus producing classical capacity estimates.<sup>16</sup>

After 1856, we have less information on Libyan slave exports, since the Ottoman anti-slavery firman suppressed the official record-keeping far more effectively than it affected the substance of the trade. However, those estimates which are available suggest an average level of about 1,000 per annum. Again, this is lower than previous accounts but here the Saharan figures will provide a major counterweight.

Because none of the other three Maghribian countries ever served as a major conduit for slave exports, their imports of human chattel across the Sahara are far less precisely recorded than those of Libya. However, all of them imported more black Africans for domestic deployment than did Libya, being more densely populated, more agriculturally developed, and the centres of states which relied on black slave troops at various times. Thus, we are left with a major portion of the trans-Saharan slave trade which remains difficult to tabulate.

Existing records at least indicate that for the period from the fifteenth century onward, when Egyptian and Libyan slave imports can be estimated with some degree of reliability, Tunisia and Algeria did not play a very significant role in this commerce. Morocco, on the other hand, always maintained a major independent caravan link with the Sudan and even exercised some degree of political control over Timbuktu and its environs from the late sixteenth through the mid-eighteenth century. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, the Moroccan rulers also maintained a large black army, although its relationship to the slave trade is not clear<sup>17</sup> and will have to be taken up in the general discussion of African slave troops in the Islamic world.

The first quantitative statements which provide anything resembling a statistical account of the Moroccan slave trade occur near the end of the eighteenth century (Table 2/C/11,12). Even these estimates (as well as almost all that follow) are based on reports from north-western coastal cities of caravans entering the Saharan entrepôts of south-eastern Morocco, where (unlike Murzûq and Ghadâmis in the Fazzân) there was never a long-term European presence. Occasional reports of the 'Akbar' or major annual Timbuktu caravan suggest much lower figures (Table 2/C/12, 23,25,33); however, given the close ties between Morocco and the Western Sudan (much like Egypt and the Nilotic Sudan after 1820), it is difficult to calculate total slave imports from this source.<sup>18</sup>

In consideration of these flaws in the data, I am now inclined to scale down the reported global figures, assuming again that they are capacity estimates rather than serious attempts to calculate the average rate of an inevitably fluctuating trade. Moreover, if we are to assess a separate Algerian slave trade, it is important not to double-count the Moroccan imports. The figures for the end of the eighteenth century probably represent an average annual import of about 2,000. This most likely increased after 1810 as did most slave trades, but it is still difficult to accept Miège's figures. He assumes that the recorded estimates are too *low* and himself exaggerates the demand – to be examined below – for slaves in the desert regions themselves. Even the carefully considered projections by Graeberg probably overestimate the average, as the same observer's calculations did for Libya.

There is a consensus in the sources of a drop after 1840 but strong evidence from internal Moroccan market data (Table 2/C/30, 34) that imports rose in the last decades of the century. The explanation for this rise, which goes against the trends for the rest of the Islamic slave trade in both the Sahara and the Red Sea/Indian Ocean region, is probably the greatly increased supply of slaves generated by the wars against the French in the western Sudan, as described in the accompanying chapters of this volume by Martin Klein and Ann McDougall plus the absence of any abolitionist measures in Morocco. Despite the resulting great increase in estimates for the last period, the total figure for Morocco constitutes a slight decline from my 1979 calculations.

Algeria clearly has the smallest slave trade of any North African country. Here, there is only one capacity estimate (Table 2/D/7) to deflate but one needs to consider whether the reported imports through the traditional Algerian entrepôts of the Mzāb are independent of the trade figures for Morocco and the Fazzān. It is significant that despite the French colonial presence (or because of it according to some sources, Table 2/D/11) the trade estimates for Algeria increase towards the end of nineteenth century, as do those of Morocco. Again, Sudanic supply rather than Mediterranean demand may be the key factor here.<sup>19</sup> On whatever basis they are measured, the Algerian imports cannot ever have been very large. However, the present estimate (influenced by population data, see below) represents a slight increase over my previous count.

Tunisia is again a small importer, feeding mainly off the Ghadāmis market (see below) linked to the Sudan. We can assume that the estimates of Frank and Traill (Table 2/B/7,8) are slightly above the average while Macgill (Table 2/B/10) may be too low by a greater amount. In any case, the increasing trade of the early nineteenth century seems to have fallen off quite abruptly here with the prohibition by the local government in

1850. Possibly the deteriorating Tunisian economic conditions during this latter period<sup>20</sup> had as much to do with the decline of the local slave trade as the government's decrees.

After these figures for the exports and coastal deployment of slaves in the Maghrib it is necessary to give special attention to the slaves entering the Saharan portions of the region and remaining there. As already indicated, there is no significant direct evidence of slave-trading in the Saharan portions of the western Maghrib beyond the information used to estimate general imports. However, after the indirect demographic evidence is examined, some attempt will be made to add a percentage to the existing figures for slaves imported into southern Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

The Fazzān region of present-day Libya and the neighbouring desert portions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica represent a special case. Not only is this zone the largest single avenue for slave traffic into the entire Maghrib (with some portion also going to Egypt) but it also, at least during the nineteenth century, absorbed a much larger (and more visible) proportion of these forced immigrants than did the more western desert regions. Furthermore, the valuable data from this region (as well as some of the Benghazi accounts of individual caravans) gives us some idea of the mortality rates of slaves taken across the Sahara, a critical factor in determining the overall demographic impact of the Islamic trade.

Renault's figure of 2,700 slaves entering Murzūq and Ghadāmis during the eighteenth century is not as carefully calculated as his Tripoli export statistics, since we have almost no data on trade in this area before 1800. It must also be remembered that (as Table 2/F/2 indicates) a certain portion of these slaves (particularly during periods of disorder – see Table 2/B/49) were sent to Egypt. A more regular portion went from the Fazzān to Tunisia, but mainly via Ghadāmis (Table 2/E/4–11, 13). Moreover, there is no evidence of a particularly high demand for slaves within the southern regions of Libya at this point. Nonetheless, the slave populations of Murzūq and Ghadāmis, estimated by Hornemann and Dickson at about 8,000 (see Table 3) were still considerable and would require a significant slave trade to maintain their levels, given the accompanying reports of high resident death rates. Moreover, even in the urban sectors of coastal Libya there would be some demand for the replacement of domestic slaves. Thus Renault is justified in adding something over 1,000 to the export figures in establishing a total Libyan import level. I have added a lesser figure of 500 for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries on the assumption (to be re-examined carefully when indirect evidence is taken more fully into account) that all aspects of the Libyan slave trade were at a lower level during this period.

We have very good records for Murzūq (and sometimes the alternative

TABLE 3  
RECEIVING AREA: GENERAL SLAVE/BLACK POPULATION

Date	Quantity	Comments	Original Source	Reference
<i>A. General Mediterranean</i>				
1.		consistently higher death rates for blacks from plagues	various chronicles	Dols, 1977, pp. 178-85f.
<i>B. Egypt</i>				
1.	general	consistently higher death rates for blacks from various epidemics	various chronicles	Dols, 1977, pp. 178-85f.
2.	1400s	slave trade manual says Abyssinians do not live long outside country	Abū Sati, 1407-96 Egyptian author	Mueller, 1980, p. 135
5.	1701-1879	'astonishingly low' birth rate among Cairo black female slaves	court probate records	Walz, 1985, pp. 149-52
6.	1798	Egyptian black population: includes some non-slave-descended Nubians	Jomard, French scholar, traveller	Jomard, 1829, pp. 363ff.
7.	1821	slave plague deaths 'within a few years'; total deaths are 70,000	Scholz, German traveller	Scholz, 1922, p. 48
8.	1822	Black slaves throughout Egypt	Gailliaud, French traveller	Gailliaud, 1826, III, p. 117
9.	1830	Blacks throughout Egypt	Cadalvene, French traveller	Cadalvene, 1836, p. 104
10.	1834	Alexandria plague death rate exceptionally high for 'Negroes and Berbers'	various French local physicians	Sticker, 1908, pp. 311-12
11.	1834	'Negroes and Berbers' in total Alexandria population of 42,000	various French local physicians	Sticker, 1908, p. 312
12.	1840	slaves in Cairo	Bowring, British official study	Bowring, 1840, p. 10

13.	1840	24,000	Blacks throughout Egypt	Clot Bey, French physician, Egypt	Clot Bey, 1840, I, p. 168
14.	c. 1840	25,000	Blacks in Egypt (total population 3 mil.) based on house count estimate	Census by Muhammad 'Alī	Marcel, 1877, p. 103
15.	1840	22,000	estimate of total slave population of Egypt	Campbell, British diplomat	Fredriksen, 1977, p. 52
16.	1850-55	11,500	Blacks in Cairo; aftermath of high cholera deaths among blacks	Colucci, Italian Egyptian official	Colucci, 1862, pp. 604-6
18.	1868	16,442	free black population of Egypt	official census	Walz, 1985, p. 152
19.	1873	40,000	'Nubians and Soudanis (mostly slaves)' in total Egyptian pop. of 5.5 mil.	estimates from official census	McCoan, 1877, p. 23
20.	1877-8	23,000	slaves manumitted via official procedures	records of Khedevial manumission offices	PP 1883, LXXXIII, PP 1889, LXXXVII
<i>C. Algeria</i>					
3.	c. 1835	1,800	slaves in Algiers, 2/3 are women	Baude, French officer	Baude, 1838, p. 927
4.	1838	3,382	black population, Algiers; various occupational niches, low reproduction rate	French government census	Lespes, 1930, pp. 182, 513
5.	1839-40	400	Negro 'corporation' in Algiers; membership 390-408 individuals	Baude, French official	Baude, 1841, p. 328
6.	1843	2,872	black pop., areas under Fr. administration (1,595 free, 1,277 slaves)	French census	Corelle, 1850, p. 109
7.	1844	8,000	Black slaves throughout Algeria	Projection from limited military census	Carette and Roget, 1856, pp. 158-9
8.	1844	12,000	4,000 black slaves; 8,000 blacks	military census plus other documents	Emerit, 1949, pp. 30-1
9.	1847	1,380	black population of Algiers (total 24,996)	French census	Corelle, 1850, p. 41
10.	1848	18,329	slave population of Algeria	abolition indemnity commission	Julien, 1964, p. 348

TABLE 3 (continued)

<i>C. Algeria</i>							
11.	1848	20,000	total black pop. of Algeria	French official estimates	Corelle, 1850, p. 109		
12.	1882	1,228	327 slaves, 901 free blacks in Mzâb at French conquest; total Mzâb pop. = 30,000	Robin, 1884 book	Briggs, 1958, p. 74		
13.	c. 1900		Algerian Black African cults; numerous w. ref. to specific Sudanic areas	Andrews, French traveller	Andrews, 1903		
14.	1940s	125,000	Blacks in southern region of Algeria (possibly not all slave-descended)	Capot-Rey, French geographer	Capot-Rey, 1953, pp. 163-75		
<i>D. Libya</i>							
1.	1631-73		black servants in many urban homes, frequent manumission	Girard, French resident surgeon	Girard, ms., 72-3		
2.	1891	6,000	black slaves throughout Libya	British consul, Benghazi	PP 1893/94, LXXXV, p. 245		
<i>E. Tunisia</i>							
2.	1700s		Sidi Sa'ad, black marabout, becomes object of saint cult	al-Wazîr al-Sarraj, fl. 1724-28	Cherif, 1984, pp. 585-6		
4.	1800		pagan cults of local blacks denounced to Bey as threatening Islam	letter of Ahmad Baba al-Timbuktui	Limam, 1981, pp. 351-4		
5.	early 1800s		high mortality in early childhood for blacks; c. 200 manumissions p.a.	Frank, French resident physician	Frank, 1850, pp. 115-19		
<i>F. Sahara</i>							
4.	1883	2,000	Slaves at main Sanûsi centre, Cyrenaica, Libya	Duveyrier, French traveller	Duveyrier, 1884, pp. 21-2		

entrepôt of Ghât) slave imports up through the 1860s. Until the late 1850s the level of this trade corresponds roughly to Libyan exports, with the residual slaves who remained in the country corresponding to the situation in the eighteenth century. The continuation of this trade at such a high rate after exports from Libya had dropped can be accounted for by the increased demands in Egypt during the late 1850s but particularly the 1860s (see Table 1 and discussion above). After the late 1870s, when Egyptian demand also fell, the Fazzān slave trade seems to have gone into an irreversible decline.

However, during this same period the Sanūsī order had established a set of lodges in southern Cyrenaica, providing not only a basis of support for the newly developed (and until then very hazardous) Wadai-Benghazi trade route,<sup>21</sup> but also a terminal market for slaves coming along this route. It is clear from accounts of Central African slave exports (Table 2/F/40,44) that the slave trade from this area remained high in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as well as the early twentieth century. After the decline of the Egyptian market for black labour the 2,000 or so slaves coming through Wadai each year must have stayed in eastern Libya as part of the growing Sanūsī oasis population. These slaves have been added to the data on Tripoli and Benghazi exports in estimating the total Libyan import figures at the end of Table 2.

Finally, the Saharan trade reports of the nineteenth century give some indications of slave mortality in the desert caravans. The various accounts by Gagliuffi in the 1840s (Table 2/F/10,20, 22,23) indicate very high death rates on the Borno-Murzūq route although much smaller ones on caravans coming from the Niger Bend. Possibly the lower unit value of slaves acquired in the wars of the central Sudan and raids into the relatively populated but vulnerable equatorial regions account for this brutal treatment of slaves. In any case, it (and the equally high figures for the Wadai-Benghazi route in Table 2/B/75,76) suggest that estimates of the slaves who actually arrived in northern Africa must be supplemented by varying, sometimes quite large, factors, as indicated in the very tentative adjusted figures at the end of the table.

I have deliberately avoided drawing up grand totals for either the Egyptian-Sudan or the Maghrib-Sahara slave trades at the end of Tables 1 and 2. The figures for partial periods are really the significant portion of the present findings and will later have to be combined with indirect evidence to provide an estimate for longer time periods (in any case, the time periods for the various regions counted here do not match). In comparison with my 1979 publication, the figures for the nineteenth century here are somewhat reduced and those for the eighteenth raised. This will probably result in a lowering of the totals for the Mediterranean Islamic

slave trade, since the estimates for the pre-eighteenth century periods are constructed from projections based upon the 1800s, the period with the highest directly calculated rate. As this base is reduced, so will be the projections. However, much of this procedure also depends upon the examination of indirect evidence from the slave-receiving areas.

#### INDIRECT EVIDENCE: RECEIVING AREAS

Because direct evidence on the Islamic slave trade is insufficient to establish reliable calculations, it must be used together with documentation of African slaves in the countries where they were eventually settled. This indirect evidence is necessary not only to check upon the relatively precise eighteenth and nineteenth century figures presented in Tables 1 and 2 but also to provide indicators for making projections about the scale of the slave trade in periods for which there is insufficient quantitative data to make direct calculations.<sup>22</sup>

#### *General and Urban Populations*

In discussing the various conditions and occupations of black slaves and their descendants in Islamic Mediterranean countries, the emphasis here will be on quantities of demand rather than such social issues as upward mobility and the role of eunuchs. It is assumed that the majority of slaves entered urban households where they played various domestic roles and also moved out into related artisanal and extra-mural service occupations. Evidence on these factors is all included in the general demographic material of Table 3. The only occupations to which specific attention has been given are those of agriculture and mining (see Table 4) and military/political service (Table 5).

None of the observations contained in Table 3 constitutes reliable counts of even the general population of the areas in question, let alone their slave and components. We can get some idea of the range of blacks and their ratio to other groups from the various eighteenth and nineteenth-century Egyptian demographic estimates (Table 3/B/6,8,9,11-16,18-20) as well as French figures for Algeria (Table 3/C/3-12,14) and other statements on Libya, Tunisia and the Sahara. The bases upon which these tabulations were made are at best intelligent projections (for example, the house count in Table 2/B/14) and usually do not even pretend to cover either the entire territory in question or the combined population of enslaved and manumitted blacks. Given the number of slaves reported leaving Egypt and especially Libya for the eastern Mediterranean, it would be useful to have more information on their presence in such areas as Istanbul, but this seems difficult to obtain. The ratios of slaves to general



urban populations given for Egypt and Algeria (about 4 to 5 per cent) might be used for projections where no specific count of slaves exist, but no such effort is made here.

What we can conclude is that blacks did form a significant proportion of urban society throughout Egypt and North Africa, numbering in the region of tens of thousands for each separate territory. For the Maghrib, this impression is reinforced by the prominence of African religious cults in Algeria and Tunisia (Table 3/C/13,14;E/2,4).

Equally relevant for calculating the slave trade is the consistent evidence that such black populations failed to reproduce themselves. High African susceptibility to Mediterranean diseases is reported from medieval times onward (Table 3/A/1) and through all the northern African regions (Table 3/B/1,3,7,10,16; E/5). Walz's analysis of court records (Table 3/B/5) adds hard evidence to the general impression (Table 3/D/4) that black women also had few children after being brought north. Given the fact that the majority of such slaves were women, and that such children as they had could, in cases where the father was free, be absorbed into general society, it is obvious that any black slave population in the Mediterranean would require a considerable rate of immigration to keep it up.<sup>23</sup>

It is impossible to translate any of this very broad demographic information into a mathematical equation, but it is obvious that the maintenance of a slave population within the range indicated here would have required a slave trade on the scale suggested for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the previous section.

### *Rural Labour*

It is a fixed convention, in contrasting Islamic with European New World slavery, to point out that the former system lacked intensive labour demands comparable to the Atlantic plantation economy. Broadly speaking this is true, and by far the most common occupations of black slaves in the Muslim world were the household and other urban roles cited in Table 3. However, in given times and places agricultural and other non-urban enterprises drew heavily upon African slaves. The most important examples of such servile labour demand were found in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea where slaves played a major role in date and coffee planting as well as pearl fishing; however, these workers came almost entirely from East African sources and thus did not influence the scale of the Mediterranean slave trade. The Mediterranean Islamic rural regions using slave labour are more restricted than those of the Indian Ocean but in Egypt (including for present purposes the extreme northern Sudan), the Maghrib and the Sahara, we do find a number of significant sectors.

TABLE 4  
RECEIVING AREA: SLAVES IN AGRICULTURE AND MINING

Date	Quantity	Comments	Original Source	Reference
<i>A. Egypt</i>				
1. 889/90		slaves in gold mines, Wadi Allaqi, south of Aswān	Ya'qūbī, d. 897	Yacoubi, 1937, p. 190
2. 940s-950s		'numerous black slaves' at Shabūr in Delta	ibn Hawqal, Arab traveller, geographer	ibn Hawqal, 1964, p. 138
4. 1830s		despite low prices, use of slave cultivators proves too costly vs. peasants	Bowring, British scholar, emissary	PP 1840, XXI, pp. 88-9
5. 1,750		slaves sold at Tanta, mainly bought by peasants for farm labour	Reade, British consular agent	Mowafi, 1981, p. 24
<i>B. Algeria</i>				
1. 750 +		West African, presumably slave, cultivators in Jabal Nafūsa	Ibadite chronicle, 12th century	Lewicki, 1985, pp. 94-6
2. 1862		black slaves, freedmen of Mzāb do irrigation work; much disease	Colombien, French traveller	Colombien, 1862, p. 192
<i>C. Tunisia</i>				
1. 825	1,000	black oasis labourers recruited by rebel against Aghlabids	b. 'Idhari	Dyer, 1979, p. 13
<i>D. Sahara</i>				
1. c. 1270		black slaves employed in Taghaza salt mines under Masūfa Berbers	al-Janahāni, merchant; al-Qazwīni, 1275	Hopkins/Levtzion, 1981, p. 178
2. 1352		black slaves employed in Taghaza salt mines under Masūfa Berbers	b. Baǧūja, Arab traveller	Hopkins/Levtzion, p. 282
3. 1356		slaves of both sexes work copper mines, Takādda	b. Baǧūja, Arab traveller	Cuoq, 1975, p. 318

TABLE 5  
RECEIVING AREA: BLACK SERVILE MILITARY/POLITICAL DEPLOYMENT

	Date	Quantity	Comments	Original Source	Reference
<i>Egypt</i>					
9.	990-1160		replacement rate, Fatimid army: 10% active troops plus 6 year training period	various	Hamblin, 1985, pp. 66-82
11.	1046	40,000	recalculation of Naṣīri-Khusrow observations	Naṣīri-Khusrow	Hamblin, 1985, pp. 305-8
19.	1177	18,000	Saladin Qaraghulam in battle against Crusaders	William, Archbishop and observer	William, 1943, p. 431
20.	1881	1,153	Saladin Qaraghulam after troop reductions	Maqrīzī (based on diary of witness)	Gibb, 1951, p. 310
21.	1497-98	500	Egyptian Mamluks create black arquebus corps, quickly suppress it	various chronicles	Ayalon, 1956, pp. 68-71

In addition to the Egyptian section, there are entries for Iraq (9), Tunisia-Libya (12), Morocco (26), Spain (3) and Algeria (1).

Egypt generally represents the antithesis of an agricultural system likely to make extensive use of slaves. Instead of the classic land abundance and labour scarcity, this is a country whose native population has always been crowded into a narrow strip of irrigated soil and sufficiently controlled by political authorities so that little income was left over to purchase outside workers (Table 4/A/4). There is very little evidence of slavery in pre-Islamic Egyptian agriculture<sup>24</sup> or for most of the Islamic period. During medieval times, the only reports of extensive rural labour come from the gold mines in northern Nubia and one agricultural region of the Delta (Table 4/A/1,2) but these practices do not seem to have continued on the same scale after the tenth century AD. The use of slave cultivators by Arab tribes in upper Egypt (Table 4/A/2) is probably more continuous but not statically very significant unless we assimilate it to the Saharan regions further west which, however, deserve a separate discussion.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Egypt briefly experienced conditions which encouraged fairly extensive agricultural slavery. On the one hand, commercialized sugar and especially cotton cultivation provided incentives for major investments in rural production. At the same time the indigenous population, struck by various epidemics cited in Table 2/B, had not yet undergone that massive growth which would characterize Egypt from the latter nineteenth century onwards. Thus, both elites (Table 4/A/4) and even peasants (Table 4/A/5) found it possible and profitable to purchase large numbers of African slaves to work their lands. As noted some time ago by Gabriel Baer (1969, 186-7), indigenous demographic change in the last quarter of the century, which reduced the value of rural slave labour, played an important part in Egyptian accession to western abolitionist pressures.

In the Maghrib, the great period and place of servile employment in agriculture appears to have been ninth century Tunisia under the Aghlabids, but the source of labour here was apparently Sicily rather than the Sudan.<sup>25</sup> After that period (and for blacks, even during it; see Table 4/C/1), Maghribi rural servile populations appear to be heavily concentrated in the south, which is to say the Sahara, where it is difficult to distinguish between descendants of Sudani slaves and a presumably indigenous black population referred to as *ḥarāṣīn*. In any case, the data in Table 4/C,D (as well as the indications of black Saharan populations in Table 2) indicate a heavy use of slave labour in North African oasis cultivation. However, except for the rapid growth of Sanūsī settlements in the Cyrenaica desert in the late nineteenth century (Table 3/F/4), the total numbers of population involved in this sector would account for only a small, if steady, proportion of the ongoing desert slave trade. Similarly, the Saharan copper-mining economies reported in the Sahara

in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Table 4/D/1-3) may have demanded significant slave imports but the salt mines of later periods were generally located farther to the south and also were not very intensively worked,<sup>26</sup> so that they cannot really be calculated into trans-Saharan slave trade estimates. Likewise, the evidence for a major sugar industry in Morocco during the sixteenth century seems too imprecise to indicate a large-scale demand for slaves.<sup>27</sup>

#### BLACK MILITARY AND PALACE SLAVES

For the most part, the data on general population and rural labour concentrate on the same modern era for which we have the greatest direct slave-trade evidence. The indirect evidence thus confirms what we can already surmise and also provides some indication of the correlations between given levels of supply and forms of demand. Information on the use of black slaves in Islamic military forces, however, is both more plentiful than other forms of indirect evidence and distributed broadly over all the Islamic centuries. Therefore, it tells us about Muslim demand for black slaves during periods in which there are virtually no quantitative observations of the trade itself.

The precise quantification of the military evidence remains problematic. Even those numbers which are given must usually be treated as more metaphorical – equivalents of 'very many' – rather than the result of real counts. This is particularly true of battle descriptions where even a self-proclaimed 'careful count' by a scholarly cleric such as William of Tyre (Table 5/B/19) can be far out of line with other observations of the same forces (Table 5/B/20,21). However, tabulations of troops displayed at parades are more reliable and can also be adjusted (Table 5/B/11) so as to provide reasonable estimates.<sup>28</sup>

Even if we can take the numbers of troops seriously, the relationship of a given military formation to the slave trade remains difficult to calculate. Hamblin (Table 5/B/9) has provided some idea of a replacement rate, assuming of course that the force is maintained at the level described in the available observations over a considerable period of time. However, even in cases where a military group is given a name meaning 'black slaves' (*qaraghulam*, 'abīd) we cannot be sure that the troops are really black or, if so, the recruitment base is an ongoing slave trade.<sup>29</sup>

For the present, no attempt has been made to calculate rigorously from this data either the size of Muslim black armies and palace corps or the level of slave-trade demand that each size would generate. It is, however, reasonable to assume that there were extended periods during which several thousands of slaves per annum (and sometimes tens of

thousands in a few years) would have been required to meet this need. Military demand will thus provide (as did more limited data in my 1979 essay) a major component of the coefficients for slave-trade demand in various historical periods.

## CONCLUSIONS

This essay is tentative in two senses. First of all, because it represents only a stage in bringing together data for a comprehensive account of the Islamic African slave trade; second, because it indicates how limited a basis we can ever attain for determining the scale of this traffic. The publication of such an intermediate set of findings and their accompanying doubts is intended both to provide students with the considerable new material which has come to light on this subject and also to invite them to join in the effort to produce as definitive an account as possible of this major confrontation between Africa and the outside world.

## NOTES

1. On the latter, see William Gervase Clarence-Smith (ed.), *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Frank Cass, 1989, 21-44, also published as a special number of *Slavery and Abolition*, Vol. 9 (1988); and especially my own contribution to this collection, 'The 19th Century Islamic Slave Trade from East Africa (Swahili and Red Sea Coasts): A Tentative Census'.
2. For a discussion of earlier estimates see Ralph A. Austen, 'The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade: A Tentative Census', in H. Gemery and J. Hogendorn, *The Uncommon Market: Essays in the Economic History of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, New York: Academic, 1979, 23-76; there is a general criticism of this effort in David Henige, 'Measuring the Unmeasurable: the Atlantic Slave Trade, West African Population and the Pyrrhic Critic', *Journal of African History* [hereafter *JAH*], 27,2 (1986), 269-93; smaller disputes with my findings have been produced by Renault, 1982 and Lovejoy, 1984; both argue that I underestimated the Libyan data, a point which I accept in Renault's case (I have incorporated the data into the present revision) but do not, for reasons, to be discussed below, for Lovejoy.
3. (Editor's note: because of limitations of length, it was necessary to abbreviate both tables and bibliography to those entries specifically cited in the text. The numbers have been kept to indicate the original length. The author plans to publish the tables in their entirety until which time further details may be had by writing to R. Austen at the Committee on African and African-American Studies, University of Chicago.)
4. I am beholden for this, as for many other insights into the study of the slave trade, to Philip Curtin.
5. On Marrakesh market data, see the accompanying essay in this volume by Daniel Schroeter, 185-213.
6. The Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire has to be thanked for its publication of various studies of Egyptian economic history as well as its series of carefully edited and indexed French-language publications of pre-1700 travel accounts which would otherwise be almost impossible to find and, in any case, very difficult to use for a project of this kind.

7. Renault reports (personal communication) that the archives of European consular representatives in pre-nineteenth-century Egypt yield no data which add significantly to this evidence.
8. Walz, 1978, 202–6.
9. Jay Spaulding, 'Slavery, Land Tenure and Social Class in the Northern Turkish Sudan,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* [hereafter *IJAHS*] 15,1 (1982), 1–20.
10. This point is made by perhaps the most energetic and careful of the nineteenth-century observers of the trade who nevertheless produces one of the highest figures (Bowring in Table 1/A/50).
11. On Sudan chronology, Gray (1963) and Prunier (1988); on Egyptian agriculture as well as the role of developments in autonomous African sectors such as Dâr Für, Wadai, etc., see later sections of this paper.
12. Michael Brett, 'Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the tenth of the twelfth century A.D.', *JAH*, 10,3 (1969), 347–64.
13. Dyer, 1987, adds additional data to this record (Table 2/B/18,19,31) but his dissertation takes no cognizance of Renault's work.
14. I come out with a slightly lower number than both Dyer and Renault for the critical Caulet observations (Table 2/B/18,19) by running them over the longer period of available calendar years; the restriction to winter 'seasons' in the earlier accounts makes sense for studying caravan operations but has no value in calculating statistical averages.
15. Ehud Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade and its Suppression, 1840–1890*, Princeton: Princeton University, 1982, 192–202.
16. Austen, 'Trans-Saharan Slave Trade'; Adu Boahen, *Britain, the Sahara, and the Western Sudan, 1788–1861*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1964; Lovejoy, 1984. My estimates in this earlier essay were largely based on Boahen; Lovejoy's work is an upward revision of my own results. An excellent model of calculations based upon the inevitable fluctuations downward from peak trade years is Renault's article on eighteenth-century Libya.
17. Allen E. Meyers, 'Slave Soldiers and State Politics in Early 'Alawi Morocco, 1655–1727', *IJAHS*, 16,1 (1983), 39–48; this article argues that the connection was negligible, but see Table 2/C5–8.
18. This point is more fully discussed in the accompanying chapter by Daniel Schroeter as are the statistical observations in Fig. 3, 199, attributed to Schroeter.
19. For a 'supply-side' analysis of the entire African (as well as medieval European) slave trade, see the forthcoming study by Stefano Fenoaltea, 'Europe in the African Mirror: the Slave Trade and the Rise of Feudalism'.
20. Lucette Valensi, *Tunisian Peasants in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Princeton: Princeton University, 1977, 183ff.
21. Dennis D. Cordell, 'Eastern Libya, Wadai and the Sanusiya: a tariqa and a Trade Route', *JAH*, 18,3 (1977), 28–9.
22. For examples of such projections, see Austen, 1979. No such effort has yet been made for the revised data presented here.
23. In my 1979 paper I calculated this at 15 per cent on the assumption that the average service life (time between arrival and death or manumission) was seven years. I could use guidance on probable rates of manumission (I assumed an average of ten years after enslavement) and the substitutability of non-slave (especially freedmen) for slaves in various urban occupations.
24. Liza Beizunstra-Malowist, 'Le travail servile dans l'agriculture de l'Égypte romaine', *V Congrès International d'Histoire Économique*, Leningrad, 1970.
25. Mohamed Talbi, 'Droit et économie en Ifriqiya au II<sup>e</sup>/IX<sup>e</sup> siècle', in A. Udovitch (ed.), *The Islamic Middle East, 700–1900: Studies in Economic and Social History*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1981, 215f.
26. Ann McDougall, 'The Sahara Reconsidered: Pastoralism, Politics and Salt in the Eighth through the Twelfth Centuries', *African Economic History*, 12 (1983), 263–86.

27. Paul Berthier, *Les anciens sucreries du Maroc et leurs réseaux hydrologiques*, Rabat: Ministère d'Éducation Nationale, 1966.
28. Pace Henige, 1986, 302, 304–5, who rejects all military statistics as 'of no value whatever' apparently because 'War is, after all, the ultimate polemic'.
29. Gibb, 1951, 309 argues that in latter twelfth-century Egyptian military parlance, *Qaraghulam* had taken on a technical meaning (lower order mamluk cavalry) rather than a literal one (servile blacks); he is probably right not only because William of Tyre describes the *Qaraghulam* as *gregoriorum* (common gentlemen) rather than as racially distinct, but also because in earlier Egyptian military systems using many black Africans the latter almost always served in the infantry. On the connection between the seventeenth and nineteenth century Moroccan '*Abid al-Buhârî*' and the slave trade, see Meyers, n. 15 above; as evidence in Table 5/D/24,26 suggests, by the nineteenth century, the '*abid*' had certainly become a self-reproducing Makhzan (state-allied) tribe rather than the product of continuing slave imports.

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- Abbreviations: *IFAOC* Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire (numbered items are volumes in the 'Collection des voyageurs occidentaux en Égypte')
- IJMES* International Journal of Middle East Studies
- JAH* Journal of African History
- MAE* Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (France), archival files
- PP* Parliamentary Papers (Great Britain)
- PUF* Presse Universitaire de France
- SRGE* Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte
- BSG* *Bulletin de la Société Géographique*
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