The Changing Worlds of Atlantic Africa

Essays in Honor of Robin Law

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within rather than without states was slighter than North and many others might suppose. But that begs the chicken and egg problem: to establish and maintain political centralization in African conditions was difficult, so North might question whether the states that were created were effective enough at doing the things that his model recommends. In the case of two of the more economically buoyant states of the period, the Asante kingdom (founded c. 1700) and the Sokoto Caliphate (founded 1804–8), it could be said that they needed more time to establish unmistakable economic superiority, per head of population, than they were to be allowed by the imposition of colonial rule (in 1896 and 1903 respectively).

But, in addition, a more general answer may be suggested. The pattern of economic growth exhibited in the nineteenth century, based to a large extent on the use of slaves to produce commodities, was partly self-limiting. This was because of the uniquely high external costs involved where labor markets are based on slavery rather than hired labor. The wars fought by slave-owning states were not usually specifically motivated by the prospect of capturing slaves, but the economic value of slaves made such wars pay and thus helped to sustain militarist regimes.[101] The "collateral damage" of wars and slave raiding was felt most forcefully in the hinterland of major states, where stateless societies or weaker states repeatedly suffered depletion of resources and disruption of economic life. This must have limited the export market for Hausa cloth, for example.

Conclusions

This chapter has discussed the interaction between states and markets with respect to Smithian growth, for the pre-colonial nineteenth century in West Africa. It has been emphasized that markets did not depend on states to exist, or even to flourish. Yet, while avoiding what Lonsdale called the "evolutionist assumption that it is in some sense 'better' to live in states,"[102] I have argued that some of the states under review contributed a range of public goods which assisted market-based growth. However, this was to a large extent combined—inextricably—with coercion. This was the most feasible form of economic growth available at the time. But it is suggested that its double-edged character, delivering Smithian growth along with economic and labor rents, made it self-limiting. This helps to account for the fact that, by the time the Europeans scrambled, the economies presided over by states had not proved themselves unambiguously wealthier than those inhabited by stateless societies.

101. As C. C. Wrigley noted in *African Affairs* 70 (1971), 393–404. Compare also Kwame Arhin, "The Financing of the Ashanti Expansion (1700–1820)," *Africa* 37 (1967), 283–91, and Arhin, "The Asante Praise Poems: The Ideology of Patrimonialism," *Paideuma* 32 (1986), 163–97.
102. Lonsdale, "States and Social Processes in Africa," 139.

Chapter Eight

The Economic Impact of the 1807 British Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Joseph E. Inikori

The literature on the 1807 British abolition of the transatlantic slave trade from Africa, as opposed to the abolition of slavery in the British Caribbean colonies in 1833, is dominated by the politics of abolition.[1] In spite of the claims and counter claims made by the abolitionists and the slave traders concerning the expected economic consequences of ending the slave trade for both Britain and Africa, there has been no detailed study of how abolition actually affected the process of economic development in Britain and in West Africa in the short term or in the long run. A fascinating narrative of the economic and political consequences of the abolition of slavery in the British Caribbean colonies was published recently by Seymour Drescher entitled, *The Mighty Experiment*.[2] But nothing similar to that has been written on the abolition of the slave trade itself. This chapter lays out the claims and counter claims concerning the expected economic consequences of abolition and examines the decades that followed to assess these claims against the historical reality both in Britain and in West Africa.

I. Claims and Counter Claims on the Expected Impact of Abolition

I.1. Claims by the Pro-Slave Trade Interests

Between 1804 and 1807, the pro-slave trade interests in Lancashire collected, organized, and presented a large body of evidence intended to show the expected negative consequences of ending the slave trade for the United Kingdom in general and for Lan-

1. Reginald Coupland, *The British Anti-Slavery Movement* (London: T. Butterworth, 1933); Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944); Richard B. Sheridan, "Eric Williams and *Capitalism and Slavery*: A Biographical and Historiographical Essay," in Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman (eds.), *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
2. Seymour Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

cashire in particular. William Walton in Whitehaven was in charge of collecting the raw facts from all regions across the Atlantic and passing them on to George Case in Liverpool, who in turn forwarded them to Dr. Bisset and Mr. Simon Cock in London, both of whom were working on behalf of Liverpool merchants to defeat the bill in Parliament for abolishing the slave trade.[3] William Walton informed George Case: "what I write is little more than a plain statement of facts with Remarks thereon, which Dr. Bisset will be pleased to put into form and proper language to meet the public eye, adding or curtailing as he may think best."[4]

The Lancashire pro-slave trade group tried to show the extent of demand for slave labor in Spanish America and the French Caribbean, and the capacity of the French slave trade to deliver slaves to the Americas. Members of the group wrote letters to their friends in Spain and France to collect evidence on specified issues. Answers to queries sent to Spain were brought to England in January 1805, according to William Walton, "by the Spanish Gentleman now in London, and which [I] received from him by last night's post."[5] Among other things, the data received contained evidence from the census of Mexico taken in 1796, "as usual by the Clergy," showing a total of "679,842 Negroes, men, women, and children," in Mexico, and "539,628 Negroes, men, women, and children," in Peru; 2 million Negroes more were needed in Mexico and Peru:

> in order to put those immense countries into a moderate state of cultivation, work the mines, etc., great numbers of mines being now totally stopped and useless for want of Negro Labourers to work them.... Before the French Revolution in St Domingo began, there were about twenty-five thousand Negroes imported annually into Mexico and Peru, purchased from the different European Nations, in their various Islands including what were brought to the Havana etc for sale—but there were Spanish purchasers for thirty to forty thousand, if they could have been procured and offered for sale.

Continuing, it is stated that to put their cultivation "on a proper footing" the two extremely valuable Spanish islands of Puerto Rico and Cuba needed, "in addition to their present numbers," 150,000 and 400,000 "more Negro labourers," respectively.[6] The point in all this is that there was a huge demand for slave lobor in Spanish America, and British merchants were in a good position to profit immensely from it, profits that would be lost to the British economy if the British Parliament abolished the slave trade. As William Walton put it:

> The various nations of Europe have each their Fort or Excellence, or in other words are possessed of some Advantage either local or acquired, in which they excel their Neighbours. British Merchants Excel (in general knowledge of Commerce) the merchants of other nations.[7]

Other evidence collected concerned the contribution of the cotton textile industry to the British economy that would be lost if the slave trade was abolished. Demography was presented as a clear measure of the contribution:

3. The data collected are tied together among the Detached Papers of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa in the National Archives, Kew Gardens, London, England (T 70/1585).
4. T 70/1585, Wm Walton to George Case, Whitehaven, 19 January 1805.
5. T 70/1585, Walton to Case, Whitehaven, 19 January 1805.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

> The increase of inhabitants in all the different towns in Lancashire which are employed in the cotton manufactures, as Bolton, Blackburn, Warrington, Lancaster, Bury, Haslingden, Preston, Stockport, Ashton, Oldham, Chorley, Leigh, Prescot, Blackrod, Wigan, Ormskirk, Newton, etc., is very great, of which some idea may be formed by the increase in the Town of Manchester including Salford, which is a suburb to Manchester divided by the river Irwell, over which there are three Bridges. Manchester may justly be stiled [sic] the fountain head of the cotton manufactures in Lancashire.[8]

The growth over time of the population of Manchester and Salford is shown as follows:

1717	8,000
1757	19,839
1773	27,246
1788	50,412
1791	65,376
1802	86,125

It is reported further that:

> All round Manchester for five to six miles, every way bordering the high roads, it appears to be a continued village, full of industrious people employed in various Branches of the Cotton Manufactory. The land is chiefly employed in Pasture and Meadow, as likewise in bleaching and printing grounds, and other purposes connected with the Cotton Manufactures.[9]

This is followed by evidence showing annual consumption of raw cotton in Great Britain and Ireland and the number of slaves needed to produce the cotton:[10]

Years	Raw Cotton (lbs)	No. of Slaves Needed
1760	3,115,420	13,351
1764	5,912,346	25,338
1770	9,425,610	40,395
1780	11,743,522	50,329
1786	19,642,715	84,183
1790	26,856,942	115,101
1799	37,074,600	158,891

The claim for the expected consequences of abolition for the cotton industry concludes with supposedly what Richard Arkwright, the inventor of the spinning machine, would say if he returned from his grave to find that the slave trade had been abolished:

> If Sir Richard Arkwright could again make his appearance in this world, he would complain heavily and say, it has been to little purpose that I invented such most curious and valuable machines for the spinning of cottons if no more negroes are to be sent from Africa to the West Indies to raise the raw materials. If my successors are not to receive constant supply of cottons to work upon, they must go to and establish their wonderful and extensive

8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.

works in those countries that have settlements and negroes on their plantations to raise the raw cottons and will supply them therewith on the best and lowest terms.[11]

Other claims by the pro-slave trade group pertained to the expected adverse effect of abolition on Liverpool computed as follows:[12]

Brief Estimate of the Effect [on] the Town & Port of Liverpool from the Abolition of the African [Slave] Trade

147 ships employed, of 34,976 Tons at £20 per ton	699,520
Provisions for a voyage for 5,600 Seamen at 50 [shillings] each a month:	170,000
Wages for Masters and other officers in one voyage	240,000
Wages for Seamen & subordinate persons employed aboard	210,000
Tradesmen & Labourers employed in preparing ships for their voyages	250,000
Manufacturers, East India Goods Merchants, etc., for cargoes reckoning 250 slaves per ship & £20 per head	750,000
Premium of Insurance on £1,660,000, ships & cargo for 3 legs of the voyage at 20Gs [guineas] %	332,000
[Insurance] to cover the premium £332,000 at 20Gs %	66,400
Insurance on cargoes homeward calculating the pms at only one-third of the outward cargoes	132,800
TOTAL	**£2,850,720**

The Lancashire pro-slave trade group concluded its claims concerning the expected adverse effects of abolition with the ominous point that the abolition of the slave trade would at once deprive "our merchants and manufacturers of a market for exports to the amount of upwards of a million sterling per annum, and this at a period when their exclusion from many of the markets of Europe is threatening them with Destruction."[13]

I.2. Counter Claim by a Liverpool Anti-Slave Trade Merchant, Edgar Corrie

In February 1788, a Liverpool merchant, Edgar Corrie, who was not directly involved in the slave trade, but whose business was very much connected to the general multiplier effects of the trade, had made a counter prediction in a letter he sent to Lord Hawkesbury as part of the evidence to be employed by Parliament to determine the future of the trade. Afraid of the consequences to his business if it became known that he was offering predictions supporting abolition, he requested that the letter be dated London, 27 February, 1788, and signed, "W. J." Among other things in the rather long letter, it says:

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. T 70/1585, Observations on the Bill now in the House of Commons for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Sent to Lord Howick, Dated 14 February 1807.

The African Trade being a Commerce of Enterprise and Risk, the Profits have occasionally been very great, particularly since the Year 1779, in which Period many opulent Fortunes have been acquired.... The profits of those employed in furnishing the Cargoes and the Outfits are a clear Advantage to them. The Gains of the Masters of the Vessels employed in the Trade have been very great. The exports to Africa from Liverpool in 1787 are said to have exceeded £800,000 in Value; the gross Sales of Negroes purchased, with Investments to that Amount, may be rated at more than £1,000,000, Sterling, and the Gains of the Masters of the Vessels fitted out in that year at £6 per £106 the customary Allowance for Privilege and Coast Commissions, and, exclusive of Wages, may be reasonably stated at £60,000, Sterling, realized by those who survive to deliver the Slaves at Market. The export of British Manufactures and foreign Commodities for the Purchase of Negroes are of much benefit to the Manufacturers, and to those who supply the other Goods that are shipped off to Africa. The Importance of the African Trade in this View may be estimated by the exports to Africa from Liverpool in 1787, which are supposed to have exceeded £800,000 in Value. *But it is a Matter that merits particular Inquiry, whether the Africans may not gradually furnish Investments, the Produce of the Soil, in return for the Goods they require, and by what Means this Trade can most effectually be substituted for that of Slaves.*[14]

I.3. The Official Mind of Abolition: The Case Made by Thomas Irving, 1791

What I characterize as the official mind of abolition can be observed in the evidence of Thomas Irving, taken on April 5, 1791, by the House of Commons Select Committee appointed to examine the transatlantic slave trade from Africa. At the time Thomas Irving was the Inspector General of Imports and Exports, and Register of Shipping of Great Britain. Earlier on, he had served as the Inspector General of Imports and Exports and Register of Shipping of North America from 1767 to 1774; in 1774 he was appointed Receiver General of South Carolina and a member of that colony's council. He is generally regarded by students of British foreign trade and shipping as the most meticulous, and possibly the most well-informed also, of the eighteenth-century Inspector Generals.[15]

Thomas Irving informed the Select Committee that the British Caribbean colonies, as they were constituted in 1791, had enough enslaved Africans to produce all the sugar needed in Great Britain and in the British colonies, and with a change in the system of cultivation, the slave population should be able to sustain itself through natural increase. He noted that the unwillingness of the planters to encourage local production of food on the plantations, their importation of more men than

14. British Library, *Parliamentary Papers, Accts. & Papers*, 1789, Vol. 84, No. 646a, Part I (No. 13); emphasis added; also Add. MSS. 38,416 fol. 35, Edgar Corrie to Lord Hawksbury, Liverpool, 24 Feb., 1788.
15. R. Craig, "Capital Formation in Shipping," in J. P. P. Higgins and Sidney Pollard (eds.), *Aspects of Capital Investment in Great Britain, 1750–1850* (London: Methuen, 1971). Craig avers that Thomas Irving was "one of the most perspicacious and certainly the most efficient of the Inspector General of Imports and Exports ..." (p. 134).

women from Africa, and their dependence on imported food made it impossible for the slave populations to reproduce themselves naturally. If the plantation system could be altered gradually, placing gender-based discriminatory duties on slaves imported from Africa (females duty-free and duty on males), and using the sums realized as bounty to encourage slave breeding, the slave populations would become self-sustaining.

He advised against the expansion of sugar production in the colonies beyond what was needed in Great Britain and its colonies, because the price of sugar from the British Caribbean in the second half of the eighteenth century was consistently higher than that of sugar from the foreign colonies by 20 to 30 percent. Monopoly laws kept the British market for the expensive colonial sugar, and the export of any surplus output to foreign markets would require the payment of bounties by the British government:

> I am of opinion, that however just and proper it may be to encourage our own islands to the extent of supplying ourselves, and thereby doing that justice to the proprietors of the estates there which they consider themselves entitled to, yet the extension of the cultivation of those islands beyond that degree that is requisite for supplying Great Britain and her immediate dependencies, with the principal articles of their produce, is by no means likely to promote the interests of the empire; because from the great disparity of price between the British and Foreign sugars, the former cannot be made an object of export by any other means than by that destructive system of policy which has been too much adopted in some other branches of our commerce, namely, the granting of bounties out of the Exchequer, in order to enable the British exporter to stand the competition of prices in the foreign market. It is a dangerous principle to force commerce and manufactures like fruit raised on a hot bed. In such cases, the capital and the industry of the individual are too often drawn from objects of profit to pursuits which can only be carried on by the aid of the national purse.[16]

Asked whether the reduction of exports to Africa resulting from the abolition of the slave trade "would be materially prejudicial to the manufacturing interests of Great Britain," Thomas Irving informed the committee:

> An immediate stop being put to our exports to Africa, would doubtless be felt in a very considerable degree by those artificers, who are at present employed in manufacturing goods for that branch of our export trade, because they would find the channels through which their industry passed to a market shut up before they had time to turn their attention, labour and capital to other pursuits.

But he quickly added that past experience showed the disruption would not last long, citing the case of the mainland American colonies as example:

> The late revolution in America affords striking proofs of the justice of this observation. With the independence of these States, it was generally apprehended that Great Britain would also lose the benefit of their commerce; but experience has proved the fallacy of that opinion. The exports of our native manufactures to that part of the world, instead of being lessened since the separation of the countries, are increased ... *For the facts and reasons which I have thus set forth, I am under no apprehensions that a gradual check to the importation of Slaves would materially affect the manufacturing interests of this country.*[17]

16. British Library, *Parliamentary Papers, Accounts & Papers,* 1790–1, Vol. 92, pp. 3y, 265–275: pp. 269–270, for the quote.

I.4. Impact of Abolition on Africa: Henry Trafford's Case Presented to Lord Grantham

Immediately following the war of American independence and the loss of the thirteen North American colonies, the British government considered seriously changes that needed to be made in the geographical direction of British trade. In March 1783, as part of the process, a correspondent of Lord Grantham sent a plan which involved the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and the transformation of Africa into a major part of British overseas trade:

> The very extraordinary Revolution which hath taken Place, with Respect to our north American and other Territorial Possessions, having made it indispensably necessary for his Majesty's Ministers and the Parliament to take into their most serious Consideration what alterations & Improvements are requisite to be made in our Commercial System, it cannot be doubted but that a Proposition which may have a Tendency to assist those Deliberations and elucidate a matter of so great concern to the Welfare and Prosperity, if not even the future Existence of the nation, will be candidly received and attended to.[18]

The recommended plan, titled, "Plan of an universal Revolution of Commerce," involved a geographical reordering of British foreign trade around Africa, Asia, and Europe with the transfer of the West Indian, North and South American trades to Africa, and the link with Asia (anticipating the Suez Canal by 86 years) would be through the Suez instead of the Cape of Good Hope:

> Transplantation; or a recurrence to first principles. Europe, Asia, and Africa, commercially reunited. Purely, simply as prior to Columbus's baneful discovery of the New World in 1492 and the Portuguese destructive exploration of a passage round the Cape of Good Hope in 1498.... *Re-Transplantation radically abolishes that Anti-christian, Barbarian, iniquitous, accursed System of Trading in human Flesh; the whole and only cause of civil commotion, Anarchy, Chaos, oppression and Rapine—replete with every imaginable Evil.... Africa in future and until time shall be no more, will be Traded to, Travelled and Traversed, with the same efficacy, ease and security as Europe.*[19]

The elaborate plan, with detailed calculations of expected prices of commodities from Africa, painted a very optimistic view of the impact of abolition on the process of socioeconomic development in Africa, from which Britain was expected to gain considerably.

17. Ibid., pp. 273–274; emphasis added.

18. Bedfordshire Record Office, Lady Lucas Collection, L 29/340, Henry Trafford to Lord Grantham, London, 5 March, 1783, at Mr. John Owen's Linen Draper, King Street, Covent Garden.

19. Bedfordshire Record Office, Lady Lucas Collection, L 29/341, London, 14 February 1783; emphasis added.

II. The Historical Reality after Abolition

II.1. Impact on the British Economy

At the micro-economic level, as we would expect, the evidence suggests some of the slave traders and others directly and indirectly connected to the Atlantic slave economy went through a short period of adjustment difficulties. This can be observed in the private correspondence of top Liverpool merchants. Thus, John Bridge Aspinall, a member of a large Liverpool slave-trading family, writing on April 30, 1807, to a business friend in London, lamented:

> Never were we so pushed for money as at present. Yesterday I attended a few select friends of Messrs. Gregson & Co. to investigate their accounts which I am happy to say is more than sufficient to pay all their creditors & leave a considerable surplus, but it will require time. They have positively declined carrying on the Bank, consequently all their Debtors must settle all their accounts, amongst them I am sorry to say we stand considerably in their Debt, say Ten Thousand Pounds, which I most sincerely wish to pay immediately. Also it is absolutely necessary we should have a fund in some other Bank to carry on our Business. It is true our Ships are arrived in the West Indies, but we shall have Bills at a Long Date which will be of no immediate use, consequently I am under the necessity of requesting you will permit us to Draw on you at as short a Date as possible for the second and third sets of Bills drawn by Mr. Murphy on Geo. Baillie & Co. . . .[20]

On July 4, 1807, John Aspinall wrote again, sounding depressed:

> From the precarious situation of my brother's health, the great probability of his retiring to some other situation (where he may be advised by the faculty), Our Trade entirely taken from us, in short not knowing how to employ either our Time or Capital to advantage has determined us to decline Business of all Kinds, consequently it's desirable our property should be entirely unconnected [with] any new arrangements. Therefore it's my Brother's wish that we should advance the whole sum of twenty thousand pounds to Mr. Rigby on Mount Ingram Estate, Knowing that your view is to assist Mr. Rigby.[21]

On December 3, 1807, the Aspinall brothers wrote about their slaves sold in the West Indies: "We have your note promising payment for Negroes due from Wm Field Esqr. & Capt. Ainsworth of Ship Nanny. . . . We are very desirous to have all our accts. Settled before Xmas that we possibly can."[22] A letter from an unidentified writer gives an approximate general picture of things in Liverpool in the year of abolition: "Mr. Grole is much obliged to Mr. Cock for the perusal of the 2 enclosed letters & is very glad to hear the concerns at Liverpool are not likely to turn out so bad as was supposed."[23]

On the other hand, the prediction of the Lancashire pro-slave trade group concerning the growth of demand for slave labor in Spanish America turned out to be correct.

20. National Archives, T 70/1586 (1), John Bridge Aspinall to Simon Cock, Liverpool, 30 April 1807.
21. T 70/1586 (1), John Aspinall to Simon Cock, 4 July 1807.
22. T 70/1586 (1), John & James Aspinall to Simon Cock, 3 December 1807.
23. T 70/1586 (1), writer and recipient unknown, 24 April 1807.

Cuba became one of the major markets for the transatlantic slave trade after 1807,[24] and the Spaniards quickly developed their slave trade to meet the demand. Before 1807, the Spaniards had only been tangentially involved in the slave trade through special arrangements, in which the ships employed operated from ports in England under the management of English captains and manned largely by British seamen. Although the long-term objective was for Spaniards to take over the entire operation, for which reason a few Spaniards were put on board each ship to under-study the English operators,[25] it may be valid to argue that British slave traders could have profited from the expansion of the market for slaves in Spanish America in the nineteenth century.

But, on the whole, all the doomsday predictions concerning the British economy in general, and Lancashire in particular, turned out to be wrong. It is true that, apart from Barbados, the slave populations in the British Caribbean colonies were unable to reproduce themselves through natural increase between 1807 and the abolition of slavery in the 1830s. The slave population in Jamaica decreased from 348,825 in 1807 to 311,070 in 1834; the total slave population in the British Caribbean colonies decreased from 776,105 in 1807 to 664,970 in 1834.[26] But, as far as the Atlantic slave economy and its contribution to the ongoing development process in England are concerned, this decline was more than compensated by the continued transatlantic slave trade to Spanish America and Brazil, and the phenomenal growth of the slave population in the United States between 1807 and 1860. The African population in Cuba increased from 139,444 in 1792 to 393,436 in 1827; that of Brazil, from 1,988,000 in 1798 to 5,756,000 in 1872; and that of the United States, from 1,378, 000 in 1810 to 4,441,000 in 1860. In fact, while the African population in the British Caribbean declined from 835,500 in 1800 to 788,000 in 1830, by 1860 it had increased to 962,500.[27] Thus, there were several times more Africans (enslaved and freed) in the Americas from 1808 to 1860 than there were in 1807.

In consequence, commodity production for Atlantic commerce by diasporic Africans in the Americas increased by more than 96 percent between 1781–1800 and 1848–1850, with production in British America (the United States included) increasing from approximately 50 percent of the total to 61 percent; and the total value of Atlantic commerce more than doubled during the period.[28] Raw cotton produced by Africans in the Americas expanded phenomenally after 1807, largely in the United States (but also in Brazil), and imports into Britain grew from 41.8 million pounds (weight) in 1800 to 452 million in 1841.[29] Sir Richard Arkwright must have been elated that, contrary to the prediction of the Lancashire pro-slave trade group, the value of his invention was not diminished by the 1807 abolition. The cotton imports from the Americas came overwhelmingly through Liverpool, about two-thirds of the

24. David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 455–456.
25. Joseph E. Inikori, "The Volume of the British Slave Trade, 1655–1807," *Cahiers d'Etudes africaines*, 128, XXXII (4), 1992, p. 658.
26. B. W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807–1834* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), Table 4.1, p. 74.
27. Watts, *The West Indies*, Table 7.10, p. 321; Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Table 4.5.A, p. 189, Table 4.5.B, p. 190, Table 4.6.A, p. 194.
28. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England*, Table 4.4, p. 181, Table 4.7, p. 197, Table 4.8, p. 202.
29. Ibid., p. 79.

total in 1812, and nine-tenths in 1833.[30] The annual value of British cotton manufactures exported increased from £12.5 million in 1805–07 to £22.4 million in 1834–36, and £34.9 million in 1854–56,[31] thus proving right Thomas Irving's official mind of abolition. Neither the trade of Liverpool nor the population of Manchester declined. On the contrary, the population of Lancashire grew from 700,000 in 1801 to 2 million in 1851. Among all England's counties Lancashire had by far the fastest growing population during the period.[32] Ultimately, Lancashire's exports and its rapidly expanding regional market induced the major technological developments of the Industrial Revolution.

II.2. Impact on West Africa's Economies

While the literature contains hardly any serious discussion of the impact of the 1807 abolition on the British economy, its impact in West Africa is one of the earliest subjects seriously debated in African historiography. Consistent with the early focus of African historiography on politics, the debate centered on the political and social consequences of the transition from the transatlantic slave trade to the export of products in the nineteenth century. Kenneth Dike's pioneering study of the coastal city-states of the southeastern Nigerian Niger Delta, published in 1956, concluded that the ending of the Atlantic slave trade and the growth of produce exports gave rise to a profound change in the political economy of these city-states. Whereas the rulers of these city-states were able to earn monopoly rents from the slave trade, the atomistic structure of the produce trade precluded monopoly rents, thus reducing the income of the rulers and, consequently, their political power as well.[33] But, another pioneer in modern African historiography, Ade Ajayi, reached a contrary conclusion: No major socio-political change occurred; the rulers continued to exercise their monopoly in the produce trade as they did in the Atlantic slave trade; hence, they suffered no loss of income and political power.[34] Ralph Austen joined the debate on the side of Ajayi in 1970,[35] and Tony Hopkins did so on the side of Dike in 1973.[36] The debate was reopened in the 1990s.[37]

30. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 162.

31. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England*, Table 9.6, p. 436.

32. Ibid., Table 2.7, p. 81.

33. Kenneth Onwuka Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830–1885* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956).

34. J. F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841–1891: The Making of a New Elite* (London: Longman, 1965).

35. Ralph A. Austen, "The Abolition of the Overseas Slave Trade: A Distorted Theme in West African History," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1970), pp. 257–74.

36. A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (London: Longman, 1973). See also Patrick Manning, "Slave Trade, 'Legitimate' Trade, and Imperialism Revisited: The Control of Wealth in the Bights of Benin and Biafra," in Paul E. Lovejoy (ed.), *Africans in Bondage, Studies in Slavery and the Slave Trade: Essays in Honor of Philip D. Curtin on the Occasion of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of African Studies at the University of Wisconsin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), pp. 203–233.

37. Robin Law, "The Historiography of the Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa," in Toyin Falola (ed.), *African Historiography: Essays in Honour of Jacob Ade Ajayi* (London: Longman, 1993), pp. 91–115; Robin Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Because of the focus of the debate on political and social issue—whether or not the ending of the Atlantic slave trade and the growth of product exports caused a social revolution in West Africa in the nineteenth century—the impact of the 1807 abolition on the process of economic development in the region has been sidelined in the literature. None of the contributors to the important volume, *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce*, edited by Robin Law, examines comparatively the impact of the Atlantic slave trade and that of the product exports that replaced it on the process of economic development in the region. Even Martin Lynn's book, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, focused on the impact of product exports on West Africa's economies as "one of the main concerns,"[38] presents evidence discussed ultimately in political and social terms not explicitly aimed at economic development processes. In general, therefore, arguments in the literature concerning change or continuity are not related to economic development processes over time. It is only in this context that we can comprehend claims that while the Atlantic slave trade was "overwhelmingly important for coastal trading states such as Bonny, it was less central to the communities in the hinterland, whose economies were based mainly on subsistence agriculture."[39] When analysis is focused on economic development processes over time, the unasked question is what the Atlantic slave trade contributed to the prolonged dominance of subsistence production in the Atlantic hinterland, from where the export captives were forcefully taken. We also would like to know how the growth of product exports, which replaced it, and the growth of population after the Atlantic slave trade affected the movement of producers from subsistence to market production in the hinterland and the economic characteristics of the relationship between the coastal economies and those in the hinterland. These questions are the main focus of the rest of this chapter.

To answer these questions, we need to examine comparatively the changing character of interregional trade between the coastal economies and their immediate and distant hinterlands over four time periods—the several centuries preceding the arrival of European traders in the mid-fifteenth century; the first two centuries of European trade dominated by trade in products (the mid-fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth century); the Atlantic slave trade era, 1650–1850; and the post-slave trade era, 1850–1900, with 1807–1850 as a transition period—and show the consequences of the changes for the development and geographical spread of the market economy in the region. Focus on the commercializing process is informed by the fact that the market is the main source of the structural and technological transformation responsible for long-run improvements in resource use and sustained growth of productivity. Over a long period of time subsistence production (production for immediate consumption by the producer without exchange on the market) had remained overwhelmingly dominant, while production for the market was marginal. But, no matter how relatively large, subsistence production can go on forever without causing major changes in organization and technology; historical evidence across the globe makes it clear that such changes are associated with the expansion of the market sector over time.

38. Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 4.

39. Law, "The Historiography of the Commercial Transition," p. 110. The claim by David Eltis and Lawrence Jennings that trade with the Atlantic world made no difference to the history of Western Africa in the period 1600–1860 should also be viewed in the same context: David Eltis and Lawrence C. Jennings, "The Trade between Western Africa and the Atlantic World in the Pre-colonial Era," *The American Historical Review*, Volume 93, No. 4 (October, 1988), pp. 936–959; David Eltis, "Trade between Western Africa and the Atlantic World Before 1870: Estimates of Trends in Value, Composition and Direction," *Research in Economic History*, Volume 12, 1989.

By the mid-fifteenth century, the market economy had been evolving slowly but steadily in West Africa for several centuries on the basis of factors arising from regional and interregional developments. For various reasons population growth and concentration occurred unequally across regions. The spatial distribution of natural resources within and among regions also differed. All this combined to encourage the growth and development of trade and the gradual evolution of specialization between and within regions over time. The interior savanna, where large centralized states developed quite early, with their heavily populated commercial and Islamic learning centers (especially the Niger Bend and the Central Sudan, comprising largely modern Northern Nigeria), was the focal point of the interregional trade. The Gold Coast (modern southern Ghana), with its natural resources that supported large-scale production of gold and kola nuts, was a major southern point. The trade in kola nuts between the Gold Coast and the savanna economies expanded as the savanna populations became increasingly Muslim. Apparently because of its resource advantage in the production of gold and kola nuts, the Gold Coast was one of the major regions in West Africa without evidence of early textile production.[40] It became a major importer of textiles and other manufactures from manufacturing centers in the savanna and other parts of West Africa in exchange for its gold and kola nuts.[41] Other important southern points in the pre-European regional and interregional trade included parts of Yorubaland (especially northeastern Yoruba and the Ijebu area), the Benin kingdom, and northern Igboland.[42]

Evidence produced by the research of the past four decades or so shows unambiguously that developments in northern Igboland from the ninth to the seventeenth century were central to the growth of trade, the commercializing process, and the evolution of the market economy in southeastern Nigeria during the period.[43] The long period of peace associated with Nri hegemony from the ninth to the fifteenth century gave rise to agricultural prosperity and population growth in the Igbo savanna heartland. With decreasing land to population ratios, the northern Igbo were compelled to make two important adjustments. One was migration to the previously neglected, more

40. Colleen E. Kriger, *Cloth in West African History* (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2006); Colleen E. Kriger, "'Guinea Cloth': Production and Consumption of Cotton Textiles in West Africa, before and during the Atlantic Slave Trade," Cotton Textile as a Global Industry Conference Paper, Padua, Italy, November 17–19, 2005; Colleen Kriger, "Textile Production in the Lower Niger Basin: New Evidence from the 1841 Niger Expedition Collection," *Textile History*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1990), pp. 31–56; Colleen Kriger, "Textile Production and Gender in the Sokoto Caliphate," *Journal of African History*, Vol. 34 (1993), pp. 361–401.

41. Ivor Wilks, "A Medieval Trade Route from the Niger to the Gulf of Guinea," *Journal of African History*, III, 2 (1962), pp. 337–338; John O. Hunwick, *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire: Al-Sadi's Ta'rikh al-sudan down to 1613 and Other Contemporary Documents* (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1999), p. xxix; John D. Fage, "Some Remarks on Beads and Trade in Lower Guinea in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Journal of African History*, Vol. III (1962), pp. 343–344.

42. A. E. Afigbo, "Pre-colonial Trade Links Between Southeastern Nigeria and the Benue Valley," *Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1977); A. F. C. Ryder, "Dutch Trade on the Nigerian Coast During the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. III, No. 2 (December 1965); S. A. Akintoye, "The North-Eastern Yoruba Districts and the Benin Kingdom," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. IV, No. 4 (June 1965); Marion Johnson, "The Cowrie Currencies of West Africa," Part I, *Journal of African History*, Vol. XI, No. 1 (1970); Marion Johnson, "The Cowrie Currencies of West Africa," Part II, *Journal of African History*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (1970).

43. David Northrup, *Trade Without Rulers: Pre-Colonial Economic Development in South-Eastern Nigeria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978); David Northrup, "The Growth of Trade Among the Igbo before 1800," *Journal of African History*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (1972); Kenneth Onwuka Dike and Felicia Ikejiuba, *The Aro of South-eastern Nigeria: a study of socio-economic formation and transformation in Nigeria* (Ibadan: University Press, 1990) pp. 114–115; Afigbo, "Pre-colonial Trade Links."

fertile lands in the forested river valleys to the south;[44] the other was a growing movement away from land-intensive to labor-intensive activity—manufacturing and trade. These developments were critical to the growth of trade between the northern Igbo and their neighbors, especially those to the south in the river valleys and the Atlantic coast, the densely populated northern Igbo territories exchanging mainly their manufactures for the agricultural and aquatic products of the river valleys and the Atlantic coast. The quality and magnitude of Thurstan Shaw's Igbo-Ukwu archaeological discoveries, which are consistent with other evidence, testify to the technical skill of the northern Igbo craftsmen and the extent and range of manufacturing activity in the area in the pre-sixteenth-century period.[45]

Aboh's entrepôt trade on the lower Niger connected the northern Igbo to the Benin kingdom, the other important southern point in West Africa's interregional trade. Benin merchants were among the long-distance traders who assembled regularly to do business at Aboh from places as far south as the Atlantic coast, as far north as the Niger-Benue confluence and the Benue valley, and Igboland.[46] Benin merchants also traded extensively with their northern neighbors from whom they bought cotton cloths in exchange for Benin metal ware; the most important of them were probably the northeastern Yoruba.[47] The evidence suggests that northeastern Yoruba cotton cloths were being re-exported to the Gold Coast from Benin before the arrival of European traders on the Atlantic coast.

The import and widespread use of commodity currencies provide some measure of the extent of development and the geographical spread of the market economy in West Africa by the mid-fifteenth century. Northern Igbo craftsmen produced, among others, a metal currency shaped like a small hoe that was used as a medium of exchange in local transactions in the Bende market[48] (and probably elsewhere as well). The large quantity of copper products among the Igbo-Ukwu materials suggests copper currency in some form was also in use in southeastern Nigeria before the sixteenth century.[49] Evidence concerning cowries probably provides the best measure. Marion Johnson's study shows that the use of cowries, imported through the trans-Saharan trade, as currency in West Africa started in the Niger Bend at least in the eleventh century C.E. By the fifteenth century, the cowrie currency was established on the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin.[50] The quantity and spatial spread of the commodity currencies indicate, undoubtedly, the continuing growth of regional and interregional trade, and the evolution of the market economy, in West Africa in the mid-fifteenth century.

The predominance of African products, such as gold, cotton cloths, red pepper, hides and skins, woods, and ivory, in the first two centuries of European commercial enterprise in West Africa reinforced the ongoing expansion of regional and interregional trade and the development and geographical spread of the market economy in West Africa. This is reflected in the composition of commodities imported into West

44. Dike and Ikejiuba, *The Aro of South-eastern Nigeria*, p. 115.

45. Thurstan Shaw, *Igbo-Ukwu: An Account of Archaeological Discoveries in Eastern Nigeria*, 2 volumes (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970); Thurstan Shaw, *Unearthing Igbo-Ukwu: Archaeological Discoveries in Eastern Nigeria* (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1977).

46. Afigbo, "Pre-colonial Trade Links;" Northrup, *Trade Without Rulers*.

47. Ryder, "Dutch Trade on the Nigerian Coast;" Akintoye, "The North-Eastern Yoruba Districts and the Benin Kingdom."

48. Dike and Ikejiuba, *The Aro of South-eastern Nigeria*, pp. 237–238.

49. Shaw, *Igbo-Ukwu*; Shaw, *Unearthing Igbo-Ukwu*.

50. Johnson, "The Cowrie Currencies of West Africa," Parts I & II.

Africa by the European traders during the period.[51] On the Gold Coast the addition of seaborne European gold trade to the overland gold and kola nut exports to the savanna interior greatly increased the scale of business for the Asante merchants. The income multiplier and demographic effects of the expanded export production and trade also created a favorable socioeconomic environment for the productive investment of profits from commerce in the domestic economy. The Asante merchants began to invest their profits from trade in forest clearing to create farmlands in the sixteenth century, for which they needed labor imported from other parts of West Africa. Hence, in addition to the continuing and expanded imports of cotton cloths from other parts of West Africa (now carried by the European traders) and cowries, labor from other parts of West Africa was also carried by European traders to the Gold Coast from the sixteenth to the early seventeenth century.[52] In the Bights of Benin and Biafra, the imports were overwhelmingly dominated by commodity currency—cowries for the Bight of Benin, and small copper rods, weighing about one pound each, for the Bight of Biafra. As late as 1681, cowries comprised more than 59 percent of the total value of imports into the Bight of Benin; the evidence indicates the proportion was larger earlier. In the Bight of Biafra, commodity currency was more than two-thirds of the total value of imports in the 1660s. These commodity currencies were employed only in domestic exchanges; import and export trade with the Europeans was conducted by barter. The volume and ratio of the commodity currencies in the imports at this time are, therefore, a clear measure of the continuing growth of regional and interregional trade and of the development of the market economy on the Atlantic coast and in the immediate and distant hinterlands.[53]

The phenomenal expansion of transatlantic captive exports from the mid-seventeenth century changed everything. The flow of trade goods within and between the regions was largely replaced by the forceful procurement of captives from the hinterlands. In the Bight of Biafra (southeastern Nigeria), the flow of manufactures from the densely populated Igbo heartland (northern Igboland) to the river valleys and the Atlantic coast was replaced by the flow of captives forcefully taken without any market transaction, in the first instance. The middlemen states on the coast and their immediate hinterlands, which received the captives from the more distant hinterlands and sold them to the European exporters, now got all the consumer manufactures they needed from the European traders who brought them from Europe and Asia.[54] The coastal economies became typical parasitic enclave economies, with little productive but largely disruptive links to the economies and societies in the hinterland. The adverse effects of these developments on regional and interregional trade and the development and geographical spread of the market economy is reflected in the dramatic change in the composition of imports brought by the European traders.[55]

51. Joseph E. Inikori, "Transatlantic Slaving and Market Development in the Atlantic World: West Africa, 1450–1850," in David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Volume 3: AD 1420–AD 1804* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, in press).

52. Ivor Wilks, "Land, Labour, Capital and the Forest Kingdom of Asante: A Model of Early Change," in J. Friedman and M. J. Rowlands (eds.), *The Evolution of Social Systems* (London: Duckworth, 1977); Ray A. Kea, *Settlements, Trade, and Polities in the Seventeenth-Century Gold Coast* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 85–91.

53. Inikori, "Transatlantic Slaving and Market Development in the Atlantic World."

54. Joseph E. Inikori, "The Development of Entrepreneurship in Africa: Southeastern Nigeria during the Era of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade," in Alusine Jalloh and Toyin Falola (eds.), *Black Business and Economic Power* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2002).

55. Inikori, "Transatlantic Slaving and Market Development in the Atlantic World."

On the Gold Coast, labor disappeared from the imports as the region was transformed from a major exporter of gold to a major exporter of captives; cowrie imports also diminished drastically and disappeared altogether from most cargoes. In the Bights of Benin and Biafra, the proportion of commodity currencies in the imports was in low single digits in the second half of the eighteenth century; in the first half of the nineteenth century it was less than 2 percent.[56] The decline of currency imports is a clear signal that internal trade, regional and interregional, and the development of the market economy were all in decline. With the establishment of parasitic enclave economies on the coast, the imports became predominantly consumer manufactures, especially textiles that were marginal imports in the early decades, particularly in the Bight of Biafra. The socio-political conflicts generated by the forceful procurement of captives also stimulated demand for firearms. In the 1790s, textiles were 38–47 percent of the total value of imports into the Bight of Biafra, and firearms were 27–40 percent. In the first half of the nineteenth century, textiles were between 27 and 34 percent of the total value of imports into the Bights of Benin and Biafra, and firearms were between 16 and 33 percent. Alcohol had also become a major import, ranging between 14 and 21 percent during the period.[57]

The evidence shows unambiguously that, with the ending of the transatlantic slave trade and the growth of product exports, the growth of regional and interregional trade and the development and geographical spread of the market economy in West Africa resumed once again. Although other European nations and their American colonists continued to export captives from West Africa, product exports to the United Kingdom from West Africa grew dramatically after 1807. The Export of palm oil, shown in Table 1, illustrates the sudden change.

Table 8-1. Palm Oil Exports from West Africa to the UK, 1805–1810 (quantity in tons)

Year	Quantity (tons)
1805	216.35
1806	360.75
1807	111.65
1808	552.35
1809	749.15
1810	1,287.70

Source: Computed from Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change*, Table 1.1, p. 13.

As the table shows, there was a sudden surge in the volume of palm oil exported from West Africa to the UK immediately after abolition in 1807. The 394.7 percent increase from 1807 to 1808 is remarkable. This was followed by a further increase of 35.6 percent in 1809, and 71.9 percent in 1810 when the thousand-ton mark was exceeded. This sudden increase was the product, no doubt, of efforts by the Liverpool slave traders to find alternative employment of their capital and time. We may recall John Aspinall's complaint in July 1807 of "not knowing how to employ either our Time or Capital to advantage." The growth was sustained, with some fluctuation, throughout the first half of the nineteenth century; the annual average for the 1840s (1841–50) was 23,476.63 tons.[58] As the Atlantic slave trade ended effectively in the mid-nineteenth cen-

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Computed from Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change*, Table 1.1, p. 13.

tury another surge in palm oil exports began in the 1850s. The annual average for the 1850s was 35,248.29 tons; 39,648.68 tons for the 1860s; and 50,536.95 tons for the 1870s.[59] Like the trade in American cotton, Liverpool completely dominated UK palm oil imports from West Africa, its share ranging between 64 and 99.4 percent during the period 1830–1890.[60] Palm kernel exports were added to palm oil from the 1850s.[61] While palm produce dominated the exports to Europe in the nineteenth century, the production of other export products, such as rubber, woods, cotton, coffee, and cocoa, also began to develop.

The growth of product exports changed the relationship between the coastal economies and those in the hinterlands. Productive economic linkages were re-established between the coast and the interior. Palm produce, rubber, cotton, groundnuts, and other commodities were now produced in the interior and sold to traders who carried them to the coast in exchange for imported and local goods. Instead of their populations being forcefully taken without market transaction, the interior producers of export commodities were now linked by market transactions to the Atlantic ports. The income multiplier effects of export production stimulated the expansion of production for market exchange in the interior and encouraged the growth of specialization and division of labor between export producers and other producers in the interior. This set in motion the growth of internal trade and the development and geographical expansion of the market economy, a process that had been more or less frozen for about two hundred years by the adverse impact of the Atlantic slave trade. Added to this was the demographic effect of the ending of the Atlantic slave trade in the hinterland. For example, the Igbo hinterland was spared the forceful loss of its population to overseas exports and deaths associated with the violent procurement of captives. The resulting added population was part of the labor force which produced the palm produce and other export products in the Igbo hinterland in the nineteenth century. The export-producing Igbo hinterland also became a net importer of captives from the ongoing jihad in the north at this time.[62] This demographic development is one of the elements of the previously unused or under-utilized resources—the other was land—employed in nineteenth-century production of export products in West Africa, as argued under the vent-for-surplus conceptual framework.[63]

59. Computed from Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change,* Table 1.1, p. 13 and Table 5.4, p. 113.

60. Ibid., Table 1.8, p. 27 and Table 6.1, p. 130.

61. Ibid., pp. 119–120.

62. Don Ohadike, "The Decline of Slavery among the Igbo People," in Suzanne Miers and Richard Roberts (eds.), *The End of Slavery in Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), pp. 441–443.

63. H. Myint, "The 'Classical Theory' of International Trade and the Underdeveloped Countries," *The Economic Journal,* Vol. LXVIII (June 1958); Jan S. Hogendorn, "The Vent-for Surplus Model and African Cash Agriculture to 1914," *Savanna,* 5 (1976), pp. 15–28. The vent-for-surplus idea was first developed by Adam Smith, but Myint refined it into a formal development theory. The main thrust of the analysis is that resources (land and labor) are under-utilized when there is limited market opportunity. When such opportunities are presented the initial growth of output (for export and for the domestic market) is caused by increased utilization of the previously under-utilized resources. Technological change makes little contribution at this point; that will come later. In the post-slave trade context in West Africa, it should be noted also that the ending of the transatlantic slave trade increased the total amount of goods and services available in West Africa, because the amount of goods received by the West African middlemen in exchange for captives exported was less than even the subsistence output that would have been produced by the exported captives, according to Gemery and Hogendorn's estimates: Henry A. Gemery and Jan S. Hogendorn, "The Economic Costs of West African Participation in the Atlantic Slave Trade: A Preliminary Sampling for the Eighteenth Century," in Henry A. Gemery and Jan S. Hogendorn (eds.), *The Uncommon Market: Essays in the Economic History of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), pp. 143–161.

Because transatlantic captive exports on the Gold Coast practically ended shortly after the 1807 British abolition, the impact of the new developments occurred there quite early in the nineteenth century. The UK value of palm oil imported from the Gold Coast grew from an annual average of £8,298 in 1827–1829 to £76,873 in 1840–1844.[64] However, the main exports from the Gold Coast in the first half of the nineteenth century were gold and kola nuts. Gold was exported both to Europe and overland to the interior savanna states; kola nuts went entirely to the latter. Estimates show the annual average output of the Akan gold fields increased from 27,000 ounces per year in the second half of the eighteenth century to 35,000 in the first half of the nineteenth; much of the eighteenth century output went north to the savanna, while the greater part of the nineteenth century output went to Europe.[65] Kola nut exports from the Gold Coast to Hausaland is estimated to have increased tenfold in the nineteenth century.[66] Like southeastern Nigeria, captives that would have been exported during the Atlantic slave trade era were now employed to produce commodities for export and for the Gold Coast domestic market. The growth of regional and interregional trade, and the development and geographical spread of the market economy that resulted, are all reflected in the revival and growth of currency imports into the Gold Coast in the first half of the nineteenth century. The import of cowries, which had almost disappeared in the second half of the eighteenth century, increased from an annual average of 25.4 tons in 1827–1829 to 304.4 tons in 1845–1847.[67]

With the effective ending of the transatlantic slave trade in Lagos following British Bombardment in 1851, and placement on the Lagos throne of a king (*oba*) whose return to power was dependent on ending the overseas slave trade, developments in Lagos proceeded even more rapidly. Significant exports of palm oil from Lagos began only in the 1850s.[68] In the 1860s the export of palm kernels alone (to all parts of the world) rose from £25,274 in 1863 to £324,414 in 1869; it averaged £253,377 a year in 1871–1875.[69] Lagos' annual average palm oil exports to Britain in the 1890s was £691,192; palm kernel, £233,063; and total exports to Britain, £1,066,815. By the 1890s, major exports from Lagos included rubber and cocoa.[70] Again, the growth of trade in Lagos and its hinterlands, and the development and geographical spread of the market economy which resulted, are all reflected by the massive expansion of currency imports. Cowrie imports from Britain into the Bights of Benin and Biafra averaged approximately 3 tons a year in 1827–1830, 38 tons in 1831–1840, and 164 tons in 1841–1850.[71] But in

64. Computed from Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa,* Table 1.6, p. 23, and Table 1.10, p. 30.

65. Gareth Austin, "Between Abolition and *Jihad*: The Asante Response to the Ending of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1807–1896," in Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce,* pp. 96–97, 100.

66. Ibid., pp. 96–97, citing Joseph Raymond LaTorre, "Wealth surpasses everything: an economic history of Asante, 1750–1874," (PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1978), p. 365.

67. Inikori, "Transatlantic Slaving and Market Development in the Atlantic World," Table 2.

68. Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa,* pp. 22, 154.

69. Ibid., Table 7.3, p. 156.

70. Customs 4/85-Customs 4/94, National Archives, Kew Gardens, London, England.

71. Computed from J. E. Inikori, "West Africa's Seaborne Trade, 1750-1850: Volume, Structure and Implications," in G. Liesegang, H. Pasch and A. Jones (eds.), *Figuring African Trade: Proceedings of the Symposium on the Quantification and Structure of the Import and Export and Long Distance Trade in Africa, 1800-1913* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1986), Table III.5, p. 71.

1855–1860, imports from all parts into Lagos and the nearby port of Whydah alone averaged 2,750 tons a year.[72] Imports into Lagos alone averaged 2,812 tons in 1865–1870, and 2,121 tons in 1871–1880.[73] From the 1880s the import of British silver coins grew rapidly; net imports in 1881–1891 totaled £329,399.[74] Estimates show British silver coins worth £500,000 were in circulation in Lagos and its immediate hinterland in Yorubaland in the 1890s.[75] The establishment of commercial banking in Lagos in 1891, the African Banking Corporation,[76] just four decades after the ending of the transatlantic slave trade, testifies to the fast increase in the volume of domestic trade and the extent of the market economy in the Lagos trading region and its linkage to other regions. It is important to note that for the two hundred years of intensive captive exports (1650–1850), no commercial banking developed anywhere in West Africa.

III. Conclusion

The evidence presented and analyzed in this chapter suggests that, in the final analysis, the economic impact of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade on all sides of the Atlantic has to be assessed at both the microeconomic and macroeconomic levels. The microeconomic level involves the fortunes of the individual slave traders and other entrepreneurs connected directly and indirectly with the Atlantic slave economy in England, the employers of slave labor in the Americas, and the middlemen traders in West Africa. The macroeconomic level of analysis concerns issues of economic development processes over time—the development of local, regional, or national economies. We may take the first level of assessment as approximately consistent with private cost and benefit analysis, while the second corresponds roughly to social cost and benefit analysis. Viewed this way, the evidence indicates some planters in the British Caribbean may have been hurt in the first three decades of the nineteenth century as the slave population in general could not sustain itself through natural reproduction. At the macroeconomic level, it is also probable that abolition may have acted along with other factors to produce adverse effects on the development of the mono-cultural economies of the British Caribbean between 1807 and 1834. The latter subject is not seriously examined in this chapter.

Coming to England, the evidence suggests a number of the slave traders went through a short period of adaptation difficulties. In addition, abolition may have taken away their opportunity to profit from the expansion of demand for slave labor in Spanish America in the nineteenth century, as they had accurately predicted. Research into the business history of the slave traders in the post-slave trade period may reveal something interesting. The general indication, however, is that with continuing supply of slave labor from Africa and the expansion of the slave population in the United States,

72. A. G. Hopkins, "The Currency Revolution in South-West Nigeria in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. III, No. 3 (1966), p. 474.

73. Ibid., Table I, p. 475.

74. Ibid., p. 482. In 1887 the British colonial governor in Lagos reported that export commodities were all bought for cash: "the old system of bartering merchandise is less resorted to" (p. 482).

75. Ayodeji Olukoju, *The Liverpool of West Africa: The Dynamics and Impact of Maritime Trade in Lagos, 1900–1950* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2004), p. 21.

76. Olukoju, *The Liverpool of West Africa*, p. 19; Hopkins, "The Currency Revolution in South-West Nigeria," p. 482.

the Atlantic slave economy remained robust and slave production of commodities for Atlantic commerce in the Americas expanded phenomenally in the nineteenth century. Liverpool, where the bulk of the British slave traders were concentrated in 1807, was the main beneficiary of this development, as the chapter has shown. Similarly, Liverpool was the main beneficiary of British legitimate commerce in West Africa, which grew rapidly shortly after abolition, especially the palm produce trade. It is reasonable to infer from both sets of evidence that the former slave traders may have come close to being fully compensated if they were not actually so. As for the other British entrepreneurs connected to the Atlantic slave economy, there can be no doubt that they were more than fully compensated, as evidence on the macroeconomic level makes clear. As far as this level is concerned, the claims and predictions of the Lancashire pro-slave trade group turned out to be entirely wrong. Liverpool and its Lancashire hinterland flourished rather than declined. Richard Arkwright smiled in his grave as slave-produced cotton poured into the cotton industry and Atlantic markets absorbed growing proportions of the output to induce the technological innovations that drove England's industrialization process to its successful conclusion. This, ultimately, is a vindication of the official mind of abolition presented in 1791 by Thomas Irving, the Inspector General of Imports and Exports of Great Britain.

In West Africa, the evidence indicates that the coastal middlemen may have gone through adaptation difficulties initially, somewhat similar to the British slave traders. But, in purely economic terms, they gained substantially as the product trade expanded and the opportunity for productive investment of profits from commerce in the domestic economy developed *pari passu* with the growth of commodity production for export, in contrast with the forceful procurement of captives for export that retarded the expansion of regional and interregional trade and the growth and geographical spread of the market economy, thus limiting market opportunity for the investment of profits from commerce in the domestic economy. Evidence from four periods of West African history—pre-European, early European, slave trade era, and post-slave trade nineteenth century—taken together confirms the point. As we may recall, following the cumulative effects of export production and trade in the first two periods Asante merchants began investing their profits from trade in large-scale forest clearing to create farmlands for commercial agriculture and profit from the domestic demand of a growing urban population in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. That process was held back for almost two centuries; it resumed again in the nineteenth century. In the Bight of Benin, the rapid growth of trade and investment opportunities offered a favorable environment for the establishment of commercial banking in 1891, something that did not happen anywhere in West Africa during the two hundred years of intensive captive taking and export. In southeastern Nigeria (Bight of Biafra), the coastal middlemen and their Aro suppliers in the immediate hinterland had no favorable market opportunities to invest capital in the production of commodities either for export or for sale internally during the transatlantic slave trade era.[77] But from the mid-nineteenth century, "many enterprising and wealthy Aro began to establish plantations of palm oil and later of cocoa and rubber."[78] The former slave traders on the Atlantic coast also combined trading and commercial agriculture during the same period. The numbers of people they employed on their commercial farms in the neighborhood of the port cities were

77. A. J. H. Latham, "Currency, Credit and Capitalism on the Cross River in the Pre-Colonial Era," *Journal of African History*, Vol. 12 (1971), pp. 599–605.

78. Dike and Ekejiuba, *The Aro of South-Eastern Nigeria*, p. 257.

reported to exceed the populations of those cities several times.[79] In contrast to the slave trade era when commercial success was displayed in conspicuous consumption and the accumulation of perishable imported consumer manufactures owing to lack of opportunities for productive investment, the product trade of the nineteenth century and its multiplier effects offered market opportunities for the traders to accumulate lasting productive assets.

As for the macroeconomic level of assessment, there can be little doubt that the growth of commodity production for export that followed the ending of the transatlantic slave trade revived and further extended the pre-slave trade development process that had been frozen at best for two centuries. The parasitic enclave economies of the middlemen coastal states of the slave trade era restored their productive trade links with their immediate and distant hinterlands as the latter produced export and other commodities sold to the former, and the multiplier effects generated more production and trade in both areas. This chapter has employed partly the secular flow of currency imports as a proxy to measure these developments. Earlier studies, with their exclusive focus on political and social issues, failed to take into account the adverse impact of the transatlantic slave trade on economic development processes in West Africa in order to appreciate the significance of the changes wrought by the growth of commodity production for export following the ending of the export trade in captives. The error is compounded by the omission of the victim economies and societies in the hinterland, from where the captives were forcefully taken without market transactions, in the studies leading to the conclusion that the ending of captive exports and the growth of commodity production for export produced no significant change. When long-run economic development process is made the central focus, as this chapter has done, only one conclusion can be sustained by the evidence—that the ending of the transatlantic slave trade and the expansion of commodity production for export brought about fundamental changes in the process of economic development in West Africa in the nineteenth century. It is fair to say that of all the economies of the Atlantic basin, West Africa's economies were the main beneficiaries of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade in the nineteenth century.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 252.

Chapter Nine

British Abolitionist Policy on the Ground in West Africa in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

Silke Strickrodt

Research into the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and the "illegal" slave trade in West Africa is hampered by the nature of the sources.[1] There is an abundance of sources from those British who tried to suppress the trade, such as naval officers' reports and documents from the courts of mixed commission. However, this material only documents what happened at sea and is mainly restricted to the movement of suspected slave ships. There is very little material relating to what actually happened on shore. The information that does exist, usually provided by consuls and other officials stationed there, is often second-hand and unreliable. In contrast to the period when the slave trade was legal, there is hardly any documentation from individuals who were actually involved in the illegal trade, such as the traders, their agents and, most of all, the slaves. This makes it difficult to reconstruct and understand the operation of this trade. It also creates a distance from the actual enslavement of people.

One of the few exceptions to this lack of documentation is the material relating to the case of John Marman (sometimes also spelled "Marmon"), a British trader based at Accra, who in 1851 was charged with slave dealing. He was accused of transporting slaves from his establishment at Accra to his factory at Little Popo (today's Aneho, in Togo), where some of the slaves were allegedly sold to slave traders and subsequently shipped across the Atlantic. In fact, the charges related to a whole range of offences, some of which he was suspected to have committed together with his African wife, Abenah,[2] with whom he lived at Accra. This episode and the material generated by it have been largely ignored in the literature,[3] except in Mary MacCarthy's study of 1983, which refers to it only briefly:

1. I want to register my thanks to Adam Jones who read and commented on the draft of this paper. All opinions expressed and mistakes made in this contribution are entirely my own, although the former have been shaped to considerable extent by years of stimulating work and intellectual exchange with Robin Law, as his Ph.D. student.

2. There is great variation in the spelling of African names in the documents, such as Abenah vs. Ebner, Amatey Bouchee vs. Amatee Boshee and Odattay vs. Adatee. Sometimes, the names are identifiable with current Ga or Akan names: "Coffee" with Kofi, Quabino with Kwabena and Odattey with Odotei. For the sake of consistency, in this chapter I reproduce the spelling used in the records of Cruickshank's investigation.

3. Trevor Getz does not seem to have been aware of it, although he refers to the proclamation that was prompted by it (*Slavery and Reform* 56). John Parker briefly mentions the material (*Making the Town* 32 n. 145). See also Jones and Sebald, *An African Family Archive*, 22–4.