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978-0-521-84068-2 - The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Volume 3: AD 1420-AD 1804

Edited by David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman

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THE CAMBRIDGE WORLD HISTORY OF SLAVERY

Volume 3: AD 1420-AD 1804

Most societies in the past have had slaves, and almost all peoples have at some time in their pasts been both slaves and owners of slaves. Recent decades have seen a significant increase in our understanding of the historical role played by slavery and wide interest across a range of academic disciplines in the evolution of the institution. Exciting and innovative research methodologies have been developed, and numerous fruitful debates generated. Further, the study of slavery has come to provide strong connections between academic research and the wider public interest at a time when such links have in general been weak. *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* responds to these trends by providing for the first time, in four volumes, a comprehensive global history of this widespread phenomenon from the ancient world to the present day.

Volume 3 of *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* is a collection of essays exploring the various manifestations of coerced labor in Africa, Asia, and the Americas between the opening up of the Atlantic world and the formal creation of the new nation of Haiti. The authors, well-known authorities in their respective fields, place slavery in the foreground of the collection but also examine other types of coerced labor. Essays are organized both nationally and thematically and cover the major empires, coerced migration, slave resistance, gender, demography, law, and the economic significance of coerced labor. Nonscholars will also find this volume accessible.

David Eltis is Robert W. Woodruff Professor of History at Emory University and research associate of the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University. He has also held visiting appointments at Harvard, Yale, and Oxford universities. Eltis received his PhD from the University of Rochester in 1979. He is author of *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, co-author (with David Richardson) of *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, and co-compiler of *Slave Voyages* at www.slavevoyages.org. He co-edited and contributed to *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (with David Richardson) and *Slavery in the Development of the Americas* (with Frank D. Lewis and Kenneth L. Sokoloff) and edited *Coerced and Free Migrations: Global Perspectives*.

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VOLUME 3
AD 1420–AD 1804

Edited by

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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

This is the third volume of *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, exploring the various manifestations of coerced labor in Africa, Asia, and the Americas between the opening up of the Atlantic world and the formal creation of the new nation of Haiti. Slavery has been among the most ubiquitous of all human institutions, across time and place, from earliest history until, some would argue, the present day. Yet its durability and ubiquity are not widely recognised and, where they are, they seem poorly understood by the general public and scholars alike. A central aim of these volumes, which cover many different times and places, is to help to place the existence and nature of slavery against the backdrop of the broader human social condition.

Slavery has appeared in many different forms and is not always easy to separate from other forms of coerced labor. Nevertheless, there are basic similarities that emerge from the contributions that follow. Most critical of these is the ownership of one human by another, and the ability to buy and sell the human chattel such ownership creates. A second common characteristic is the fact that chattel status is a heritable condition passed down through the mother. Such characteristics are not to be found in the more general category of 'coerced labor', as normally practiced. The latter typically involves a general loss of citizenship rights, but not necessarily ownership of one person by another and inherited status. Some scholars regard slavery as part of a spectrum of coerced labor and dependency, but the institution has maintained a distinctive legal existence in almost all societies.