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Concubinage and the Status of Women Slaves in Early Colonial Northern Nigeria

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The establishment of British rule in Northern Nigeria (1897-1903) did not ameliorate the condition of female slaves, particularly concubines.1 The policy of Indirect Rule, as implemented under High Commissioner Frederick Lugard (1900-1906), required an accommodation with the aristocracy of the Sokoto Caliphate, which constituted most of the area that became the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. As is well known, individual officals who opposed the conquest were deposed, but the aristocracy itself was kept in place. Indeed under colonial rule many of the powers of the aristocracy were enhanced. In order to achieve the support of the aristocracy, the Lugard Administration had to compromise on many issues, and one of the most sensitive of these was concubinage. The issue touched the nerve of patriarchal Muslim society. Women in general held an inferior position in society, both legally and in fact. Concubines and other slave women were even worse off than free women. For the British, the treatment of women was not an important issue and there was virtually no reluctance in accepting the status quo to the extent that other policies allowed. The problem was that concubines were

slaves, and British policy was committed to the reform and ultimate demise of slavery.2 This article explores the tension between patriarchal Muslim society and British colonialism over the status of women. Concubinage was allowed to continue. It is apparent that women had to accept their subjugation, but sometimes they resisted.

Before the British conquest, slavery had been an important instrument for the recruitment of women, through capture and purchase, from outside the Sokoto Caliphate. Frequently, females had been brought into caliphate society at relatively young ages, often under the age of fifteen. Many of these slaves had been incorporated into the households of the aristocracy and merchant class as concubines. Others had been settled on rural estates as agricultural workers, but young girls, whether born on these estates or recently imported, had also been brought into the homes of the wealthy as concubines.3 At the time of the conquest, there were also some court messengers (jakudu and kuyangi),4 and often these women, too, had been concubines and only later were assigned political duties. Many households had a slave or two, usually women or girls, who worked in the compound. It was not unusual for these women to have spent at least part of their sexually-mature years as concubines as well.

Under the Caliphate, concubinage, as a means of controlling women, accomplished three social aims. First, it concentrated women in the hands of the wealthy and powerful. Second, it increased the

size of aristocratic and mercantile households as children were born to these women. Third, it helped consolidate the dominant culture of caliphate society. Women were brought into the caliphate from outside, forced to conform to urban, Muslim social norms, and contributed their children to the next generation of the commercial and political elite. British policy accepted the patriarchal structure of this social formation; there were no reasons apparent to colonial officials why any other policy should be adopted. In so doing, concubinage and the subordination of women were incorporated into colonialism.

According to Islamic law and the customs of the Sokoto Caliphate, concubinage was a special category of slavery. Concubines were chosen for their sexual attraction to their masters, and they had rights which were denied other slaves. They were recognized in Islamic law. Men could have as many as four wives, who had to be free women, and they could have as many concubines, who were supposed to be slaves, as they could afford. The children of concubines were legally free, and a concubine was to become free on the death of her master, as long as she bore a child and in some instances had shown signs of pregnancy or had miscarried.[5]

Although women were legally minors under Islamic law, there was a clear distinction between concubines and wives.[6] Concubines were slaves, and wives were not. As slaves, a concubine could not marry, own property, or inherit without the consent of her master. A wife,

by contrast, had the rights of the free borne, even though as a woman she had fewer rights than a male. The legal opinions of Muslim experts varied with respect to the propriety of free women owning land, the details of marriage contracts, and rules on inheritance. But free women did inherit and therefore could own land, although such ownership was often discouraged. There were a variety of marriage contracts between free women and free men, but the ease of divorce protected women from excessive abuse, at least in some cases. Inheritance practices theoretically followed Malikite norms, in which free women received half the male share of estates. Discrimination on the basis of gender aside, there is no doubt that being a wife was preferable to being a concubine.

In the context of caliphate society, and indeed in the early years of colonial rule as well, wives not only had to be free-borne or at least freed from slavery, they also had to be Muslims.7 They had to have families with acceptable origins (asali). Marriage could not take place unless there was a guardian (wali) for the bride, usually her father, but sometimes the father's brother or the bride's older brother. The bride's family provided a dowry (gara), and the groom's family gave a number of presents to the bride and her family, the most important of which was sadaki, a cash payment that legalized the contract. There also had to be reliable witnesses. If a husband had more than one wife, he had to maintain nocturnal access, usually three nights in succession but sometimes four, and provide equal

support for each.8 Men did not always follow these norms, which is one reason why divorce was so common, but women from respectable families certainly could expect husbands to do so.

Colonial Policy towards Women and Slaves

As part of general colonial aims to reform slavery, women received some protection from sale and excessive punishment, and the number of new slave recruits, including females, was steadily reduced, but those women who were already slaves experienced life much as they had before the conquest. For Lugard and his staff of colonial officiers, slavery presented a hazardous terrain fraught with the potential for serious social and economic dislocation.9 Women as such were not considered a dangerous problem, but assuaging the fears of men - particularly those of the aristocracy and merchant class - was perceived as a necessary component of successful colonial rule. Sacrificing the interests of slave women was an easy, almost non-consequential act for Lugard and his staff.

British decrees on slavery affected both male and female slaves, but as will be demonstrated, female slaves were treated differently than males. The various slavery proclamations prohibited enslavement and the slave trade, abolished the legal status of slavery, and declared all children born after April 1, 1901 to be free. Slavery itself was not abolished nor were slaves as such emancipated.

Instead, the British initiated policies to reform slavery with the intention of minimizing social dislocation and unrest.10 As a result, keeping slaves in their place was a major concern, and because many female slaves were concubines, reinforcing the subordination of women to men inevitably became an unintentional but crucial dimension of British policy.

Females faced four distinct disadvantages. First, a clandestine trade in children and teenagers continued to supply some slaves, most of whom were females and many of whom became concubines. Secondly, as will be examined in detail below, the courts were used to transfer slave women to those men who could afford to buy concubines. Thirdly, girls born into slavery before 1901 were still legally available for concubinage as they reached puberty, which meant that there was a supply of girls, particularly from rural areas, until the mid-teens. Fourthly, even girls born after April 1, 1901 who should have been considered free were perceived as a pool from which new concubines could be drawn. Public opinion had discouraged the use of girls born into slavery as concubines, but with the difficulty of acquiring new slaves after 1901, many masters ignored public opinion.11

Colonial policy, as initially devised by Lugard, attempted to blur the distinctions between concubines and wives, even though it was well known that concubines were slaves and wives were free. Sometimes the wishful thinking of officials equated the two forms of

relationship, thereby deliberately ignoring legal opinion and local practice, but it was not really expected that people would behave as officials sometimes wished. At least one colonial official wanted to believe that "concubines are not really slaves."12 Lugard thought that matters relating to concubines were similar to those for women in general. "It is a question of marriage rather than slavery."13 Women had to respect marriage and the dictates of their "husbands"; running away was unacceptable for concubines, just as it was for wives in England, where according to Lugard a woman "can be forced to return." The intention was to prevent the growth of what Sciortini described as that "very undesirable class of unattached females."14 Percy Girouard, who succeeded Lugard as High Commissioner, charged that such women would "drift into prostitution."15 The "grown up women" who were considered so undesirable, even to the point that they were not wanted as inmates at Freed Slaves' Homes, were girls as young as twelve.16 The contradictions apparent in these quotations demonstrate that British officers -- all male -- rationalized their attitudes towards slave women and thereby provided a screen behind which Muslim males ran their households in much the same way as always.

Women and the Fugitive Slave Crisis

One of the reasons colonial officials tried to keep slave women, including concubines, in their place was because there was a mass exodus of slaves shortly after the conquest and for several years thereafter.17 A recognizable and large portion of these fugitives were the very women who were supposed to be content with their lot, according to popular views of concubinage. That they were not contented is clear from the early colonial records. Temple reported in September 1902 that "a number of domestic slaves, almost always women, have been running away to the Fort from their houses in Bauchi."18 Webster wrote of similar difficulties at Nassarawa in 1904: "These runaways are all women, mostly concubines."19 The truth was clear; many women simply did not accept their status as slaves. They seem to have accepted better their subordination as women because many ran away with or to other men. Others attempted to reach their natal homes and relatives, which also meant attachment to males in most cases. Some did indeed become prostitutes, which required another kind of dependency even if it also offered independence from individual men.20 As these actions of women demonstrate, male-female relationships were based on subordination, but there were different levels of subordination and women could and did move from one level to another.

When women ran away to their home communities, the British sent patrols and messengers to induce them to return. At Nassarawa, Webster used the courts to justify such punitive action.

> There have lately occurred a number of cases in which slave owners have complained to the Native Court or Emir of the desertion of their slaves or concubines and the course that follows is for the Sariki to send ordering the chief of the town in which they have taken refuge to send them in for the case to be decided. When if as in most cases matters can amicably arranged the runaway fugitive returns[;] if not a ransom is agreed on which generally is very low. The Toni towns have however lately refused point blank to send any in and driven out the Emir's messengers with insults or even blows.21

The patrols sent to retrieve the women charged these towns with contempt of court rather than harboring fugitive slaves. The effect was the same, of course. The colonial state was able to re-inforce the relationship between concubine and master.

Supposedly, women could not be forced to return to masters who were responsible for cruelty or ill-treatment, and no woman could be made to go back if she absolutely refused. And there were women who did refuse, such as Agunge, aged 30, who languished in irons in the Ilorin jail because she would not marry a cripple.22 Agunge was allowed to go free in December 1906, without compensation to her

master. Similarly, Ei-issa, aged 20, was permitted to return to the home of her mother at Gindi, near Gwandu, in September 1905. She had been severely beaten by her master, who "could give no good reason for the scars of whip cuts recently inflicted. She states that she ran from him to avoid this cruelty." The master, however, was not prosecuted for assault "as there was no evidence of corraboration."23 The intention was not to disrupt domestic relations, and if it was necessary to provide a safety valve, as in this situation, so be it.

The Courts and the Redemption of Women

The cornerstone of British policy was a decree that fugitive women had to obtain their freedom through the courts, which involved the payment of redemption money to their masters and the receipt of certificates of freedom. Otherwise a fugitive was returned to her master or placed under a guardian. In Nupe, Larrymore interpreted this decree in a fashion that was representative of other provinces. It should be noted that Larrymore's equation of "husband" and "master" reveals that dimension of British attitudes which attempted to obfuscate the difference between concubinage and marriage.

> In cases where a woman runs away from her husband or master, and the man she goes to can be found,

an arrangement of the difficulty is easy enough, by making the latter compensate the original husband or master; the amount varies from L5 - L10 [120,000-240,000 cowries]. But when, as sometimes occurs, no man is forth-coming, and the woman still declines to return, a solution is more difficult. To allow her to have her own way and go free would simply mean increasing prostitution. I have now arranged to hand her over to the Emir's old mother. Her and her husband's [i.e., her master's] name and date of handing over are entered on a list kept in the Resident's office, and she is liable to be sent for at any time. In due course, as a rule within a month, a husband is found who is willing to pay the required compensation. The three are then brought up to the Resident, the new man's name duly entered up, the compensation handed over to the original husband [i.e., master], and the case satisfactorily concluded. In cases where the man is forthcoming, but cannot afford to pay the amount demanded as compensation, the woman is allowed to go with him, but the Chief of the man's village is made responsible for the

money.24

The redemption money could be paid in installments, as in the case of Alisu and Hawa, who were freed for 16 bags of cowries (320,000 cowries), six bags down and the remaining ten bags to be paid over the course of two years.25

If slave women tried to attach themselves to soldiers or other government employees, the soldiers or employees had to pay the redemption money. In Kano, for example, Isa, Biba and Kolo, aged 17, 17 and 14 respectively

> were married to three soldiers. . . with the consent of their owner and in each case. . . in the presence of the Native Alkali [judge]. I [the Resident] warned the soldiers that these women were now free, and that they were responsible for their persons and must produce them at any time, unless for good reason shewn.26

The warning was an admission on the part of the colonial regime that the fate of slave women after they had been "freed" could not easily be guaranteed. It must have been difficult, indeed virtually impossible, to keep track of women and thereby know for certain whether or not they had been resold into slavery, which usually meant

concubinage. If soldiers and government employees could not pay, the fugitive women were restored to their owners, and as Temple reported from Bauchi in 1902, "the returning of these women to their masters time after time became a serious nuisance." As a result, he posted a notice in the market that slaves fleeing to the fort first would be punished and then would be sent back to their masters.27

Lugard carefully distinguished between the purchase money paid to masters and the dowry that was required for marriage - they were not the same thing, "but the woman may use it [dowry] for self-redemption if she desires to do so." Lugard rested this interpretation on a ruling of a judge [alkali] in Bida. He considered the effect of the ruling "far-reaching". "It amounts in fact to an abolition of the slave-concubine class (except in the case of a slave-girl who is voluntarily her master's concubine), and of a decree of emancipation for all women on marriage, except in the case of a woman slave who marries a fellow-slave."28 The logic of the argument went as follows: those born of slave parents (cucunawa) could not be sold anyway; women could no longer be obtained as slaves and concubines from pagan tribes, and hence it follows that practically all women are already emancipated. The law as it exists also recognizes that a slave woman who bears a child to her master is not only free at his death, but practically so during his life, and that even if she bears no child but is well behaved she is free at her master's death.29

Lugard's legal interpretation was straight forward: "whenever a woman whose status is that of a slave marries a man, and any 'dowry' is demanded by the owner of the woman, it must be regarded as purchase money, and the transaction is consequently illegal. It may, however, be paid as redemption-money, provided that the woman is first freed with all proper formalities by the Native Court."30 In fact, however, this fine legal distinction was not always upheld, and practice varied considerably from one emirate to another.

In Yola, for example, local judges substituted the proper freedom papers for ones that stated that ransoming was done for purposes of concubinage, "thereby perpetuating the state of slavery of the woman, and assisting in the purchase of a slave."31 Similar practices were followed elsewhere:

> The Courts have [in Sokoto at any rate] permitted women to be ransomed and freed, and yet to become the concubine of the ransomer by what amounts to a legal fiction. If the ransomer intends to marry the woman he says before the alkali [judge] na pansa bauya ta zama diya (I ransom the slave woman she becomes free). If it is intended, with her consent, that she shall become a concubine he says na pansa bauya na sa ta daka (I ransom the woman I set her in my private house). The effect of the emancipation is thus held in

> suspence as long as she remains a member of the household, but takes effect the moment she leaves him. He cannot restrain her for she has been freed. She can leave her ransomer at will and marry whom she likes. She is even more free than the wife for she need get no divorce, and has no Sadaki to repay. Cases have occurred of girls inducing rich men to ransom them as concubines, in order that they may immediately leave them and marry someone else.32

Of course the number of concubines who actually took advantage of this legal fiction is unknown, and it is unlikely that many women were allowed to behave in the manner reported.

The 1905-06 Court Registers

The data for a study of concubinage and the fate of women slaves in general during the early years of colonial rule are decidedly biased. With the exception of one source,33 all information is derived from males, whether they were colonial officials or informants. Courts discriminated against women; indeed the testimony of women was accepted only through male intermediaries. Hence there is virtually no direct testimony from women, and none from slave women. And the bits and pieces that reveal the attitudes

of women are filtered through male eyes.

Registers of 627 freed slaves, 403 of whom were females, for 1905 and 1906 offer a rare view of how the British put into practice their policies for the treatment of slave women.34 The registers record the names of slaves, their age and sex, the place of liberation, ethnic background, reason for emancipation and probable destination. Often these categories are incomplete, but in general the registers carry a tremendous amount of data of interest to social historians.

The registers were kept in order to keep track of freed slaves; the courts were a major instrument of reform under the colonial regime. Slaves who wished to purchase their own freedom were legally entitled to do so, although in practice there were numerous constraints which prevented many slaves from exercising this right.35 Some oral traditions even deny that there was such a right, which is more consistent with the caliphate legal heritage.36 The provisions of the slavery proclamations also allowed third parties to pay the redemption money on behalf of a slave, whereupon the slave was released in the custody of the redeemer. In this case the custodian was either a relative or an intended "husband." Slaves seized from traders were also released, although in these cases no ransom was paid. The courts issued certificates of freedom to each of the emancipated slaves.

The courts in question were of two types - local Muslim courts

that existed under the caliphate and continued to operate under the colonial regime and provincial courts set up by the British government. Most slaves seized from traders passed through provincial courts, while most other cases were handled by the Muslim courts, which were referred to as Native Courts. Kano, for example, had 24 Muslim courts in 1905-1906.37

Undoubtedly far many more slaves achieved their freedom without resort to the courts than are recorded in the 1905-1906 registers; in addition to those who ran away in the first several years of colonial rule, many reached tacit understandings with their masters and mistresses whereby they gradually bought their own freedom through the payment of monthly installments. And still other slaves received their freedom as acts of charity on Islamic holidays and as death-bed bequests. Hence the registers are only a partial indication of a much larger process of change involving the slow decline of slavery. That these registers date to 1905 and 1906, relatively early in the colonial era, is of particular value historically, since many of the cases include people who were recently enslaved.

Although 64.3 percent of the court sample was female, it is not safe to conclude that this percentage accurately reflected the proportion of slave women in caliphate society. Studies from the western Sudan do suggest such a conclusion there,38 and it may well be that female slaves outnumbered males in the Sokoto Caliphate too.

But because the courts offered a legitimate method for transferring women for purposes of concubinage and "marriage," more women are registered than men, and hence projections of the relative proportion of males and females cannot be made on the basis of these figures.

Much of the information contained in the registers can be treated as reasonably accurate, with the normal allowance for human error. It can be assumed, for example, that age and ethnic identification are relatively accurate. If slaves did not know their ages, judges, court attendants and others offered their reasoned opinions. Ethnic awareness was clearly well developed; again slaves must have testified most of the time but others were highly informed about such matters. Redemption prices, statements of ill-treatment, seizure from slave traders, and similar information are probably accurate, too. Undoubtedly reasons for seeking emancipation were simplified in most cases, and ill-treatment, flight and other factors are likely under-represented in the registers. That these factors are mentioned at all is revealing. Their inclusion indicates that resistance to slavery was common, so common that court attendants and British officials alike saw little reason to hide such cases. They became immune to the implications of the mistreatment which was implied. A similar observation can be made about oral data collected in the 1970s. Informants readily volunteered evidence of severe punishment and poor living conditions for slaves, despite stereotyped statements about how willingly slaves accepted their status.

Certain other information in the 1905-06 registers must be treated cautiously, however. "Marriage" was a common reason for freeing women, but what this meant in practice is open to interpretation. There is considerable circumstantial evidence that most "marriages" were in fact cases of concubinage. Similar statements about relatives, adoption, and other situations implying dependency also have to be examined carefully. Besides the qualifications which limit a literal interpretation of some data, many officials failed to complete the registers, thereby reducing their comparative value. Nonetheless, the sample is large enough to allow considerable analysis of the plight of female slaves.39

Fortunately, the registers provide considerable data on how female slaves were actually treated, although many questions remain unanswered. Of the 340 females in the 1905-06 registers whose ages are known (Table I), 18.3 percent were aged ten and under. Children were a prime commodity in the slave trade, especially after the trade became illegal. They were relatively easy to move, there being little risk of escape or resistance. They could be disguised as children of the traders, and there was a ready market for children in southern Nigeria as well as in the northern emirates. Females between ages 11 and 25, the prime marriagable years as defined locally,40 constituted 53.1 percent of the cases. In fact most of these girls and women were probably destined for concubinage. If the women aged 26-30 are included then 84.3 percent of the sample was in

the category for which "marriage" was a real possibility. At least 53 percent of these females were destined for such a fate (Table II). Of course the actual number of women who became concubines or otherwise "married" may well have been higher, since the categories in the sample are not mutually exclusive.

The age profile of females who "married" their redeemers cannot be accepted as strictly accurate (Table III). The bunching of ages indicates that many were estimates. Nonetheless, certain patterns are clear. Of the 121 cases where ages are given, 75 were under twenty and 46 were aged twenty and over. Approximately half (62) of the women were in their mid to late teens. The youngest female headed for "marriage" was seven; at least five twelve-year olds were so intended.

For most females, women and children, freedom through the courts still meant some kind of dependency.41 In 76.6 of the cases, women ended up in the custody of others. Women who escaped, managed to purchase their own freedom or were released on their own reconnaisance constituted only 21.8 percent. And many of these women probably established or re-established dependent relationships. The general policy was to encourage women to marry, return to relatives or maintain an ongoing association with their former masters and mistresses.

The question of controlling female slaves was implicitly connected with attaching women to men or surrogate males in the form

of such colonial institutions as Freed Slaves' Homes and missions. Both the Islamic courts and the colonial infrastructure were brought to bear to achieve this end. The ideal was for a woman to have a "husband", whether she was a concubine or a wife did not matter to the colonial regime. If an unattached female was too young or no male was available, she was assigned a guardian, placed in a Freed Slave's Home or handed over to one of the few mission stations. Sometimes girls under ten were assigned to Europeans as servants. Females in these various categories constituted 17.1 percent of the sample. They were usually married as soon as prospective husbands were located.

Whenever relatives could be identified, unattached females were restored to their care, and usually the relatives were males; 15.5 percent were so released.42 The ransoming of relatives had been big business before the conquest and continued to be afterwards. Before 1903, freeborn Muslims were retrieved from areas outside caliphate territory, and some neighboring pagans were able to secure the release of their kin within the caliphate. Special market-towns which had been considered politically neutral for purposes of ransoming captives were located at a number of places (between Maradi and Katsina and between Zaria and Ningi, for example).43 After the conquest, it was possible for relatives to move more freely in search of kin. Hence at least four Jaba females and one Gwari woman were freed by relatives in the 1905-06 cases, which probably would have

been more difficult to do, if not impossible, before the conquest.

Only 22 women (15.2 percent) over age 25 were freed in order to "marry." Women over 25 were usually allowed to follow their own inclinations; women over 30 tended to ransom themselves. Some of these older women, at least, were concubines who were allowed to marry someone other than their master.44 A master could make a declaration of intended emancipation upon his death. This declaration was known as mudabbar. The master could continue to enjoy sexual access once the promise was given, but the woman could not be sold. Under some conditions, the woman could come and go as she pleased. These concubines were known as wahayiya.45

At least 86 cases (21.3 percent) appear to be females who were seized from traders, the result of recent kidnappings, or otherwise enslaved since the British conquest. In most cases, however, the documents do not include evidence as to whether or not slaves were recently acquired. It is likely, therefore, that the proportion of new slaves was higher, perhaps much higher, than the data establish.

The Cost of Redemption

The cost of redemption closely approximated the price of female slaves in the last years of the legal slave trade. In the 1890s, slaves generally cost between 100,000-300,000 cowries in various parts of the caliphate.46 The cost of redemption for 129 females in

1905-1906 averaged 265,000 cowries, with the price of most women falling between 200,000-300,000 cowries (Table IV).47 If small children and the one leper are excluded, than the average price was 275,000. There are several other anomolies in the sample which cannot be explained, such as the price paid for three women, apparently in a single court case, of 60,000 cowries each, a figure which is decidely low. If these cases are omitted, then the average may well have been closer to 280,000. Because the British attempted to suppress the slave trade and did indeed prevent organized slave raiding, it might be expected that the cost of transferring female slaves through the courts would have been considerably higher than it was. That it was not suggests that the courts conspired to fix prices, since the supply of new slaves was decreasing and the demand for concubines continued to be high.

It is possible to break the 1905-06 prices down into several categories, including prices for women redeemed for "marriage", prices for women redeemed by relatives, prices of self-ransom, and prices for cases of unknown or special reasons. The average price of 92 women redeemed for "marriage" (excluding non-cowrie prices)48 was 270,000 cowries; the average for those redeemed by relatives was 260,000; and the average for self-ransom was 270,000. The average price for the other cases, 190,000 cowries, includes a leper at 45,000 cowries, and if this case is excluded, then the average price for these other cases is not much lower.

There does not appear to be any correlation between price and the age of female slaves who were older than ten. The average price of girls aged 11 and 12 who were "married", for example, was 266,000 cowries (sample: 5), although it might be expected that girls in this prime age group might have cost considerably more than other women. It should be noted that prices tended to bunch at four levels: 200,000 (10 cases), 250,000 (15 cases), 280,000 (16 cases) and 300,000 (53 cases). These cases represent 71.7 percent of the sample. The frequency of the 300,000 price seems to indicate that there was a standard price for the purchase of women; 40.5 percent of all cases were at this price.

While the 1905-06 prices seem to correspond with prices in the decade before the British conquest, it is not clear how long this price structure lasted. By 1917, for example, concubines cost L 28, roughly 560,000 cowries at the 1905-06 rate of exchange, a figure which was almost double the 1905-06 price.49 Admittedly, the British no longer recognized cowries as legal tender by 1917 and hence the exchange rate had inflated considerably. The real price may well have been in line with earlier prices.

Some of the 1905-06 cases should be discussed further. The ransom price of the youngest girl to be "married" to a redeemer - an eleven-year old girl - was 300,000 cowries. The prices of the 12 year old girls, also "married" to their redeemers, were 200,000, 250,000, 280,000, and 300,000. The prices of two others are not

known. The oldest redemption cases included a 70 year old woman, ransomed by her daughter at Zaria for 350,000 cowries (one of highest prices), a 60 year old woman who was repatriated to Mandara,50 and a 55 year old woman who was released because of "illegal transfer." The low prices for redemption of some women for "marriage" cannot be explained: three women were transferred at 60,000 cowries each; one was aged 22 years old, the second was 24 years old and the age of the third is unknown. The details of one person ransomed at 90,000 cowries are not known. A 70,000-cowrie ransom for a one-year old girl does not seem out of line. The most expensive ransoms usually involved women who "married" their redeemers, including prices of 320,000 cowries (15-year old), 330,000 cowries (18-year old), 350,000 cowries (15-year old), and 350,000 cowries (25-year old). The only exception in the sample was the 70 year old women ransomed by her daughter. The cases of redemption involving commodities did not end in marriage: two were by relatives and one was a case of self-ransom.

Ethnic Origins of Slave Women

Slave women came from a plethora of ethnic backgrounds. In the 1905-06 sample at least one hundred ethnic groups were represented, and no single ethnic group predominated. Ethnic identity or place of origin is known for 311 females. These include 277 ethnic

affiliations, representing 88 different ethnic groups, and 34 place names. Only 12 ethnic groups had five or more people: the greatest number was Jaba (31), followed by Hausa (26), Alago (21), Nupe (16), Kedara (15), Kanuri (14), and Gwari, Tangale, and Fulbe (10 each). Other significant identifications included Piri and Bashema (7 each), and Mada (5). Admittedly the sample is skewed, but it is unlikely that the inclusion of a greater number of slaves from emirates that are unrepresented or under-represented in the sample would change the general conclusion. Other ethnic groups would surely be included, and the numbers of each group would change but not the extent of the variety.

The place names which are mentioned in 34 cases further suggest that the range of ethnic backgrounds was indeed large. Twenty of 34 place names are from Adamawa, which was a large area with numerous ethnic groups. The other place names reflect the same pattern; slaves came from frontier emirates where pagan groups were scattered.

The reported identifications probably disguise even more varied backgrounds, moreover. Maguzawa, for example, is not included as a category, and females reported as "Hausa" may well have included Maguzawa or have been second-generation slaves of other origins. Slaves of Kanuri origin represent a special category, since they were associated with neighboring Borno, not one of the non-Muslim societies that predominate in the sample. Nevertheless, in a few cases, perhaps 5 percent, certificates of freedom were issued to

slaves who had been kidnapped or caught in a raid from one of the enemies of the caliphate and were therefore regaining their legitimate freedom under Muslim law.

Hausa, Fulbe and Nupe were the main ethnic groups associated with the caliphate, and they represented 16.7 percent of the sample. Of these, 8.4 percent were described as Hausa, by far the largest ethnic group in the caliphate, while 5.1 percent were Nupe and 3.2 percent Fulbe.

There is a relative absence of Muslim backgrounds. Only 66 cases are identified with ethnic groups that were predominantly Muslim; some other groups, such as the Ningi (4 cases) were in part Muslim. In none of the cases, including Hausa, Fulbe, Nupe and Kanuri, did ethnicity and religion necessarily correspond. People were freed on the basis that they had been free and were Muslim. At least 20 females (5 percent) were so released, but some Hausa, Nupe, Fulbe and Kanuri females may have been acculturated, second-generation slaves who were not entitled to emancipation on the grounds of religion. Despite the uncertainty of the data, it is clear that relatively few cases, probably less than 20 percent, involved Muslims.51

The registers thereby confirm what has been known about the system of enslavement under the caliphate.52 Over 80 percent of the females were clearly non-Muslim in origin, and an overwhelming proportion of these slaves were from small ethnic groups. A steady

influx of new slaves from raided areas on the frontiers of the caliphate maintained and indeed increased the population of the caliphate. Enslavement served as a mechanism of demographic expansion and contributed to the consolidation of a Muslim, and largely Hausa, society. Such a policy reduced the size of the small ethnic groups on the periphery of the various emirates.

The ethnic categories also establish that most new slaves were settled within 100 km of their places of origin. Since the data do not address the question of slave movement directly, it is necessary to explain the reasoning behind this conclusion. First, the homelands of the various identifiable ethnic groups tended to be within 100 kms of the court where the slaves of those ethnic groups were freed, not a great distance. At least 21.3 percent of the cases were females seized from traders, and even if they are removed from the sample on the assumption that the intention was to take them further afield and thereby increase the distance from the point of capture to final destination, the probable distance travelled by new slaves is hardly altered. Whether or not slaves were actually traded at some time between capture and emancipation, and many slaves were never traded but were distributed through official channels after emirate-sanctioned raids, slaves were often settled not far from home. It should be noted that these conclusions apply to males as well as females. Such information corrects the usual assumption that slaves often travelled great distances from point of capture to place

of settlement.53 While clearly many slaves did, many others did not.

People who lived in the areas bordering Zaria and Bauchi are more heavily represented in the sample than other regions that were also sources of slaves for the caliphate (Table V). The court cases at Zaria accounted for 158 (39.2 percent) of all women freed; while those at Bauchi accounted for 107 (26.6 percent). The third largest contributor to the sample was Yola (46 cases, 11.4 percent), so that these three emirates, which formed a wedge through the non-Muslim middle belt of Nigeria, included 77.2 percent of the cases. This skewing has to be taken into consideration in a number of the conclusions reached here. The degree of non-Muslim enslavement might not have been as severe if Kano, Katsina, Sokoto and Gwandu were represented more fully, and the people on the fringes of these emirates, particularly Maguzawa and the Hausa of the independent enclaves of Maradi, Argungu and Tassawa would be in evidence. It is likely that more trade slaves found their way to Kano than to other emirates, because Kano Emirate dominated the commerce of the caliphate and relied less on raiding than Zaria, Bauchi and Yola for its slave supplies. Most slaves at Sokoto and Gwandu arrived as tribute from the other emirates, so that slaves there usually had travelled considerable distances. Only 12.7 percent of the women from the court sample were freed in the northern emirates of Kano, Katsina, Hadejia, Sokoto and Gwandu. Hence it is clear that the sample distorts the picture somewhat, but it is likely that the

general conclusion would be the same if allowance is made for these important exceptions.

Slavery and Female Sub-Culture

The diversity of ethnic origins for the slave women in the 1905-06 sample demonstrates well the fact that slavery was a process whereby non-Hausa females became acculturated. As is most clearly the case with respect to concubines, this process of forced assimilation frequently occurred within the extended families in which women were placed. Concubines, like wives, were kept in seclusion, so that free women had the primary responsibility of transforming non-Hausa slaves into Hausa concubines.54

Apprenticeship in household tasks and crafts, training in ceremonies associated with rites of passage, and cooperation in household activities brought wives and concubines together. The tensions and support inherent in these relationships was a crucial dimension of acculturation. While institutions of subordination had the function of promoting changes in ethnic identities, women had to interact in ways that provided solidarity based on gender, even if concubines usually had to obey the dictates of wives.

There is little known about important aspects of female sub-culture in the early years of colonial rule, particularly in matters relating to marriage, naming ceremonies and funerals. These rites of

passage brought women together as women, and to some extent ethnic and class differences which separated women were temporarily ignored. Bori, a spirit-possession cult, reinforced a female sub-culture.55 Bori ceremonies took place outside the acceptable (to most men) rhelm of Islam, and while some men participated in bori sessions, most bori adherents were women. Its dance, ritual and hierarchy offered an alternative world view to the male-dominated tradition of Islam. As with rites of passage, bori ceremonies helped undermine class and ethnic differences among women, although certainly bori did not always do so. Nonetheless, women participated in bori as women rather than as members of a specific class or a particular ethnic group.

A recognition of these women-centered activities serves as an important corrective to this study. In concentrating on slave women, I may well have displayed a tendency to underestimate the links between women of different classes. The cases in which mistresses freed their slave women, and the slaves stayed with the mistresses, suggests that something other than class was important to many women. Further research, set in proper historical perspective, is required to clarify the relationship between women in early colonial society.

The children of concubines had an advantage that was not shared by their slave mothers nor, indeed, by many free children of poor households. Despite the slave status of their mothers, their paternity not only guaranteed that children of concubines were free

but also resulted in their being brought up in commercial or aristocratic households. These children were fully acculturated, and while they probably suffered some deprivation relative to their half brothers and sisters born of free mothers, they still had many opportunities not available to other children. The importance of the concubine mother's background to the acculturation of their children is not certain, but the paramountcy of the paternal identity is very clear.

The ethnic backgrounds of concubine mothers were remembered well, according to the court records and oral testimony, but the significance of that identity other than as a label seems to have been slight. Women were cut off from their natal societies, and there were too many ethnic groups from which concubines were drawn to permit any particular ethnic identity from assuming a wider meaning for the women themselves.

Caliphate society was "Hausa" in the sense that the dominant language of most parts of the caliphate was Hausa. The great diversity of ethnic backgrounds for slaves, particularly women, indicates that caliphate culture was constantly exposed to new influences in ways that are beyond the scope of this study. In fact many languages were spoken in the caliphate; the aristocracy tended to speak Fulfulde as well as Hausa, and some emirates were outside the Hausa heartland. Nupe, Yoruba, Gurma and other languages were more common in these emirates, but everywhere Hausa was the

commercial tongue. The extension of the Hausa language, Islam, and caliphate political ideology were parts of an interconnected cultural transformation which required the incorporation of slave women. This process of cultural change and expansion continued after the European conquest of the caliphate. And the incorporation of alien women still was an important feature of this transformation in the early years of colonial rule.

Recruitment of Concubines, 1912-1921

Concubines were still available in the clandestine slave markets for at least two decades after the conquest, although probably in restricted numbers. In Kano, Resident Carrow is remembered as the official who ended this trade in the years after 1919. According to Alhaji Mahmudu K'ok'i, a judge and intellectual who witnessed the events of this period,

> Before then trading in slaves, in concubines, went on in secret. It was done under the pretence of free marriage. It was when Mr. Carrow arrived here [in 1919], that he was engaged in suppressing this. He went to Karaye, as the slave traders were numerous there. They used to go to Adamawa and bring back slaves from there. Mr. Carrow would go right into the huts in their compounds where they were concealing slaves and fetch them out. And

then the slave dealers were collected and told that they were to stop it. After that, the girls were divided among different house-holds. We were given some. My father was allotted two and they became like members of our family.56

As this testimony demonstrates, the practice of guardianship for freed slave women which had been established in the first years of colonial rule was still in force.

The courts provided a mechanism for the transfer of women well into the 1920s.57 Christelow's analysis of court records from the the Kano judicial council for 1913-14 demonstrates that unrelated males frequently redeemed slave women. In eleven of seventeen cases involving female slaves, a third-party male paid the redemption money.58 By 1917 the Kano courts were heavily involved in the distribution of slave women, in striking contrast to the situation in 1905-06. Whereas only a few slave women were registered in Kano's twenty-four courts in 1905 and 1906, 1,027 were "freed" in 1917 alone and a third of these were ransomed by prospective "husbands," a proportion which is not much different from that for 1905-1906 in other places.59 As Alhaji Mahmudu remembered the situation, "Before Carrow put a stop to slave trading, if a man had the money, and saw a young slave girl, he would offer to buy her, maybe [for] twenty pounds. - then the two would marry [sic] before an alkali; at that time the brideprice was fixed at 8 pounds - hence the alkali would write L8. A lot of women became concubines in this way."60

In Sokoto in 1921, Edwardes still reported ransoming for purposes of concubinage, which were now considered cases of "mal-practice."61 Even then, however, the patriarchal attitudes of the British were not so very different from those of the Sokoto aristocracy:

> The ransoming of girls for concubinage undoubtedly still goes on. Several cases have come to my notice, and I pointed out that the girl is born free and can marry whom she pleases. It is of course quite illegal, and must stop, but at the same time one cannot feel that any great harm is done. The girls are of low class, children of slaves of course, and as the concubines of rich men they have many luxuries denied to the wives of poor men. Such girls are freed by the court at the time, and can leave him whenever they wish. I have not punished any of the offenders, but have impressed on the Alkalai that it is their duty to satisfy themselves that a female produced for ransome [sic] is of age to be a slave, and that in any case the fact that the girl is free on leaving the court is to be made clear. I do not think that any subtleties of Moslem law as to the holding of a free woman in concubinage disturb the peace of either party.62

As Edwardes observed, "The critical period passed three or four years ago. Now it is safe to say that there is not a virgin slave in the country, and any case of ransoming for concubinage is open to grave suspicion."63

Despite the continued use of the courts, by the second decade of colonial rule, males had to rely increasingly on the recruitment of children borne of slave parents as a source for concubines because newly enslaved girls became more and more scarce. It was necessary to impress girls into concubinage who technically should have been considered free, since they were born after 1 April 1901.64 By then, however, the reform of slavery, even though directed at males, had been effective enough so that the recruitment of concubines could be overlooked. A new policy evolved which tried to keep such cases out of court. Concubines had to be recruited by other means.65 Colonial attitudes towards women were such that the contradiction inherent in this policy scarcely mattered.

Table I

Age Profile of Female Slaves Freed through Courts, 1905-1906

Age	Number	Percentage
0-5	25	7.4
6-10	37	10.9
11-15	64	18.8
16-20	77	22.6
21-25	40	11.7
26-30	44	12.9
31-35	16	4.7
36 +	37	10.9
Total	340	99.9
Unknown	63	

Source: Register of Freed Slaves, 1905-1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 90, Acc 121

Table II

Destination of Freed Female Slaves, 1905-1906

Destination	Number	Percentage
Marriage to Redeemer	145	39.4
Marriage--other	17	4.6
Restored to relatives	57	15.5
Freed Slaves' Homes	23	6.2
Missions	15	4.1
Custody of Local Officials	14	3.8
Court Wards (children under 10)	8	2.2
Self-redmption	30	8.2
Adoption	3	0.8
Living with former mistress	5	1.4
Freed on own inclination	47	12.8
Escape	3	0.8
Died	1	0.3
Total	368	100.1
Unknown	35	

Source: Registers of Freed Slaves, 1905-06, SNP 15/1
Acc 90, Acc 121

Table III

Ages of Females Redeemed for "Marriage" to Redeemer, 1905-1906

Age	Number	Age	Number
7	1	23	0
11	1	24	1
12	6	25	10
13	2	26	0
14	3	27	2
15	26	28	0
16	4	29	0
17	20	30	11
18	8	35	3
19	4	40	7
20	7	youth	1
21	1	unknown	18
22	4		
		Total	140

Source: Register of Freed Slaves, 1905-1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 90, Acc 121

Table IV

Cost of Redemption of Female Slaves, 1905-1906

Cost (cowries)	Marriage #	Relatives #	Self-Ransom #	Other #
45,000				1 (leper)
60,000	3			
70,000		1 (baby)		
90,000				1
130,000			1	
180,000	1		1	
200,000	7	3		
210,000	3			
217,000			1	
220,000	1	1		
240,000	1	1		
250,000	9	2	4	
260,000	4			1
270,000	5		2	
280,000	11	1	2	2
290,000	1			
300,000	42	2	9	
310,000		1	1	
320,000	1			
330,000	1			
350,000	2	1		
L2 10/-	1			
L3 10/-		1		
L4		1	3	
L20	1			
two cows		1		
mare, 3 clothes		1		
mare, 3 gowns				1
Total	94	17	24	6

Source: Registers of Freed Slaves, 1905, 1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 90, Acc 121

Table V

Location of Court Cases for Freed Slaves, 1905-1906

Emirate	1905		1906		Total		Percentage	
	Both	Females	Both	Females	Both	Females	Both	Females
Zaria	98	64	145	94	243	158	38.8	39.2
Bauchi	8	6	160	101	168	107	26.8	26.6
Yola	30	16	34	30	64	46	10.2	11.4
Sokoto	38	27	-	-	38	27	6.0	6.7
Muri	51	23	7	2	58	25	9.3	6.2
Bassa	14	8	-	-	14	8	2.2	2.0
Gwandu	7	7	-	-	7	7	1.1	1.7
Katagum	4	4	3	3	7	7	1.1	1.7
Kano	4	3	4	2	8	5	1.3	1.2
Katsina	-	-	6	5	6	5	1.0	1.2
Nassarawa	1	1	6	4	7	5	1.1	1.2
Ilorin	-	-	5	2	5	2	0.8	0.5
Borgu	2	1	-	-	2	1	0.3	0.2
Total	257	160	370	243	627	403	100.0	99.8

Source: Registers of Freed Slaves, SNP 15/1 Acc 90, Acc 121

Summary

Court records from 1905-06 offer a rare view of the status of women slaves in early colonial Northern Nigeria. It is shown that British officials found it easy to accommodate the aristocracy of the Sokoto Caliphate on the status of these women, despite British efforts to reform slavery. Those members of the aristocracy and merchant class who could afford to do so were able to acquire concubines through the courts, which allowed the transfer of women under the guise that they were being emancipated. British views of slave women attempted to blur the distinction between concubinage and marriage, thereby reaffirming patriarchal Islamic attitudes. The court records not only confirm this interpretation but also provide extensive information on the ethnic origins of slave women, the price of transfer, age at time of transfer, and other data. It is shown that the slave women of the 1905-06 sample came from over 100 different ethnic groups and the price of transfer, which ranged between 200,000-300,000 cowries, was roughly comparable to the price of female slaves in the years immediately preceding the conquest. Most of the slaves were in their teens or early twenties. The use of the courts to transfer women for purposes of concubinage continued until at least the early 1920s.

1. This article arises from a joint research project into the impact of early colonial rule on slavery in which I am involved with J. S. Hogendorn. An earlier version was presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of African Studies, Edmonton, June 1987. I wish to thank Elspeth Cameron, Martin Klein, Thomas Lewin, Beverly Mack, Catherine Coles, and Richard Roberts for their comments.

2. For a discussion of British policy toward slavery, see J. S. Hogendorn and Paul E. Lovejoy, "The Development and Execution of Frederick Lugard's Policies Toward Slavery in Northern Nigeria," paper presented at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Denver, November 1987, and Hogendorn and Lovejoy, "The Reform of Slavery in Early Colonial Northern Nigeria," in S. Miers and R. Roberts, eds., The End of Slavery in Africa (Madison, 1988).

3. Muhammadu Rabi'u, interviewed at Fanisau, Kano Emirate, 13 July 1975 by Yusufu Yunusa; Garba Sarkin Gida, interviewed at Gandun Nassarawa, Kano Emirate, 14 September 1975 by Ahmadu Maccido; Abdulwahbu Dawaki, interviewed at Rano, Kano Emirate, 12 September 1975 by Aliyu Musa; and Bakoshi, interviewed at Hunkuyi, Zaria Emirate, 10 December 1975 by Ahmadu Maccido and Paul E. Lovejoy. All interviews, which are on deposit at the Northern History Research Scheme, Ahmadu Bello University, are on tape and have been transcribed. The interviews were conducted under the supervision of

the author and/or J. S. Hogendorn.

4. Mahmood Yakubu, "A Century of Warfare and Slavery in Bauchi, c. 1805-1900: An Analysis of a Pre-Colonial Economy" (B.A. dissertation, unpublished, University of Sokoto, 1985), 64; and Beverly B. Mack, "Service and Status: Slaves and Concubines in Kano, Nigeria," in Catherine Coles and Beverly Mack, eds., Hausa Women (Madison, forthcoming).

5. For a fuller discussion of concubines and their place in Caliphate society, see Paul E. Lovejoy, "Concubinage in the Sokoto Caliphate," in Coles and Mack, Hausa Women. Also see Douglas Edwin Ferguson, Nineteenth Century Hausaland, being a Description by Imam Imoru of the Land, Economy, and Society of His People (Ph.D. thesis, unpublished, UCLA, 1973), 231-233; and M. G. Smith, "Introduction," in Mary Smith, ed., Baba of Karo. A Woman of the Moslem Hausa (New York, 1954). It should be noted that Alan Christelow is wrong in stating that a concubine became free "once she had born her master children;" see "Slavery in Kano, 1913-1914: Evidence from the Judicial Records," African Economic History, 14 (1985), 69.

6. For a general discussion of the place of concubines in Islamic society, see Joseph Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law (Oxford, 1964); Schacht, "Umm-al-Walad," Encylopedia of Islam (London, 1934),

1012-1015; and Reuben Levy, The Social Structure of Islam (London, 1957), 69, 77-81, 105. For a comparison with the status of concubines in other Muslim societies, see Margaret Strobel, Muslim Women in Mombasa, 1890-1975 (New Haven, 1979); Strobel, Allan G. B. Fisher and Humphrey J. Fisher, Slavery and Muslim Society in Africa. The Institution in Saharan and Sudanic Africa and the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade (London, 1970), 97-109; E. R. Toledano, "Slave Dealers, Women, Pregnancy and Abortion," Slavery and Abolition, 2, 1 (1981), 53-68. For a further comparison with the status of women under slavery, see Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, eds., Women and Slavery in Africa (Madison, 1983).

7. For the place of concubines in Hausa society, see M. G. Smith, Social and Economic Change among Selected Native Communities in Northern Nigeria (Ph.D. thesis, unpublished, University of London, 1951), 127-166. For an autobiographical account, see Mary Smith, ed., Baba of Karo. A Woman of the Moslem Hausa (New York, 1954). For a description from 1905, see A. J. N. Tremearne, Hausa Superstitions and Customs. An Introduction to the Folk-lore and the Folk (London, 1913), 85-88. For local legal tradition in the first decade of colonial rule, see the notes on Muslim law, Hausa and English versions, in R. C. Abraham, An Introduction to Spoken Hausa and Hausa Reader for European Students (London, 1940), 120, 154-155, 158-159, 204-213. For a discussion of concubinage in more recent

(London, A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, ed., 3rd ed., 1970), 228fn.

12. G. W. Webster, Report on Nassarawa Province, December 1904, SNP 7/5 346/1904. Unless otherwise noted, all archival references are to the Nigerian National Archive, Kaduna.

13. Marginal note to Webster's report of December 1904.

14. J. C. Sciortini, 10 May 1907, SNP 7/7 1648/1907.

15. Percy Girouard to Lord Crewe, 16 November 1908, CSO 1/27/8, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

16. Sciortini, 10 May 1907.

17. Paul E. Lovejoy, "Fugitive Slaves: Resistance to Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate," in G. Okihiro, ed., In Resistance: Studies in African, Afro-American and Caribbean History (Amherst, Mass., 1986), 82-91; Hogendorn and Lovejoy, "Reform of Slavery."

18. C. L. Temple, Report on Bauchi Province, September 1902, SNP 15/1 Acc 42.

19. Webster, Nassarawa Report, December 1904.

times, see Mack, "Slaves and Concubines in Kano;" also see Isa Wali, "Concubines and Slaves: The Facts," Nigerian Citizen, July 25, 1956. For a discussion of the legal status of women, see Allan Christelow, "Women and the Law in Early Twentieth Century Kano," in Catherine Coles and Beverly Mack, eds., Hausa Women (Madison, forthcoming); Christlow, "Slavery in Kano," 57-75.

8. Abraham, Spoken Hausa, 120, 150-153; M. Hiskett, "Enslavement, Slavery and Attitudes towards the Legally Enslavable in Hausa Islamic Literature," in John Ralph Willis, ed., Slaves and Slavery in Muslim Africa (London, 1985), I, 122; Abdulrazak Giginyu Sa'idu, "History of a Slave Village in Kano: Gandun Nassarawa" (B.A. dissertation, unpublished, Bayero University, 1981), 45; Wada, interviewed in Kano City, 18 July 1975, by Yusufu Yunusa.

9. Hogendorn and Lovejoy, "Lugard's Policies toward Slavery;" and Hogendorn and Lovejoy, "Reform of Slavery."

10. Hogendorn and Lovejoy, "Lugard's Policies Toward Slavery;" and "Reform of Slavery."

11. Sa'idu, "Gandun Nassarawa," 46-47, 151-152, 157; and Frederick Lugard, Political Memoranda. Revision of Instructions to Political Officers on Subjects Chiefly Political and Administrative, 1913-1918

(London, A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, ed., 3rd ed., 1970), 228fn.

12. G. W. Webster, Report on Nassarawa Province, December 1904, SNP 7/5 346/1904. Unless otherwise noted, all archival references are to the Nigerian National Archive, Kaduna.

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17. Paul E. Lovejoy, "Fugitive Slaves: Resistance to Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate," in G. Okihiro, ed., In Resistance: Studies in African, Afro-American and Caribbean History (Amherst, Mass., 1986), 82-91; Hogendorn and Lovejoy, "Reform of Slavery."

18. C. L. Temple, Report on Bauchi Province, September 1902, SNP 15/1 Acc 42.

19. Webster, Nassarawa Report, December 1904.

20. See, for example, P. G. Harris, Kano City Assessment 1921-22, SNP 7, where it is reported that the wealthy businessman, Mai Kano Agogo, owned a large lodging house in Fagge quarter which consisted of three quadrangles, each containing fifteen rooms. Some of the occupants were "women of the prostitute class." For a study of Hausa "courtesanship, see Jerome Barkow, "The Institution of Courtesanship in the Northern States of Nigeria," Geneve-Afrique, 10, 1 (1971), 1-16. Also see Abner Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa: A Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns (London, 1969).

21. Webster, Nassarawa Report, December 1904.

22. Register of Freed Slaves, Ilorin Province, 1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 121.

23. Register of Freed Slaves, Sokoto Province, 1905, SNP 15/1 Acc 90.

24. H. D. Larrymore, Nupe Province, Report for Quarter ending 31 March 1907, SNP 7/8 2017/1907. Also see Stanley, Report on Sokoto Province, half year ending June 30, 1908, Sokprof 2/9 985/1908.

25. Register of Freed Slaves, Bauchi Province, May 1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 121.

26. Register of Freed Slaves, Kano Province, September 1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 121.

27. Temple, Bauchi Report, September 1902; Temple, Report on Bauchi Province, October 1902, SNP 15/1 Acc 43. Also see the case of Pattoo in Register of Freed Slaves, Kano Province, January 1905, SNP 15/1 Acc 90. In 1904, when Larrymore was Resident in Kabba Province, he instituted similar policies (Kabba Province Monthly Reports, March 1904, SNP 15/1 Acc 64):

> Freed Slave Women...[are] given to guardians in this place. One or two of them are a source of much trouble to the Resident at present. One (Guardian, Mrs. Williams) refused to do any work, has now commenced to refuse food, speaks no known language, and I am at a loss what to do with her. A police constable has apparently offered her marriage, by some means, and I am told that she is willing to marry the man. Will Your Excellency please sanction? [margin: "yes"] She will be on the Police books as laid down. I think the woman is most fortunate in having found a suitor. I have seen her. Another is a girl freed slave (guardian, Mrs. Hesse) after having been

treated apparently with every consideration, in fact, as Mr. Hesse assures me, "as one of the family" this young woman now refuses to reside with the Hesse household -- she wants to marry Sergt. Brown of the Police. I was assured however that she was too young to marry. I therefore offered to send her back to the [Freed Slaves'] home in Zungeru. She said, in Hausa, that if she were sent back she would cut her throat. She wants to live with the present Mrs. Brown until old enough to marry Sergt. Brown. Will Your Excellency sanction change of guardianship? [margin: "It is a very puzzling case. I see no way of dealing with it except as you suggest."]

28. Frederick Lugard, Instructions to Political and Other Officers, on Subjects Chiefly Political and Administrative (London, 1906), 144.

29. Lugard, Instructions, 144.

30. Lugard, Instructions, 146. Also see Lugard, Political Memoranda, 228.

31. Lugard, Political Memoranda, 233.

32. Lugard, Political Memoranda, 229, based on a report by Arnett.

33. Smith, ed., Baba of Karo.

34. These registers are contained in two files, SNP 15/1 Acc 90, and SNP Acc 121.

35. Paul E. Lovejoy, "Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate," in Lovejoy, ed., The Ideology of Slavery in Africa (Beverly Hills, 1981), 233-235; Lovejoy, "Problems of Slave Control in the Sokoto Caliphate," in Lovejoy, ed., Africans in Bondage. Studies in Slavery and the Slave Trade (Madison, 1986), 251-252; Hogendorn and Lovejoy, 1988.

36. Lovejoy, "Problems of Slave Control," 251.

37. Frederick Lugard, Annual Reports, Northern Nigeria, 1905-06, 411.

38. See Martin A. Klein, "Women in Slavery in the Western Sudan," in Claire C. Robertson and Klein, eds., Women and Slavery in Africa (Madison, 1983), 67-92.

39. Examples of court cases, taken from Register of Freed Slaves, Zaria Province, August 1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 90, include the following:

Mahabauta, 10, Nruma [ethnic group], recently purchases, restored to relatives;

Aliba, 30, Hausa, "Freed by Emir of his own free will, having fallen to him as his share of Gaidi [inheritance];"

Kamanu, 25, Kedara, "ransomed by Audu from Magaji for 220,000 [cowries] and married to him;"

40. Smith, ed., Baba of Karo, 166.

41. For one of the clearest statements of this policy of enforced dependency, see H. R. P. Hillary, Sokoto Province Monthly Reports, January 1905, Sokprof 2/2 401/1905. Christelow, "Women and the Law," also notes how important it was for males to speak on behalf of slave women who were seeking their freedom.

42. See, for example, the case of Yaganah, aged 16, Kanuri: "Enslaved by some unknown man at Kukawa in 1903; exchanged in Bauchi shortly afterwards. Claimed by her brother. Freed to return with her brother to Bornu" (Register of Freed Slaves, Bauchi Province, August 1906, SNP 15/1 Acc 121). Also see the case of Pattoo, aged 26, from Bebeji in Kano Emirate: "Freeborn Hausa woman, enslaved at Ningi, fled on the occasion of the 1901 Expedition [against Ningi]. Left to follow her own inclinations. A grown up woman well able to look after herself. She has been informed as the Regulations re marriage with govt servants" (Register of Freed Slaves, Kano Province, January 1905, SNP 15/1 Acc 201).

43. Lovejoy, "Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate," 235-236.

44. Yusufu Yunusa, "Slavery in the 19th Century Kano" (B.A. dissertation, unpublished, Ahmadu Bello University, 1976), 32-33.

45. G. P. Bargery, A Hausa-English Dictionary and English-Hausa Vocabulary (London 1934).

46. David Carl Tambo, "The Sokoto Caliphate Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century," International Journal of African Historical Studies, 9 (1976), 194, 216-217.

47. For a comparison with prices elsewhere in West Africa in the late nineteenth century, see Roberta A. Dunbar, "Slavery and the Evolution of Nineteenth-Century Damagaram," in S. Miers and I. Kopytoff, eds., Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives (Madison, 1977), 164; Emmanuel Terray, "Reflexions su la formation du prix des esclaves a l'interieur do l'Afrique de l'Ouest precoloniale," Journal des Africanistes, 52, 1-2 (1982), 119-144; and Klein, "Women in Slavery," 67-92.

48. Cowrie-sterling exchange rates varied, but in 1906 a shilling was worth 1,200 cowries (Annual Report, Northern Nigeria, 1906-07,

522). At this rate, L4 was worth 96,000 cowries but probably was meant to be the equivalent of 100,000 cowries. If this rate is correct, then sterling values were extremely low. Because of the problem of converting these values, the analysis here ignores these cases.

49. Summary of interviews with Alhaji Mahmadu K'ok'i of Kano by A. N. Skinner. Besides his career as a judge and scholar, Ahaji Mahmudu was also Bargery's principal collaborator in the compilation of the 1934 Hausa-English dictionary. I wish to thank Professor Skinner for a copy of these summaries. For a biography of Mahmadu K'ok'i, see Skinner, ed., Alhaji Mahmudu K'ok'i (Zaria, 1977).

50. Register of Freed Slaves, SNP 15/1 Acc 90.

51. On the basis of ethnic identification, the upper limit of the percentage of female slaves who could have been Muslim, however defined, was 20 percent.

52. Jan S. Hogendorn, "Slave Acquisition and Delivery in Precolonial Hausaland," in R. Dumett and Ben K. Schwartz, eds., West African Culture Dynamics: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives (The Hague, 1980)477-493; and Michael Mason, "Population Density and 'Slave Raiding' - The Case of the Middle Belt of Nigeria," Journal of

African History, 10, 4 (1969), 551-564. For the debate on the drain of population from the Middle Belt of Nigeria as a result of enslavement, see M. B. Gleave and R. M. Prothero, "Population Density and Slave Raiding: A Comment," Journal of African History, 12, 2 (1971), 319-324; and Mason's reply, "Population Density and Slave-raiding: A Reply," Journal of African History, 12, 2 (1971), 324-327.

53. Claude Meillassoux, Anthropologie de l'esclavage. Le ventre de fer et d'argent (Paris, 1986), 68-69; and Paul E. Lovejoy, Transformations in Slavery. A History of Slavery in Africa (Cambridge, 1983), 88.

54. For additional information on Hausa women, see Jerome H. Barkow, "Hausa Women and Islam," Canadian Journal of African Studies, 6, 2 (1972), 317-328; Mack, "Slaves and Concubines and Kano;" Christelow, "Women and the Law;" Cohen, Custom and Politics; Catherine Coles, Muslim Women in Town: Social Change among the Hausa of Northern Nigeria (Ph.D. thesis, unpublished, University of Wisconsin, 1983); and Smith, Baba of Karo; and Isa A. Abba, "Kulle (Purdah) among the Muslims in the northern States of Nigeria: Some Classifications," Kano Studies, 2, 1 (1980), 42-50.

55. On bori, see Michael Onwuejeogwu, "The Cult of the Bori Spirits

among the Hausa," in Mary Douglas and Phyllis M. Kaberry, eds., Man in Africa (London, 1969), 275-305; and Christelow, "Women and the Law."

56. Mahmudu K'ok'i, Summary of Interviews.

57. In 1906-07, at least 53 slave women were redeemed for purposes of "marriage" in Kano Province; see F. Cargill, Kano Province Annual Report, 1907, SNP 7/9 1538/1908.

58. Christelow, "Women and the Law." Christelow suggests that the main reason males ransomed unrelated women was because they acquired rights of wilaya (guardianship) over the women and thereby could give them away in marriage, receiving in return the economic and social benefits which accrue to one who offers a bride. He does not consider the possibility that men obtained such women for purposes of concubinage. Any subsequent benefit acquired through marriage arrangements with other men must have been a secondary consideration, if it was a factor at all.

59. Chinedu Nwafor Ubah, Administration of Kano Emirate under the British, 1900-1930 (Ph.D. thesis, unpublished, University of Ibadan, 1973), 371.

60. Mahmudu Wokili, Summary of Interviews.

61. Edwardes, Sokoto Province Half Year Report, 30 September 1921, Mss. Afr. s. 769, Rhodes House).

62. Edwardes, Sokoto Report, 1921.

63. Edwardes, Sokoto Report, 1921.

64. Mack, "Slaves and Concubines;" Sa'idu, "Gandun Nassarawa," 16-47, 131-132, 157.

65. By 1921, colonial officials had begun to expect that concubinage would be dealt with informally outside the courts. The alkali of Kano, Mohammadu Aminu, was removed from office in February as the result of "a slave ransom case, in which he permitted a girl born in and brought from Ngaundere in the Cameroons to be treated as a slave, for purposes of ransom, thus contravening the code." He received a jail term of three years. The alkali of Gwarzo, Kano Emirate, was likewise removed "for permitting children born free, to be ransomed before him." He received a similar sentence. See A. C. G. Hastings, Kano Province Report for 15 Months ending 31st March 1921, SNP 10/9 120p/1921.