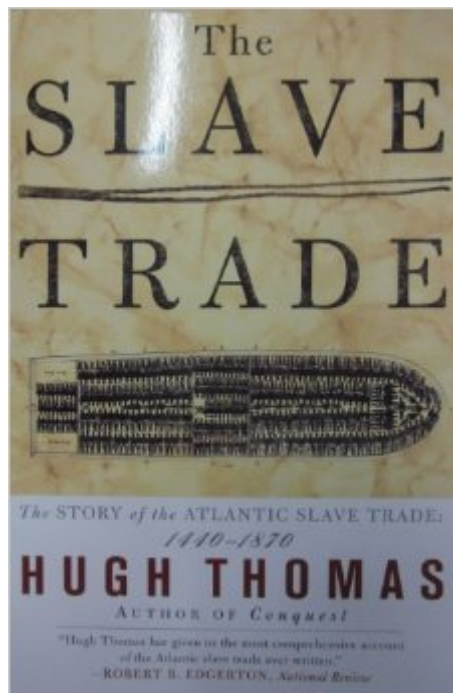


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The SLAVE TRADE: THE STORY OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE: 1440 - 1870



Synopsis

After many years of research, award-winning historian Hugh Thomas portrays, in a balanced account, the complete history of the slave trade. Beginning with the first Portuguese slaving expeditions, he describes and analyzes the rise of one of the largest and most elaborate maritime and commercial ventures in all of history. Between 1492 and 1870, approximately eleven million black slaves were carried from Africa to the Americas to work on plantations, in mines, or as servants in houses. The Slave Trade is alive with villains and heroes and illuminated by eyewitness accounts. Hugh Thomas's achievement is not only to present a compelling history of the time but to answer as well such controversial questions as who the traders were, the extent of the profits, and why so many African rulers and peoples willingly collaborated. Thomas also movingly describes such accounts as are available from the slaves themselves.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

THE SLAVE TRADE: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870 is, perhaps, the single most-important work dealing with the slave trade. This masterful work builds on and partially overlaps John Thornton's AFRICA AND AFRICANS IN THE MAKING OF THE ATLANTIC WORLD, 1400-1800 and Edward William Bovill's THE GOLDEN TRADE OF THE MOORS. It also provides an essential bridge between those works and Ira Berlin's MANY THOUSANDS GONE: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America & MAROON SOCIETIES: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas (edited by Richard Price). Starting with the first major shipload of African (white, café au lait and black) slaves taken in a razzia by Portuguese in 1444, Thomas briefly looks backward at

the history of slavery among Christians, non-African Muslims and Africans - pagan, Christian and Muslim. He recounts the origins of the Atlantic slave trade - including the long-existing North African-Spanish conflict with mutual slave raids and the beginning of the coastal trade in West Africa associated with Prince Henry's desire for exploration, conquest, profit and religious zeal and the equal desire for conquest and / or profit of almost all African rulers and aristocrats, as well as of numerous merchants (especially Muslim and Mandingo), already familiar with the Trans-Saharan trade. Thomas recounts the early settlements in the Azores and Madeira and Cape Verde Islands, as well as the lengthy effort to conquer the Canary Islanders, including the guanches of Tenerife, and the explorations of Cadamosto.

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