Chapter - IV

Slave Trade

The regular trade of slaves developed in Buddhist period was also prevalent during early medieval period. From the references of the Jātakas\(^1\) it was observed that the concept of slave trade originated as practice during Buddhist period. It was further testified in both indigenous and foreign sources that the trade of slaves between c.4\(^{th}\) century B.C. to c.2\(^{nd}\) century A.D. was briskly practiced. Starbo\(^2\) also verifies that the king was waited upon by women purchased from their parents. It is further stated that by 150 B.C., slave trade had developed to a profitable vocation in the east. Egyptian and Greek merchants established the slave trade with India through sea which can be testified from the accounts of Eudoxos\(^3\). Apolonius\(^4\) also verified that an Indian ambassador went to Rome with eight slaves. In the book Periplus of the Erythrean sea\(^5\), it is told that beautiful girls for royal harem were imported from Persia to Berygaza and that the export of women slaves was practiced from India to Socitra\(^6\). Though, the prominent epic makes it clear that the selling girls as slaves were not considered good in Indians\(^7\). This trade was prevalent up to 5\(^{th}\)–6\(^{th}\)

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4 Rawlinson, H.G., *Intercourse between India and Western World*, p. 46
7 *Mahābhārata*, Anusashan Parva, 44/37
Century A.D. Indian eunuchs have been mentioned as one of the trade commodities subjected to duty at Alexandria in the Justinian law digest. Besides, some male slaves were also imported to India from south East Asian countries during in 5th - 6th Century A.D. Significantly, the decline of Roman Empire reduced the volume of slave trade in Gupta period.

Literary, Archaeological and other sources such as Muslim and Arab accounts enormously glean that there existed a regular slave trade during early medieval period. The following literary sources while focusing a flood of light leaves no iota of doubt that slave trade was flourishing in India during the period under study- Padampuran (5th A.D.), Nisithacurni (7th A.D.), the Samaraiccakatha (8th A.D.), Kuvalayamalakatha (779 A.D.), the Ganitasarasangraha (850 A.D.), the Upamitibhavaprapancakatha (905 A.D.), the Kathakosa (C-10th AD), the Uttaraddhyayanatika (C-11th A.D.), the Rajatarangini (C-12th A.D.), the Lilavati (1150 A.D.), Lekhāpadhāti (V.S. 1288) and Prabandhacintamani (C-13 A.D.). Further, various Muslim and Arab accounts viz.: Futuhu-L-Buldan (892-93 A.D.), the Tarikhe-i-Subuktigin (1011-1059), the Tarikh-i-Yamini (1020-50 A.D.), the Jami U-L Hikayate (1211 A.D.) and Tarikh-i-Firozshahi (C-13th A.D.), also had valuable references about slave trade. Tilotha, Rourbela, Dhar and some other inscriptions of the period also throw welcome light on the slave trade during the period under study which are illustrated in Epigraphica Indica and Epigraphica Carnatica.

8 Shrivastava, O.P., op.cit., p.124
9 Majumdar, R.C., Suvarnadvipa, Vol II, pp. 34-37
The growing trade relations between Arabs and Turks gave up momentum to trade and traffic in slaves. However, we have evidence of the enslavement and sale of women captured by petty chiefs in predatory raids\textsuperscript{10} and also of the enslavement of people captured in wars by the Arab\textsuperscript{11} and Turk\textsuperscript{12} invaders which got an added impetus to slave trade. In 1192 A.D. when Muhammad of Ghor inflicted a defeat on Prithviraj and took him prisoner, the helpless inhabitants of Ajmer, his capital were taken as slaves and sold\textsuperscript{13}. It is said that after the fall of Kalinjar, Kutubdin enslaved 50,000 Hindus\textsuperscript{14}. After Mahmud’s victory over Nidar Bhim, slaves were so plentiful that they could be bought at cheap rates\textsuperscript{15}. Similarly, as a result of Muslim victory in Gujrat in 1197, more than 20,000 persons fell into the hands of victors hence enslaved and sold\textsuperscript{16}.

\textit{Lekhāpadhāti}, a court document of medieval period refers to the attacks of two feudatories on other’s territories; after inflicting defeat on the enemy, the girls from the other countries were first captured and then sold as slaves in the market\textsuperscript{17}. In these documents the names of buyers and sellers were not mentioned, although, the word \textit{amuka} (so and so) was mentioned which shows that the practice of enslaving the captives was so widely prevalent and number of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{10} Gopal, Lallanji, \textit{op.cit.}, p.71
  \item \textsuperscript{11} Majumdar, R.C., (Ed.), \textit{The Age of Imperial Kannauj}, p. 114
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Elliot and Dowson, \textit{History of India as Told by Its own Historian}, Vol.II, pp.230- 231
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Smith, V.A., \textit{op.cit.}, p.403
  \item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}, p.409
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Elliot and Dowson, \textit{op.cit.}, p.39
  \item \textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, p.230
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Gopal, Lallanji, \textit{op.cit.}, p.72
\end{itemize}
slaves so high that it was impossible to mention the records of transactions by the names of the contracting parties while preparing the general drafts. The above discussion clearly shows that the girls and soldiers captured by feudal chiefs were solid as slaves. Kalhana, tells about a king Vajraditya of Kashmir who sold many men to the Malechchhas who seem to have been the Arabs of Sindh\textsuperscript{18}.

Lallanji Gopal\textsuperscript{19} mentions the stories of villages of robbers, who used to capture people and sell them to slavery. These activities were taken by forest tribes. The *Upamitibhavaprapancakatha* (905 A.D.) refers to robbers feeding a man so that he might be sold for a handsome price\textsuperscript{20}. The *Kathakosa* tells us about Mitrananda who falls in to the hands of robbers who sold him to the merchants who took him to Persia\textsuperscript{21}. The similar stories can be traced from *Mahābhārata*,\textsuperscript{22} *Prabandhacintamani* states that the export of slaves from Gujarat has become so considerable that the Jain minister Tejapala of Viradhavala was compelled to circulate a law to ban the abductions by seamen who sold captives as slaves in foreign lands\textsuperscript{23}. However, the success of such an orders is doubtful, but it is significant that the number of slaves exported from Gujarat had been such as to create a serious problem for the Jain minister. The above stories also tells us that the robbers happily thought of the high price that their slaves would fetch in a foreign country. The documents of

\textsuperscript{18} *Rajatarangini*, IV, p. 397
\textsuperscript{19} Gopal, Lallaji, *op.cit.*, p.73
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Cf. Shrivastava, O.P., *op.cit.*, p.126
\textsuperscript{22} *Mahābhārata*, 3/51
\textsuperscript{23} *Prabandhacintamani*, IV, 20, p. 99
*Lekhāpadhati*\(^{24}\) also refers that slaves being shipped to overseas and sold or exchanged for other commodities.

**Objective of Slave Trade:**

The art\(^{25}\) and literature\(^{26}\) of the early medieval period testifies the luxurious life of kings and feudal chiefs. Erotic scenes in the temple buildings of this period reflects the outlook and taste of the kings and chieftains of the period. This must have resulted in the increased volume of the slave trade and traffic. It is interesting here to note that the slaves served a demand of luxury for the rich and prosperous princes, ecclesiastical institutions and dignitaries and feudal chieftains even in medieval Europe\(^{27}\). The idea of earning handsome money by selling slaves is also one of the main objective of slave trade. The enslavement of thousands of people by Turk invaders in early medieval India reflects the above objective of slave trade. The income from the slave trade was one of the main sources of state economy\(^{28}\). The use of slaves for sexual pleasure seems to be the foreign impacts on the trends of Indian slavery.

**Categories of Slaves:**

On the basis of the sex and domestic as well as other functions performed by slaves they can be divided into two main categories as a

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\(^{24}\) *Lekhāpadhati*, p. 47

\(^{25}\) Aggarwal, V.S., *Khajuraho Sculptures and Their Significance*, p.114

\(^{26}\) Cf. Shrivastava, O.P., *op.cit.*, p.126

\(^{27}\) Postan, M.M., *Medieval Trade and Finance*, p. 306

\(^{28}\) Sukla, D.N., *Uttar Bharat Ke Rajasava Vyavastha*, p. 151
commodity of trade. These categories are male slaves, female slaves and eunuchs. The indigenous literature of early medieval period is full of the references of trade of both the categories of slaves. *Likhanavali*, *Ganitasarasangraha*, *Upamitibhavaprapancakatha*, *Rajtrangini*, *The Lilavati*, *Lekhabaddhati*, *Kuvalayamala*, *Kathakosh* the *Kathasaritshgara* and some Muslims accounts mention trade in female slaves. The *Kuvalayamala*, the *Kathakośh* the *Kathasaritshgara* and some Muslim accounts mention trade in male slaves. The sale of eunuchs for lucrative prices mentioned in *Upamitibhavaprapancakatha*. From the Muslim accounts we come to known that eunuchs were imported for royal harems.

In the period of our study slaves were purchased for domestic services as well as for productive works. Female slaves were purchased for domestic and luxurious purposes. They were also used for economic purpose such as cultivation, etc. The documents of *Lekhabaddhati* (V.S. 1288) mentions the outside duties of slave girls like ploughing, threshing, bringing grass etc. which shows the economic importance of the slave girls.

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29 Negi, J.S., *op.cit.*, p. 95
30 *Ganitsarsangraha*, p. 86
31 *Upamitibhavaprapancakatha* p. 404
32 *Rajtrangini*, VIII, 520-21, p. 233
33 *Lilavati*, p. 102
34 *Lekhabaddhati*, pp. 45-47
35 Suri, U., *Kuvalamalakatha*, p. 46
36 *Kathasaritshgara*, VIII, 3, p. 3/51
37 Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, p. 118
The domestic slave girls further can be divided in two parts: - One, kept for household purposes and other for the purpose of luxurious life. The documents of Lekhāpadādhati enumerate the duties performed by domestic slave girls. These are: - cutting of vegetable, pulverizing (spices), smearing the floor with cow dung, sweeping, bringing water and fuel, throwing away the human excreta of her master’s family, milking the cow, buffalo and goat, churning the curd, and other house hold works. Again from Lekhāpadādhati it can be inferred that apart from household jobs the slave girls could also be used for pleasure. The commentary of Mahesvara on Dayabhāga also confirms the practice of keeping slave girls for enjoyment. Medhatithi also speaks of the slave girls who were kept for pleasure. The Mitaksara also explains slave girls of the avaruddha and bhujisya types in terms of their use for sexual enjoyment. The unmarried girls of white complexion were purchased for sexual enjoyment while that of black complexion for domestic purpose. The first two documents of Lekhāpadādhati also mention the slave girls of while complexion, sixteen year old and with pleasing and auspicious limbs. In the other documents a slave girl is described as having black eyes, a sharp nose, long hair, with all her limbs in proper form. So we can say that beauty was the barometer for slave girls to be purchased for sexual purpose. Likhnāvali refers the purchase of slave girls for marriage.

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Gopal, Lallanji, op.cit., p. 80
42 Gopal, Lallanji, op. cit., p. 79
43 Ibid.
44 Puspha Parsad, op.cit., pp. 269-270
45 Ibid.
also. The rigidity of caste was not an important factor in the sale and purchase of women slaves. The Lekhāpaddhati mentions a Rajput girl selling herself to a merchant\textsuperscript{46}. From the above discussion it can be concluded that the sale and purchase of women slaves was not only made for economic purpose but for the pleasure of family life as well.

Muslim rulers kept slave eunuch for harem services. They were usually bought in childhood and castrated\textsuperscript{47}. Eunuchs and castrated boys served as private attendants upon royal women, minstrels were also made available for company\textsuperscript{48}. There is no clear evidence of purchase and sale of boys for sexual pleasure.

**Slave Market:**

In early medieval India, though the slave trade was on peak yet we do not find any reference of regular slave markets like Basara and Bagdad. In one of the documents of Lekhāpaddhati,\textsuperscript{49} chatuspath (crossing of four roads) has been told as a sight for the purpose of sale/purchase of slave girls. Lallanji Gopal\textsuperscript{50} also corroborates another reference of sale of a girl at chātusapatha wherein she has been shown requesting a man to keep her as a slave at chātusapatha. It seems that chātusapatha served as a regular place for the sale of slaves. Besides, chātusapatha was also selected as a place, keeping in the view, to give information of sale to every body. An Inscription from Dhar (11\textsuperscript{th})

\textsuperscript{46} Negi, J.S., *op. cit.*, p. 95
\textsuperscript{47} Srivastava, O.P., *op. cit.*, p.128
\textsuperscript{48} Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, pp. 161-62
\textsuperscript{49} Lekhapaddati, *op.cit.*, pp. 44-47
\textsuperscript{50} Gopal, Lallanji, *op. cit.*, p. 74
A.D.) is quite significant in this regard which reveals that the Kanauj, Gujrat, Takka, Gauda, Malwa and two other regions were famous for slave markets\textsuperscript{51}. This inscriptions also focuses on the sale of beautiful girls in Malwa region who were brought from various parts of Madya Pardesh. Evidences in regard to slave markets can also be gathered from Rourbela Inscriptions\textsuperscript{52} recovered from Gwalior. Delhi was a centre as a slave market for regular sale in the time of Alauddin Khalji as stated by Barni\textsuperscript{53}. Thus from the above discussion it can be concluded that in India \textit{chātusapatha} might have ordinarily served as regular place of sale of slaves from the earliest time to early medieval period.

The sale and purchase of slaves in regular slave markets at commercial level shows the emergence of new trends in Indian slavery system\textsuperscript{54}.

\textbf{Price of Slaves:}

Regarding the price of a slave the sources of early medieval period also throws some light. The \textit{Ganitsarasangraha}\textsuperscript{55} provides valuable information about the valuation of slaves. Luxury was the prime factor for deciding the value of a female slave, however, factors like age, sex and other personal qualities of the person offered for sale could also effect the price level. \textit{Ganitsarasangraha} reveals that in South India the price of a ten year old girl was fixed @ 33.33 gold

\textsuperscript{51} Yadav, B.N.S., \textit{op.cit.}, p. 44
\textsuperscript{52} Sukla, D.N., \textit{op. cit.}, pp.148-149
\textsuperscript{53} Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 196
\textsuperscript{54} Shuka, D.N., \textit{op. cit.}, pp.148-149
\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Ganitsarsangraha}, p.46
coins while a sixteen year old women could be purchased in 20.83 gold coins. The reason behind it was that a ten year girl could be used for a longer time for sex than a sixteen year old women. In a document of Lekhāpaddhati the price of a sixteen year old girl with pleasing and auspicious limbs and for multipurpose use named Panuti is given 504 visalpriya dramms. In the second document of Lekhāpaddhati the prices of a slave women is mentioned 60 dramms. In the documents of Lekhāpaddhati the prices of girls of same age and complexion, who meant for same purpose is given different (i.e. 504 visalpriya dramms and 60 dramms). The above difference of prices can be easily understandable because it seems that the price mentioned in respect of formers is in silver coins, whereas that of latter is probably in gold coins.

The price of the women of same age in the same region was less in the time of Bhaskaracharya the author of Lilavati than that of Mahaviracharya the author of (1150 A.D.) Ganitsarasangraha (850 A.D.). It appears that the increasing number of slaves due to invasion of Arabs and Turks and the growing luxury of the ruling aristocracy must have declined the value of a female slave. The increasing purchasing value of money due to scarcity of coins in later period might be the factor for declining value of female slaves. The Lilavati informs about the prices of female slaves in Karnataka region. It reveals that the price of a sixteen year old women was 32 gold Niskas or 32x16 = 512 silver dramms, while the prices given in

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56 Puspha Prasad, op. cit., p.271
57 Ibid., p. 272
58 Lilavati, p. 102
59 Ibid.
\textit{Lekhāpaddhati} dealing with Gujrat and Rajasthan regions are 504 \textit{visalpriyadramms} or 60 \textit{dramms} (60 \times 8 = 480 \textit{dramms}). From the above statement it is clear that there was not a much difference in the prices of slaves in two different regions. In the Muslim society also the prices of beautiful female slaves (20 to 40 \textit{tanks}) was more than the ordinary female slaves whose price was not higher than 5 to 12 \textit{tanks}\textsuperscript{60}.

Mahmud of Ghazna who invaded India in first quarter of 10\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D. enslaved thousand of people and took them to Ghazna, there he sold them for 2 to 10 \textit{dirhams}\textsuperscript{61}. Thus the prices of slaves could vary as per their qualities and uses.

**Legal Procedure of Sale Deeds of Slaves:**

The slavery during the period under study had developed so remarkably in Indian society that the state machinery could no do without enactment of certain legal procedure in it. That is why the sources throws light on the legal procedure of sale of slaves, their value, conditions of sale and purchase and the laws regarding their manumission. \textit{Lekhāpaddhati}\textsuperscript{62} provide evidences of the day, \textit{tithi}(date), year, name of buyer and name of person were offered for sale with identifying marks. Moreover, the names of writer and witnesses of deeds were also recorded in the documents of \textit{Lekhāpaddhati}. In these sale deeds sometimes \textit{Panchamukhanagra} was also informed. In these documents the duties of slave girls in

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{60} Elliot and Dowson, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. III, p. 196
    \item \textsuperscript{61} Ibid., Vol. II, p. 50
    \item \textsuperscript{62} Pusha Parsad, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 271-75
\end{itemize}
buyer’s house were also mentioned. The purchaser has to comply with the prevailing customs according to the conditions of the sale. He had the right to punish the slave girls in case of the violation of their duties. This was also proclaimed in the public besides recorded in the document. It was also laid down that if she committed theft or misbehaved in any other manner in her master’s house, or she was interrupted in her duty by virtue of the wealth of her father, brother or husband, while she would be working in her owner’s house, or committed any disobey of duty, the latter would be at liberty to tie molest or beat her. And if in this process of punishment she committed suicide the master would not incur any guilt or sin. The document dealing with sale/purchase of a slave was prepared with the knowledge of pancakula consisting of mahajana and brāhamana, so and so and signed by the buyer with a sign of svastika\textsuperscript{63}.

The Likhanavali\textsuperscript{64} also provides some traditional documents for the sale of male and female slaves. In these documents the day, date and year of sale with the name of village, pargana, district and the state where the sale was made were mentioned. The word ‘amuka’ in the documents describes the names of persons concerned with the sale deeds of slave including the names of witnesses and writers. The sale was made on the price decided by the mediator (pancha) or demanded by the seller. The document also mentions the duties of slave. On the basis of comparison between the documents of Lekhapaddati and Lekhanavali it can be fairly said that the condition of slaves was

\textsuperscript{63} PushaParsad, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.271-75.

\textsuperscript{64} Negi, J.S., \textit{op. cit.}, p.95
somewhat better in 14th century Mithila than in the 12th Cent. in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Inter-Regional, and International Slave Trade:

The national and international slave trade during the period under study was flourishing in India as testified by various literary and archaeological sources that provide valuable information's in this regard. Inscriptions found from South India and illustrated in *Epigrapica Carnatica* (Vol. III, V, VIII) and Rourbela inscription recovered from Gwalior and Dhar inscription provides information in this regard provide ample references in same context. Similarly, various literary sources like *Lekhapaddhlati*, *Lilavati*, *Upamitibhavaparpanchakatha*, etc. provide ample references in same context Male slaves were exported from North to South India for attractive prices. *Kausalayamalakatha* mentions about the slaves who were taken to Mahilarajya i.e. the kingdom of women (May be Kerala in South India) where they were exchanged for gold. *Lekhpaddhati* gleans about the capture of a girl from Maharashtra and her sale in Gujarat or Rajasthan. Stone inscription from Dhar mentions Dhar as a market for inter-regional slave trade. Slave eunuchs were imported from Bengal and sometimes from farthest Malaya Island in the 13th Century. Ahsraf further mentions that the slaves from hill tribes were also sold in the various parts of country on higher prices because of their strong physique and their power of endurance, *Mahābhārata*

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66 Pushpa Prasad, *op. cit.*, p.272
67 Yadav, B.N.S., *op. cit.*, p. 44
also mentions that Pataliputra was also a centre of inter regional slave trade\textsuperscript{69}. All such references sufficiently testify that inter regional slave trade was prevalent during early medieval period in India.

International slave trade, infact, continued throughout the early medieval period. Slaves were imported and exported from India in this period. Indigenous literature and Muslim accounts give enormous evidences in this regard. There are references of women slave trade practiced with middle east countries\textsuperscript{70}. \textit{Upamitibhavaprapancakatha}\textsuperscript{71} gleans to known that female slaves and eunuchs were sent to adjoining countries for lucrative prices from Rajasthan and adjoining regions. It has already discussed above in foregoing pages that slaves exported from Gujrat created serious problem for the Jain minister Tejapata. From the stories of \textit{Kathakosa} and \textit{Mahabh\=rarataa} it can be added that sometimes Indian slaves were exported to Persia and Arbia\textsuperscript{72} as well. From the document of \textit{Lekh\=apaddhati}\textsuperscript{73} it has already discussed that female slaves being shipped to overseas and sold or exchanged for other commodities. Prof. Ashraf recording the memoire of Muslim historian Mir Masum tells that Khalif Abdul Malik, the Sultan of Iran, Iraq and Makran (8\textsuperscript{th} Century) sent some people to buy female slaves and other things of Hindustan\textsuperscript{74}. It is interesting to add here that even some kings participated in the slave trade. \textit{Rajatanrangini} refers to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{69} \textit{Mahabh\=rarataa}, I, p. 92
\item \textsuperscript{70} Dvivedi, L.P., Purva Madyakalin Bharat Mein Nagric Dasta, \textit{Samaj, Dharam Avam Darshan}, year 5, Vol. II, p.126
\item \textsuperscript{71} Gopal, Lallanji, op. cit., p. 73
\item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{73} Puspha Prasad, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 271-75
\item \textsuperscript{74} Srivastava, O.P., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 131
\end{itemize}
King Vajraditya of Kashmir who sold many men as slaves to the Malecchas.  

There were some merchants also who carried imported foreign slaves into this country. There was a great demand for beautiful slave girls from the numerous autonomous kingdoms spread all over India. Some professional slave traders from foreign countries were doing a flourishing business here. Turk rulers of Hindustan imported slaves from Turkistan, Khurasan and China. Jain sources clearly indicate that female slaves described as bakusira (from bakasadesa), isanika [From Isan (China)], dhorukini (tharukini probably from Arab), marundi and parsı (Persian) were present in the court of a legendary Indian prince, clan in the garments of their own countries. As discussed above the eunuchs were also imported from Malaya Islands. Rajatararigini cites the example of Bulliya whom it names and who bought beautiful slave girls from Turks who in turn had gathered them from many countries. They were so beautiful that the king brought them all and sent them off to his harem to live along with his other queens.

Basara and Bagdad were the centers of international slave trade in early medieval period. The price of unmarried female slaves as per white completion in the market of Basara, could vary from 1000 Dinars to 10,000 Dinars. According to Andre Wink the Arbas were the first people in world who gave up momentum to slave trade. Furthermore, he adds that they used slave as the commodity of

75 Rajatararigini, IV, 397, p. 103
76 Jain, H.L., Jain Agama Sahitya Mein Bhartiya Samaj, pp. 161, 256
77 Anderson, Peri, Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism, p.268
78 Vink, Andre, op.cit., pp. 1-24
exchange. They used slaves as a commodity of exchange after gold. Arabs got industrial production\textsuperscript{79}, clothes\textsuperscript{80}, Indian beads\textsuperscript{81}, in lieu of slaves. They established their trade relations with East Africa through slaves and made them medium of exchange.

On the basis of slave trade Arabs made their identification at international level\textsuperscript{82}. They established record of slave trade in lower regions of Sahara, Central Asia and India. As Wink says that they were first to differentiate slave on the basis of colour and \textit{jati}. Their main objective was to establish their trade relations with above said areas on the basis of slave trade\textsuperscript{83}. It is estimated that between 900-1100 A.D, the Arab’s trade of slaves with Trans-Sahara Route was worth Rs.17,40,000\textsuperscript{84}. Furthermore, they sent 10,000 slaves per year to Islamic Asia and India between 850-1000 A.D. through the trade routes of Red sea and Indian ocean\textsuperscript{85}. Azadi named Arab of Oman was a famous slave trader in 9\textsuperscript{th} Century.\textsuperscript{86} The slaves from Arab countries were sent from Sofala to the ports of western India in 9\textsuperscript{th} Century\textsuperscript{87}. Arab slaves came to India through Kutch, Sind and Kathiawad\textsuperscript{88}. The pilgrims to famous Islamic centers of Macca and Madina purchased

\textsuperscript{79} Vink, Andre, op.cit., p. 32
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p 32
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. 30
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., p. 31
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., p. 33
slaves on returning back and came with them\textsuperscript{89}. At that time Arabs conquered some parts of India so it seems that they would have given momentum to slave trade of India at Basara. They also gave momentum to slave trade by joining different sea routes with one another.

Arabs, in fact, added a new chapter in the history of slave trade by converting slaves into a commodity of exchange. Before it the slaves were not used as a commodity of exchange in order to keep trade balance at international level. Arabs acknowledged the use of slaves by which they earned money, thereafter, purchased various commodities of industrial production, raw material and turned the balance of trade in their favour. They imported slaves from Eastern Africa and sent them to Indian Asian countries in lieu of metallic objects and Indian beads. Before Muslim conquest of Byzantine Empire Arabs connected trade route between Volga to Eastern Baltic Sea. They also connected Baltic Sea to Kiev, Black sea and Caspian sea with Turkistan. An another route was developed between Baberia to Prag and Northern Karpethian to Nizar.\textsuperscript{90} Perhaps the most important trade of early medieval period was operated through Spain and later on slave trade commenced. So in this way Arabs not only established slave trade with Bysentine Empire but also with central Asia, India and parts of China. They made transactions for their necessary commodities through slaves from these countries\textsuperscript{91}. In this way, the slave trade worked for commercial exchange, favorable balance, international trade balance and establishing international

\textsuperscript{89} Vink, Andre, \textit{op.cit.}, pp1-24.
\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Ibid.}, p.35
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Ibid.}
relations for Arabs. In other words it was for the first time that slaves at wide level being trading objects turned the trade in their favour of Arabs. While giving a sudden momentum to slave trade and making slaves the important factor of the economy the Arab set a new trend in economy of the contemporary Asia in particular and world in general.

**View of Dharmasastras Towards Slave Trades:**

The *dharamashastras*\(^\text{92}\) of early medieval period objected and rather ordained to restrict the trade of human beings for upper two varna people i.e *brāhamana* and *kshatriya*. It was laid down in the *smrtis*, in this context, that a *brāhamana* or *kshatriya* who indulged in slave trading automatically became a *vaisya* in seven days. It seems that the traditional thinkers intending to restore the declining socio-economic values in the society came out to theorize certain laws but the material conditions overcame their theory. What can be fairly said that inspite of the prescriptions of the *shastras* to the contrary, trade and traffic in slaves were gradually increasing as a lucrative profession during \(10^{\text{th}}-12^{\text{th}}\) the centuries. *Shastric* inucations were honored more in breach than in observance.

Lastly, it can be easily stated that the slave trade have taken a definite shape up to early medieval period, wherein inter-regional women slave markets (*dasi mandi*), sale of slave at the *chātusapatha* of the town, the import and export of slaves were prevalent. Establishment of slave market on the pattern of Basra and Bagdad

\(^{92}\) *Yājañvalkaya, Katyayana, Devenbhatt*, etc. tells that slaves should be treated properly and they give various methods of their manumission. They condemned the slave trade for upper varnas.
became a specific identity of early medieval Indian trade. Arab traders took active part in it and they used slaves as commodity of exchange. Income from slave trade became source of revenue for state. Inscriptions from South India specify slaves as articles on which toll was charged. Further a record of the reign of the Hoyasala King Viraballala (1173 A.D.) may be cited which mentions the tax of 2 kasu for one slave. The sale and purchase of slaves at commercial level was responsible for the emerging of new consumable trend in slavery with the centers and markets of sale and purchase. Slaves could be useful thing in early medieval period Indian economy which might be sold on upper or lower prices without any hesitation. It is not, however, fare to conclude that new trend of slavery reduced the old trends. Indeed both the trends were prevalent. Availability of slaves in large number did not lesser the possibility of their use in productive work because their adjustment was not possible in domestic works only. It can, therefore, be concluded that their deployment in productive works went side by side.

It can be fairly said that due to certain decisive factors discussed earlier slave trade emerged as a significant development in the institution of slavery. It became a sources of livelihood for a section of society while a profitable job for elite class. The emergence of slave markets in various parts of the country testifies the growing volume of slave trade. Regarding the prices of slaves it can be said that luxury is the prime factor for the valuation of the female slaves and good physique for male slaves. The trade formalities were given legal shape by preparing the deeds of sales. It is interesting to add that caste/

93 Srivastava, O.P., op. cit., p. 129
*varna* was not a prime factor now in compression with earlier period. The socio-economic needs of the time perhaps be the deciding factor for this remarkable change.