Article

Migrants in Chains: On the Enslavement of Muslims in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe

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Abstract: Between the Renaissance and the French Revolution, hundreds of thousands of Muslim men and women from the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean were forcibly transported to Western Europe. Those who were not ransomed or who did not return to their homelands as part of prisoner exchanges, languished for decades and, many, for the remainder of their lives, in chattel slavery. This essay considers the enslavement process overall and the conceptual frameworks necessary to bring this poorly known chapter in European social history into focus. Emphasizing the case of the Muslim galley slaves of the Catholic ports of France, Italy and Malta, it argues that without appreciating this phenomenon as a form of migration, as well as part of a larger history of global slavery, it not possible to understand the specificity of confessionalized enslavement within the early modern Mediterranean.

Keywords: slavery; migration; Enlightenment Europe

1. Introduction

It was one of the curious incidents of her Grand Tour of Italy in 1770. Strolling along the quay of Genoa on St. Martin's Day, the English lady and her companions heard men from a docked ship calling out. Introducing themselves as "poor Christians who have entirely abandoned Mahomet," they invited the tourists to come aboard to listen to them play music. Their performance, she wrote a friend afterward, "was by no means bad." But the men's appearance elicited a mixture of horror and compassion. Their "poor legs, which were naked, almost black, and, of some, the flesh had partly grown over their fetters." Muslim slaves, chained to the oars, begged the lady and her friends for

money and to "listen to the details of their calamitous situation." These hapless souls, she learned, were but a few of the 350 Muslim "prisoners" in the city. Most of the men were condemned to a life of toil as galley slaves. Muslim girls and women were given to wealthy matrons for work in the "most menial department of their household." ([1], vol. 1, pp. 308–09).

Passing comments in an epistolary exchange between an anonymous English traveler and a friend open a small window on a large, unacknowledged story. It is the history of hundreds of thousands of Muslim men and women who spent much of their adult lives in bondage in early modern Catholic Europe. ([2], pp. 34–35) Of course, the enslavement of Muslims was only part of a larger, forced exchange of persons who experienced captivity, were either ransomed or subjected to life-long servitude across the Muslim-Christian divide in the Mediterranean during these centuries. Numerous publications, popular, fictive and scholarly, recount the horrors of the "white" slavery of Christians in Muslim lands [3–5]. Yet, there has been decidedly less interest in hearing the stories of the Muslim victims. In fact, for more than a century there was little historical research on the subject ([2], pp. 1–13; [6]). When this past remains largely unknown even to historians and social scientists of European inter-religious relations and migration ([7], p. 13) (Compare [4,6]) it should not surprise us that there is no public awareness that the number of Africans, Mediterranean and Eastern European Muslims, Jews, and Orthodox Christians who languished in bondage in Western Europe greatly outnumbered the Catholics and Protestants enslaved in the contemporary Muslim world.

Archival research by historians on Muslim servitude in early modern Europe has begun to recover this past [2,8–15]. This essay does not pretend to add substantially new documentation to the reconstruction project. Rather, it seeks to reconsider scholarly approaches to the subject. To date, historians have treated the stories of Muslim men and women in Western Europe (as well as Protestants and Catholics held in North African and Ottoman captivity) almost exclusively from the perspectives of the historiography of slavery. Yet the Muslims of Enlightenment Genoa, whom our English traveler encountered, were both enslaved persons and forced migrants. As slaves, they suffered, in the formulation of Orlando Patterson, a form of "social death": a profound and brutal process of estrangement intended to deracinate them from home, kin, status and property [9]. However, the enslaved should also be regarded as part of a distinct flow of migrants [16]. This forced transfer of individuals from the Muslim shores of the Mediterranean accelerated just as the last indigenous Muslim communities were expelled from Portugal and Spain. Numbering in the hundreds of thousands over the centuries, Muslim men and women, some from as far east as Iran and as far west as Morocco, were, by virtue of circumstance and confession, forcibly resettled in kingdoms and city-states in the Catholic Mediterranean, from Spain to France, Italy and Malta. Segregated from the larger society on the basis of their faith, Muslim galley slaves forged their own communities with religious leadership, houses of worship, common languages of work and principles of solidarity. Approaching these isolated groups from the perspective of migration as well as from a history of global enslavement, will contribute to a better understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of confessionalized captivity in the early modern world. It will also serve to remind us of the continuity of Muslim settlements in Europe, east and west, from the medieval period to the present.

2. The Global Crusade and Human Captivity

Human migration bridged the inner sea between the regions now known as "Europe," the "Middle East" and "North Africa". It was both the consequence and expression of the high degree of mobility between shores, the shifting political boundaries of empires and the intensity of cross-cultural exchange. Before the modern period, few moral qualms impeded the trade in human beings. All three monotheistic religions condoned human slavery; all post-Roman polities sought to regulate it to suit cultural, economic and political ends. The strong elements of continuity in the history of enslavement within the Mediterranean basin (and the Black Sea region) notwithstanding, at the end of the medieval period important geopolitical ruptures changed the institution, the direction of population flows and the ethno-religious and gender composition of persons ensnared in its nets.

For much of what S. N. Goitein called the "Middle, Middle Ages" (roughly 800–1250 C.E.) Islamic powers dominated the commerce of the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean and with it, the traffic in domestic, agricultural and military slaves ([17], pp. 237–80). Although the transport of enslaved persons across the Sahara and from East African (as well as from the Caucasus and Central Asia) remained in the control of Muslim polities and merchants well into the nineteenth century, the medieval crusades against Islam redirected the Mediterranean slave trade and changed the confession of its victims. Latin Christendom's territorial conquests in Syria, Anatolia and North Africa proved largely ephemeral. But command of the inner sea coupled with an expanding trade network furnished the merchant marines of cities like Genoa with special advantages over Muslim and Jewish merchants and especially in the traffic in human beings.

The late medieval Mediterranean trade in human beings was skewed by gender. Most captives sold in Genoa's auctions were women and children, products of the mass enslavement of Muslim communities in Iberia and Sicily as well as from raids across the Mediterranean, including in the Maghreb [18–21]. The shifting frontier in Spain, which favored Christian colonization by land, also afforded opportunities for Jewish entrepreneurs to navigate between sides, selling Muslim slaves to Christians ([22], p. 65). At its height, Genoese domination of the Mediterranean traffic in slaves rested on the strategic placement of its entrepôts, including one in the northern Black Sea (Tana) and another in the Aegean on the island of Chios. The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, which carried out their holy piracy from the island of Rhodes, supplied captives while the Byzantine state and its vassals, as well as smaller Turkic-Muslim states, secured the access points between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean [23].

Given this division of labor, the consolidation of a multi-continental Muslim empire over the next two centuries radically transformed the geopolitical coordinates of commerce overall and with it, the control over the slave trade. As Ottoman armies pushed westward, in fact on the eve of their conquest of Constantinople which would effectively turn the Black Sea into an "Ottoman lake" for the next three centuries, Pope Nicholas V (d. 1455) acceded to the request of King Afonso V (d. 1481) of Portugal for a special bull which would renew crusading privileges in more expansionist terms. *Dum Diversas* (1452) granted, in effect, the same license and indulgences to the Portuguese king and his heirs (and followers) that had been employed to induct noblemen in the medieval crusades against Islam in the Levant. However, in this and a second encyclical, *Romanus Pontifex* (1455), the pontiff

also authorized unprecedented sweeping enslavement privileges to Christianity's conquistadors. In sum, the king was permitted ([24]; [25], vol. 2, p. 469)

> to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit...

With Christendom's eastern flank all but lost, there was a tone of urgency in these bulls. They permitted the Portuguese to use force against both Islamic and non-Islamic Africa as well as against the peoples of the African-Atlantic islands. Conquest and colonization in the name of St. Peter would at least create a *cordon sanitaire* between the advance of Islam and non-monotheistic populations. Of course, by offering a broad, indeed limitless, religious license, these bulls laid the ideological foundations for future Catholic conquests around the world, from West Africa, the Caribbean and Peru to Gujarat and the Philippines. That the Iberian Peninsula itself, after the Catholic conquest of Andalusia and the nearly simultaneous annexation of lands across the Atlantic, became a crossroads of a global slave trade, did not diminish the symbolic and strategic centrality of the Mediterranean; nor did it undercut the significance of capturing Muslims and Africans as part of the post- medieval crusader-colonial "prime directive" [26]. Although the suggestion of Bartolomé de las Casas (d. 1566) to alleviate the suffering of the indigenous populations of the Americas through the enslavement of Africans smacks of medieval race prejudice, the Bishop of Chiapas may have actually sought to return to the letter of *Dum Diversas* which foresaw slavery in and conquest of Africa—not the religiously quarantined Americas—as a means of preventing further "contamination" of the known world by Islam.

In addition to unleashing a global crusade, fifteenth-century papal authority gave new impulse to territorial wars against the leading Muslim powers in the Mediterranean, especially the Ottoman sultans after their conquest of Mamluk Egypt and much of coastal North Africa. The early modern crusade—although uncommonly known as such—legitimized both large-scale holy war and endemic holy piracy. Well into the eighteenth century, Rome dedicated important revenues to the frontline Catholic sovereigns (such as the Habsburg emperors) by redirecting church tithes and other subsidies toward state treasuries. New military orders emerged or regrouped, from the Uskoks of Senj (in today's Croatia) to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who after their rout from the island of Rhodes in the early sixteenth century rebuilt their raiding operations on Muslim military and civilian targets from the islands of Malta and Gozo [27]. Over the centuries, the early modern crusade against Islam sanctified alliances (*Liga Sacra*), the last of which was declared by the pope in 1684 after Ottoman armies again besieged Vienna ([28], pp. 215–36).

Wars against the Ottoman Empire by land and by sea (as well as intra-Christian competition within Europe during the Wars of Religion) led to a rapid and unprecedented escalation of the size of armies and armadas manned by salaried troops and mercenary battalions ([29], pp. 137–41). The scale of death and captivity increased apace. A single battle might yield thousands of casualties and captives. The carnage of the great battle of Lepanto in 1571, for example, took the lives of some 30,000 sailors and soldiers. More than 7,000 Muslim captives, most men in the prime of their lives, were distributed

to the Spanish, the Venetians and the papacy at the close of the battle, on the basis of their investments in the combined armada [29,30]. Nevertheless, the Ottoman advance went unchecked. In record time, the sultan built a new fleet and, but two years after Lepanto, annexed Cyprus to the empire. If the Ottomans dominated the most important crossroads of the older routes of enslavement (through the Black Sea and via North and East Africa), by the early seventeenth century, the Mediterranean itself, convulsed by nearly constant small scale, "asymmetrical" holy conflicts, also yielded thousands of new victims for sale [31,32].

While armies required free male soldiers or mercenaries, hand- held gunpowder weapons as well as beasts of burden, the seaborne crusade demanded a largely unarmed and coerced labor force. The oarsmen in the galleys and laborers on the docks and in shipbuilding that were required to maintain and power the armadas were supplied in large part or subsidized by confessionalized captives of this permanent war economy, whether they were prisoners of war, victims of shipwreck, or persons kidnapped along the shores and borderlands. For those states that did not join in the new, global crusade from the Atlantic and the Red Sea to the Pacific, a display of military prowess and religious zeal against the Muslims in the Mediterranean also assumed the form of holy piracy Medici Tuscany, a merchant-state seeking to preserve its autonomy in the face of French and Habsburg territorial pretensions on the Italian peninsula, established the Order of the Knights of St. Stephen, Pope and Martyr in 1561 [33]. Grand Duke Cosimo I de' Medici (d. 1574) served as its first grand master. With the laudable goal of defending Christendom from Muslim raids in the Tyrrhenian Sea, the Medici state reaped both religio-political and economic rewards: its raids and skirmishes with the infidel yielded thousands of men for the oars of its fleet and a steady stream of human beings for sale to other, Catholic states. Perhaps, too, such a conspicuous display of fervor for the faith offset criticism for the relative leniency of Medici policies toward the Jews (and Orthodox Christians) who lived and traded in Florence and Livorno [34,35].

Of course, the holy wars that pitted Muslim states against Catholic powers alternated with cross-religious commerce and even, an occasional inter-faith alliance, the most controversial of which was concluded in 1536 between the French King Francis I (d. 1547) and the Ottoman Sultan Suleyman II (d. 1566). Notwithstanding the ongoing religious conflicts, throughout the early modern period the cultural make-up of the states of the Mediterranean world defied a neat, binary division between Christianity and Islam [36]. Ottoman cities remained resolutely multi-religious while much of Western Christendom was purged of its indigenous Jews, Muslims, and, after the Reformation/Counter-Reformation, its Christian dissenters. The treaties that enabled Catholic and Protestant vessels to harbor in Muslim coastal cities provided no reciprocal privileges for Ottoman or North African flagged ships or Muslim merchants in Catholic ports. Even Venice's famous *Fondaco dei Turchi*, after the sixteenth century, rarely hosted Ottoman Muslim delegations [37,38]. Catholic merchants and consuls who resided in Istanbul, Alexandria, Aleppo, Izmir, Tripoli and other cities could practice their faith and find moral succor in small communities of practicing Catholics that were supported by Rome and Versailles; they also relied upon political support from the permanent representatives of trading nations. By contrast, no parallel accommodations or political infrastructure for Muslims existed in Latin Christendom (with the possible exception of sixteenth-century Poland and seventeenth-century Dutch cities). In fact, between the mass deportation of Iberian Muslim communities, between 1609 and

1613, and the late nineteenth century, no free community of Muslims, including those converted to Christianity, resided within Western Europe.

Like the new Christian captives who were paraded upon arrival to the docks of North African ports ([4], p. 55), the enslavement of Muslims and their public display filled more than practical needs. They became exotic specimens and "goods," trophies in a cosmological conflict. As captives enslaved through an ongoing crusade, the infidels who were brought in fetters to Europe personified the triumph of the true religion over the false and Christianity over the "superstition" of Islam. Depictions of Turks (meaning any subject of the Ottoman sultan from Hungary to Syria or, generically, a person of the Islamic faith) and Moors (a subject of either the deys of Tunis, Tripoli or Algiers or of the sultans of Morocco), as well as the great battles in which infidel men were killed or captured, were celebrated in paint and verse. The enormous figures of Muslim slaves on the columns of the Porta Nuova (1583), at the entrance of Palermo and Pietro Tacca's early seventeenth-century sculpture of the "Quattro Mori," composed of the figures of an enslaved Maghrebian father and his three sons, which forms the base of the statute of Ferdinando I de' Medici (d. 1609), expressed the public identities of regimes, cities and citizens [39].

Livorno in the early seventeenth century counted one of the highest number of servile residents (as a percentage of its total population) in the Mediterranean: roughly one in every 12 of its inhabitants was enslaved ([35], p. 93). For the cleric who compiled the list of the Knights of St. Stephen's valiant victories, it mattered little how the human prizes were wrested from Islam: the sack of the city of Bone/Annaba in Algeria in 1607 was qualified as the "most glorious enterprise ... ever undertaken." It resulted, he bragged, in the carrying off of 2000 Muslims, mainly civilians, of both sexes to Livorno ([40], p. 138; [41,42]). In this period, Muslim children were gifted as trifles for entertainment, like the "lively" young lad referred to in the letter of a cardinal [43]. So great was the nobility's demand for such trophy-human beings in the later sixteenth century, that Pope Paul III (d. 1549) authorized the general purchase and employment of Muslim domestic slaves in Rome itself ([2], p. xvi) (compare [44]; [45], p. 132).

Within the Mediterranean, there is no little doubt that faith played a determining role in the forced transfer of populations. Some states, notably the Knights of St. John at Malta, made confessional identity a zero-sum game. All non-Catholics—Orthodox Christians, Muslims and Jews alike—found aboard Muslim ships could be seized. Until the mid-sixteenth century, Maltese captains would routinely board Venetian ships, confiscating the cargo of Jews and Muslims. Even Jews with the requisite permits and passports would be sent to the slave auctions in La Valletta. ([14], p. 40; [46]).[1] Yet while all non-Catholic captives from Ottoman lands were confessionalized and, as such, became technically subject to captivity (including, until the early eighteenth century, many Orthodox Christians), their status and hence their fate, were not uniform. Upon disembarkation at the port, before entering quarantine, secretaries and interpreters would record the personal name, place of origin, father's name and distinguishing features of each new captive ([2], p. 74). These scant facts of status determined their destiny; whether she or he would be a candidate for ransom, sold to the highest private bidder at auction, or transferred to the dungeon (*bagnio*) as an addition to the workforce owned by the state treasury or the military order.

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[1] Skippon [46] who visited Malta in the early seventeenth century noted a separate dungeon for the enslaved Jews.

Comparisons have been made between Mediterranean confession-based and Atlantic race-based slavery [4,47]. Despite the fact that opportunity factors, particularly geography and transport, facilitated who and when persons might be enslaved, there remained significant variables in the processes of confessionalized and racialized enslavement. For a confessionalized captive, whose homelands were proximate, ransom (and even escape) remained more than a theoretical possibility, precisely because ransoms were many times the price of a human being sold at a slave auction. Confessional identity functioned paradoxically: the same identity that rendered the individual vulnerable to enslavement could also afford a critical margin of personhood, which linked him or her to powerful states or to communities of coreligionists of means. In the case of some Ottoman Christians, it might lead to more lenient treatment by their Protestant and Catholic captors ([35], p. 115). Over these centuries, recurrent negotiations between the chief belligerents on land and sea, including Venice, the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, resulted in highly formalized terms of prisoner exchange in diplomacy and truce agreements [48,49].

Unlike the ports of Ghana or the terminus of the trans-Sahara routes in Tunis, where prince and pauper might have shared the same fate, the rank and provenance of confessionalized captives within the Mediterranean continued to play an important role in the treatment of captives overall. Even implacable foes like the Maltese grand masters and the deys of Tripoli concurred that captains of ships (provided they were not themselves converts) must be treated with deference while awaiting ransom or exchange ([14], p. 468). Moreover, it must also be underlined that the distinction between racialized and confessionalized identities was observed within the Mediterranean itself: preliminary censuses make clear that the numbers of East and Sub-Saharan Africans sold into bondage in the early modern period throughout the Mediterranean dwarfed the numbers of either Western Christians or Mediterranean Muslims ([2], pp. 34–9). Thus, for persons trafficked within the Mediterranean, proximity (and with it the possibility of flight) and provenance (which included the supposition that individuals retained ties that might yield ransom or exchange or even sanctuary aboard an allied ship) not only informed their classification as "Turchi" or "Mori," but also afforded them a critical margin of personhood which was denied to human beings labeled "Negri" or "Etiopici' ([35], p. 115; [50]).

3. The Mediterranean's Galley Complex

Whether through war, piracy, or shipwreck, once a Muslim fell captive in the western or central Mediterranean until the nineteenth century, he or she remained for a time suspended in the grey zone between temporary prisoner and servile migrant, domestic servant and galley slave. Gender was the first determinant in the fate of a Muslim, Jewish or Orthodox Christian captive. The terms of servitude for confessionalized captives/slaves remained gender-specific. Rank counted less for women, although families attempted to ransom their captive daughters, mothers, and wives, as well as their sons. Muslim women undertook dangerous travels across the sea to raise funds to purchase their own and their family's freedom ([14], pp. 207–8). Most women (including Jewish, African and Greek Orthodox) who were not ransomed were sold to private individuals and put to work in Catholic (and sometimes, Jewish, in the case of Muslim women) homes as domestics and not infrequently forced into forms of concubinage. The majority of adult male captives, subjects of the Ottoman Empire and the North African states, became part of a public workforce in the country of capture or were sold to service

other Catholic fleets. From that point onward, it was only ethnicity (Balkan or North African origin) point of sale, and price that were recorded in the naval account books, as we find in an extant register from the Port de Toulon*,* entitled "Bagne des Galères*,* matricules des Turcs (1682–1707)." In this period, "turc" simply meant galley slave [51].

Although we must resist a facile equation of race and religion in terms of enslavement processes, in an age of quasi-industrialized uses of forced labor, there were other parallels between the confessionalized slavery of the Mediterranean and the racialized enslavement in the Atlantic. The framework developed by Philip Curtin to analyze what he called the "Plantation Complex" in the Caribbean [52], might provide a comparative model to reassess the specificity of galley slavery, an important component of the forced labor systems throughout the early modern Mediterranean. Indeed, both the Plantation Complex and the "Galley Complex" involved a secular, feedback loop linking demand for labor with prevailing technologies of production. It is true that the Galley Complex relied on both (nominally) free and coerced labor forces, in addition to confessionalized slave crews. However, both forms of forced transfer were, to a great degree, determined by the state of technology. If galley slavery ended previous to plantation slavery in the Atlantic, it was not a question of moral outrage or differences in the identities of the enslaved, but of an earlier shift to wind-powered vessels within the Mediterranean. As long as galleys fleets were used for transport, war and piracy in the Mediterranean (and the Baltic), confessionalized enslavement persisted. [2]

Like agricultural slavery in the Atlantic, the Galley Complex was built on pre-existing systems of captivity and enslavement. However, it also reshaped those flows, decisively contributing to the shift in demand from female to male captives [53–56]. A ship with 26 oars required five men per oar and an additional 20 oarsmen in reserve as replacements. Larger frigates might employ 500 men at the oars ([14], p. 339). As the size of the Mediterranean's galley fleets peaked in the late seventeenth century so did demand for able-bodied enslaved, Muslim oarsmen in Catholic ports. By the early eighteenth century, when wind powered vessels replaced ships powered by human strength, particularly among the Atlantic-bound fleets of kingdoms like France, the demand for galley slaves also decreased. It is little wonder that because most Mediterranean corsairs, whether the Knights of Malta, privateers, or the *rais* of the Maghreb, depended on the maneuverability of galleys to raid coastlines, prey upon merchant cogs, and beat a speedy retreat, especially in calms, the economy of confessionalized enslavement, albeit reduced in scale, would continue into the nineteenth century.

Employing confessionalized slaves satisfied the need for workers in a system so grueling and degrading that it was not possible to rely fully on convicts or conscripted individuals. Condemnation to the galleys remained a dreaded form of punishment and the direct precedent for the totalizing institution of the prison. For many convicts, what was supposed to be a short term at sea became a death sentence. Many men maimed themselves rather than be put to the oars. After a few weeks of confinement in the ships, the stench of human sweat and excrement was overwhelming. Enslaved oarsmen who were chained to their benches could not bathe, change their clothing or even move to relieve themselves. For weeks they were offered only brief respites for sleep; their rations were made up of a monotonous diet of vegetable and legume soup and bread, although ships took on fresh water and other necessities as required while on patrol ([2], p. 185; [14]) Although concern for the economic

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[2]   Davis ([4], p. 9) notes this relationship but does not pursue it.

losses resulting from the high mortality rates among galley slaves led to the employment of medical staff and the creation of a type of infirmary for those so impaired by disease or injury as to be finally removed from the bench, during the summer months many crew members sickened and died. The plague of 1720–1721 carried off one fifth of France's rowing force ([56], p. 246).

Like much of the Caribbean's racialized slave communities, the servile labor force of the galleys did not reproduce themselves by natural increase. Although a percentage of galley slaves survived for decades, some remaining at the oars into their sixties and even seventies, they were not permitted to marry. Given the morality rates due to combat, occupational injuries and disease, in addition to the sheer exhaustion of the human beings who powered the galleys, replacements were continually sought. While the pontifical fleet at Civitavecchia remained entirely dependent on external resupply, whether by gift or purchase, the Tuscan Knights of St. Stephen became self-sufficient by dint of their own regular, holy depredations as well as the human cargo transported to their shores by privateers. The ransom and sale of slaves was the mainstay of the economy of the Knights of St. John. Maltese auctions annually sent about two hundred human beings to Civitavecchia, the majority of the enslaved being subjects of the Ottoman Empire; they also sold slaves to Italian navies and to France ([14], pp. 241–46). Although France was a signatory to treaties with the Sublime Porte that prohibited the enslavement of their subjects, French consuls doubled as slave procurers in La Valletta and Italian ports. Muslims were sold into slavery by land as well: the Holy Roman Empire furnished Ottoman captives for the galleys of France, and even Malta ([14], pp. 264–70).

The core of the traffic in Muslim slaves corresponded with the changing theatres of war and the establishment of key auction sites between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Despite widespread piracy, slave auctions became concentrated in a number of Catholic ports. As such, over the centuries there were regional, boom and bust cycles. For example, Trapani in Sicily held 5,000 Muslim slaves in 1569, comprising approximately one sixth of its total population. But a century later, the city registered not a single adult slave among its inhabitants. Elsewhere, particularly in trading and crusading ports that relied on galleys, the numbers of Muslim slaves remained constant or grew over the seventeenth century. These ports often received human cargo from privateers as well as from their own slaving expeditions. In Livorno, the slave population reached 3000 individuals in 1616 (of approximately 37,000 inhabitants); in Naples, between 10,000 and 20,000 individuals, or 4 to 7 percent of its estimated population of 270,000 inhabitants in the early seventeenth century belonged to the state or private persons ([2], pp. 24–31). Given its continuing role as one of the chief traffickers of non-Catholic slaves within the Mediterranean and as a state that issued letters of marque to other Christian entrepreneurs, Malta's cities held more than a thousand Muslims (and other non-Catholic individuals) in bondage at the end of the eighteenth century ([14], pp. 577–83).

Yet the Galley Complex also differed in important ways from agricultural slavery in the Americas. Unlike the plantation system, the actual oarsmen who were enslaved (as opposed to convicts and volunteers) were part of a crew owned, maintained and managed by a state or one of the state-like lay religious orders. State-appointed officials fed, clothed and punished them; an overseer was responsible financially for injuries, death, and flight. As a chattel crew, Muslim slaves could be sold along with the frigate. In battle or if the hull foundered upon shoals, chained to their benches, they and not the captain, went down with the ship. At the end of the sailing season, Muslim slaves would be pressed

into the construction of public works projects such as bridges or walls in the outskirts of Naples and in Maltese towns of La Valletta and Senglea ([14], pp. 301–05).

Precisely because the Galley Complex was not simply a system of production but a mainstay of the state's defenses, the composition of the labor force was rarely entirely servile. To minimize the risk of rebellion, Catholic fleets typically intermingled Muslim slaves on the bench with Christians, either convicts (including Protestants) or so-called *buonavoglie* or "volunteers," whom poverty or debt forced to become oarsmen. The proportion of Muslim galley slaves to Christian oarsmen varied from fleet to fleet as well as over time, but seems to have increased as the larger European fleets began to phase out their galleys in the early eighteenth century. In seventeenth-century France, Muslims accounted for about a quarter of all galley slaves, roughly 50 captives for every 150 *forçats* (convicts) in 33 ships although that proportion might change in large vessels ([51], p. 55; [56], p. 144). In Livorno, the proportion of Muslim galley slaves to either convicts or *buonavoglie* rose in St. Stephen's crews ([2], p. 31). By 1685, there were 647 Muslim slaves, the majority of whom were of North African origin, to 579 Christian convicts and 181 "volunteers"; similarly, in Genoa, Muslim slaves, who once composed only one quarter of the galley slaves in 1642, by the end of the century outnumbered the number of convicts (*forzati*) ([2], pp. 171–77). In mid-eighteenth century Malta, 639 of the 782 men at the oars were enslaved Muslims ([14], p. 345).

4. Solidarity and Survival of a Forced Migrant Community

Together the Galley and Plantation Complexes removed millions of individuals from their homes and families and forced them across the sea into perpetual servitude. Chattel slavery throughout the early modern Mediterranean and Atlantic subjected human beings to quotidian brutality, cruel punishments and deprivations; within the Mediterranean basin, Muslim and Christian survivors of captivity recounted comparable horrors. That said, there remained significant differences in the treatment of confessionalized slaves as individuals and groups within "receiving" societies. These conditions patterned and limited the possibility for an individual's integration or absorption into the new society and, hence, reflected more than culturally-specific attitudes or comparable survival strategies. As such, the experience of these displaced persons cannot be fully understood without considering how the confessionalized enslavement of larger groups of individuals produced both a servile workforce and a peculiar migrant community.

For Muslim galley slaves, the structure of their migrant communities and their survival strategies were critically determined by the degree of ostracism and outright hostility of the society in which they spent their lives. Although not all Catholic ports treated these forced migrants with the same degree of exclusion and, in some cases, such as in Marseilles, Balkan Muslims actually enjoyed superior "privileges" to French Protestants, overall there were notable contrasts in the Catholic and Muslim Mediterranean settings. Whereas in many Muslim ports foreign Christians, Jews and members of local Jewish and Ottoman Orthodox communities were a familiar sight to the majority society, in Italy and France, aside from the rare appearance of a heavily guarded diplomatic entourage from Persia, Morocco or Istanbul, the only Muslims that ordinary Catholics encountered in their daily lives were the enslaved. Muslim slaves in Malta complained that unlike the practices in Istanbul or the North

African ports, they were not even allowed to eat or drink their purchases of food inside shops and taverns with Christian customers, but were forced to take their meals in the street ([14], pp. 124–25).

Muslims in Catholic societies were visually marked. That was not because they maintained the customary clothes of their homelands, such as turbans or long robes; nor did it owe to distinguishing facial features or to skin color. Rather, it was because being dressed and groomed as "turchi" was prescribed by law and the regulations of naval administrations. Their heads were shaved except for a distinctive pigtail ([14], pp. 75–77). Although the ordinary galley slave may have retained a long mustache that covered his lips, only their chaplains were allowed a beard. Clothing too was uniform: a roughly woven woolen cape with a hood. Converted slaves and Muslims alike carried a one to two pound iron footlock around their ankle; Muslims also bore chains or were chained to the little kiosks they were permitted to open on the docks and in marketplaces ([2], p. 88).

Life in port for galley slaves was certainly an improvement over the weeks of torment they endured during the rowing season on patrol and in battle. Nevertheless, both the galley and the prison-like structures called the *bagnio* (in Genoa, the *darsena*) which were constructed at the docks to shelter them constituted the Muslim ghettos of early modern Europe. In Malta, more than three prison-like structures were dedicated to housing Muslim and Jewish slaves at night; after 1749, privately owned male slaves were also required to overnight in one of these structures ([14] pp. 93, 440). The French sculptor Charles Marguerite Jean-Baptiste Mercier Dupaty inspected the *darsena* of Genoa in 1785. In its "low, dark, and dank," masonry chambers he found that younger, active men were chained in cells measuring 6 by 6 feet. This provided just enough room to move and to change their clothes ([2], p. 188).

All of these conditions—the rigors of work and life aboard the galley, their treatment at port, and the hopelessness of a future without the comforts of a familiar culture or family—drove a very high percentage of Catholics and Protestants in the *bagnio*s of North Africa and the Ottoman capital toward conversion ([4,10]; [5], pp. 77–78).[3] In theory, adopting the faith of the receiving society should have functioned as the primary modality through which the forced migrant might attempt to integrate within or actually achieve some form of "naturalization" in an early modern society. The receiving society's institutional capacity to accept (or deny) converts, in turn, would have played a key role in reinforcing or undermining the bases of solidarities within these forced migrant communities (compare [58]). However, the rate of Muslim galley slave conversion to Christianity remained inexplicably lower than their counterparts across the sea. Part of this may have to do with the method of religious "outreach". A zealous and astute Jesuit in early seventeenth-century Naples who dispatched Arabic speaking priests to the prisons met with greater success; a new *Casa dei Catacumeni* (a type of half-way house for new converts) for Muslims in Rome which offered instruction in Christianity attracted some slaves ([2], pp. 268–75; [59]). But attempts to proselytize slaves met with opposition from galley administrators. Overseers in the papal port of Civitavecchia complained that even this limited opportunity to receive instruction in a new faith should be discontinued. Catholics should not expect that Muslims would ever really foreswear their faith; it was only abused by "Turks who feign to be Christian until, at the first opportunity, they flee to their homelands" ([2], p. 271).

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[3] Article 23 of the French-Ottoman Treaty of 28 May 1740 accepted the inevitability of frequent conversions, establishing procedures for the transfer of property should a commercial factor or sailor convert to Islam. For the treaty see [57].

Although the missionaries were far less successful with adult male Muslims of the galleys, baptism of Muslim women and children in domestic service occurred with some frequency in the early modern period. The fact that most of the conversions in Rome and Livorno were of children or enslaved women ([59]; [2], pp. 276–78), lends support to the supposition that the higher rates of conversion in Muslim lands may partially be attributed to the greater prevalence of household slavery. The Ottoman historian Suraiya Faroqhi observes that slave-owners often pressured their Christian slaves into accepting Islam [60]. But if we consider conversion not as a novelty, a question of force, or an expedient but rather as part of a larger, multi-faceted process of migration and absorption into a new community, it is not only the push factors that might explain an individual's choice to change the beliefs of his or her natal society. Muslim societies, because of the higher number of slaves in homes, the structure of households, and the potential for social mobility despite servile and foreign birth, facilitated this process in ways that Catholic society did not: Islamic laws recognized the free, Muslim status of offspring of a slaveholder and his concubine who, if her child was male, might also demand to be manumitted [61]. Muslim masters of converted slaves often emancipated them and willed them property and support (through endowments). Although both Muslim and Catholic states had a vested interest in keeping their fleets well supplied with slave labor and thus, ultimately, in discouraging mass conversion, it is not surprising to find the Ottoman controller of the state *bagnio* writing about the rewards due a Catholic slave after his conversion to Islam, which might include a pass to release him permanently from the prison, new clothes, and even a stipend from the treasury.[4]

By contrast, in Catholic lands, the real and anticipated benefits for converts, particularly galley slaves, were modest indeed and rarely involved manumission. In France, the small number of converted "turcs" were not permitted to leave the oars, although they did gain the right to bequeath their meager property upon death ([56], pp. 264, 284). In Tuscany, converts could shed their chains and sleep outside the *bagnio* but they were still considered "prisoners of war" and hence property of the order ([2], p. 255). Catholicism raised a host of ancillary problems that had no parallel in Ottoman lands or in the North African context where many "Muslim" corsairs were in fact converts from Catholicism or Protestantism. While in the Muslim world, the neophyte was allowed his or her "ambiguous" forms of adherence to the new religion with little scrutiny [63], in Catholic societies an entire multi-state apparatus, the early modern Inquisition, had been created to eradicate such spiritual ambiguity and syncretism of belief, as well as to prevent "backsliding" into Judaism and Islam. An abiding distrust of the sincerity of the Muslim (or Jewish) convert affected both laity and clergy in early modern Europe. Even in old regime France where officials increasingly separated the state business of naturalization from membership in the Roman Church, Peter Sahlins did not find a single case involving the "secular" denization of an adult Muslim convert [64] (compare [65]).

Thinking of conversion and the integration of forced migrants in a new society only in terms of "push-pull" factors associated with migration should not allow us to disregard the power exerted by migrant communities over their members. A convert, in addition to potentially forfeiting the remote chance that a prisoner exchange might restore him to his kin and facing the prospects of punishments

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[4] For an example from Ottoman archives: see [62]. The controller of the shipyards requested the release of a Maltese by the name of Antoine Tondo; after his conversion; his name was to be struck from registry and he was released from the prison.

more terrifying than the galleys if the Inquisition convicted him of backsliding to Islam, also lost the companionship and solidarity of his former co-religionists at the oars. If solidarity among Muslim galley slaves might have been stronger than their Catholic counterparts in Muslim lands, it may have to do with both the relatively limited opportunities for conversion/manumission/naturalization and the slaves' ability, despite (and perhaps because of) local conditions, to create a fairly autonomous social order. Unlike the leadership imposed by religious orders, such as the Trinitarians, or the chain of command binding newer missions sponsored by Louis XIV (d. 1715) to France, which pretended to represent the spiritual and political interests of Catholics enslaved in Tripoli, Tunis, Salé and Algiers, Muslim galley slaves may have achieved greater autonomy because of the absence of on site representatives of their religio-political authorities They elected their own leaders at sea and on land. Muslim chaplains (or judges), called in Italian *papasso/papassi* or *cadi* (kadi), had to earn the respect and trust of their co-religionists on the basis of their character, experience and learning ([4], pp. 113–21). Relying on the precedent set by Ottoman and North African tolerance of Catholic missions, Muslim chaplains gained special privileges including the right to dress in a dignified manner, a private room in the prison and exemption from the most degrading forms of manual labor. Chaplains wrote petitions on behalf of slaves and acted as interlocutors with administrators of the fleet in addition to leading prayers ([2], p. 247; [66], pp. 145–48).

Initially, Catholic states conceded few religious privileges to these early modern Muslim migrants. However, Muslim slaves leveraged the asymmetries of travel and settlement between the Muslim and Christian worlds to their advantage. It must be remembered that although no free Muslim communities resided in Western Europe after the Morisco expulsion from Spain, there remained large indigenous and foreign Christian communities throughout the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb. In addition to thousands of enslaved Catholics and Protestants, many freemen—diplomats, clerics and merchants—settled in the religiously inclusive environment and enjoyed the protection of sultans, governors and deys under bilateral treaties [35,36]. Thus, Muslim galley slaves who took advantage of foreign merchants' willingness to relay letters and to mediate in the collection of ransom funds across the sea [35], also addressed petitions to Muslim authorities about their general treatment and the lack of religious accommodations. In response, the rulers of the Maghreb, in particular, exerted pressure on local Catholics representatives. They threatened to retract normal or special liberties accorded to Christian slaves and the Catholic orders if parallel religious "accommodations" were not extended to Muslims enslaved in Christendom [2,11].

Thus, isolated though they remained from the larger society and deprived of the support of free co-religionists, forced Muslim migrants in Italian ports and Malta were able to wrest from Catholic authorities significant concessions with respect to their cultural and religious rights. Consider: at a time when there were no Protestant houses of worship in France, Muslims in Malta and Italian cities prayed according to their own cult in small chapels found within the *bagnio*s. It was the Knights of St. John who may have first permitted enslaved Muslims and Jews a small room or chapel within Malta's slave prisons; by the eighteenth century there was at least one free-standing mosque near the Muslim cemetery at Marsa ([14], p. 447). In Italy, Livorno's prison might have held a chapel by the end of the seventeenth century. It was a common enough practice in Italy, that the Bey of Tripoli was able to prevail over the reluctance of a pope in the early eighteenth century. Reciprocity worked: either Muslims would have their own prayer room in Civitavecchia or all the Catholic orders would be

expelled from Tripoli. In Genoa, a chapel was granted in the *darsena* sometime before 1737 ([2], pp. 242–43).

Naples, perhaps because of its limited commercial interests in Muslim lands, persisted in denying its large slave population any accommodation for the practice of their faith. When the subject of a chapel was broached to the ruling council, it was rejected categorically. Providing Muslims with a place to pray was tantamount to heresy: Catholics would become "co-conspirators" in "the superstition of Mohammedan practice" ([2], p. 245). In other cities, Catholic authorities needed to be "coaxed" by Muslim rulers into granting Muslim galley slaves real estate beyond their ghettos (the ship and the dungeon) for proper burials. In the mid-seventeenth century, the Dey of Tunis warned that he would destroy the Catholic cemetery in his city if papal authorities did not finally provide Muslims with a dedicated burial ground. Genoa pledged to give Muslims burial plots outside the walls of the city, near the beach, in 1711, although they only made good on their commitment six years later. Finally, in 1768, only after it had concluded important treaties with the Ottoman Empire, did Naples' city fathers relent: although there was still no chapel, they conceded a cemetery to Muslim slaves, so that their dead would no longer be left on the road to be eaten by stray dogs ([2], pp. 248–52).

Culture may have reinforced ties of interdependence among Muslim migrants in Enlightenment Europe, but the individual's very survival depended critically on his relationship with his community. A galley slave received a yearly ration of clothing, a bunk, and monotonous daily ration of food with some slight variation including a bit of meat over the course of the month, scarcely enough to maintain his health. To purchase straw for his bunk, to procure sufficient food and some extra comforts, as well as to painstakingly scrimp and save for his ransom over decades, required ingenuity and cooperation. The English lady who visited late eighteenth-century Genoa related that slaves were permitted to open kiosks, "little shops or sheds on the quay," where they sold " pedlary [sic] goods" as a reward for good behavior. Shackled to their kiosks, some tended coffee hearths or set up lemonade stands; "chained in couples" other slaves hawked such items as fish, mats, and knitted goods ([1], pp. 210–12). Muslim slaves had a great deal of mobility around La Valletta and other Maltese towns which enabled them to carry out chores for private persons as well as to engage in little enterprises for their own benefit. Among many different by-occupations, Jewish and Muslim slaves on Malta, to the dismay of churchmen, ran micro- credit operations [14,67].

Like their Catholic and Protestant counterparts, Muslims who were fortunate to return home after their captivity in Malta and the Holy Roman Empire have left autobiographical accounts of their experiences [68–70]. However, it is the memoirs of a Huguenot, Jean Marteilhe (d. 1770), who served alongside Muslims during his years at the oars in the French navy, which offers unusually perceptive insights into how these isolated migrant communities survived in the early eighteenth century ([66], pp. 145–48]). Acquainted with many of the "turcs" in Marseilles, Marteilhe found them to be brave, loyal, generous and honest. On shore, Muslims from the Balkans and from the Maghreb dined communally; they shared their food with one another and offered sustenance to non-Muslim galley slaves. Since Muslims had greater liberty to travel into the city than the Huguenots, Marteilhe and his co-religionists asked their help in obtaining supplies and money which were sent from Geneva. This was not a small favor to ask: to collect these funds and distribute among the Huguenot convicts put the Muslim couriers in great danger. Yet, without expectation of material reward, Muslims willingly risked beatings and torture to help the Protestants.

Protestant-Muslim collaboration relied on ties between communities and not simply an individual's good will. Marteilhe's close ties with a courageous ex-Janissary ended abruptly when, in 1708, Yusuf was torn to pieces on the bench beside him as the ship took canon fire upon entering the Thames. Upon learning of his commission with Marteilhe from their chaplain, Yusuf's co-religionists stepped forward to continue his good work. A sympathetic observer of their religious beliefs, Marteilhe directed his reader's attention to the role that Islamic precepts played in helping Muslim migrants survive emotionally and socially in a hostile land. "It must be known that when Turks have an opportunity to exercise charity or other good works, they communicate this joy to their *papas,* as their theologians are called." ([66], p. 147)

For the Muslim migrant isolated in Mediterranean Europe, *thawab* (a deed meriting divine recompense) served not only as a principle of mutual aid but also as a source of personal dignity and hope for reward in the afterlife. The moral obligation to carry out such charitable works including the emancipation of one's co-religionists motivated the Alaouite sultan of Morocco, Muhammad III (d. 1790) to embark on a campaign, unparalleled before the French Revolution, to liberate captives en masse. Determined to empty Malta's dungeons of its enslaved Muslims, in 1782 his diplomats initiated complex and difficult negotiations with the Knights of St. John under the auspices of the Spanish court. By the time the final installment of money was paid out to the Grand Master, a year before the sultan's own death, Muhammad III had freed more than 1,000 subjects of the North African states and the Ottoman sultan from life-time bondage at the enormous cost of nearly six hundred thousand *scudi*.[5] By means of a supreme act of *thawab*, in 1789, for the first time in more than two centuries, not a single enslaved Muslim remained in Malta ([14], pp. 577–83).

5. Conclusions: Islamic Diasporas or Returning Europeans?

By the French Revolution, the decline of the Galley Complex and an enlarged umbrella of diplomatic and commercial agreements binding Muslim and Christians Mediterranean powers reduced the availability and demand for confessionalized slaves in Catholic lands.[6] Of the estimated half million souls who spent all or good part of their adulthood as forced migrants in early modern Italy alone, several hundred Muslim migrants remained in chains until the arrival of the French Revolution's soldiers and sailors after 1797 ([2], pp. 34–35, 188–89). In Genoa, but four years before the Revolution, a visitor found elderly and disabled Muslims shackled prone to the wooden planks that served as their beds. Shrouded in dirty covers, they were condemned to suffer their last months of life unattended and lying in their own filth ([2], p. 188). Even in freedom, many of former slaves lacked the means and stamina to return to a distant homeland. A visitor to Sardinia in 1812 estimated that

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[5] Consider: the annual income from a particularly large eighteenth-century estate owned by the noble Chigi family of Rome was 8,000 *scudi* [71].

[6] "O Fie, Father! Tho' it Part of your Function to make a dismal Story of Slavery among the Infidels… yet you should, methinks, adhere only to the Truth. You come lately from Marseilles where you must, or might have seen the Turks, Moors, & c. in much worse Condition than the most unhappy Beylic [sic] Slave in Algiers… You likewise must needs have seen or heard, how Slaves are treated in Spain, Malta, Genoa, &c." commented the translator, undoubtedly a Protestant, who chastised the authors of Philemon de La Motte's *Several Voyages to Barbary* [1721] for their imbalanced reporting. ([4], p. 130).

more than 80 former "Turkish slaves" had been stranded without "shirts or proper clothes, many without leggings, pale, famished." Left to the mercy of the good citizens of Cagliari, many succumbed to starvation in public view ([72], p. 76). The graphic descriptions of the destitution and degradation of the survivors of decades of enslavement, as well as the cruel indifference of society to their plight, suggest the actual etymology of the term "Muselmänner," which resurfaced in the jargon of inmates of the Nazi death camps during World War II ([73], p. 46).

Despite the disparaging idioms in European languages that bear witness to the centuries of Muslim servitude in early modern Europe [37], there remains no public acknowledgment of their lives, deaths and communal histories. Of course, Salvatore Bono is correct in attributing the suppression of the memory of Muslim slavery during the Renaissance and Enlightenment to colonial burnishing of the West's image [2]. However, there are other reasons why acknowledgment of this history might discomfit the gatekeepers of the European Union today. As Julia Clancy-Smith reminds us, [74] the end of the Galley Complex did not stop the movement of populations between the Muslim and Christian Mediterranean. Rather, the flows and forms of migration were transformed. The French armies and navies that liberated the last captive Muslims in Genoa would later subject North Africa and the Middle East to forms of imperial control. An unprecedented imbalance of power between the northern and southern shores of the internal sea brought tens of thousands of new settlers from the north—the political refugees of the revolutions of 1848, Italian artisans, French engineers, and Corsican colonial farmers—to Muslim cities and countryside [75]. Free emigration of Italy's poor to the "terra promessa" remained a central goal of Prime Minister Giovanni Giolitti's colonial war for Libya in 1912–1913 [76].

The unacknowledged multi-lateral movement of migrants within the Mediterranean from the medieval period until today adds another layer of complicity to the ideologies that have keep these coerced migrant communities of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment in history's shadows. The long waves of Muslim settlement in the West before the twentieth century challenges cherished myths of cultural uniformity and civilizational superiority that undergird European Union policies toward membership and migration [77]. Pundits and politicians, so fond of pronouncing the death of multi-culturalism and ascribing its inevitable decline to immigrants themselves or to Islam more generally, would have to concede that the integration of Muslim communities in previous centuries failed because the West lacked ecumenical institutions that would allow them (even after conversion) to live as free men and loyal political subjects, and not because of the intransigence of belief or the inability of individuals to adapt to their condition as religious minorities. Textbooks would have to be re-written to reflect the reality that it was the perseverance of Muslim communities of faith and the insistence of Muslim rulers that tested and then put into practice Enlightenment ideals before the French Revolution. Indeed, for European governments, like Germany and Spain, which claim the right to confer national citizenship on long, lost ethnic diasporas or in order to redress historic wrongs [78], public acknowledgement of the almost uninterrupted settlement of Muslim communities in the West from the early Middle Ages to the present forces the real question: Are the Muslims of today's Europe "migrants" at all? Or, are they not in effect returning Europeans?

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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