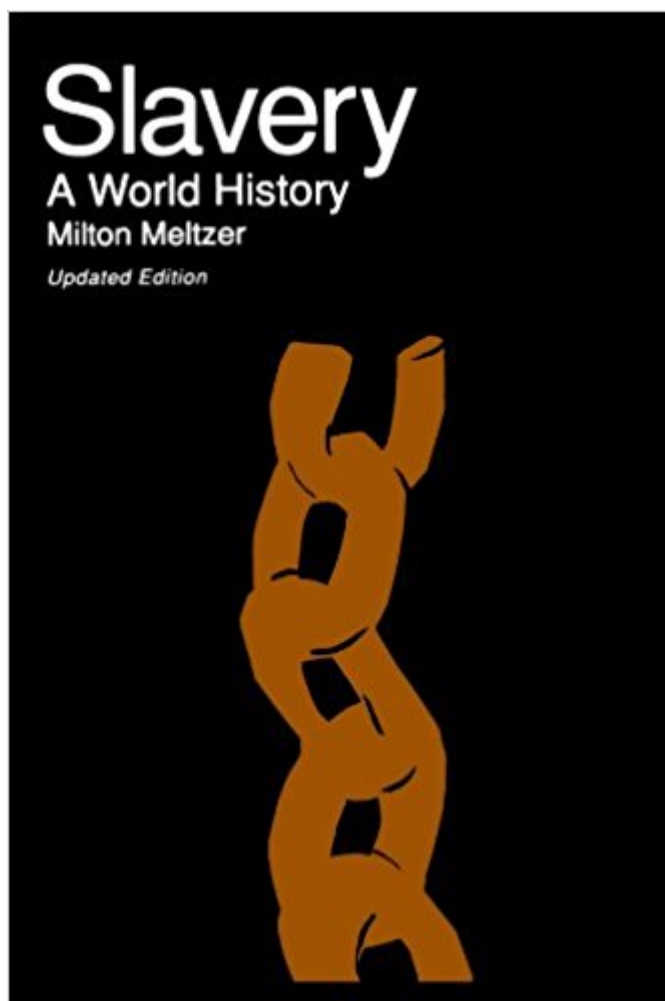


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Slavery: A World History



Synopsis

Slavery is not and has never been a "peculiar institution," but one that is deeply rooted in the history and economy of most countries. Although it has flourished in some periods and declined in others, human bondage for profit has never been eradicated completely. In *Slavery: A World History* renowned author Milton Meltzer traces slavery from its origins in prehistoric hunting societies; through the boom in slave trading that reached its peak in the United States with a pre-Civil War slave population of 4,000,000; through the forced labor under the Nazi regime and in the Soviet gulags; and finally to its widespread practice in many countries today, such as the debt bondage that miners endure in Brazil or the prostitution into which women are sold in Thailand. In this detailed, compassionate account, readers will learn how slavery arose, what forms it takes, what roles slaves have performed in their societies, what everyday existence is like for those enchained, and what can be done to end the degrading practice of slavery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Though subtitled "A World History," this work pretty much confines itself to the ancient Near East, Greece, Rome, and the West. However, it does deal with Nazi and Soviet slavery and contemporary slavery in such places as Brazil and Thailand. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Milton Meltzer, a distinguished historian and biographer, is the author of more than eighty books. Among his many honors are five nominations for the National Book Award. He collaborated with Langston Hughes on *Black Magic* (also available from Da Capo Press/Perseus Book Group) and *A*

Pictorial History of Black Americans.

I'm almost a hundred pages in and am loving this book. After listening to many Roman history podcasts I became intrigued on the involvement of slavery in economies throughout history. I'm finding the book to be very very enlightening, but will have to look elsewhere to find out what flavors of slavery took place in Asia and other parts. It seems fairly Eurocentric, but it's a great start.

Excellent. Thank you.

Fascinating book! You realize that most people's view of slavery is so short sighted and inaccurate - only thinking about the African American slavery in the American South. I was shocked to learn of the diverse practices of slavery around the world and throughout history. The author writes in a clear and concise way, guiding the reader through the centuries and what daily life was like. In light of our country's current debates about removing public statues of Southerners who had anything to do with slavery, this book helps you understand what a different mindset existed about slavery in the past. The book makes it clear that for most of civilization hardly anyone ever even questioned whether or not slavery was okay. That's just the way the world worked. We must be careful not to judge those who came before us by the standards of today.

Not a "world history" since it leaves out the most extensive slave trade of the Arab Muslims in Africa - the east coast slave trade Gives an informative overview history of slavery in ancient and medieval societies which we don't hear much about. However, except for a few politically correct statements the book leaves out the huge topic of the Arab Muslim slave trade in Europe (the Muslim Barbary pirates) and especially Africa, which was very extensive and brutal - might read Humphrey J. Fisher for this, or do a web search. Surprising dishonesty in the title.

A great book, scholarly but easy to read. Originally published in two volumes, the first half deals with slavery from ancient times to the Renaissance, the second half concentrates on the African slave trade, and also covers some of the modern uses of forced labor, gulags and other types of near-slavery. I particularly appreciated reading about slavery in earliest history, a topic that is rarely covered. The comprehensive nature of this book keeps slavery in perspective, but doesn't shy away from the worst abuses when people are classed as property.

Meltzer provides a readable overview of the role of slavery in human history. Any book that takes on a broad topic such as this is bound to come up short in some ways, but overall he does a creditable job of explaining slavery in various societies for the beginner. Too often Americans tend to particularize their history and fail to see the "big picture". Coming to understand the flow of the slave trade (where most slaves were shipped to the Islands and Brazil), how the British ended slavery, that slavery existed in South America for years after the United States Civil War and continued in the Arab countries helps put a different slant on the issue. Europeans, who are sometimes all too ready to judge the American experience, should consider Belgium's role in Africa. King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa.

Very well written and researched. I only wish it had covered Asia, India, and Islam in as great of detail as it did Haiti. A must read for history lovers!

Very accessible. Covers all that we don't learn in school. Helps us understand modern slavery through examination of the past.

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