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## *Slavery – Myth and Reality:*

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### **What is Slavery?**

The term “slavery” does not have a single, agreed upon definition, although most definitions stress a loss of personal freedom. The simplest definition therefore, would be unfree labor or a condition lacking freedom. In this sense, there are many different types of slavery. But the one that most of us think of when we hear the word today, is chattel slavery. This is a particular type of slavery that is defined as the holding of slaves as property, who can be bought and sold at will. Since this is the particular type of slavery which is most often thought of as “real” slavery today, it is the type of slavery I will focus on in this article.

### **Who Invented Slavery, and When was it Invented?**

Slavery goes so far back in history, that we cannot know exactly when or by whom it was first practiced. What we do know, is that slavery goes as far back as historical records exist: it was practiced in the earliest civilizations of the Mesopotamian fertile crescent<sup>1</sup>—the first civilization in history—and it is present as a legal institution in the very first written legal codes currently known: the Ur Nammu law code<sup>2</sup> of ancient Mesopotamia and the Hammurabi law code,<sup>3</sup> of ancient Babylon.

Thus, while we cannot know for sure who first invented slavery and when, we do know that the European explorers of several hundred years ago did not do so, as the institution was already ancient by their time.

### **Who Practiced Slavery?**

Everyone. Every race, and nearly every ethnic group, in human history have been slaveholders at some point in their past (some still are). Slavery as a social and legal institution was almost universally practiced. Best selling Historical author and King’s College Fellow at Large, Eric Metaxas, describes just how universal slavery was: “Slavery was as accepted as birth and marriage, and death[; it was] so woven into the tapestry of human history that you could barely see its threads, much less pull them out.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Snell, “Slavery, Ancient Near East,” in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013; Raymond Westbrook, “Slave and Master in Ancient Near Eastern Law,” *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, 70.4 (1996).

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Westbrook, “Slave and Master in Ancient Near Eastern Law,” *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, 70.4 (1996).

<sup>3</sup> Raymond Westbrook, “Slave and Master in Ancient Near Eastern Law,” *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, 70.4 (1996).

Everywhere on the globe, for five thousand years, the idea of human civilization without slavery was unimaginable.”<sup>4</sup> Lets briefly explore the history of slavery by race and continent:

Europe: Much is made of the practice of interracial slavery by Europeans in the colonial ages, but the mostly intraracial slavery of the ancient period is much less frequently discussed. Slavery—mostly of other Whites—was widely practiced in ancient Europe. The ancient Greeks<sup>5</sup> and Romans,<sup>6</sup> both had well developed slave systems, with large populations of slaves, and this was carried into the Byzantine period.<sup>7</sup> The ancient tribes of the North also practiced slavery. The Celts,<sup>8</sup> Germans,<sup>9</sup> and Vikings<sup>10</sup> had slaves, and the latter were notorious for being slave raiders and traders. Recall that St. Patrick first arrived in Ireland as a slave,<sup>11</sup> and that Dublin was a major Viking slave trading center.<sup>12</sup> The White Scythians of the Russian steppe also had slaves.<sup>13</sup>

Later on, there were also occasional Muslim slaves in some European countries (mostly Spain, France and Italy).<sup>14</sup> These were gained almost exclusively through warfare, and as a byproduct of Italian trade in White slaves to the Muslim lands. There was no established independent trade network in slaves that brought Muslim slaves into Europe, like the networks bringing European slaves into the Islamic world,

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<sup>4</sup> Eric Metaxas, *Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery*, Harper, 2007, p. xiii-xiv/Introduction.

<sup>5</sup> Deborah Kamen, “Slavery, Greece,” in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Patricia Watson, “Slavery, Rome,” in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Sarris, “Slavery, Late Antiquity and Byzantium,” in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Philip Freeman, *War, Women, and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts*, University of Texas Press, 2002, ps. 43, 80, 83; Patricia Calvert, *The Ancient Celts*, Scholastic, 2005, p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> Harold Mattingly (trans.), and J. B. Rives (rev.), *Tacitus: Agricola and Germania*, Penguin, 2009, p. 46-47.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 65; Michael Hoffman, *They Were White and They Were Slaves: The Untold History of the Enslavement of Whites in Early America*, Wiswell Ruffin, 1991, p. 4; Erik Bromberg, “Wales and the Mediaeval Slave Trade,” *Speculum*, 17.2 (1942).

<sup>11</sup> Philip Freeman, *War, Women, and Druids: Eyewitness Reports and Early Accounts of the Ancient Celts*, University of Texas Press, 2002, ps. 80, 83.

<sup>12</sup> Erik Bromberg, “Wales and the Mediaeval Slave Trade,” *Speculum*, 17.2 (1942).

<sup>13</sup> Timothy Taylor, “Believing the Ancients: Quantitative and Qualitative Dimensions of Slavery and the Slave Trade in Later Prehistoric Eurasia,” *World Archeology*, 33.1 (2001). See also: Adrienne Mayor, *The Amazons: Lives & Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World*, Princeton University Press, 2014, p. 47.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Bensch, “Historiography: Medieval European and Mediterranean Slavery,” in: Seymour Drescher, and Stanley Engerman, eds., *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*, 1998, p. 229-231.

for the keeping of slaves was virtually abolished in Europe during the middle ages.<sup>15</sup> Later still, as is much discussed, many European nations were involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade out of Africa, and also occasionally enslaved East Asians from colonies in Asia,<sup>16</sup> and Amerindians in North America.

East Asia: Slavery was widespread in ancient and medieval East Asia. The ancient Chinese civilization had a well-developed slave system going back at least to the Jin Dynasty,<sup>17</sup> though probably much earlier, and the Japanese<sup>18</sup> and Koreans<sup>19</sup> also had slavery—the latter with slaves composing as much as 40% of the population during some time periods.<sup>20</sup> The Japanese had their own version of the Barbary Pirates: slave traders who sailed to the coasts of China and Korea and abducted fisherman and others to take them back to Japan as slaves.<sup>21</sup> Although most slaves in East Asia were East Asian, during the mediaeval era China, in particular, did receive both White<sup>22</sup> and Black<sup>23</sup> slaves.

The Middle-East & South Asia: As previously noted, slavery in the Middle East goes back to the very dawn of civilization in Mesopotamia.<sup>24</sup> Thus from the dawn of recorded history slavery was widespread in the Middle East. It would remain so until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Those familiar with the Bible will know that slavery is mentioned frequently in the Old Testament, with the first reference being in the very first book of the Bible, Genesis.<sup>25</sup> The Bible further records not only the Hebrew's own enslavement, but laws pertaining to slaves within ancient Hebrew society,<sup>26</sup> so it becomes obvious that ancient Hebrews held

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<sup>15</sup> Stephen Bensch, "Historiography: Medieval European and Mediterranean Slavery," in: Seymour Drescher, and Stanley Engerman, eds., *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*, 1998, p. 229-231.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Nelson, "Slavery in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 59.4 (2004).

<sup>17</sup> Elise Brezis, and Heeho Kim, "Was the Korean Slave Market Efficient?" *MPRA: Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, No. 14735, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Nelson, "Slavery in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 59.4 (2004).

<sup>19</sup> Elise Brezis, and Heeho Kim, "Was the Korean Slave Market Efficient?" *MPRA: Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, No. 14735, 2009.

<sup>20</sup> Elise Brezis, and Heeho Kim, "Was the Korean Slave Market Efficient?" *MPRA: Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, No. 14735, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Nelson, "Slavery in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 59.4 (2004).

<sup>22</sup> Herbert Franke, "Sino-Western Contacts Under the Mongol Empire," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 6 (1966).

<sup>23</sup> Julie Wilensky, "The Magical Kunlun and 'Devil Slaves': Chinese Perceptions of Dark-Skinned People and Africa Before 1500," *Sino-Platonic Papers*, 122 (2002).

<sup>24</sup> Daniel Snell, "Slavery, Ancient Near East," in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013; Raymond Westbrook, "Slave and Master in Ancient Near Eastern Law," *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, 70.4 (1996).

<sup>25</sup> Genesis 9:25.

<sup>26</sup> For example, consider Exodus 21:2, Exodus 21:21, and Leviticus 25:44-46.

slaves. Slavery was apparently a general practice among the various civilizations that flourished in the ancient Middle East.<sup>27</sup> The Middle-East also gave the world some of the first international slave traders, the Phoenicians. These early mariners seem to have traveled as far as Greece, kidnapping slaves, and selling them internationally at other ports.<sup>28</sup>

In the medieval Islamic period, the slave trade expanded into a massive slave society, where slaves were brought continually into the region through trading and warfare (and sometimes piracy), from Europe and Africa, and sometimes other places. I will discuss this more further below. During this period, if not earlier, slavery existed in India, where Islamic influence brought with it ready access to its vast international slave trading networks, as well as its consistent desire for slave labor.<sup>29</sup> Slavery in the Middle East did not come to an end until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with some countries not abolishing it by law until the 1960s.<sup>30</sup>

The Americas: Slavery was also widespread among the Amerindians.<sup>31</sup> As in other places, slavery was generally more important in more advanced civilizations than in more primitive societies. None the less, it is known to have existed across both continents. In Mexico, the Aztecs had slaves, many of whom were prisoners of war or criminals.<sup>32</sup> The Maya also had slavery.<sup>33</sup> In what would become the Southern US, an early agricultural civilization existed in the lower Mississippi area which relied heavily upon slaves to work the fields.<sup>34</sup> On the other side of the continent, in the Pacific Northwest, the tribes of what is now Washington State and Oregon were heavily culturally dependent on slavery, where slaves

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<sup>27</sup> David Lewis, "Near Eastern Slaves in Classical Attica and the Slave Trade with Persian Territories," *Classical Quarterly*, 61.1 (2011); Daniel Snell, "Slavery, Ancient Near East," in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>28</sup> Rhys Carpenter, "Phoenicians in the West," *American Journal of Archaeology*, 62.1 (1958); Martin Corral, *Ezekiel's Oracles Against Tyre: Historical Reality and Motivations*, Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2002, p. 126.

<sup>29</sup> Gavin Hambly, "A Note on the Trade in Eunuchs in Mughul Bengal," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 94.1 (1974).

<sup>30</sup> Wikipedia, "Timeline of Abolition of Slavery and Serfdom," retrieved 8/27/2020: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_abolition\\_of\\_slavery\\_and\\_serfdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_abolition_of_slavery_and_serfdom)

<sup>31</sup> William MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

<sup>32</sup> William MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

<sup>33</sup> William MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

<sup>34</sup> William MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

constituted a form of property by which wealth and status were measured.<sup>35</sup> There were even particular small tribes in the region from which others kidnapped slaves almost as a matter of course, and which were therefore considered “slave” tribes.<sup>36</sup>

The plains tribes though practicing slavery on a far smaller scale, none the less took and held slaves. One Crow chief, speaking to a White general about how much he hated the neighboring Sioux tribe, explained in part that “we want back our lands. We want their women for our slaves, to work for us as our women have had to work for them. . . The Sioux have trampled upon our hearts. We shall spit upon their scalps.”<sup>37</sup> The tribes of the Southwest regions were involved in a massive slave trade, which captured both Whites and Amerindians from other tribes, as well as Mexican Mestizos, and used the slaves as items of trade or to tend their large herds of horses.<sup>38</sup>

Later, after the arrival of Europeans and Black African slaves, some Amerindian tribes, most notably the Cherokee, bought and owned Black slaves. Many Black slaves even went with their Cherokee masters on the “trail of tears” where the Cherokee were removed by the US Government to reservations in Oklahoma.<sup>39</sup> Today, descendants of these Black slaves often claim membership in the Cherokee nation, although they were expelled in 2007, on the basis that most of them were not descendants of Cherokees, but of slaves of Cherokees.<sup>40</sup> The Black American actor Don Cheadle is descended from Black slaves belonging to members of the Chickasaw tribe.<sup>41</sup>

Africa: Though portrayed in modern politically correct discourse as the ultimate victims of slavery, Africans have been slave takers and slave holders from their earliest recorded history. The earliest major

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<sup>35</sup> Donald Mitchell, “Predatory Warfare, Social Status, and the North Pacific Slave Trade,” *Ethnology*, 23.1 (1984); James Arneson, “Property Concepts of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Oregon Indians,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 81.4 (1980); William MacLeod, “Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

<sup>36</sup> James Arneson, “Property Concepts of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Oregon Indians,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 81.4 (1980); William MacLeod, “Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

<sup>37</sup> Steven Schwamenfeld, “The Merciless Indian Savages,” *American Renaissance*, March 1998. Review of: Thomas Goodrich, *Scalp Dance: Indian Warfare on the High Plains, 1865-1879*, Stackpole, 1997.

<sup>38</sup> Clint Smith, “Violence, Trade, and Comanche Empire: How the Comanche Reshaped Power in the Southwest Borderlands,” Term Paper, HST 427, Dr. Bruce Erickson, December 3, 2008.

<sup>39</sup> HP writers, “Cherokee Nation Expels Descendants of Tribe’s Black Slaves,” *Huffington Post*, August 25, 2011: [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cherokee-nations-expels-d\\_n\\_936930](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cherokee-nations-expels-d_n_936930)

<sup>40</sup> HP writers, “Cherokee Nation Expels Descendants of Tribe’s Black Slaves,” *Huffington Post*, August 25, 2011: [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cherokee-nations-expels-d\\_n\\_936930](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cherokee-nations-expels-d_n_936930)

<sup>41</sup> Henry Louise Gates Jr. “Don Cheadle’s Deep American Roots,” *The Root*, May 26, 2011: <https://www.theroot.com/don-cheadles-deep-american-roots-1790864100>

civilization in Africa is probably ancient Egypt. Unsurprisingly, the ancient Egyptians had slaves,<sup>42</sup> as recorded most famously in the Bible.<sup>43</sup> Slavery existed in the later Black Islamic kingdoms such as Mali as well,<sup>44</sup> and the famous Barbary Pirates operated out of Africa (though they were Muslims from other places, and few were actually Black Africans). The primitive tribes of Sub-Saharan and West Africans took, held, and traded slaves,<sup>45</sup> and many of these tribes made big business taking and selling slaves to White and Middle-Eastern slave traders as well.<sup>46</sup> Speaking of sub-Saharan/West Africa, one historian noted that “in contrast to Europe, ‘slaves were the only form of private, revenue-producing property recognized in African law.’”<sup>47</sup> Indeed, so widespread was slavery and other forms of unfree labor in Africa, that free, wage labor was virtually unheard of there.<sup>48</sup> One historical analysis in the Americas showed that “90 percent of those [Blacks] shipped to the New World were enslaved by Africans [first] and then sold to European traders.”<sup>49</sup> In the New World, much to the surprise of many, free Blacks and part Blacks often held other Blacks as slaves.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Garry Shaw, “Slavery, Pharaonic Egypt,” in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>43</sup> This is most famously recorded in Exodus with the story of the enslavement of the Hebrews on an ethnic or racial basis by the Egyptians, and their miraculous escape, but it is actually recorded much earlier, in the story of Joseph in Genesis, where he is sold a slave in Egypt, and lives there with an Egyptian family and is preyed upon by his mistress. Additionally, even earlier still, the Bible indicates that Hagar, a slave of Sarah’s, was originally an Egyptian slave.

<sup>44</sup> Ghislaine Lydon, “Slavery, Exchange and Islamic Law: A Glimpse from the Archives of Mali and Mauritania,” *African Economic History*, 33 (2005).

<sup>45</sup> Trevor Burnard, Review of: Stephen Behrendt, A. Latham, and David Northrup, *The Diary of Antera Duke, an Eighteenth-Century African Slave Trader*, Oxford University Press, 2010, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 22.2 (2010).

<sup>46</sup> Henry Louise Gates Jr., “Ending the Slavery Blame-Game,” *The New York Times*, April 22, 2010: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/23/opinion/23gates.html>

<sup>47</sup> Gareth Austin, “Coercion and Markets: Integrating Economic and Social Explanations of Slavery in Precolonial West Africa, c1450-c1900,” Historical Economics Workshop, Paris School of Economics, May 18, 2009.

<sup>48</sup> Gareth Austin, “Coercion and Markets: Integrating Economic and Social Explanations of Slavery in Precolonial West Africa, c1450-c1900,” Historical Economics Workshop, Paris School of Economics, May 18, 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Henry Louise Gates Jr., “Ending the Slavery Blame-Game,” *The New York Times*, April 22, 2010: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/23/opinion/23gates.html>

<sup>50</sup> Charles Joyner, Review of: Larry Koger, *Black Slaveowners: Free Black Slave Masters in South Carolina, 1790-1860*, McFarland, 1985, *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 87.4 (1986).

Slavery was truly a global institution, and no theory blaming any one race or ethnicity for practicing it is based on fact: the facts are, that all races have been slaveholders. The history of slavery is a history of a global phenomenon.

### Who Was Enslaved?

As might be guessed after learning that all races practiced slavery, the answer to this question is the same as for the question “who practiced slavery?”: namely, everyone. At some point or other, all races (including Whites) have been slaves, and historically much, though certainly not all, slavery was intraracial—meaning that master and slave were of the same race. It is the enslavement of White people by non-Whites however, that is the least discussed of all slave events, so I will focus on Whites as victims of interracial slavery here:

#### *A Brief Historical Overview of the History of White Slavery:*

As noted, White people were enslaved not only by other Whites (mostly in the ancient world) but also by non-Whites. The later will be our focus here. When looking at this history, one particular case stands out as the most significant: the history of enslavement of White Europeans by the Islamic world. Although other cases of enslavement of Whites by non-Whites exist, and I will mention those in passing, this is far and away the most significant and will consume most of our time.

White Slavery By Non-Islamic, Non-White Slaveholders: Enslavement of Whites by non-White peoples who were not Muslim did happen, though by comparison it was much less significant, much smaller in scale and volume, and sometimes sporadic rather than systematic. The most notable such cases are:

***Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Indians:*** In the ancient world, where different races rather seldomly interacted, most slavery was intraracial, but some interracial slavery did exist, facilitated by warfare on the borders where racial ranges met, or by international slave trade (like that carried on by the Phoenicians and other Mediterranean pirates and traders, or facilitated by empire). In particular, the ancient sources indicate that White slaves fell into the hands of non-White masters in three places in antiquity: ancient sources indicate clearly that White Thracian and Scythian slaves from around the Black sea region were sold and held in ancient Egypt, probably via trade with the Greeks.<sup>51</sup> There is also evidence that White slaves (Greeks and perhaps others) were imported and sold in ancient India by Roman times, and perhaps earlier.<sup>52</sup> Finally, Greek sources, albeit most of them semi-mythical (like those of Homer) rather than historical, depict the kidnapping and enslavement of Greeks by Phoenician traders, which indicates at the very least, that among the Greeks the Phoenicians had a reputation for kidnapping Greeks and selling them as slaves in distant ports.<sup>53</sup> Although a lack of hard data on Phoenician slavery prevents us from clearly substantiating this Greek opinion, there is no real reason to

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<sup>51</sup> Adrienne Mayor, *The Amazons: Lives & Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World*, Princeton University Press, 2014, p. 388.

<sup>52</sup> Kathryn Hain, “The Slave Trade in European Women to the Middle East and Asia from Antiquity to the Ninth Century,” Doctoral Dissertation, University of Utah, 2016, see Ch. 5.

<sup>53</sup> Rhys Carpenter, “Phoenicians in the West,” *American Journal of Archaeology*, 62.1 (1958); Martin Corral, *Ezekiel’s Oracles Against Tyre: Historical Reality and Motivations*, Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2002, p. 126.

doubt it, as other, historical, sources clearly indicate that the Phoenicians did traffic slaves.<sup>54</sup> Additionally, Carthaginian Phoenicians are known to have had thousands of slaves working in their mines in Iberia,<sup>55</sup> who would have almost certainly been drawn heavily from the local population of the Iberian peninsula. These are probably among the first documented cases of Whites being enslaved by non-Whites in history.

**Chinese:** The medieval Chinese obtained White slaves over the Silk Road.<sup>56</sup> White slaves were also repeatedly noted to have been gifted to Mongol Emperors in China during the Mongol dynasties.<sup>57</sup> White slaves were likely not common in China (where most slaves were other Asians), but they did exist with enough visibility that they were mentioned at the time.

**Koreans:** In medieval Korea, most slaves were other Koreans, and most of the rest were other Asians, however, it seems that White slaves—probably trafficked over the Silk Road, and via China—did occasionally make it to Korea. In particular, one verified instance of a group of White slave soldiers being posted by the Chinese to Korea is known from historical documents.<sup>58</sup> This is the first historically documented instance of White people being in Korea, so it seems that the very first Whites to ever set foot in Korea were slaves.

**Amerindians and Maoris:** The age of European colonialism brought White people into extended contact with non-White peoples they had never encountered before. In the ensuing conflicts White captives were not infrequently enslaved. Numerous accounts of Whites taken prisoners and made slaves by various Amerindian tribes exist (although not all such captives were made slaves).<sup>59</sup> In New Zealand, it seems Whites were also occasionally enslaved by Maoris,<sup>60</sup> although the extent to which they were considered slaves in the chattel sense by the Maoris is debatable.

**White Slavery in the Islamic World:** The history of White slavery in the Islamic world is a history of a massive slave system, and of massive loss of life, and liberty, which lasted over a massive timeframe.

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<sup>54</sup> Glenn Markoe, *Phoenicians*, University of California Press, 2000, p. 104-105; Martin Corral, *Ezekiel's Oracles Against Tyre: Historical Reality and Motivations*, Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2002, p. 126-127; Henry Williams (ed.), *The Historian's History of the World, in Twenty-Five Volumes, Volume II: Israel, India, Persia, Phoenicia, Minor Nations of Western Asia*, United States, 1905, p. 342.

<sup>55</sup> Glenn Markoe, *Phoenicians*, University of California Press, 2000, p. 104.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Foltz, "Judaism and the Silk Route," *The History Teacher*, 32.1 (1998).

<sup>57</sup> Herbert Franke, "Sino-Western Contacts Under the Mongol Empire," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 6 (1966).

<sup>58</sup> Herbert Franke, "Sino-Western Contacts Under the Mongol Empire," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 6 (1966).

<sup>59</sup> Gregory Michno, and Susan Michno, *A Fate Worse Than Death: Indian Captivities in the West, 1830-1885*, Caxton Press, 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Staff writers, "The Pekeha Slave Captured by Maori as a Child," *New Zealand Herald*, June 30, 2019. Review of: Trevor Bentley, *Pekeha Slaves, Maori Masters: The Forgotten Story of New Zealand's White Slaves*, New Holland Publishing, 2019: [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12241815](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12241815)

The sheer scope and scale of the White experience of slavery under Islam dwarfs other stories of slavery, including the trans-Atlantic one. It is one of the most important slavery experiences in the history of slavery worldwide, which shaped the very language we use today.

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So many slaves were taken out of Europe, with Eastern Europe being hit the hardest over the longest period of time, that the name of a European group (the Slavs) formed the basis for the word for a “slave” in English, and in every other European language,<sup>61</sup> as well as the word for “chains” in Castilian Spanish (from Islamic Spain),<sup>62</sup> and a word for a castrated goat in Catalan (also influenced by the Muslim slave trade).<sup>63</sup> The Arabic word for Slav, “Saqliba”, became a word in Arabic not only for a “slave”<sup>64</sup> but also for a “eunuch”<sup>65</sup>, and the Muslims called Eastern Europe “Bilad as Saqliba” or “the slave country,”<sup>66</sup> because they took so many slaves from there.

Although White slaves in the Islamic world could have come from anywhere in Europe—and particularly in the early period, many came from Western Europe and Byzantium in addition to the east<sup>67</sup>—the most consistent source of slaves from Europe was Eastern Europe (hence the connection to the Slavs).

The White slave trade of Islam lasted over a thousand years: as early as the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. it was already established,<sup>68</sup> and it would last until at least the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>69</sup> Over that time immense numbers of White people were taken into slavery in the vast Islamic world. Because reliable statistics are hard to come by, exact numbers—particularly for the whole of the trade’s history—are near

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<sup>61</sup> John O’Neill, *Holy Warriors: Islam and the Demise of Classical Civilization*, 2009, p. 112; Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 66-67; Daniel Evans, “Slave Coast of Europe,” *Slavery & Abolition*, 6 (1985).

<sup>62</sup> Daniel Evans, “Slave Coast of Europe,” *Slavery & Abolition*, 6 (1985).

<sup>63</sup> Daniel Evans, “Slave Coast of Europe,” *Slavery & Abolition*, 6 (1985).

<sup>64</sup> Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 66-67.

<sup>65</sup> John O’Neill, *Holy Warriors: Islam and the Demise of Classical Civilization*, 2009, p. 112; Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, p. 99; Daniel Evans, “Slave Coast of Europe,” *Slavery & Abolition*, 6 (1985).

<sup>66</sup> Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, p. 99.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 66; Olivia Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900-1500*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 205.

<sup>68</sup> Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 66-67; Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, p. 99; Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198.

<sup>69</sup> Walter Ratliff, *Pilgrims on the Silk Road: A Muslim-Christian Encounter in Khiva*, Wipf & Stock, 2010, p. 4.

impossible to ascertain, but estimates can be made from what we have, and what we do have shows that the numerical scale of the trade in White bodies was massive:

Contemporary accounts attest to the massive numbers of White slaves pouring into the Islamic world from just the ports on the Black Sea alone:

In 1438, Jesuit priest and traveling chronicler Bartolomeo de Giano visited the Black Sea ports of Khaffa Tana, and Moncastro, and reported that “Indeed. . . [the Muslims] inflict so many evils each day in Russia that not a year passes but that there do not come to Constantinople thirty or more ships full of slaves who are then sold like sheep in Moncastro, in Tana, and in the city of Caffa, and this is not even a tenth or a hundredth of those who are captured by them. In this year alone in Tana, so many Slavs were brought to be sold (as I myself learned from an eye-witness) that for the price of four, six, or ten florins at most, one could purchase one thousand youths.”<sup>70</sup>

The price indicated by Giano would have allowed a common day laborer to purchase anywhere from nine to twenty slaves on just one day’s wage!<sup>71</sup> Such a low price for slaves would back up the account of their numbers, since a slave market where slaves were not extremely plentiful would be expected to charge much higher prices. Other reports indicated that there were so many slaves in the Muslim world from Russia alone (not counting the others) that those who had been enslaved for a while, would ask newly arrived Russian slaves “if anyone was still left in Rus[sia]”.<sup>72</sup>

More empirical scientific work by modern researchers has given various small snapshots of the trade at specific times and places. A few examples: in the 1570s, 20,000 Russians were being sold as slaves in the markets of Kaffa alone every year.<sup>73</sup> While total slaves taken from Poland between 1500 and 1644, have been estimated at up to a million, with an average of 20,000 per year.<sup>74</sup> By the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century it was estimated that the Crimea had over 400,000 slaves living there but only 187,000 free Muslims.<sup>75</sup> In

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<sup>70</sup> Bartolomeo de Giano, with William L. North (trans), *A Letter on the Cruelty of the Turks*, Primary Sources in Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Carlton College, 2004: <https://web.archive.org/web/20191210230703/https://www.carleton.edu/medieval-renaissance-studies/translations/primary-sources/>. See also, for citation to print source: [https://apps.carleton.edu/profiles/assets/wnorth\\_cv.pdf](https://apps.carleton.edu/profiles/assets/wnorth_cv.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> Bartolomeo de Giano, with William L. North (trans), *A Letter on the Cruelty of the Turks*, Primary Sources in Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Carlton College, 2004, footnote 25: <https://web.archive.org/web/20191210230703/https://www.carleton.edu/medieval-renaissance-studies/translations/primary-sources/>.

<sup>72</sup> Alexander Yanov, *The Origins of Autocracy: Ivan the Terrible in Russian History*, University of California Press, 1981, p. 201.

<sup>73</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006)

<sup>74</sup> Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe: 1500-1700*, Routledge, 2007, p. 24-25.

<sup>75</sup> Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe: 1500-1700*, Routledge, 2007, p. 24-25.

Islamic Spain, as early as the tenth century a census listed over 13,000 White eunuchs in Spain alone.<sup>76</sup> Even at the very tail end of the trade in 1830, when it was at its lowest point, and just a decade before it would end, there were still 200 Russians taken into slavery in the Silk Road city of Khiva alone every year (not counting the other Silk Road cities):<sup>77</sup> which amounts to one new White slave taken every other day. And those of course, were just the ones taken into slavery per year, not the whole Russian slave population of Khiva. Research on the Barbary pirates has indicated that during their heyday, they took as many as a million White slaves.<sup>78</sup> And they were one of the most minor players in the trade in White slaves.

Overall, while we do not have an exact figure, when considering the length and volume of the trade, the numbers we do have, as well as other sources indicating the massive volume of the trade, we can safely conclude that there must have been many millions of White people taken into a life of slavery in the Islamic world.

Medieval Islamic society was a true slave society in that slaves were used at all levels for an extremely wide variety of tasks. Male slaves could be used in administration,<sup>79</sup> general palace service (e.g. haram guards, pages, etc.),<sup>80</sup> as soldiers,<sup>81</sup> in agriculture,<sup>82</sup> quarrying,<sup>83</sup> and building projects/construction,<sup>84</sup> as

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<sup>76</sup> Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198.

<sup>77</sup> Walter Ratliff, *Pilgrims on the Silk Road: A Muslim-Christian Encounter in Khiva*, Wipf & Stock, 2010, p. 4.

<sup>78</sup> Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001).

<sup>79</sup> Arthur Horniker, "The Corps of the Janizaries," *Military Affairs*, 8.3 (1944); Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>80</sup> Arthur Horniker, "The Corps of the Janizaries," *Military Affairs*, 8.3 (1944).

<sup>81</sup> Arthur Horniker, "The Corps of the Janizaries," *Military Affairs*, 8.3 (1944).

<sup>82</sup> Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001); Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006); Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe: 1500-1700*, Routledge, 2007, p. 25.

<sup>83</sup> Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001).

<sup>84</sup> Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001); Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe: 1500-1700*, Routledge, 2007, p. 25.

sexual slaves,<sup>85</sup> in the galleys,<sup>86</sup> and of course in general labor. Female slaves were generally used as domestics<sup>87</sup> or as concubines/sex slaves.<sup>88</sup> Some slaves of both sexes might be trained in a skill, and perform skilled labor such as artisan or textile work.

The Muslim world obtained its White slaves through sophisticated trade networks. In addition to slaves obtained via direct warfare, there were several major, established trading routes through which White slaves entered the Islamic world: in the period before the Reconquista, the central-European route<sup>89</sup> took slaves across central Europe and down into Islamic Spain, or Al Andalus from which they were sold into the rest of the Muslim world, the Black Sea route took slaves across the Black Sea, and then either across the Mediterranean<sup>90</sup> or down to Istanbul<sup>91</sup> or Baghdad,<sup>92</sup> the Mediterranean route of the Barbary Pirates took slaves from the coasts and from shipping, and transported them across the Mediterranean,<sup>93</sup> and the Silk Road route took slaves to Silk Road cities such as Samarkand, Khiva and Bukhara (and on into China).<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Michael Aucoin, and Richard Wassersug, "The Sexuality and Social Performance of Androgen Deprived (Castrated) Men Throughout History: Implications for Modern Day Cancer Patients," *Social Science & Medicine*, 63 (2006); Richard Trexler, *Sex and Conquest: Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas*, Cornell University Press, 1995, p. 40; Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 125.

<sup>86</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006); Alexander Yanov, *The Origins of Autocracy: Ivan the Terrible in Russian History*, University of California Press, 1981, p. 201; Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe: 1500-1700*, Routledge, 2007, p. 25; Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001), p. 25.

<sup>87</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>88</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006); Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe: 1500-1700*, Routledge, 2007, p. 25.

<sup>89</sup> Olivia Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900-1500*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 205.

<sup>90</sup> Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198.

<sup>91</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>92</sup> Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, p. 99; Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198.

<sup>93</sup> Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001).

<sup>94</sup> Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198; Richard Foltz, "Judaism and the Silk Route," *The History Teacher*, 32.1 (1998).

These different trading routes were made possible by a number of different key actors: in the early period the Vikings served as the primary raiders,<sup>95</sup> taking the slaves, and Jewish traders called Radhanites served as middlemen,<sup>96</sup> transporting the slaves into the Muslim world for sale. In the later period the role of primary raider went to the Crimean Tatars<sup>97</sup> (and to a much lesser extent, the Barbary Pirates),<sup>98</sup> and the primary middlemen were the Venetians and Genoese.<sup>99</sup>

This trade, though changing hands over the years, went on and on. Though it lasted for a millennium, its demise was swift, coinciding with a rising Europe, which finally had the power to defend itself. The first route to be cut off was the central-European route, which was cut off with the Reconquista in Spain in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but the trade just shifted to other routes. The real beginning of the end came in 1783, when Russia was finally strong enough to crush the Crimean Tatars by annexing the Crimea.<sup>100</sup> This put an end to the biggest source of White slaves for the Muslim world. Then, beginning in 1816, combined forces of the United States, Great Britain, and several other European nations collaborated to crush the Barbary Pirates, in what is known as the Barbary wars.<sup>101</sup> In 1830, with the French occupation of Algeria, the Barbary Pirates were finally gone for good.<sup>102</sup> At that point, the Silk Road cities were the last hold-outs, and in 1842, when the Khanate of Khiva was finally put under enough pressure to stop taking and holding Russian slaves,<sup>103</sup> the White slave trade of Islam—at least the external one—was effectively

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<sup>95</sup> Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 65.

<sup>96</sup> Richard Foltz, "Judaism and the Silk Route," *The History Teacher*, 32.1 (1998).

<sup>97</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>98</sup> Robert Davis, "Counting European Slaves on the Barbary Coast," *Past & Present*, 172 (2001).

<sup>99</sup> Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198; Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>100</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>101</sup> "Milestones: 1801-1829--Barbary Wars, 1801-1805 and 1815-1816." U.S. Department of State: Office of the Historian: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/barbary-wars>

<sup>102</sup> "Milestones: 1801-1829--Barbary Wars, 1801-1805 and 1815-1816." U.S. Department of State: Office of the Historian: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/barbary-wars>

<sup>103</sup> This was the date of a treaty which stipulated that Russians would no longer be taken or held as slaves by Khiva. Though it appears that the slave trade in Russians in Khiva did not end immediately, it was certainly drastically reduced afterward to the point where it was not common enough to be worth speaking of. See: John Strong, "Russian Moves in Central Asia, 1843-1856," 1973; Jeff Eden, "Beyond the Bazars: Geographies of the Slave Trade in Central Asia," *Modern Asian Studies*, 51.4 (2017).

dead. Of course, the internal trade in White slaves would continue on for some years thereafter, into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Slavery and Brutality:**

What of the treatment of slaves? The hardships that Black slaves, traded over the trans-Atlantic endured is often mentioned, but the cruelty of other slave systems is not. When looking at other slave systems however, it quickly becomes apparent that cruelties were common for other slaves that the Trans-Atlantic slaves did not contend with. Once again, I want to focus on the things White slaves endured under Islam, though I will mention other systems too.

#### *The Treatment of White Slaves in the Medieval Islamic World:*

The cruelty endured by White slaves in the Islamic system started with the separation from family and community when the slave was first captured. It then moved on to the treatment received while waiting for transport to the main slave markets and actually being transported there: White slaves arriving at Crimean towns were inspected for value and “the old and infirmed men, who will not fetch much at a sale, are given up to the Tatar youths, either to be stoned, or to be thrown into the sea, or to be killed by any sort of death they might please.”<sup>104</sup> From there, the slaves were shipped for sale. They were apparently frequently starved along the way, since one eyewitness described the “state of hunger” in which they arrived at the Black Sea trading ports.<sup>105</sup> It was typically sometime during transport along the trade route, or shortly after arrival in the main market, that the castration took place. Male White slaves were routinely castrated.<sup>106</sup> The trip to market was so bad that one Slavic proverb grew up which stated “Oh how much better to lie on one’s bier, than to be a captive on the road to Tartary.”<sup>107</sup>

Some of the slaves were kept in the Crimea by the Tatars, although most were sold. For those that were kept, many cruelties awaited: one eyewitness noted that “we often find among these unfortunate people very strong men, who, if not castrated, are branded on the forehead or on the cheek, and are tormented by day at work and by night in dungeons.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

<sup>105</sup> Bartolomeo de Giano, with William L. North (trans), *A Letter on the Cruelty of the Turks*, Primary Sources in Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Carlton College, 2004, footnote 25:  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20191210230703/https://www.carleton.edu/medieval-renaissance-studies/translations/primary-sources/>.

<sup>106</sup> This can be judged alone from the fact that the Islamic word for White slaves was also a word eunuch. But see also, for instance: Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, 1975, p. 198.

<sup>107</sup> Alan Fisher, “Muscovy and the Black Sea Slave Trade,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, VI.4 (1972).

<sup>108</sup> Eizo Matsuki, "The Crimean Tatars and Their Russian-Captive Slaves: An Aspect of Muscovite-Crimean Relations in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Mediterranean World (The Mediterranean Studies Group Hitotsubashi University)* (2006).

In the main Islamic markets to which the slaves went, things were scarcely better. Families taken together, and not separated at the point of capture, could of course expect to be sold apart at the main market. Male slaves were often sold as galley slaves, “a form of life which for unutterable horror is perhaps without a parallel in the history of humanity.”<sup>109</sup> Another historian has described galley slavery as “a middle passage without end.”<sup>110</sup>

Young female slaves, and sometimes also young or castrated male slaves, had a high likelihood of being sold into sexual slavery.<sup>111</sup> And Christian slaves might be tortured or even killed in an attempt to force their conversion to Islam.<sup>112</sup> In the Silk Road cities of Khiva and Bukhara, slaves who ran away had their ears or nose amputated for the first attempt, and were executed via impalement on a pike for a second attempt.<sup>113</sup> Slaves of the Barbary pirates were tortured by beating the soles of their feet, called the “bastinado”, and for graver offenses, might have their ears or nose cut off.<sup>114</sup> In general, the large numbers of available White slaves over much of the trade’s history, meant that they were cheap to buy, and thus their masters had no particular economic incentive to keep them healthy or even alive. The small number of privileged slaves—those in the royal household and in administration, and those used as soldiers—had much better lives, but even they were subject to the caprices of their masters. The famous slave soldiers of the Ottoman empire were likely treated better than the average run of slaves, but their origins lay in sorrow and misery: the *devshirme*, or child levy, was a blood tax imposed on the conquered European peoples in Greece and the Balkans which took their children away in infancy and enslaved them to the sultan as soldiers.<sup>115</sup> Parents who protested were met with violence.<sup>116</sup>

Thus, the brutality of Islamic White slavery is well evidenced.

#### *Slave Treatment in Other Societies:*

The Islamic and Trans-Atlantic slave systems were certainly not the only systems where cruelties took place. The ancient systems were not lacking in their own cruelties. For instance, slaves in ancient Rome

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<sup>109</sup> Peter Brown, *John Knox: A Biography*, Vol. 1, A. and C, Black Publishing, 1895, p. 81.

<sup>110</sup> Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 24.

<sup>111</sup> See footnotes 85, and 88. see also: William Clarence-Smith, “Eunuchs and Concubines in the History of Islamic Southeast Asia,” *MANUSYA: Journal of Humanities*, special issue, 14 (2007).

<sup>112</sup> Parbury, Allen, and Company, *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China, and Australia*, Vol. 19, 1825, p. 444.

<sup>113</sup> Walter Ratliff, *Pilgrims on the Silk Road: A Muslim-Christian Encounter in Khiva*, Wipf & Stock, 2010, p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 128-129.

<sup>115</sup> Arthur Horniker, “The Corps of the Janizaries,” *Military Affairs*, 8.3 (1944).

<sup>116</sup> Arthur Horniker, “The Corps of the Janizaries,” *Military Affairs*, 8.3 (1944).

could be sent to the arena to be publicly executed if they ran away,<sup>117</sup> and evidence given by slaves in court was taken under torture.<sup>118</sup> They were also often subject to infibulation procedures to keep them from sexual activity.<sup>119</sup> The ancient Scythians blinded their slaves,<sup>120</sup> and in ancient Sparta, part of the finishing test for soldiers was to kill a slave tied in a public square at night.<sup>121</sup> Many slaves in ancient and medieval East Asia were castrated,<sup>122</sup> while slaves in Sub-Saharan Africa were used for sacrifice<sup>123</sup> or even eaten.<sup>124</sup> In the Americas, the Pacific Northwest tribes often killed their slaves in Potlatch celebrations to show off their wealth<sup>125</sup>—at such celebrations, valuable property was destroyed in front of party-goers in order to demonstrate the great wealth of the owner, who could afford to simply destroy some of his property since he had so much. The Aztecs tortured and sacrificed their slaves,<sup>126</sup> and the Mississippian culture hamstrung their slaves.<sup>127</sup> Virtually all of these things were absent entirely from the Trans-Atlantic slave system.

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<sup>117</sup> Amy Zoll, *Gladiator: The True Story of History's Unknown Woman Warrior*, Berkley Publishing, 2002, p. 100-101; Patricia Watson, "Slavery, Rome," in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>118</sup> Patricia Watson, "Slavery, Rome," in: Roger Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine Huebner (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition*, Blackwell Publishing, 2013.

<sup>119</sup> Robert Darby, "Genital Cutting, Male," in: Patricia Wheleban, and Anne Bolin (eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Human Sexuality*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Wiley, 2015.

<sup>120</sup> Timothy Taylor, "Believing the Ancients: Quantitative and Qualitative Dimensions of Slavery and the Slave Trade in Later Prehistoric Eurasia," *World Archeology*, 33.1 (2001).

<sup>121</sup> [Documentary Film] *Last Stand of the 300: The Legendary Battle at Thermopylae*, The History Channel, 2007, at: 15:58 – 16:55.

<sup>122</sup> William Clarence-Smith, "Eunuchs and Concubines in the History of Islamic Southeast Asia," *MANUSYA: Journal of Humanities*, special issue, 14 (2007).

<sup>123</sup> Trevor Burnard, Review of: Stephen Behrendt, A. Latham, and David Northrup, *The Diary of Antera Duke, an Eighteenth-Century African Slave Trader*, Oxford University Press, 2010, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 22.2 (2010).

<sup>124</sup> Sidney Hinde, *The Fall of the Congo Arabs*, Methuen, 1897, p. 62-67.

<sup>125</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica's Guide to Black History, "Slavery: Historical Survey > Slave Owning Societies," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2007: <https://web.archive.org/web/20070929224042/http://www.britannica.com/blackhistory/article-24156>; Encyclopedia Britannica's Guide to Black History, "Slavery: The Law of Slavery > Master-Slave Legal Relationships" *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2009: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090204200121/http://www.britannica.com/blackhistory/article-24164>.

<sup>126</sup> William MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

<sup>127</sup> William MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 30.4 (1928).

In fact, when one looks at the history, the Trans-Atlantic slave system was likely one of the least brutal in world history. By and large, the things Black slaves in the Americas and Caribbean had to worry about—dying in transport, being whipped or beaten, getting an unusually cruel master, and getting family sold away—were true of all slavery everywhere. These slaves however, did not generally have to worry about the things described above: they were not routinely castrated, blinded, hamstringed, murdered, tortured, sacrificed, or eaten, and they did not face the level of horrendous conditions faced for instance, by galley slaves. Of course, none of this means those things were not real cruelties (nor that occasionally, an unusually cruel master did not exist who did kill or otherwise more severely mistreat his slaves). But Trans-Atlantic slavery was in no way more cruel than any other slave system over history.

### Who Ended Slavery?

Even though slavery was practiced around the world by every race, one race is mostly responsible for ending it: Whites were the main reason that slavery is now virtually non-existent. Slavery has a unique historical trajectory: unlike almost any other institution in history, it went from being accepted worldwide, to being outlawed almost worldwide, in under a century. And its almost worldwide abolition is due to the massive pressure rising European powers placed on societies in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, to end slavery in their own countries. Indeed, abolishing slavery was certainly a White idea:

“The history of antislavery was largely the history of . . . small bands of abolitionists in America and Britain in the 1770s and 1780s. After millennia of the acceptance of slavery as a global institution, Britain was among the first nations to permanently ban its own slave trade (1807), and to emancipate its colonial slaves (1834). It was thereafter the principal agent in securing the ending of the transoceanic slave trades of the world.”<sup>128</sup>

In fact, even in mediaeval times Europe had largely given up the practice of slavery within its continental space, with the exception being the Mediterranean countries of Spain, France and Italy, who continued to practice it.<sup>129</sup> Although abolitionism, as we know it, had yet to develop. Thus, White nations, most prominently Great Britain, were the single most important agents in ending slavery not just among their own people, but also throughout the world. Slavery was neither a White invention, nor an institution disproportionately practiced by Whites, but White people did play a disproportionate role in ending it.

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So what are we to take away from this brief summary of world slavery? The first lesson is that the “blame game” is not based on facts, it is based on racial hatred: blaming White people for slavery is a cruel injustice, as the facts are that Whites neither invented, nor disproportionately practiced slavery.

Second, slaves everywhere—not just in the European colonies—were subject to brutal treatment. Indeed, many cruelties were commonplace in non-White slave systems, or ancient slave systems, which were virtually absent from the slave systems of the European colonialism of which we are often told.

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<sup>128</sup> Seymour Drescher, “Antislavery Debates: Tides of Historiography in Slavery and Antislavery,” *European Review*, 19.1 (2011).

<sup>129</sup> Stephen Bensch, “Historiography: Medieval European and Mediterranean Slavery,” in: Seymour Drescher, and Stanley Engerman, eds., *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*, 1998, p. 229-231.

Perhaps the greatest lesson to take away from this is that no race has a monopoly on being enslaved or being a slave master: using slavery—not so very long ago, a nearly universal institution—to score political points against any one race is despicable.

The truth of history is that slavery belongs to the heritage of all human races: it is a part of history. Not just European history, but world history. Let us simply acknowledge slavery as a universal failing. Nothing else can ever reflect the true extent of slavery across time and place, or ever be just or right.

Slavery is, for the most part, in the past now, thanks to White intervention. Let us make sure we do not use its history today to fuel still more injustices, this time of blame and slander.