

Slavery in Islam: From the 7th Century to the Present

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Summary

What was the magnitude of the Arab Islamic slave trade? Records prior to 1800 are quite incomplete, and unfortunately, even some documents from 1800 – 1900 are questionable. Nevertheless, estimates can be made based on the data we do have.

- Owen Alik Shahadah, author of the website arabslavetrade.com and defender of the view that Islam is an agent of Black African liberation and development, claims that the slave trade before 1800 was ‘a trickle.’¹ Shahadah believes that 10 million African slaves were taken between 650 and 1900, with most coming in the nineteenth century. This compares with 10 to 12 million slaves taken across the Atlantic to the Americas during New World slavery.
- Ralph A. Austen, who according to Orlando Patterson makes the ‘most systematic evaluation of the direct and indirect statistical data’² estimates the following:

	Trans-Saharan	Red Sea	East Coast	Total
650 – 1600 AD	4,820,000	1,600,000	800,000	7,220,000
1600 – 1700 AD	700,000 ³	200,000	100,000	1,000,000
1700 – 1800 AD	700,000	200,000	400,000 ⁴	1,300,000
1800 – 1900 AD	1,200,000	200,000 ⁵	1,257,100 ⁶	2,657,100
				12,177,100

- Note that the numbers underestimate the total number of persons captured, because of the great uncertainties about slaves dying en route because of illness, exhaustion, exposure, malnutrition, or mistreatment. Paul Bairoch argues for a much more aggressive total number of African slaves taken in the Arab slave trade, at 25 million.⁷
- Furthermore, Islamic slavery has never fully been abolished. It continues, especially in Saudi Arabia and other areas that have more conservative forms of Islam and hold to *shari’a* law: Iran and Afghanistan.

The presence of slavery and/or abolition in a belief system does not make that belief system true or false. Nevertheless, I believe we must understand these phenomena as thoroughly as possible. Slavery was and is a complex social phenomenon, and surprisingly difficult to define. Anyone seeking to understand slavery as a whole must look at its specific contexts and contents. Since the founding of Islam, *shari’a* law sought to reform the slavery that was universal but specifically inherited first by Arab Muslims and then subsequent Muslim peoples. Compared to New World slavery, slavery in the Muslim world was comparatively light until the 1800’s, when Muslims started using plantation slavery on a large scale. Islamic slavery prior to that was focused around households, not plantations.

Islamic law held that slave-holding was an inviolable Muslim right, not least because Mohammed himself bought, sold, captured, released, and owned slaves. Islamic law gave masters both rights and obligations towards their slaves, gave certain protective rights to slaves, and perhaps most importantly, viewed the slave as human. The enslaved Muslim was equal to the free Muslim in religious matters and superior to a free non-Muslim.⁸ Slaves fared

¹ Owen Alik Shahadah, www.arabslavetrade.com

² Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 1982), p.159.

³ From 1600 – 1700, the breakup of the Songhay Empire in West Africa led to a rise in the trans-Saharan trade, from 550,000 to 700,000, while trade along the Red Sea and East Coast remained constant; see Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World* (New Amsterdam Books: New York, 1989), p.148 – 149.

⁴ From 1700 – 1800, the East Coast trade increased from 100,000 to 400,000 mainly due to the Muslim Omanis consolidating their power along the mainland ports and Zanzibar, but also the Catholic French who purchased slaves for the Mascarene Islands; see Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.148 – 149.

⁵ Inferred from Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.148 – 149, and subsequently chapter 7.

⁶ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.188

⁷ Paul Bairoch, *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1993)

⁸ Qur’an 2:221; 16:71; 30:28

much better under Islamic law than pre-Islamic Arabia, and classical Greco-Roman law. ‘The position of the domestic slave in Muslim society was in most respects better than in either classical antiquity or the nineteenth-century Americas’ and the economic situation of such slaves were no worse than (and even in some cases better than) free poor people.⁹ While the situation for women in Islamic societies was not as advantageous as in Christianized nations, measured in other ways, Islam showed remarkable commitment to economic justice. The Islamic ethic of care for the poor on the highest state policy level, not only on an individual and communal level, contributed a great deal to this fact; Christianity, by contrast, focused more upon individual and church initiatives and less on political policies; Christianity was not designed to have direct control of the state and could never be translated into a political ethic, whereas Islam was. Thus, I hasten to add, in appreciation of the Islamic tradition, that during the medieval period, Islamic societies had more socio-economic equality among men and across households than any other society, even the nations of European Christendom.

Penal slavery was prohibited in Islamic law. Indeed, the introduction of Islam to a country usually terminated this means of enslavement. Debt-bondage was also prohibited in Islamic law, but this proved much more difficult to enforce. The most striking difference, however, between Arab Muslim slavery and slavery elsewhere was concubinage. Most female slaves were concubines, owing primarily to the fact that the Qur’an grants Muslim men an unlimited number of concubines in addition to four wives.¹⁰ Slave women could not be forced into prostitution, which was a vast improvement over the common practice of the pre-Islamic Near East. But other rights were lacking. A Muslim man may take women as slaves and have sex with his slave women against their will, whenever he likes, starting from when they are nine years old, and without officially marrying her – this was agreed upon by all four Sunni schools: Shafi’i, Hanafi, Maliki and Hanbali. Before a slave woman bore a child for the master, she had no protection from dismissal. This is contrasted with a free Muslim woman: ‘A [free Muslim] woman disavowed by her husband left the household with her dowry and could return to her family. No similar economic and social safety net was available to the ordinary concubine who was turned out of the household by her master.’¹¹ However, when a female slave became pregnant with her master’s child, she became *umm walad*, or ‘mother of a child,’ and was granted certain rights; for example, she could not be sold, and she was customarily freed upon her master’s death.¹² Muslim apologists for Islamic concubinage claim that the whole purpose of such concubinage was to free these slave women, but pregnancy as the criterion for the slave woman to acquire legal rights like a full wife seems a bit problematic for the view that freedom was highest in Mohammed’s mind. Children born of such unions were free based on the father’s status as free and were granted part of the father’s inheritance. The fact of mixed race marriages (mostly white masters and black concubines) mitigated racist attitudes, although some were and are still present, to the great detriment of blacks in the Islamic Republics of Mauritania and Sudan, for example.¹³ Most scholars believe the ratio of female to male slaves in Islam was 2:1, although some have suggested 3:1 or 4:1 might be more accurate. By contrast, the ratio of male to female slaves in the New World was 2:1, since plantation labor drove up the demand for male slaves.

To some degree, Islam did not freeze the slave’s status, either. Unlike New World slavery, which was a life sentence, Islamic law held out more avenues for manumission. The Prophet Mohammed said that freeing slaves was a praiseworthy act. ‘He set free one hundred of the Banu Mastaliq tribe as a gesture to Juwayriyya, a beautiful woman from this tribe whom he married. Mansa Musa, the famous fourteenth century ruler of Mali, won renown for freeing a slave each day.’¹⁴ Mohammed declared that freeing slaves was one possible way of atonement for accidentally killing a Muslim man, breaking the fast of Ramadan or excessively punishing a slave.¹⁵ However, for accidental homicide of another Muslim, or for intentionally breaking a Ramadan fast, the Muslim could also fast for

⁹ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1990), p.78 – 79

¹⁰ Up to four wives: ‘And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course.’ (Qur’an 4:3) Unlimited concubines: concubines are referred to as ‘those whom your right hand possess’ in Qur’an 23:5 – 6; 33:50,52; 70:29 – 30. For example, ‘Successful indeed are the believers...who guard their private parts [refrain from sex] except before their mates [wives] or those whom their right hand possess [slave girls]’ (Qur’an 23:1, 5 – 6).

¹¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.87

¹² Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 1982), p.228. The Code of Hammurabi in ancient Mesopotamia also required this.

¹³ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.43 – 44.

¹⁴ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.39

¹⁵ Qur’an 4:92; 5:92; 58:3

two months; another option was giving a *mudd*, or measure of grain, to sixty poor people.¹⁶ Also, giving alms (*sadaqa*) was more important than freeing a slave (*itq*). While the spiritual reward for freeing a slave was escaping damnation in hellfire, affirming the unity of Allah also carried the same reward. These options made it unlikely that freeing a slave would be chosen over other methods of easing the Muslim's conscience.¹⁷ Slaves could also enter into a contractual agreement with their master to purchase their own freedom. The slave could ask for his freedom and agree to pay a fee in installments. The owner was not obligated to agree, but was considered praiseworthy if he did. This meant that slaves could earn and keep an income. 'Since slavery in most of the Arab world remained more an urban than a rural phenomenon, it is reasonable to assume that many male slaves earned their own price and bought their way to freedom.'¹⁸

If we take slavery as an institution in isolation from other Islamic ideas, it seems possible that Muslim apologists for Quranic slavery are right: Islam would have mitigated slavery over time and perhaps even have abolished it.¹⁹ Significantly, the Qur'an specifies that a Muslim cannot enslave a fellow Muslim, and Muslims could not claim abandoned children as slaves, which commonly happened in antiquity, which is very similar to the rulings in the Jewish Mosaic Law that a Jew could not permanently enslave a fellow Jew, and the later European Christian principle that Christians could not enslave fellow Christians (or Jews). However, slaves could be acquired by birth to slave parents, purchased, captured in war, or gained in political-military tribute. Unfortunately, this principle, combined with the Islamic conception of spreading Islam, led to piracy and jihads in order to acquire more slaves. What was important in the spread of Islam was the implementation of Islamic law from state rule, not the conversion of every person per se (as with Christianity); thus Islam, especially in its first few centuries, led to military campaigns, territorial conquest, and the establishment of Muslim regimes in place of formerly Christian or pagan ones. Non-Muslim residents and citizens were offered a choice upon being conquered: Submit to Allah or become enslaved. The choice was given once; if a person became a Muslim after being enslaved, the master did not necessarily have to free the slave at that time.²⁰ Hence, due to the conception of Islamic mission as enshrining Islamic state law, territorial expansion through jihad, political regulation of slavery and slave trafficking, unlimited concubinage, a desire for foreign slave soldiers, along with some pious manumission of slaves, Islam created the demand for more and more slaves. Thus, the primary source of slaves in the Islamic world has been non-Muslims: Jews, Christians, Hindus and pagans from non-Arab Middle Eastern peoples, Africa, Europe, and Asia. Some Muslims developed mixed motivations between proselytizing non-Muslims or enslaving them.²¹

Slavery in Islam officially lasted for fourteen centuries, as opposed to four centuries for the trans-Atlantic slave trade by European nations and the U.S. At the end of the 19th century, progressive Muslims re-interpreted the Qur'an to view slavery as incompatible with Islamic justice and equity. Significantly, this was only after Britain and France, following their own internal abolition of slavery, applied military and economic pressure upon Muslim countries to abolish slavery there. Thus, prior to the 19th century, 'in no part of the Muslim world was an ideological challenge ever mounted against slavery.'²² Slavery continues in Saudi Arabia, Mauritania, Pakistan, and a few other Muslim countries largely due to the conservative view that shari'a permits and supports slavery.

The Original Context: African, Arab, and Roman Slavery

¹⁶ Qur'an 58:4

¹⁷ There is 'an absence of meaningful figures of emancipated slaves in the different Arab countries.' Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.38 – 42 cites two examples: Mansa Musa (Emperor of Mali in West Africa from 1312 – 1337?) freed a large number of slaves, one a day in fact, and nineteenth century Oman showed a perhaps more pious attitude; an observer in 1862 – 63 noted that most slaves who did not die young eventually gained their freedom, and about one quarter of the population was made up of freed slaves and their dependents.

¹⁸ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.41

¹⁹ For example, Muslim American Imam A.M. Khattab argues this, <http://www.icgt.org/Khutbas/Slavery.htm>. However, Khattab's claim, 'Slavery was eliminated in lands where Islam held sway' is impossible to reconcile with historical facts.

²⁰ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.27 – 28, 32 – 35

²¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.28 – 29 says that 'traditional propagators of Islam in Africa often revealed a cautious attitude towards proselytizing because of its effect in reducing a potential reservoir of slaves.' The Muslims of Bagirmi 'made no effort to share the blessings of Islam with their pagan neighbors...for more than three hundred years.' Muslim warriors in Adamawa (modern northern Cameroun) hesitated to help people convert 'who could be enslaved or pay taxes.' And the Songhay Empire of West Africa 'was excluded from Islam in the sixteenth century on grounds that once converted they were by nature free men.'

²² Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.44

- Arabia, Africa:
 - East Africa trade route: ‘Pre-Islamic Arabia and Egypt were terminal points of well traveled slave trade circuits, some of the most important of which originated in the Sudan and Somalia...A brief reference contained in the annals of the eighteenth dynasty in the reign of Thutmose III (1504 – 1450 BC) to ‘slaves, male and female’ pointed to the existence of a continuous flow of slaves into Egypt from the land of Punt (modern-day Somalia). Further northwest along the horn of Africa was Ethiopia, another rich catchment area for slaves.’²³ ‘There is reference to trade in slaves from East Africa to Alexandria in the Persian Gulf area in the early second century AD. The large number of black slaves in the Persian Gulf area attests to a slave trade preceding the rise of Islam. This trade was intensified as Islam grew, and Arab traders for slaves in increased numbers began establishing posts on the East African coast as far south as Zanzibar, probably as early as the ninth century.’²⁴
 - Piracy: ‘Arab pirates were rampant in the Red Sea throughout antiquity and medieval times, and the Black Sea coast remained infested.’²⁵
- Rome: Since church and state were never totally joined in European Christendom with regards to ethics, Christian faith was gradually changing Roman and European sensibilities about slavery. The Jewish Law saw kidnapping and enslavement by this means as punishable by death (Exodus 21:16), and Christianity saw it as deeply immoral (1 Timothy 1:10). As for slavery itself, in 529 – 534 AD, the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian, a Christian, issued the *Corpus Juris Civilis* (‘Body of Civil Law’) also known as the *Institutes of Justinian*. These laws were a complete revision of past Roman law and formed the basis of Latin jurisprudence and Byzantine law. In it, Justinian says, ‘Slavery is an institution of the law of nations, against nature, subjecting one man to the dominion of another.’²⁶ It should be illegal but is tolerated because of the generals’ practice of taking captives in war, or because they are born to slave parents, or when a man over 20 years of age consents to voluntary enslavement so he can share in the money resulting from his own sale. Justinian rules that if a pregnant woman was free at any moment between conception and delivery, her child is free by birth. He prohibited ‘unrestrained violence toward slaves,’ except when the court granted permission for a specific reason.²⁷

Historic Islamic Slavery

7th century

- Muhammed bought, sold, captured, released, and owned slaves.²⁸
 - 627 AD: A disputed event: Mohammed presides over the massacre of 600 – 900 men of one Jewish tribe – the Banu Quraiza – for supporting the Meccans against him. Mohammed orders the men to dig a trench for their own grave. He beheads all males over the age of puberty. He enslaves all the women and children, taking one of the most beautiful women for himself. He confiscates all the Jews’ property. This event appears to be recorded in Qur’an 33:26 – 27: ‘And He drove down those of the followers of the Book who backed them from their fortresses and He cast awe into their hearts; some you killed and you took captive another part. And He made you heirs to their land and their dwellings and their property, and (to) a land which you have not yet trodden, and Allah has power over all things.’
 - 627 AD: Mohammed then conquers the rich Jewish community of Khaybar – a vast date palm plantation ninety miles south of Medina. On this occasion, Mohammed orders the torture of a Jewish chief to acquire information about the location of his treasures. When the treasure was discovered, Mohammed beheads the leader for trying to conceal the goods. Mohammed, on the same day he has her husband executed, then takes as a slave the wife of the chief, a very beautiful 17 year old woman named Safiyah, to be his eighth wife. Mohammed was then sixty. He takes

²³ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.18 – 19. For a history of the trade in slaves on the East African coast from ancient times see R.W. Beachey, *The Slave Trade of Eastern Africa* (Harper & Row: New York, 1976), especially chs. 1 and 8.

²⁴ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.150

²⁵ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.116

²⁶ Justinian, *The Institutes*, Book 1, part 3, #2.

²⁷ Justinian, *The Institutes*, Book 1, part 8, #2

²⁸ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1990); W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammed at Medina* (Oxford University Press: London, 1961); W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammed: Prophet and Statesman* (Oxford University Press: London, 1965).

another Jewish woman for another wife. Large numbers of Jews are taken prisoner and sold. This story is compiled in the 9th century by Sahih al-Bukhari in writings that form one of the two pillars of Islamic jurisprudence (Volume 5, Book 59, Number 512). The distribution of booty is described in al-Bukhari Hadiths No.143, page 700.

- 632 – 640 AD: Arab Muslims conquer Arabia and the lands of Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. Historian Speros Vryonis observes, ‘Since the beginning of the Arab razzias [raids] into the land of Rum [the Byzantine Empire], human booty had come to constitute a very important portion of the spoils.’²⁹
- 642 AD: Amr conquers Tripoli (Libya) and forces the Jewish and Christian Berbers to give their wives and children as slaves to the Arab army as part of their jizya [tax on non-Muslims].
- 651 – 652 AD: Arab Muslims sign a truce with the Nubians in Africa, called the *Baqt* by Arab historians. The terms, according to the Arab geographer Magrizi, requires that ‘each year you are to deliver 360 slaves which you will pay to the Imam of the Moslems from the finest slaves of your country, in whom there is no defect. [There are to be] both male and female. Among them [is to be] no decrepit old man or woman or any child who has not reached puberty. You are to deliver them to the Wali of Aswan.’³⁰ From 652 until its conquest in 1276, Nubia was forced to send an annual contingent of slaves to Cairo. Treaties concluded with the towns of Transoxania, Sijistan, Armenia, and Fezzan (Maghreb) under the Umayyads and Abbasids stipulated an annual dispatch of slaves from both sexes.
- ‘From the seventh century on, blacks were exported in small but steady numbers from the Zanj coast stretching from Ethiopia and Somalia in the north to Mozambique in the south. They were put to work on date plantations in Basra, Bandar Abbas, and Minab and along the Batinah coast; they also proved adaptable for use on large estates in Hijaz [i.e. the western part of Arabia encompassing Mecca and Medina].’³¹
- ‘With the rise of the Islamic states we find a systematic effort to capture as many men as women in order to supplement the conquering armies of Islam and reinforce their manpower. Once these states were established, the age-old practice of favoring female over male captives returned. Among the great majority of Islamic peoples after the ninth century, female captives and kidnapped persons fetched a higher price than males, even where slavery was economically important.’³²
- Slaves were used as administrators and soldiers because, totally dependent on their master, they were more reliable and loyal than other Arab clan leaders, who retained their own sense of clan honor and sense of personal entitlement. ‘From the early days of the caliphate we find the tendency to recruit elite slaves from groups who were infidels and of a different ethnic and ‘racial’ type...The favored group were the ethnic Turks from Transoxania...Free Iranians were also recruited to perform high-status roles and were available and willing to fill all the available elite positions in the caliphate, but conflict soon developed between the two groups, from which the natively alienated Turks emerged triumphant.’³³
- ‘Patricia Crone, in an analysis of Islamic political theories, notes that after a jihad battle was concluded, “male captives might be killed or enslaved...Dispersed in Muslim households, slaves almost always converted, encouraged or pressurized by their masters, driven by a need to bond with others, or slowly, becoming accustomed to seeing things through Muslim eyes even if they tried to resist.”³⁴
- Indian historian K. S. Lal states that wherever jihadists conquered a territory, ‘there developed a system of slavery peculiar to the climate, terrain and populace of the place.’ When Muslim armies invaded India, ‘its people began to be enslaved in droves to be sold in foreign lands or employed in various capacities on menial and not-so-meneal jobs within the country.’³⁵

8th Century

²⁹ Quoted in Robert Spencer, ‘Slavery, Christianity, and Islam,’ *First Things* (February 4, 2008), <http://www.firstthings.com/onthesquare/2008/02/slavery-christianity-and-islam>

³⁰ Cited in William Y. Adams, *Nubia: Corridor to Africa* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 1977), p.231 – 232, 451. Also discussed by Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.124.

³¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.49 – 50

³² Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.121.

³³ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.310.

³⁴ Quoted in Robert Spencer, ‘Slavery, Christianity, and Islam,’ *First Things* (February 4, 2008)

³⁵ K.S. Lal, *Theory and Practice of the Muslim State in India*, cited in Robert Spencer, ‘Slavery, Christianity, and Islam,’ *First Things* (February 4, 2008)

- ‘Arabic chronicles described how Arab traders from the north came to Africa south of the Sahara bringing salt to exchange for gold and slaves. These trans-Saharan routes carried caravans that returned laden with slaves from black Africa. Slaves were also obtained from military raids, such as those on the black populations of Nubia, in the Sudan, and on places as far south as Borno. The slaves were taken to Cairo and other Arab centers, there sold, and then dispersed throughout the Arab world.’³⁶
- Probably at this time, Muslims began to use eunuchs to guard harems and fill military and government posts. Eunuchs were important because of their genealogical isolation; they were not physically able to create a new dynasty. ‘Eunuchs were created by completely amputating the scrotum and penis of eight to twelve year old African boys. Hundreds of thousands of young boys bled to death during this gory procedure. The survival rate from this process ranged from 1 in 10 to 1 in 30. These castrated boys brought the highest price at the slave market.’³⁷

9th Century

- 813 AD: In Baghdad, the caliph, Muhammed ibn Harun Al-Amin (caliph from 809 – 813 AD) owned about seven thousand black eunuchs and four thousand white eunuchs.³⁸ Thousands of black slaves known as Zanj are brought from the East African coast to Iraq to remove salt encrustations from the land so as to reclaim it for agriculture.³⁹
- 826 – 828 AD: ‘The Islamic states and several of the advanced pagan states of Africa stand out as the slaveholding peoples who relied most heavily on tribute to establish and augment their slave populations. Although most of the slaves in the early Abbasid slave armies were bought, considerable numbers were obtained as tribute. According to Ibn Xurdadhbih, between the years A.D. 826 and 828 two thousand captives of the Turkish tribe Guzz were sent from the province of Xurasan as part of their tax payment. A considerable number of the elite slave corps found throughout the Islamic world came as tribute, the most celebrated being the Ottoman janissaries, who were recruited by means of the *devshirme* (tribute of children from the Christian subjects of the empire). A large number of the public and private slaves of Muslim African were similarly obtained.’⁴⁰
- 833 AD: The Abbasid ruler Mu’tasim (833 – 842 AD) begins his reign and, fearful of the strength of his own Arab cavalry, replaces them with Turkish slave soldiers. He also incorporates black slaves into his army.
- ‘Slaves were used for the drainage of marginal lands of Ifriqiya [i.e. the coastal regions of western Libya, Tunisia, and eastern Algeria], the eastern part of the Maghreb [i.e. the five countries comprising North Africa], during the ninth century.’⁴¹
- ‘[African slaves] were pressed into service for pearl diving in Lingeh and Bahrein and continued to be used in this highly profitable industry well into the twentieth century. Those who developed the ability to dive in deep waters were valued well above normal market values. The lot of the thousands of slaves employed in this thriving industry over the centuries was harsh indeed; and many young boys, newly exposed to the perils of this vocation, died of shock or fright.’⁴²
- 880 – 894 AD: The first great slave revolt in the Muslim world occurs, in Baghdad, the seat of the Abbasid empire. The black Zanj slaves in Iraq revolt and are joined by the black troops of the imperial army that are originally sent to put them down. This suggests that racial unrest within Islam was quite significant.

³⁶ Lamin Sanneh, *Abolitionists Abroad: American Blacks and the Making of Modern West Africa* (Harvard University Press: Harvard, 1999), p.1

³⁷ http://www.christianaction.org.za/articles_ca/2004-4-TheScourgeofSlavery.htm. On the widespread role of eunuchs in the Islamic Empire, see Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.315 – 316. For example, a black eunuch named Kafur was made master of both Egypt and Syria in the tenth century. During the twentieth century, the governor of Sidam province in Ethiopia was a eunuch. Mohammed taught against castration, but strangely accepted a eunuch into his service as a slave. Cengiz Orhonlu, ‘Khasi,’ *Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed.2, vol.4, p.1089. It must be quickly added that the use of political eunuchs was not at all unique to Islam. Junius P. Rodriguez, *Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (ABC-CLIO), p.xviii, believes that the survival rate for crude castration was 10%.

³⁸ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Color in Islam* (Octagon Books, 1979)

³⁹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.50

⁴⁰ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.123

⁴¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.50

⁴² Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.50

After fourteen years, the Zanj revolt is defeated. The head of Ali, their leader, is put on top of a pole and carried back to Baghdad.⁴³

- 884 AD: The first independent ruler of Muslim Egypt, Ahmad ibn Tulun dies. Since Egypt was close to the Sudan, it was natural for ibn Tulun to rely on black soldier slaves – 40,000 in all – to consolidate his power. That is compared with 7,000 freeborn fighters, probably Arab, and 24,000 Turkish slaves. Mindful of the ethnic/racial tension, ibn Tulun had made separate quarters for the black slaves. Ibn Tulun's son and successor, Khumarawayh, was followed in his procession by a thousand black soldier slaves, but when he died in 905, 'the new governor gave the order to attack the black praetorial guard, who were mercilessly cut down.'⁴⁴

10th Century

- Camels from Arabia make slave trafficking from Africa even more viable. 'The Arabs were established along the east coast of Africa by the tenth century, and a contemporary account indicates that Arab traders from Oman were leading raids into Africa and kidnapping adults and children.'⁴⁵ Joseph E. Harris states explicitly that most slaves were taken not in genuine wars, but in raids – some organized, some indiscriminate – conducted for this purpose.⁴⁶ All the evidence from the interior of Africa suggests that most slaves were originally kidnapped or taken in small raids. This was true, for example, of the Luvale of Northern Rhodesia.⁴⁷
- 930 AD: Ethnic and racial tensions in the slave armies of Islam erupt. 'Mounted Turkish troops decimated the black infantrymen and put their separate living quarters in Bab Oman to the torch. Following this massacre, white soldiers took over the ranks of the infantry and black slaves disappeared from the Abbasid army. The pattern of events that unfolded in Iraq over two centuries of recruiting blacks into the army, using them for rough or menial tasks and ultimately driving them from ranks, was to be repeated in other Arab countries in the following centuries.'⁴⁸
- 969 AD: Muhammed Ibn Tughj, founder of the Ikhshidid dynasty in Egypt, dies. One of his personal guards, a Nubian eunuch slave named Abu'l Misk Kafur (also known by the nickname 'Musky Camphor'), becomes regent of Egypt for almost twenty years. Kafur, an able administrator, is the only black ever to have become a ruler over an Arab land, although Egyptian popular opinion seemed to have been somewhat against him.⁴⁹
- 969 AD – 1169 AD: The fortunes of black slave soldiers in Egypt rise and fall. The Fatimids take control of Egypt, North Africa, Syria, and Palestine, resting their support on foreign troops of Berbers, Turks, and black Africans.
 - 996 – 1020 AD: During this period, the reign of the third Fatimid caliph, al-Hakim, the Berbers and Turks clash with the black Africans. Caliph al-Hakim decides to send his black troops to attack the inhabitants of old Cairo. But the Berbers and Turks join forces against the blacks to protect old Cairo.
 - 1076 AD: During the reign of Caliph al-Mustansir (1035 – 1094 AD), another racial clash occurs. The Caliph's mother was a former black slave who used her position to bestow favors on black soldiers and recruited large numbers into the military. The Berbers and Turks wage 'a murderous battle' against the blacks and drove them from Cairo into Upper Egypt. They try to return to Cairo in 1076 and were decisively defeated.⁵⁰
 - 1169 AD: The black force, in the interim period, had regained influence and power under the Fatimids, but Saladin and the Ayyubids threaten Egypt. In support of the Fatimids, 50,000 black troops are stationed between the palaces of the caliph and the vizier. 'Outmaneuvered and

⁴³ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.50

⁴⁴ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.69

⁴⁵ Footnote #78 of Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.399. R.W. Beachey, *The Slave Trade of Eastern Africa* (Harper & Row: New York, 1976), especially chs. 1 and 8

⁴⁶ Joseph E. Harris, *The African Presence in Asia* (Northwestern University Press: Evanston, IL, 1971), p.10 – 15

⁴⁷ C.M.N. White, 'Clan, Chieftainship, and Slavery in Luvale Political Organization,' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 1957, p.58 – 75. See also footnote #78 of Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.399

⁴⁸ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.68

⁴⁹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.70

⁵⁰ M. Canard, 'Fatimids,' *Encyclopedia of Islam*, revised edition vol.2, p.858, cited by Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.71

possibly betrayed by the very caliph whose cause they championed, the blacks were decisively defeated, marking their end as a political favor in Egypt. Following this, the white military elements of the Fatimid forces, notably Turks, Kurds, and Daylamites, were integrated into the Ayyubid establishment while the blacks were not. In the succeeding centuries when the power of the mamluks held sway in Egypt, only menial roles in the military were open to black slaves.⁵¹

11th Century

- ‘The need, from early medieval times onward, to import large and growing numbers of slaves led to a rapid increase, in all the lands beyond the frontiers of the Islamic world, of both slave raiding and slave trading – the one to procure and maintain an adequate supply of the required commodity, the other to ensure its efficient distribution and delivery...In the Islamic world, where slaves were transported over great distances from their places of origin, the slave trade was more complex and more specialized with a network of trade routes and markets extending all over the Islamic world and far beyond its frontiers and involving commercial relations with suppliers in Christian Europe, in the Turkish steppe-lands, and in black Africa. In every important city there was a slave market, usually called Suq al-Raiq. When new supplies were brought, government inspectors usually took the first choice, then officials, then private persons. It would seem that slaves were not normally sold in open markets but in decently covered places – a practice which continued in some areas to the nineteenth, in others till the twentieth, century.’⁵²
- 1071 AD: The Seljuk Turks start to conquer more and more of Anatolia [i.e. the western two-thirds of present-day Turkey], completing this conquest in 1080. They reduced many of the Greeks and other non-Muslims there to slave status: ‘They enslaved men, women, and children from all major urban centers and from the countryside where the populations were defenseless.’⁵³
- 1077 AD: Thousands of women from a Berber tribe who had risen up in arms are publicly sold in the slave markets of Cairo.⁵⁴
- ‘From medieval through early modern times the North African Muslim states relied on captives as an important source of both income and slaves. In early modern Algiers, according to Ellen Friendman, ‘the labor services of captives as well as ransoms paid for them were critical to the Algerian economy.’⁵⁵
- Although debt-bondage was forbidden in Islamic law, Arab rulers of Malaysia continued the practice of earlier Hindu rulers and enslaved Malays because of the debt they accumulated. Debt may have been the primary source of slaves.⁵⁶ In the Malaysian state of Batak, ‘the interest rate was a whopping 100 percent – ‘folding the debt’ is the vivid local expression. Persons also fell into debt-servitude and later slavery, as a result of high bride-price and passion for gambling. The situation was not much better among the more centralized Islamic states. One notorious practice among the Arab rulers of these states, especially in Perak, was the imposition of spurious and heavy fines on the native population which the fined person had no means of paying. He would then go into debt-servitude to the raja and eventually, with the accumulation of heavy interest, fall into permanent slavery.’⁵⁷

12th Century

- Arab merchants in Canton received slaves from East Africa, and sold them to the Cantonese. According to a 12th century text cited by Serge Bilé, most wealthy families in Canton owned black slaves and regarded them as demons and savages because of their physical appearance.⁵⁸
- In Aragon, Enecho Sanç de Laues tells us that early in the twelfth century he, his wife, and two children were taken prisoner in a Muslim raid upon Huesca.⁵⁹

⁵¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.72

⁵² Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Muslim World*, p.

⁵³ Robert Spencer, ‘Slavery, Christianity, and Islam,’ *First Things* (February 4, 2008)

⁵⁴ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.30

⁵⁵ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.107

⁵⁶ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.124. See also footnote #130 on p.404

⁵⁷ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.124 – 125.

⁵⁸ Roland Oliver, *Africa in the Iron Age: c.500 BC – 1400 AD*, (Cambridge University Press: 1975)

⁵⁹ José María Lacarra, ‘Documentos para el estudio de la reconquista y repoblación del valle del Ebro (segunda serie),’ *Estudios de edad media de la Corona de Aragón* 3 (1947-48): 515.

- 1143 AD: The last of the Murabit sultans, Tashufin (1143-45), in a raid against Toledo, attacked the castle of Azeca and in the process of taking it, killed three hundred of its Christian defenders and sent the rest off as captives to Córdoba and then to Morocco.⁶⁰
- 1143 AD: In another series of raids, ‘Ali ibn Yusuf (1106-1143) assaulted the Christian towns of Talavera, Olmos, and Canales and took many captives and much booty.⁶¹
- 1155 AD: The count-king Ramon Berenguer IV lost his own brother, Berenguer Ramon, in a raid upon Melgor.⁶²
- 1178 AD: The Catalan church of Santa Maria d’Ullà was pillaged by Muslims, and those of its canons not killed were sent into captivity on Majorca.⁶³
- 1181 AD: A raid by the Muwahhid fleet against Lisbon yielded twenty ships, much booty, and three thousand Christian female and child captives,⁶⁴ while Christian king Alfonso VIII’s forays in Andalusia in the same year are said to have brought him over two thousand Muslim captives and 2,775 dinars in ransoms.⁶⁵
- 1191 AD: The Muslim governor of Córdoba, in a subsequent attack upon Silves, won three thousand (presumably Christian) prisoners and fifteen thousand head of cattle.⁶⁶
- 1195 AD: Ibn Khaldun reports that the Muwahhid army took nearly five thousand Christians captive near Badajoz.

13th Century

- 1206 AD: In India, a former slave (Arabic *mamluk*) named Qutubuddin Aibak begins an independent rule after the death of his master, Muhammed Ghauri. Qutubuddin was ethnically Turkish. He founded the Mamluk Dynasty of India, also called the Ghulam Dynasty (*mamluk* means ‘owned’ and refers to soldier-slaves). He was an able administrator and exercised a measure of tolerance towards Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists. Notably, as a child, Qutubuddin Aibak was educated by his first master in northeastern Iran, became fluent in Persian and Arabic, and excelled at archery and horsemanship (he was a dedicated fan of the sport of polo). His master’s sons, however, were jealous of him and sold him to a slave merchant. He was eventually bought by the General Shahabuddin Muhammed Ghauri, who was governor of Ghazni, a city in central Afghanistan.
- 1235 AD: In the Muslim Mali Empire of West Africa, the first meeting of the Gbara (Great Assembly) puts in place prohibitions on the mistreatment of prisoners and slaves.
- 1250 AD: Another Mamluk Sultanate begins, this time in Egypt, and lasts until 1517. After political instability following the death of Saladin, and the invasion of Egypt by Louis IX of France in the Seventh Crusade, the soldier-slaves of Egypt gained increasing power and leverage in Egyptian politics. Finally, in 1250, Qutuz seized control and started the Mamluk Sultanate. He was assassinated by his successor, and the sultanate passed to successors this way for generations. Mamluk Egypt fought the Mongols and the Crusaders. Egypt eventually was taken over by the Ottoman Empire in 1517. In 1778, Mamluk Ali Bey al-Kabir declared Egyptian independence from the Ottoman Turks, but the Ottomans crushed the resistance.
- The thirteenth-century chronicler Pero Marín, a monk of the abbey of Silos, reports numerous examples of the somewhat-random capture of travellers, raiders, and others caught by Muslims in the open countryside: two dependents of the Knights of Calatrava caught in 1266 while driving cattle, Gil Pérez de Motos and his companions captured while raiding on the outskirts of Granada in 1280, and Ramon de Muler seized along with his mule and ass on the road to Lorca in 1285.⁶⁷ These and the numerous other examples contained in

⁶⁰ *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, ed. Luis Sánchez Belda (Madrid, 1950), 109, 85.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.79, 102.

⁶² Pedro Marfilo, *Historia de la corona de Aragón ... conocida generalmente con el nombre de Crónica de San Juan de la Peña*, ed. Tomás Ximénez de Embrun (Saragossa, 1876), 124-25.

⁶³ Jaime Villanueva, *Viage literario á las iglesias de España* (Madrid and Valencia, 1803-52), 15:215.

⁶⁴ Ibn Khaldun, 2:204.

⁶⁵ Huici Miranda, *Imperio almohade*, 1: 286.

⁶⁶ Ibn Khaldun, 2: 213; Roudh el-Kartas [Ibn Abi Zar’ al-Fasi], *Histoire des souverains du Maghreb*, trans. M. Beaumier (Paris, 1860), 307-8.

⁶⁷ Pero Marín, ‘Miraculos romanizados,’ in *Viday milagros del thaumaturgo español Moysées segundo, redemptor de cautivos, abogade de los relices partos, Sto. Domingo Manso, abad beneditino, reparados del real monasterio de Silos*, ed. Sebastián Vergara (Madrid, 1736), 136, 150 – 51, 164 – 65.

the medieval sources illustrate the pan-Iberian character of the phenomenon; any Christian or Muslim near the frontier zone stood in at least some danger of capture.

- 1285 AD: The freed slave Mansa Sakoura usurps the throne of Mali, in West Africa, becoming the sixth Mansa (the Mandinka word for *Emperor*) of the Mali Empire after a struggle for succession between Sundiata's two sons and grandson. He had been a general under Sundiata Keita, legendary founder of the Mali Empire. He was murdered in 1300 by a warrior attempting to rob him, and his body was given a regal burial despite his slave birth. This demonstrates the possibilities for freedom and advancement among slaves, especially in the military.

14th Century

- 'The fourteenth century traveler, Ibn Battuta, set out from Takedda in the western Sudan [in the Mali Empire] to Fez, went by a caravan of six hundred women slaves. Seeing caravans made up largely or exclusively of girls and women was not an uncommon sight on the trade routes linking bilad as-Sudan to North Africa.'⁶⁸
- 'By Ottoman times [the Ottoman Empire started in 1299 AD], the first for which we have extensive documentation, the pattern of importation had changed...Great numbers of Balkan Christians were forcibly brought into Ottoman service. The distinctively Ottoman institution of the *devsirme* [the quite humiliating practice of forcibly taking boys from Christian families, converting them to Islam, and making them serve in the palace, among the scribes, in religious rites, or in the military], the levy of boys from the Christian village population, made it possible, contrary to previous Islamic law and practice, to recruit slaves from the subject peoples of the conquered provinces. The *devsirme* slaves were not servants or menials, however, but were groomed for the service of the state in military and civil capacities. For a long time, most of the grand viziers and military commanders of the Ottoman forces were recruited in this way.'⁶⁹
- 1324 – 1326 AD: The Muslim ruler of the Mali Empire, Mansa Musa, makes his famous pilgrimage to Mecca. When he arrives at Cairo, he and members of his entourage buy many Turkish and Ethiopian slave girls, singing girls and garments, with so much gold that the value of gold falls in that region of the world. As a result, the names of Mali and Timbuktu appear on 14th century world maps drawn up by Christians and Muslims.
- 1377 AD: 'The Arab writer Ibn Khaldun says in his 'Prolegoma to World History' written in 1377 C.E., that God made Africa a natural source of slaves, for 'the Negro nations are, as a rule, submissive to slavery, because [Negroes] have little [that is essentially] human and have attributes that are quite similar to those of dumb animals.'
- 1391 – 1392 AD: The ruler of Bornu writes a letter to the sultan of Egypt, complaining about slave raids into his territory by Arabs from the north, selling them to Egypt, Syria, and elsewhere, in spite of the fact that he and his people are free and Muslim. These Arab raiders, he lamented, 'have devastated all our land, all the land of Bornu... They took free people among us captive, of our kin among Muslims... They have taken our people as merchandise.' The Bornu ruler asked the sultan to search out these unfortunate blacks scattered among the various slave markets and restore them to freedom and Islam, a plea that went unheeded.'⁷⁰

15th Century

- 1449 AD: In the Ottoman Empire, the Janissaries (the 'praetorian guard' around the Sultan, slaves captured from Christian families through the *devsirme* system) revolted, demanding higher wages. The Sultan conceded to this demand. From 1451, every Ottoman Sultan felt obliged to increase the pay of the Janissaries.
- 1464 – 1492 AD: 'Sonni Ali, a ruler of Songhay in the fifteenth century, though a Muslim himself, sometimes indulged his fancy by taking free Muslims and giving them as slaves and, adding insult to injury, by pretending to bestow them as pious alms.'⁷¹ Under successor Askiya Muhammed Turay I, the

⁶⁸ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.81 citing E.W. Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors* (Oxford University Press: London, 1968), p.96. See also Candice Goucher, Charles LeGuin, and Linda Walton, 'Trade, Transport, Temples, and Tribute: The Economics of Power,' *In the Balance: Themes in Global History* (McGraw-Hill: Boston, 1998), p.5; see http://www.learner.org/courses/worldhistory/support/reading_11_1.pdf.

⁶⁹ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Muslim World*, p.

⁷⁰ Lamin Sanneh, p.1; Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.30

⁷¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.30

Songhay initiated jihads, primarily to revitalize the faith in Western Sudan, which led to greater numbers of slaves.⁷²

- The West African Empires of Mali (1230 – 1600 AD) and Songhay (1464 – 1591 AD), are strongly Muslim, especially among the cultural elite, and control the traffic in slaves. Slave markets thrived in these empires, but attempts were made at regulating the conditions of slavery.

16th Century

- 1510 AD: Leo Africanus, a young Moroccan traveler, visits the city of Gao, the capital of the Songhay Empire in 1510 and 1513 when the West African empire was at the height of its power under Askiya Mohammed. He is amazed at the wealth, and also the quantity of slaves there. He writes, ‘Here there is a certain place where slaves are sold, especially on those days when the merchants are assembled. And a young slave of fifteen years of age is sold for six ducats, and children are also sold. The king of this region has a certain private palace where he maintains a great number of concubines and slaves.’⁷³
- 1527 AD: Estevan, the first identified Muslim in North America, lands in Florida as a Moroccan guide to the Spaniards. During the ensuing years of the slave trade, as many as 20% of West African slaves brought to North America are Muslim.⁷⁴
- 1544 AD: Muslim Turkish pirate Hayreddin Barbarossa captured the Ischia, taking 4,000 prisoners in the process, and deported to slavery some 9,000 inhabitants of Lipari, almost the entire population.⁷⁵
- 1551 AD: Dragut enslaved the entire population of the Maltese island Gozo, between 5,000 and 6,000, sending them to Libya.
- 1554 AD: Muslim pirates sacked Vieste in southern Italy taking 7,000 slaves.
- 1555 AD: Turgut Reis sailed to Corsica and ransacked Bastia, taking 6,000 prisoners.
- 1558 AD: Barbary corsairs captured the town of Ciutadella, destroyed it, slaughtered the inhabitants and carried off 3,000 survivors to Istanbul as slaves.
- 1563 AD: Turgut Reis landed at the shores of the province of Granada, Spain, and captured the coastal settlements in the area like Almuñécar, along with 4,000 prisoners. Barbary pirates frequently attacked the Balearic islands, resulting in many coastal watchtowers and fortified churches being erected. The threat was so severe that Formentera became uninhabited.⁷⁶
- 1566 AD: In the Ottoman Empire, Sultan Selim II gave the Janissaries permission to marry, which infringed upon the exclusive loyalty of these soldier-slaves to the sultans.
- Piracy flared up again in the western Mediterranean with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire during the late sixteenth century, and for the next two hundred years Christians and Muslims captured one another, enslaving many of their captives. The North African states, especially Algiers and Morocco, came to depend heavily for manpower and external revenues on the ‘little war’ of piracy conducted by the so-called Barbary pirates, especially during the eighteenth century.⁷⁷
- In the Ottoman Empire, for almost 130 years during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many of the sultans were minors. Their mothers, the leaders of the harem, had great influence in the Empire. This period, beginning with Hurrem Sultan, wife of Suleyman the Magnificent, is called ‘The Sultanate of Women.’
- ‘In the sixteenth century in the West African state of Songhay, the village headman distributed seed to the workers, who, in return, paid him a certain proportion of their harvest. There were in Futa Jallon slave villages which farmed the valleys while their Fulani overlords lived above on hilltops or plateaus.

17th Century

- 1622 AD: In the Ottoman Empire, the teenage Sultan Osman II tries to disband the Janissary corps (some 135,000 men) but they imprison him and murder him shortly afterwards.

⁷² Au’Ra Muhammed Abdullah Ilahi, ‘Muhammed Turay I (Askiya Al-Hajj Muhammed Ibn Abi Bakr Ture),’ edited by Junius P. Rodriguez, *Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery (ABC-CLIO)*, p.445

⁷³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/9chapter2.shtml>

⁷⁴ http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/timeline/p_1.html

⁷⁵ Elisabetta Povoledo, ‘The mysteries and majesties of the Aeolian islands’, *The New York Times*, September 26, 2003.

⁷⁶ Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy, 1500–1800* (Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, England, 2003)

⁷⁷ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.117

- The Moroccan Sultan Moulay Ismail ‘the Bloodthirsty’ (1672–1727) raised an army of 150,000 black slaves, which he named the Black Guard, and forced Morocco into submission. Ismail was known for brutally murdering members of his Black Guard on a whim.⁷⁸ Moroccan society denied them ownership of land, which defined a man’s social standing. He used over 25,000 slaves to build his capital.⁷⁹ According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, he fathered 888 children with 500 concubines.
- In the Ottoman Empire, ‘in the early seventeenth century, the devsirme [the quite humiliating practice of forcibly taking boys from Christian families, converting them to Islam, and making them serve in the palace, among the scribes, in religious rites, or in the military] was abandoned; by the end of the seventeenth century, the Ottoman advance into Europe had been decisively halted and reversed...The slave needs of the Ottoman Empire were now met from new sources. One of these was the Caucasians – the Georgians, Circassians, and related peoples, famous for providing beautiful women and brave and handsome men. The former figured prominently in the harems, the latter in the armies and administrations of the Ottoman and also the Persian states. The supply of these was reduced but not terminated by the Russian conquest of the Caucasus in the early years of the nineteenth century. Another source of supply was the Tatar khanate of the Crimea, whose raiders every year rode far and wide in Central and Eastern Europe, carrying off great numbers of male and female slaves. These were brought to the Crimea and shipped thence to the slave markets in Istanbul and other Turkish cities. This trade came to an end with the Russian annexation of the Crimea in 1783 and the extinction of Tatar independence.’⁸⁰
- 1692 AD: The Sultan Badi III, ruler of the Funj kingdom of Sennar, which replaced the Nubian kingdom in northeast Africa, starts to use slaves in his army.⁸¹
- ‘In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, raids and counterraids between Timbuktu and the Tuaregs resulted in the enslavement of Muslim prisoners of both sides. This practice of taking Muslim captives as slaves by other Muslims continued in different places in the nineteenth and even into the early part of the twentieth century.’⁸²
- ‘From the end of the seventeenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, the average price of a white female slave was four to six times greater than that of a comparable black woman slave. In Egypt, according to Lane, a white slave girl was worth anywhere from three to ten times the price of an Abyssinian.’⁸³

18th Century

- ‘During the reign of the Moroccan Sultan Muley Archy in the eighteenth century, black slaves suffered greatly. They were kept in irons as punishment for mistakes or breaches of discipline and, not infrequently, were put to death for these infractions.’⁸⁴
- 1716 AD: Thomas Pellow, an English cabin boy on a small English vessel, is captured and enslaved in Morocco. He is held for twenty-three years, and is tortured until he accepts Islam. For weeks he is beaten and starved, and finally gives in after his torturer resorts to “burning my flesh off my bones by fire, which the tyrant did, by frequent repetitions, after a most cruel manner.”⁸⁵

19th Century⁸⁶

- ‘Deprived of most of their sources of white slaves, the Ottomans turned more and more to Africa, which in the course of the nineteenth century came to provide the overwhelming majority of slaves used in Muslim countries from Morocco to Asia. According to a German report published in 1860, ‘the black slaves, at that time, were recruited mainly by raiding and kidnapping from Sennaar, Kordofan, Darfur, Nubia, and other places in inner Africa; the white mostly through voluntary sale on the part of their relatives in the

⁷⁸ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.73 – 75, 155

⁷⁹ Giles Milton, *White Gold : The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and North Africa's One Million European Slaves* (Hodder, 2006), p. 352

⁸⁰ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Muslim World*, p.

⁸¹ <http://www.san.beck.org/1-13-Africa1500-1800.html#2>

⁸² Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.30

⁸³ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.82

⁸⁴ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.61

⁸⁵ Robert Spencer, ‘Slavery, Christianity, and Islam,’ *First Things* (February 4, 2008). See also Giles Milton, *White Gold: The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and Islam's One Million White Slaves*

⁸⁶ A good summary of the nineteenth century Arab slave trade is found in Gordon, p.151 – 154

independent lands of the Caucasus (Lesghi, Daghestani, and Georgian women, rarely men). Those offered for sale were already previously of servile status or were slave children by birth.⁸⁷

- 1800 AD: Plantations on the East African coast grew grain and coconuts, relying on slave labor. ‘The volume of trade, especially during the nineteenth century, was much larger than is normally believed. Indeed, the East African trade during the nineteenth century was significantly larger than the Atlantic slave trade during the nineteenth (or seventeenth) century. R.W. Beachey estimates a total volume of 2.1 millions slaves exported at that time, not counting the ‘fringe numbers.’ Between 1800 and the mid-1820’s approximately five thousand slaves per annum were exported, and about the same number held during the last quarter of the century. During the middle half of the century, when the trade was at its peak, some twenty thousand
- ‘In the Sokoto empire [in Western Africa in present day Nigeria], slave farming of the estates of the rich reached massive proportions. Very often, the ratio of free people to the slave population was small indeed. The nineteenth century German traveler, Gustav Nachtigal, observed that of the Arabs settled in Wadai, located in the western part of modern Chad, those engaged in agriculture relied almost exclusively on slave labor.’⁸⁸
- 1811 AD: ‘Slavery had also taken root in Zanzibar long before it became a necessity in the 1830s and 1840s to sustain the clove plantations. The British naval officer, Captain Smee, who visited Zanzibar in 1811 observed that quite a few Arabs owned as many as 800 to 900 slaves. He considered that about three-quarters of the island’s 200,000 population was made up of servile labor.’⁸⁹
- 1818 AD: On the East African coast, Omani businessmen discover a new cash crop: cloves. The Omani begin to dominate clove and sugar plantations along the East African coast. ‘The planting, picking, and harvesting of cloves...were labor intensive operations requiring a large and disciplined workforce. An annual 30 percent attrition rate due to high mortality and desertions usually meant that the slave population had to be renewed after three or four years.’⁹⁰
- 1819 AD: Muhammed Ali, ruler of Egypt, invades Sudan. He sets high targets for acquiring black slaves in his armed forces for his operations in Syria and Arabia: 20,000 slaves in 1820 and 30,000 in 1823. ‘As long as Muhammed Ali held power, the slave trade remained an unquestioned feature of Egyptian life. Although from time to time, Muhammed Ali expressed opposition to slavery, he refused to curtail or abolish it on the familiar grounds that the practice was in conformity with Islam.’⁹¹ Large plantation slavery becomes common in Egypt. ‘The family of Muhammed Ali, whose rule during the better part of the first half of the nineteenth century did much to modernize Egypt, used hundreds of slaves on its sugar plantations in upper Egypt. Egyptian peasants found it practical to buy slaves to grow cotton. The sharp decline of cotton exports from the Southern states during the American Civil War triggered a boom in cotton production in lower Egypt, and, with it, the use of slaves. Reports by British consular agents in Egypt attested to the widespread practice during the 1860’s to employ black slave labor for agricultural and other outdoor work.’⁹²
- 1826 AD: The Ottoman Sultan finally conceives of a plan to rid himself of the Janissary corps. Mahmud II forms a new army, organized and trained along European lines. The Janissaries revolt and are crushed in what is now called the Auspicious Incident. The last Janissaries are decapitated in Thessaloniki.
- 1826 AD: ‘In March 1826, Ali Khurshid Agha was appointed Governor of the province of Sennar by the Egyptian authorities; in his ‘reign’, slave-trading became a seasonal and well-organized government activity. Using the thin pretext of military manoeuvres, his troops raided the Dinka, Ingassawa and Shilluk tribes and marched them off downriver.’⁹³

⁸⁷ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Muslim World*, p.

⁸⁸ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.55; there were different systems of farming, however, and some slaves were treated more mildly.

⁸⁹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.185

⁹⁰ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.189

⁹¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.175

⁹² Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.50

⁹³ I.B. Kake, *The Slave Trade and the Population Drain from Black Africa to North Africa and the Middle East*, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, CC-77/Conf.601/2, November 15, 1977, p.4

- 1840 AD: The sultan of Oman and Muscat, Seyyid Said, who has a strong naval presence in the Persian Gulf, moves his capital to Zanzibar to better watch over his African possessions and commerce, including the ‘well developed’ and lucrative Omani traffic in slaves.⁹⁴
- 1849 AD: The slave population of Zanzibar alone is estimated to be 100,000, mostly owned by Omani Arabs. By 1860, it is estimated to be 200,000, out of a total population of 300,000.⁹⁵
- 1850 AD: ‘Zanzibar was also a hub of the slave trade between Africa and Asia. In Stone Town, the oldest section of Zanzibar City, men, women, and children were squeezed into claustrophobic cells—two of which still exist—and left for days without food or water. Some were flayed at the whipping post to discover how much pain they could withstand, then priced according to their endurance and strength. By the mid-1800s, 50,000 slaves were passing through Zanzibar each year. Many were captives of Tippu Tib, a notorious Arab slave trader and ivory merchant. Tib led huge expeditions, some 4,000 strong, into the African interior, where chiefs sold him their villagers for next to nothing. These Tib used to caravan ivory back to Zanzibar, then sold them in the slave market for large profits. In time Tib became one of the wealthiest men in Zanzibar, the owner of multiple plantations and 10,000 slaves. Slavery persisted in Zanzibar until 1897, when it was finally abolished due in part to the urging of British missionary explorer David Livingstone.’⁹⁶
- ‘In the mid-nineteenth century, the Latvian-born, German-educated botanist, Georg Schweinfurth, passed on his way what he described as a small slave caravan carrying one hundred and fifty girls. Schweinfurth...noted that many slaves died on these long treks across the desert because their captors brought along insufficient food and water for the lengthy journey. White women were almost always in greater demand than Africans, and Arabs were prepared to pay much higher prices for Circassian and Georgian women from the Caucasus and from Circassian colonies in Asia Minor.’⁹⁷
- 1850’s – 1860’s AD: David Livingstone observes Muslim slavery in East Africa and writes: ‘To overdraw its evils is a simple impossibility ... We passed a slave woman shot or stabbed through the body and lying on the path. [Onlookers] said an Arab who passed early that morning had done it in anger at losing the price he had given for her, because she was unable to walk any longer. We passed a woman tied by the neck to a tree and dead ... We came upon a man dead from starvation ... The strangest disease I have seen in this country seems really to be broken heartedness, and it attacks free men who have been captured and made slaves.’ Livingstone estimated that 80,000 Africans died each year before ever reaching the slave markets of Zanzibar. Zanzibar was once East Africa’s main slave-trading port, and under Omani Arabs in the 19th century as many as 50,000 slaves were passing through the city each year.⁹⁸
- ‘English abolitionists such as Thomas Fowell Buxton organized groups like the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and for the Civilization of Africa to combat these practices by introducing the establishment of new settlements in Africa that encouraged agriculture so legitimate commerce might replace the necessity for trading in slaves. Inspired by a spirit of trusteeship, much of the missionary activity in nineteenth century Africa was aimed at ending slave-trading practices, and a major component of the new imperialism that inspired the ‘scramble for Africa’ in the 1880’s was the moral imperative to end the practice of slavery on the African continent.’⁹⁹
- 1870 AD: ‘Zobeir, a notorious slave trader, was appointed Governor of the province of Bahr-el-Ghazal and devastated both Darfur and Kordofan.’¹⁰⁰
- ‘In Africa the advanced slave systems established by the Arabs on the east coast, especially in Zanzibar and Kenya, relied entirely on organized kidnapping as the original means of enslavement and as the most important current means of enslavement during most of the nineteenth century.’¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.51

⁹⁵ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.52

⁹⁶ Robert Caputo and Christy Ullrich, ‘Swahili Coast: East Africa’s Ancient Crossroads’, *National Geographic*, October 1, 2001; http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2001/10/01/html/ft_20011001.6.html

⁹⁷ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.81

⁹⁸ Robert Caputo and Christy Ullrich, ‘Swahili Coast: East Africa’s Ancient Crossroads’, *National Geographic*, October 1, 2001; http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2001/10/01/html/ft_20011001.6.html

⁹⁹ Junius P. Rodriguez, *Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (ABC-CLIO), p.xxii

¹⁰⁰ I.B. Kake, *The Slave Trade and the Population Drain from Black Africa to North Africa and the Middle East*, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, CC-77/Conf.601/2, November 15, 1977, p.4

¹⁰¹ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p.117

- Meanwhile, household slavery, in contrast with plantation slavery, became comparatively mild, though opinions were mixed. The early nineteenth century Swiss traveler Burkhardt said, ‘Slavery had little dreadful in it but the name.’ Henry Dunand, the founder of the Red Cross, ‘commented favorably on the mildness of urban slavery in’ Tunisia, although another observer in Tunisia thought male slaves ‘led a harsh existence. Cases of manumission were few, and there was little hope for slaves to gain their freedom.’¹⁰² In Egyptian courts, masters were frequently trying to reclaim runaway slaves. ‘During certain periods, the number of runaway slaves ran high. This is all the more striking in view of the relatively easy lives that many slaves were able to lead...Where the opportunity to run away presented itself, many slaves used it and made off.

20th Century

- 1915 AD: The ruler of Darfur accused the Muslim Kababish tribe of selling free Muslims – refugees from the French in Wadai – as slaves.¹⁰³
- ‘Africa continued to supply slaves for the Arab world well into the twentieth century, when French and British colonial policy intervened to try to ban slavery, often with little practical result. Domestic slavery had by then become an entrenched social institution, as the Baba of Karo, a Hausa woman of northern Nigeria, describes in her memoirs. It enabled indigenous communities to differentiate themselves between slave and free. In that differentiation slaves had no honor and were valued simply as chattel.’¹⁰⁴

The Abolition of Slavery in Muslim or Muslim-Influenced Countries

- Tunis (1846, 1875): In the 1830’s, British Foreign Secretary Henry Palmerston, a committed abolitionist, along with Thomas Fowell Buxton (spiritual heir of Wilberforce) and the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (formed 1839) brought the trans-Saharan slave trade to the public attention. Tunis was nominally part of the declining Ottoman Empire. But the Bey of Tunis depended on the British to fend off French colonial ambitions and Turkish claims over the regency (only a short time before, the Ottoman sultan sent a military force to occupy Tripoli and remove the pasha; rumor had it he would do the same in Tunis). The British consul in Tunis, Sir Thomas Reade, said to the Tunisian Bey that nothing would be more ‘gratifying not only to the British government itself, but to the British nation generally’ than the abolition of the slave trade and slavery. In April 1842 he outlawed the importation of new slaves into Tunis. In January 1846, he issued a decree freeing all slaves in the country and declared slavery illegal. Underground slave trafficking and slavery continued, however, until the Anglo-Tunisian Treaty of 1875 was signed, once again outlawing slavery. In 1887, the Bey freed the women slaves in his *harim*. In 1890, France, which by then had taken possession of Tunis as a protectorate, obliged the Bey to decree penalties for anyone having bought, sold, or held a slave.¹⁰⁵
- Zanzibar, part of Tanzania (1847 – 1856): Zanzibar had become the largest slave market in the East and the chief point of the African-Asiatic slave trade. In 1845, the British government and Seyyid Said Ibn Sultan, the ruler of Zanzibar, signed a treaty in which the Seyyid reluctantly agreed not to permit the sale of slaves from his African dominions to Arabia and the Persian Gulf, starting January 1, 1847. He also allowed British naval ships to patrol the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea to enforce the treaty. But he won a provision to prevent British ships to search vessels belonging to his family coming from the Arabian Sea or Red Sea. He ‘wanted to ensure a continuous supply of Abyssinian girl slaves and eunuchs for the slave markets of Zanzibar and the other Arab towns on the coast.’¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the British did not allocate enough patrol boats to run down the slave-running dhows. But the Seyyid’s death in 1856 and the dependence of his successor Majid upon the British gave the British the opportunity to cleanse the slave trade from Zanzibar.¹⁰⁷
- Turkey (1854): When the British signed the treaty with the Seyyid of Zanzibar, effective 1847, it became clear that Turkey and Persia needed to cooperate by issuing firmans (decrees) forbidding their ports from importing slaves. If there was demand from these ports, there would be supply. The Turkish sultan did not

¹⁰² Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.61

¹⁰³ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.30 – 31

¹⁰⁴ Lamin Sanneh, *Abolitionists Abroad*, p.2

¹⁰⁵ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.161 – 165

¹⁰⁶ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.197 – 199

¹⁰⁷ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.182 – 207

want to anger the British and issued the firman. This was the first gesture of a major Muslim leader of his stature to ban the slave trade.¹⁰⁸

- Egypt and Sudan (1877, 1899): The Wali (governor) and then Khedive (viceroy) of Egypt from 1863 – 1879, Ismael Pasha, seeks to abolish slavery as part of his modernization plan of Egypt and Sudan. Ismael had received a European education in Paris, and brought about a series of reforms which put the country in very heavy debt. Ismael appointed British officers and administrators Samuel Baker and then Charles Gordon to suppress the slave trade through military and bureaucratic means. In 1877, the British and the Egyptians sign an agreement at the Convention for the Suppression of the Slave Trade. ‘Slave dealers were to be severely punished and their slaves set free. British vessels in the Red Sea were empowered to stop ships and set free any slaves on board. Any person depriving a freed slave of his freedom or taking from him his certificate of manumission would be punished as a slave dealer.’¹⁰⁹ Egyptian rule in Sudan was opposed by a Sudanese uprising led by Muhammed Ahmed, who proclaimed himself the Mahdi, the promised leader of the Islamic world. Interestingly, ‘the great strength of the Mahdi was fed by a fierce hatred by the people for the brutal and corrupt Egyptian rule and their fanatical opposition to British-led efforts to destroy the slave trade.’¹¹⁰ The British army invaded Sudan in 1898, overpowered the Mahdi and his forces, and immediately prohibited in 1899 the import and export of slaves; domestic slavery was to be phased out. In 1906, ‘Arab opposition to the slavery ordinances assumed near insurrectionary proportions in southern Kordofan after authorities set about the free and return to their homes one hundred twenty women and children who were held as slaves. However, the traffic in slaves disappeared; and slavery itself gradually withered away, although it took some years before its final demise.’¹¹¹
- Morocco (1912): In the mid-1800’s, Morocco was an important importer, but not an exporter, of slaves. In the 1880’s, lurid reports of the Moroccan slave trade involving the sale of very young children circulated in Europe. However, the British were initially unsuccessful in abolishing the slave trade. Britain was invested in Morocco’s strategic geographic position at the mouth of the Mediterranean and its independence from other European powers, especially France. The sultan’s strong political position prevented Palmerston from making anything more than a very mild appeal to consider abolition. The sultan replied, ‘It would endanger us with our subjects, for it touches, not on customs alone, but also religion. This Empire is not as other countries, which are civilized and whose inhabitants dwell in cities; they...are mostly Bedouins and Nomads, and do not always occupy the same place...but change with every wind. They cannot be bound by anything; and it is very difficult for them to forsake their customs – much more so to forsake what concerns their religion. They do not obey what is ordered them – they obey in words, but not in deeds. If their obedience in acts is required, troops and an army must be sent to them, until they obey though with repugnance, and then when the troops are withdrawn they revert to their customs. The French occupation of Morocco in 1912 eventually brought an end to slave traffic and slavery.’¹¹²
- Afghanistan (1923)
- Iraq (1924)
- Muslim World Conference (1926)
- Iran (1929)
- United Nations (December 10, 1948): General Assembly of the United Nations adopts Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 4 states: ‘No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.’
- Saudi Arabia (1962): King Faisal, despite being a student of Muwahiddun (Wahhabism), officially abolished slavery and introduced television and tried to modernize the country. Despite having officially abolished slavery, Saudi Arabia is consistently listed by the U.S. State Department as a ‘Tier 3’ country, in the worst category for human trafficking. Slavery is supported by the highly conservative form of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia. Repeated calls for re-legalization of slavery go out.¹¹³ The U.S State

¹⁰⁸ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.167

¹⁰⁹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.179

¹¹⁰ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.180 – 181

¹¹¹ Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.182

¹¹² Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World*, p.163 – 165

¹¹³ For example, according to the independent news source Saudi Information Agency (SIA), Sheikh Saleh Al-Fawzan, a member of the Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawa (Saudi Arabia’s highest religious body), a member of the Council of Religious Edicts and Research, Imam of Prince Mitaeb Mosque in al-Malzar in Riyadh, member of the Council of Senior

Department notes, ‘Saudi Arabia is a destination country for men and women subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically forced labor. Men and women from Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and many other countries voluntarily travel to Saudi Arabia as domestic servants or other low-skilled laborers, but some subsequently face conditions indicative of involuntary servitude, including restrictions on movement and communication, the withholding of passports and other travel documents, threats, physical or sexual abuse, and non-payment of wages. In some cases, arriving migrant workers have found the terms of employment in Saudi Arabia are wholly different from those they agreed to in their home countries. The Indian government no longer permits its female nationals under age 40 to take jobs as domestic workers in Saudi homes due to the high incidence of physical abuse by employers. Women, primarily from Asian and African countries, were believed to have been forced into prostitution in Saudi Arabia; others were reportedly kidnapped and forced into prostitution after running away from abusive employers. Yemeni, Nigerian, Pakistani, Afghan, Chadian, and Sudanese children were subjected to forced labor as beggars and street vendors in Saudi Arabia, facilitated by criminal gangs. Unconfirmed reports indicated fewer Yemeni children may have been forced to work in Saudi Arabia during the reporting period. A 2009 doctoral study submitted to Naif Arab University for Security Sciences concluded Jeddah may be a hub for an international child trafficking network exploiting the Hajj and Umrah visas (visas for religious pilgrimages to Mecca). Some Saudi nationals travel to destinations including Morocco, Egypt, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh to solicit prostitution. Some Saudi men used legally contracted “temporary marriages” in countries such as Mauritania, Yemen, and Indonesia as a means by which to sexually exploit migrant workers. The Government of Saudi Arabia does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so.’¹¹⁴

- Yemen (1962): Yemen abolished slavery at the same time as Saudi Arabia. However, the African-descended Al-Akhdam people form a hereditary low caste living in slums on the outskirts of major cities. They number perhaps 1 million out of the total population of 22 million in Yemen.
- Oman (1970):
- Mauritania (1981): Mauritania is one of two Islamic Republics in Africa, the other being Sudan. According to Amnesty International, Mauritania is the last country to still have chattel slavery,¹¹⁵ although John Eibner, historian and human rights specialist, wrote in the *Middle East Quarterly* that Sudan also has chattel slavery (see below). The French abolished slavery during its occupation of the country in 1905, the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights was incorporated into Mauritania’s Constitution in 1961, and President Haidalla nominally abolished ‘slavery in all its forms’ in 1981. Nevertheless, ethnic division and social stratification contribute to the persistence of slavery, and the government has shown no efforts to abolish it. Studies by the Anti-Slavery Society (1982) and Africa Watch (1990) call attention to at least 100,000 ‘full-time’ slaves and an additional 300,000 half-slaves, all of them black, being held by Arab-Mauritanians. Even President Mokhtar Ould Daddah kept slaves behind the presidential palace from 1960 to 1978. The older Arab practice of forming slave armies was implemented in Mauritania in 1989, when the government used Haratine militia to arrest, torture, and kill black Mauritanians. President Taya in 1997 silenced criticism of slavery and public debate on the topic. Newspapers require the authorization of the Ministry of the Interior and there is no independent broadcast media. This is a contradiction of Islamic principles that every Muslim is equal before God and that Muslims should not forcibly enslave other Muslims.
- Niger (2004): Over 90% of the population of Niger is Muslim. A recent Nigerian study has found that more than 800,000 people are still enslaved, almost 8% of the population.¹¹⁶
- Sudan: One of two Islamic Republics in Africa, the other being Mauritania. Black Africans have been abducted for centuries by Arab slave traders, and the British officially abolished slavery when they occupied Sudan, but since the 1980’s (civil war broke out in 1983 pitting the Muslim north against

Scholars, and member of the Fiqh Committee in Makkah, a member of the Committee for Supervision of the Callers in Hajj, and author of the country’s religious curriculum, says in his textbook (*Al-Tawhid*, or ‘Monotheism’) and lectures, ‘Slavery is a part of Islam...Slavery is part of jihad, and jihad will remain as long there is Islam.’ His religious books are used to teach five million Saudi students, both within the country and abroad, including the United States.

¹¹⁴ U.S. Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, *2010 Trafficking in Persons Report*, V. Country Narratives – Countries N Through S. Found at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/143188.pdf>

¹¹⁵ <http://asiapacific.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR380032002?open&of=ENG-MRT%20Slavery%20in%20Mauritania>

¹¹⁶ ‘The Shackles of Slavery in Niger,’ ABC News, June 3, 2005. See also ‘Born to be a slave in Niger,’ BBC News, February 11, 2005.

Christian and animist tribes in the south), government militias and pro-government groups raiding non-Muslim villages (primarily Dinka) have been looting goods and enslaving people. In 1989, a military coup called the National Islamic Front led by Colonel Omar al-Bashir made him President of Sudan; they arm Baggara tribesmen to fight and enslave the Dinka and Nuer tribes in the south. Representatives of the Republic of Sudan officially deny that slavery exists in Sudan, and claims that accusations of slavery are attempts to cast Muslims and Arabs in a bad light. However, estimates range from 7,000 (by Save the Children) to 11,000 (Rift Valley Institute's Sudan Abductee Database¹¹⁷) to 200,000 (by Christian Solidarity International). SudanActivism.com claims that 'hundreds of thousands' have been abducted into slavery, forced to flee, or are otherwise unaccounted for. One of the reasons for the variation is the question of fraudulent 'staged' redemptions. John Eibner, historian and human rights specialist, says, 'Sudan is the only place where chattel slavery is not just surviving but experiencing a great revival. This renaissance of the slave trade began in the mid-1980s and resulted directly from an upsurge of Islamism in Sudan at that time, and especially from the Islamist emphasis on the renewal of jihad. After gaining the upper-hand in Khartoum by about 1983, the Islamists' immediate goal was to transform the multi-ethnic, multi-religious population of Sudan into an Arab-dominated Muslim state, and to do so through jihad. Under Turabi's powerful influence, the ruler of the time, Ja'far an-Numayri, declared himself to be (sounding like a caliph of old), the 'rightly guided' leader of an Islamic state.'¹¹⁸

- Pakistan: In 1992, the Pakistan National Assembly enacted the Bonded Labor Act, in which indentured servitude and the peshgi (bonded money) system are abolished. Unfortunately, the government failed to provide money for the implementation and enforcement of the law's provisions. In 2003, Pakistan assured the United Nations that 'all bonded labor will stop' but it clearly has not. Bonded labor in South Asia is considered the biggest sore spot where modern slavery affects the most people. In Pakistan, feudal landlords and local tribal leaders keep peasants in bondage to debt and utilize private prisons. In 2006, Mohammed Aslam Rana, president of the Pakistan chapter of Peace and Human Rights International, stated that two million peasants are being held in the private jails of influential feudal lords. He was speaking at a press conference and quoting from a newspaper.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ 'Thousands of slaves in Sudan,' BBC News, May 5, 2003. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2942964.stm>.

¹¹⁸ John Eibner, 'My Career Redeeming Slaves,' *Middle East Quarterly*, December 1999, p.3 – 16; see <http://www.meforum.org/449/my-career-redeeming-slaves>.

¹¹⁹ 'Hyderabad: Two Million Bonded Labor in Sindh', *Dawn*, February 1, 2006. See <http://www.dawn.com/2006/02/01/local25.htm>. See also Owais Tohid, 'In Pakistan, 'slavery' persists,' *Christian Science Monitor*, December 15, 2003; see <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/1215/p08s01-wosc.html>. See also Sarah Stuteville, 'Twenty First Century Slavery: Pakistan's Brutal Bonded Labor System Lingers On,' *Common Language Project*, June 9, 2006; see http://clpmag.org/article.php?article=Twenty-First-Century-Slavery_146.