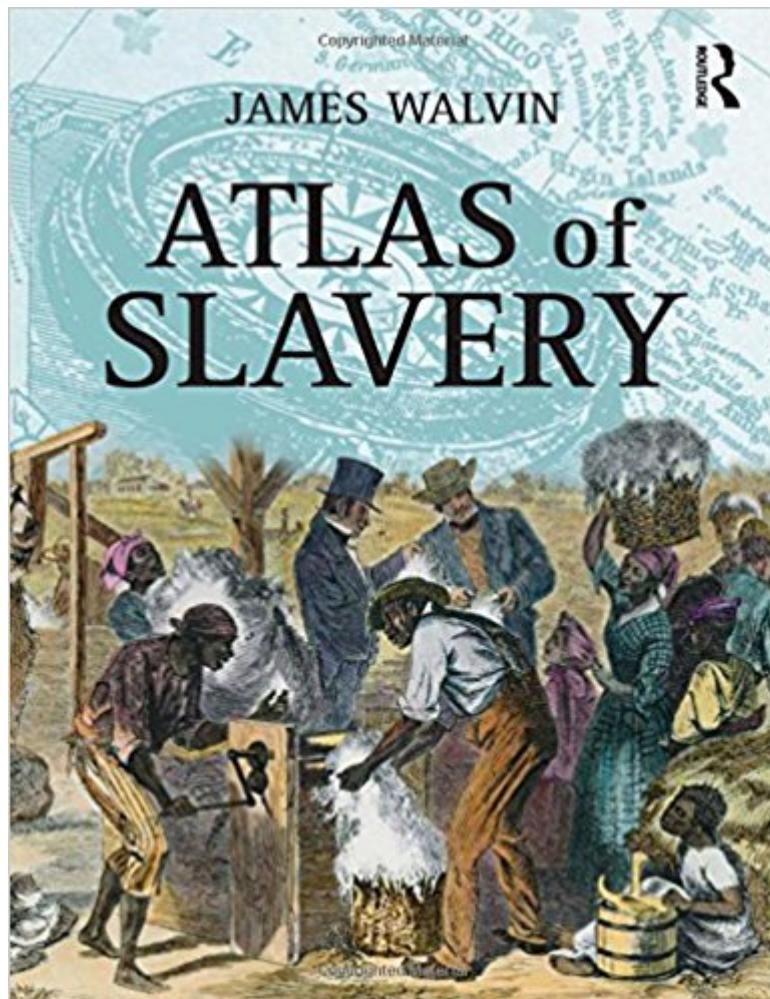


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# Atlas Of Slavery



## Synopsis

Slavery transformed Africa, Europe and the Americas and hugely-enhanced the well-being of the West but the subject of slavery can be hard to understand because of its huge geographic and chronological span. This book uses a unique atlas format to present the story of slavery, explaining its historical importance and making this complex story and its geographical setting easy to understand.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"James Walvin maps the history of slavery from ancient to modern times and provides a succinctly written commentary on the same,.....further enhancing his reputation as one of the leading international figures in raising public awareness and understanding of slavery and its impact on global history". David Richardson, Professor of Economic History, University of Hull. This is a wide-ranging and extremely useful study of the historical geography of slavery and the slave trade. This Atlas will be an invaluable resource for students studying slavery and for the general reader interested in this important area. Professor Gad Heuman, Department of History, University of Warwick.

James Walvin has over many years successfully bridged the worlds of academia, teachers, and the public at large, making the latest scholarly findings on the history of slavery accessible to the widest possible audience. His new book *Atlas of Slavery* in which he maps the history of slavery from ancient to modern times and provides a succinctly written commentary on the same,

will further enhance his reputation as one of the leading international figures in raising public awareness and understanding of slavery and its impact on global history. As we approach in 2007/8 the bi-centenary of the abolition of the British and American Atlantic slave trades, Walvin's atlas reminds us of the magnitude of the task that faced those who sought to and still seek to eradicate slavery. David Richardson, Professor of Economic History, University of Hull. The enslavement of Africans and their transportation across the Atlantic has come to occupy a unique place in the public imagination. Despite the wide-ranging atrocities of the twentieth century (including massive slave systems in Nazi Europe and the Russian Gulag), the Atlantic slave system continues to hold a horrible fascination. But slavery in the Atlantic world involved much more than the transportation of human cargo from one country to another, as Professor Walvin clearly explains in the *Atlas of Slavery*. In this fascinating new book he looks at slavery in the Americas in the broadest context, taking account of both earlier and later forms of slavery. The relationship between the critical continents, Europe, Africa and the Americas, is examined through a collection of maps and related text, which puts the key features of the history of slavery in their defining geographical setting. By foregrounding the historical geography of slavery, Professor Walvin shows how the people of three widely separated continents were brought together into an economic and human system that was characterized both by violence and cruelty to its victims and huge economic advantage to its owners and managers. Professor Walvin's synthesis of the complex history of Atlantic slavery provides a fresh perspective from which to view and understand one of the most significant chapters in global history. We may think of slavery as a largely bygone phenomenon, but it is a practice that continues to this day, and the exploitation of vulnerable human beings remains a pressing contemporary issue.

My husband is preparing for a history talk and found the information useful and caused him to search for additional information. It is a small book and very pricey.

good book

5/16" thick paper back book that cost \$63.04? At that rate, the book cost \$189.12 per inch thick. It better be good. , you're fired.

Review of: *Atlas of Slavery*, by James Walvin by Stan Prager (3-26-17) An atlas is typically a go-to reference rather than a cover-to-cover read, but there are rare exceptions, such as the *Atlas of*

Slavery, by James Walvin, which turned out to be so notable for both its maps and accompanying narrative that I carefully read and studied every page. My interests lean decidedly towards the American Civil War as well as the antebellum African-American experience; Walvin's fine treatment neatly dovetailed with each of these. Moreover, the skilled graphical treatment in this work both adds perspective and enhances comprehension on a macro level. My ongoing complaint with many books of history is a dearth of good maps or sometimes any maps at all. It can be maddening to read about key events in an unfamiliar geography without a suitable visual frame of reference. One way to mitigate this frustration is to assemble your own collection. And I have: I own a podium-sized atlas stand and its one great shelf is mostly stocked with historical atlases, which as a category generously spills over to other adjacencies. The atlas genre, of large and small formats, tends to fall into three categories. The first is the traditional book of reference maps, with little or no accompanying text. The second features maps and an abbreviated, complementary text. The third is an atlas in which the maps and the text are integral to one another. The latter is the case with *Atlas of Slavery*, a smaller format trade paper volume featuring a highly informative, well-written narrative as well as finely detailed black-and-white maps that serve as an essential foundation to the author's account. While *Atlas of Slavery* sets the stage with an overview of slavery in the ancient world, the focus of the book is on the Atlantic slave trade and its consequences for the millions of Africans swept up in it, as well as the Europeans who exploited their labor. The author correctly identifies the African slavery made manifest by that trade as entirely distinct from human chattel slavery as it existed elsewhere in time and geography. Slavery for life based solely upon race and color which extended to subsequent generations was something very different from that which preceded it. Most welcome here is both a textual and graphical exploration of the political entities of Africa and how the traditional slavery of Africa and the Arab world was radically transformed by European demand. The racist and the ignorant have been known to feebly defend the institution of African slavery by declaring that: "They sold their own people." Walvin soundly corrects this flawed assertion by pointing out that "The concept of being an African had no meaning for the people involved. The terms African and Africa were European terms" Africans felt no more uneasy about enslaving other Africans, from different cultures, than European traders felt uneasy when buying Africans on the coast. [p57] In other words, people from different tribes or different kingdoms on the African continent had as little in common with each other as citizens of England and France had in that same era. At the same time, the author unflinchingly underscores how the dramatic increase in demand by Europeans fueled a rapid expansion in the aggressive procurement of slaves from wider environs and their subsequent

transport to the west coast of Africa for sale. Prior to 1700, gold and other commodities made up the bulk of African exports, before human beings became the dominant currency. This change was primarily driven by the explosive growth of the highly profitable but labor-intensive sugar cultivation in the Americas, where there happened to be a shortage of cheap labor. Not only did the pathogens unleashed in the Columbian Experience decimate indigenous populations in the New World, but the Roman Catholic church had officially proscribed enslaving the natives. At the same time, disease and climate in Africa proved a death trap for Europeans, making sugar cultivation there untenable. The confluence of these factors generated a perfect storm for those helpless victims brutally forced into the holds of slave ships bound for the Middle Passage and destined for an uncertain future in faraway lands where they were often literally worked to death on sugar plantations. Walvin, Professor of History Emeritus at University of York, has written extensively on slavery and the slave trade and thus brings an expertise to the task often lacking by those who treat slavery on the periphery of related studies. The reward for the reader is a number of insights that probe frequently overlooked aspects of the institution, especially as it later developed in North America. Historians have long noted the bitter resistance of African-Americans in the nineteenth century to schemes that would *colonize* them back to Africa. While their ancestors may have been cruelly stolen from the African continent, these descendants, slave and free, identified with America rather than a foreign land on the other side of the Atlantic. According to Walvin, the origin of this sense of identity can be traced to specific circumstances: Until the 1720s, the black population in North America grew via imported Africans. Thereafter, it began to increase naturally rather than via the Atlantic slave trade. The consequences of the diminishing importance of the Atlantic slave trade on North America were enormous. Africa and its multitude of cultures receded as a demographic force in the lives of local slaves: there were fewer and fewer Africans in slave communities. This had the effect of inevitably reducing the cultural influence of Africa [p 100] Likewise, the author connects the development of slavery in colonial North America to its post-Revolution evolution into the essential building block of the southern cotton plantation economy: When the American colonies broke away from Britain in 1776, they took with them half a million blacks; by 1810, that had increased to 1.4 million, overwhelmingly in the old South. It was this established American slave population that was to make possible the development of the enslaved cotton revolution of the nineteenth century and the consequent westward movement of slavery from the former colonies to the new cotton frontier. When cotton thrived in the new states of the South and the frontier in the nineteenth century, the new cotton plantations turned for their labour not to Africa but to the slave populations of the old slave systems on the east coast . . . In the process, slavery was thus

transformed from a British colonial institution into a critical element in the early growth and expansion of the infant republic. The slavery of British colonial North America gave birth to slavery in the USA. [p107] Walvin's often brilliant analyses frequently point to ironies and unintended consequences. One is that while " . . . the forms of slavery that Europeans created in the Americas proved to be among the most hostile and repressive in recorded history . . . [t]he paradox remains that Europe saw the gradual securing of individual rights to ever more people in Europe at the very same time that Europeans expanded and intensified slavery across vast tracts of the Americas." [p15] Another is that the majority of those ripped away from their homelands and shipped to the Americas as property came via British ships, yet it was the later conscience-driven dedication to abolition in England that eventually not only shut down the Atlantic slave trade but also sparked a multinational movement towards emancipation. [p121-23] There is a great deal more. In fact, more than enough to encourage others with interest in this topic to find this book and devour it with relish the way I did. Of course, something should also be said of the wealth of superlative maps included here—"there are eight-seven of them" all derived from a variety of historical atlases and other sources, which as previously noted are absolutely integral to the narrative. For all of his achievements, Walvin's otherwise magnificent book is not without a couple of glaring flaws, one of fact and the other of interpretation. The first is his claim that slaves built the pyramids of ancient Egypt, [p16] which historians know was not the case. The other is his contention, repeated more than once, [p110, p124] that the American Civil War was not caused by slavery. In fact, the scholarly consensus is that slavery was indeed the central cause of southern secession and the war that act triggered. Still, there are few such imperfections. Much of this fine book begs for readers seeking a deeper perspective of this unique variation of human chattel slavery that tragically proved to be the very foundation for economic development of the modern western world.

Using very short chapters on topics such as The Atlantic, Destinations, and Slave Resistance, this is an unusual introduction to the Atlantic slave trade in the early modern era (primarily). It compartmentalizes the slave trade by geographical region, and the positive result is good detail into different windows of the trade. What is more, the black and white maps used throughout the book, which are more helpful than the maps in most every other book on the topic, drive home the content in the chapters. The book focuses on the economic side of the slave trade, but it does it well. This includes helpful discussions of sailing routes, improvements in navigation, issues affecting the continent of Africa, and the book takes a stab at pinpointing the locations and ethnic identities of the Africans as they were seized and sold. What the reader won't find should be noted. Very little social

or cultural history of the slave trade or of life for African slaves is covered. It sticks to an economic and intercontinental focus, as a historical atlas, and does it well. It can be used as a text in world history courses and for researching how slavery played a role in Africa, the Americas, and Europe.

This is an excellent book for anyone who wants to understand the entire history of slavery, but who cannot take the time to read dozens of books. Super for college students in slavery classes. This book covers the entire history of slavery INCLUDING the twentieth century! A rare and easy to read yet scholarly book for anyone from 12 to 112. The maps are GREAT!

Walvin's book allows us to have a pictorial view of world history as it was changed by the interaction of the inhabitants of one continent--Africa--with the people of three other continents--Europe, North America, and South America. His maps bring the stories to life.

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