

(as perhaps, in the apparent persistence of a significant scale of slave-dealing into the 1930s), what the reasons for this might be.

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TRANSFORMATIONS IN SLAVERY IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION

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Slavery in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa. Edited by HENRI MÉDARD and SHANE DOYLE. Oxford: James Currey; Athens: Ohio University Press; Nairobi: EAEP; Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2007. Pp. xiv + 273. £55 (ISBN 978-184701-602-7); £17.95, paperback (ISBN 978-184701-603-4).

KEY WORDS: Eastern Africa, slavery, slave trade.

The Great Lakes region of East Africa is interesting as a region where the dynamics of political and social change were, until the nineteenth century, largely internal to the area. This makes it particularly interesting for the study of slavery. Penetration of the region by slave dealers led to a rapid expansion of slavery in the nineteenth century, but this book makes clear that slavery has a long history there. Until the recent research of Michael Twaddle, most authors believed that slavery was unimportant in earlier centuries. Few colonial administrators talked about slavery. The Christian elites often said little, and nor, except for the White Fathers, did many Christian missions. There is, nonetheless, a significant amount of data, which is ably presented here. The Great Lakes is interpreted rather broadly to include the Nyamwezi and the eastern Congo.

Most of the articles deal with the nineteenth century. In fact, half deal with the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The argument for early development is made most clearly by David Schoenbrun in an article based on linguistic evidence. Schoenbrun argues that some form of dependency existed by the twelfth century and that, by the sixteenth century, a separate term for female dependents exists. A market for slaves, however, developed later. Schoenbrun links the process to political centralization. It is probable that chiefs and kings were the most important slave-users and that slave retainers played a major role in that centralization. Schoenbrun's argument is important to the introduction by Médard, who ably pulls together the other papers, the discussions at the 2002 Paris conference from which this book emerged, and some unpublished research, including a much-cited 1983 undergraduate thesis from the National University of Rwanda. The only other author to look at the pre-1850 period is Richard Reid, who argues that slaves were important to the functioning of the Buganda political and economic system before they became a major export.

Médard lays out two theories to explain the development of slavery – first, Lovejoy's argument that external demand for slaves led to transformation of the societies that provided them and, second, Thornton's argument that the slave trade expanded rapidly because slavery was already well established – and then argues that both theories are valid for the Great Lakes. There are enough data here to trace out a regional history of slavery, though with substantial local variations. The first slaves were newcomers or outsiders, exploitable because of their marginality. Women were clearly incorporated in significantly different ways. When invaders penetrated the area, both as raiders and traders, there was a dual process. The sale of slaves became a way to buy the weapons needed to parry the invaders and to expand various states, most strikingly in Buganda. Slaves also staffed market towns

like Tabora and Ujiji and other points of trade, growing the food needed by merchants and their caravans and providing a wide range of services. Médard argues that while the use of slaves fueled the expansion of the successful states, it also limited their capacity for growth. Médard also links the increased importance of slavery to the transformation of kinship, of clientage and of royal power, which often saw all subjects as the king's slaves.

The articles are all interesting, though, as often with books that emerge from a conference, the subject matter is diverse. Jan-Georg Deutsch traces the parallel development of slavery and the slave trade among the Nyamwezi. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the Nyamwezi were living in stockaded villages. Slave soldiers became important and were rewarded with slave booty. With time, most Nyamwezi slaves were used internally. Mark Leopold writes on the Nubi, who are similar to slave soldiers used elsewhere. Holly Hanson argues that the incorporation of large numbers of slaves into Buganda caused a 'crisis in the ordering of the kingdom' (p. 161) and led to instability, increasing violence and a diminution in the status of women. Michael Tuck uses conversion narratives from Catholic missions to suggest that the 'transformation' involved increased freelance enslavement, a spiral of violence and the utter powerlessness of women. Edward Steinhart writes about Ankole, where slavery was less developed than Buganda, but he argues that slavery was important in perpetuating inequality. Jean-Pierre Chretien describes the rapid expansion of the slave trade in Rwanda and Burundi and the continuation of that trade under German rule. David Northrup does a brief overview of the eastern Congo.

Finally, Shane Doyle, in an otherwise interesting article on the impact of the slave trade on demography in Bunyoro, criticizes some ideas of the late Claude Meillassoux because they were based on a limited sample. I feel that I should explain, because the article Doyle criticizes was commissioned for a book Claire Robertson and I edited.¹ We wanted Meillassoux to do a theoretical piece. He agreed to do so if he could read all of the articles. His sample was limited, therefore, to the articles we sent him. The limited data I had for West Africa supported his argument that slaves tend not to reproduce themselves. There are very few documented cases where slaves do so. In part, this is because slave women often reproduced with free persons. The United States is a very special case because of the sharp rise in prices after the abolition of slave imports into the United States. Minais Gerais is another special case. After criticizing Meillassoux, Doyle presents no evidence that his ideas do not apply to Bunyoro.

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THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ARCHITECTURE

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KEY WORDS: Cameroon, Chad, architecture, arts.

Without having read a single line, readers will get an idea of the wealth of material and the innovative approach of this book: numerous illustrations refer to

¹ Claire Robertson and Martin Klein (eds.), *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Madison, 1983).