

Plantation slavery in the middle east

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



Plantation Slavery in Indian Ocean When topics such as African history and slavery are brought to mind, many American's have a predetermined belief or idea on the subject. Such ideas may include that there is not much of African history until European presence, that African's did not do anything of significance until the arrival of Europeans. Then, there are some beliefs that slavery was only a matter of American history. Both ideas are incorrect, in that there is plenty of evidence that points towards significant achievements in Africa before the arrival of Europeans and that slavery was a major part of Indian Ocean history.

Slavery had existed in the Indian Ocean world far before Europeans captured and enforced slaves to work in agriculture plantations in America. In fact, many countries in the Indian Ocean world used slaves for manual labor. Although the manual labor is similar to that of plantations in America there are great differences between the two. Manual labor may be the sole reason for wealth and prosperity of the countries in the Indian Ocean world. Some countries in the Indian Ocean world that were under development became prosperous and powerful due to the cruel and harsh labor of slaves.

Slavery around the world dates back before the eighteenth century but slavery in the Indian Ocean world begins around the eighteenth century. According to Eduardo Medeiros in his article "Contribution of the Mozambican Diaspora in the Development of Cultural Identities on the Indian Ocean Islands" he states that, "Starting about 1720, thousands of Africans were kidnapped from their original social groups and transported to the more important islands of the Indian Ocean" (pg. 5). These slaves were transported by ships, in which they were typically stuffed into the ship with

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nothing to sleep on but the cold wood beneath their feet. Such treatment was bound to cause slaves to rebel or fight as Medeiros states, “‘Rebellion was a constant danger to the slaver’ at sea, and a permanent peril in the fields at their destination” (pg. 58). One such rebellion was legendary in the region of the Indian Ocean was that of a man named Bororo.

Bororo’s enslaved ship was set to sail from Mozambique to Mauritius carrying 237 slaves. Bororo signaled for the uprising to begin, in which Bororo attempted to attack the pilot of the ship, Captain Le Bel, while the other slaves grabbed whatever was nearby as a weapon and commenced to destroy the ship. Le Bel freed himself of Bororo’s attacks, fled to his quarters, grabbed his sword and was able to contain the riot shortly. And “ Soon after, 23, of the most energetic men had been put in chains and the rest tied with ropes.

He then, wanted to know who had been the leader of the uprising and Bororo volunteered to admit theresponsibility” (pg. 58). The Captain soon realized the size of his crew was outnumbered by the slaves and as such he commanded for Bororo who “ was tied to the foremast’s top and was shot in the presence of the remaining slaves. His body was thrown to the sea” (pg. 59). Transportation of slaves was so sever and harsh that rebellion, although slim in success, was worth more than enslavement.

Other times rebellious acts such assuicidewere acts of religious beliefs. Africans from Malagasy “ believed that at death, when the soul departed, the body would return not to God, but to the place of birth where a new existence would begin under another form” (Medeiros pg. 73). Such a belief

was so strongly felt among these people that it would persuade them to commit suicide by jumping into the sea. Slaves were transported to islands such as Reunion, Seychelles, Macarenes, and Chagos. Their labor work was needed for agriculture plantations. According to Alpers, the commencement of plantations of indigo and coffee – soon after to be replaced by sugar cane in the Masacarenhas islands – date coconut, and clove in Zanzibar and Pemba islands, grain in the Kenya coast, date in the Persian Gulf, as well as building of ports and urban development in Arabia, underwater harvest of oysters for pearls in the Red sea and Persian Gulf, cultivation of grain in Madagascar and Somalia's Littoral, and the political expansion and consolidation in Yemen and Oman contributed greatly to the demand of a large quantity of African labor force in the 18th and 19th centuries" (Medeiros pg. 6). Without such a " large quantity of African labor force" as Medeiros says, prosperity among such islands would not have reached such potentials. Such demands for large quantities of labor force reached numbers as Gwyn Campbell author of " The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia says numbers climbed, " from 33, 031 in 1765 to more than 93, 000 by the late 1790s," (Campbell pg 34). But such intense labor and transportation of slavery was bound to create multiple kinds of rebellion amongst slaves. In conclusion, slavery in the Indian Ocean world was one that contained brutal, severe, and sometimes deadly conditions.

Beginning with their means of transportation, slaves were treated as monsters as such given the icy ground to sleep on during transportation. Such conditions would cause anyone to desire escape. Flight was not only numerous during the slave trade in the Indian Ocean world but it had many

classes or levels of complexity. Whether it be simple rebellion from no longer wanting to work in the fields of plantation or whether it is an attempt to form a small community in which runaways could survive in, flight allowed for slaves to interrupt the systematic nature of the slave trade structure.

Interruption such as these would also cost the region loss in financial stability. Such interruption would also eventually lead to the demise and extinction of the slave trade in the Indian Ocean world although it took more than rebellious acts such as flight. Although many attempts were set to extinguish the fire of slavery, slavery would officially end in the Indian Ocean world by the end of the 19th century. Such attempts were disproved by simply disregarding treaties, or discovering different alternatives in the treaties.

Many regions would effortlessly change the title of slave to “contract labor” in an attempt to overcome the system. Nevertheless, slavery in the Indian Ocean world came to an official conclusion in the end of the 19th century. With the end of slavery there was a large shortage in the need for manual agricultural plantation labor. With such a shortage the Indian Ocean world lacked an edge in the economic race to achieve success this was due partly because of former slaves no longer compliant to the diminutive amount of compensation as they began consider other occupations.

Yet after slavery was officially abolished in the Indian Ocean world, there were still discriminatory and inequality issues that needed to be faced head on. After years of violence, equality is still an issue that has yet to have been reached in many regions of the Indian Ocean world. Sources: Alpers, Edward

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