

# TRAFFICKING, GENDER & SLAVERY: PAST AND PRESENT<sup>1</sup>

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Time present and time past  
Are both perhaps present in time future,  
And time future contained in time past.

T.S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton*

It is now commonly, and increasingly, held that contemporary trafficking in persons and all forms of forced labor constitute modern forms of slavery. This view was given official support in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's introduction to the State Department's 2009 *Trafficking in Persons Report* where she began: "we have seen unprecedented forward movement around the world in the fight to end human trafficking, a form of modern-day slavery." Clinton was here echoing similar claims by numerous experts and policy advocates, including the authors of her department's authoritative TIP report.

My objective in this paper is to address the serious problem of defining slavery in the modern world that currently bedevils most writings on the subject. I will argue, first, that standard arguments making the claim that *all* trafficking in persons and, even more broadly, all forms of forced labor, constitute forms of slavery are problematic because they embrace too many of the world's migrants—internal and external--and too promiscuously conflate slavery with forms of exploitation not considered slavery in most non-western societies or in any historically informed and conceptually rigorous use of the term. At the same time, I will argue that the worst forms of child labor and domestic servitude as well as international and domestic sexual trafficking, all easily satisfy a polythetic<sup>2</sup> definition of slavery in their close family resemblance to the institution as it has existed throughout history. I will proceed by first reprising and bringing up to date my own definition of slavery, developed in my work *Slavery and Social Death* and extended in later writings. I will then closely examine the definition offered by the most prominent and widely cited author on the subject of contemporary slavery, Kevin Bales. I single out Dr. Bales, not simply because of his influence, but because he has explicitly contrasted his definition with my own and has argued that while my definition might have properly described what he calls "the old" slavery it is no longer adequate for our understanding of contemporary slavery. In contesting this view, I hope to show that, to the contrary, the definition of slavery developed in *Slavery and Social Death*<sup>3</sup> and refined in later works, is of far greater relevance to our understanding of slavery in the world today, especially its fastest growing form: the trafficking of women and girls for commercial sexual purposes.

The remainder of the paper explores the gendered nature of slavery in both traditional and modern times. I begin by demonstrating this through an examination of statistical and anthropological data on traditional societies. I show that slavery has always been a highly gendered relation of domination and examine the complex interplay of economic and socio-cultural factors in

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<sup>1</sup>Forthcoming in Jean Allain, ed., *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Sept. 2012)

<sup>2</sup> A polythetic definition refers to a class of objects which have many but not all properties in common. Objects more or less belong to such a class. In practice, one object, by ideally exhibiting the most frequently occurring property or configuration of properties, is deemed prototypical. I will be arguing that the trafficked, sexually enslaved woman is the prototypical modern slave.

<sup>3</sup> Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982)

such societies. I then attempt to show the gendered nature of slavery in the major contemporary forms of the institution, focusing on the sexual domination and exploitation of women.

### **1. The nature of slavery: traditional and modern**

Conventional definitions of slavery emphasize its economic and legal aspects and are still largely variations on the 1926 League of Nations statement which, according to Allain “remains the established definition in law,” namely: “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.”<sup>4</sup> In *Slavery and Social Death* I questioned the utility of this narrowly conceived Western approach which applies mainly to modern, capitalistic slavery in which the slave is quintessentially a commercial chattel. I pointed out that in many parts of the world many categories of persons who were not slaves could be sold, for example, brides in societies with bride-price arrangements (to be examined later), debt-bondsmen, indentured servants (including those in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century U.S. and the Caribbean), serfs (as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Russia and Eastern Germany), concubines and children. At the same time, many types of slaves, especially those born into slavery or had given birth to a child with their masters, could sometimes not be sold.

Slavery, it was argued, is best understood as a form of personal, corporeal domination, by the slaveholder or his agent, based on the exercise or threat of physical and psychological violence. It is characterized, first, by the absolute power (in practice) of the master over his slave, the latter becoming merely an extension of the will and household of the former. The master’s power excluded all claims or powers by the slaves in self, things or persons. Whatever the slave possessed ultimately belonged to the master; at most, she was permitted its usufruct or *peculium*. Similarly, the slave had no claims in her children, who belonged to the master and could be moved away or sold at his will. Because the master owned the progeny of the slaves, the condition of slavery was usually inherited, although societies varied widely in the rules determining the pattern of inheritance.

The second prototypical feature of slavery was the deracination and socio-cultural isolation of the slave, which I referred to as her natal alienation. Slaves were originally uprooted from their ancestral homes then incorporated into the household or estate of their masters. They and their children were precluded from any formal attachment to, or claims on, the community of their masters. They were “people who did not belong,” quintessential “others” or outsiders, reflected in the term for slavery in many lands from ancient Mesopotamian times to 19<sup>th</sup> century West Africa, but most strikingly in the common root, *slav*, for the term in all the West European languages (Sp=esclavo, Ger.=sklave, Fr.=esclave, Du= slaaf, Sw=slav) which came about because the typical slave in medieval Europe from the 8<sup>th</sup> century were outsider Slavs trafficked to Western Europe,<sup>5</sup> a tragic historical pattern repeating itself in the current massive trafficking of Slavic women into West European sexual slavery.<sup>6</sup> There were many ways of expressing this isolation: in small, kin-based societies without developed legal systems, slaves were regarded as “kinless,” people who had no recognized place in the lineage system. In more advanced societies such as the ancient Romans they were considered legally dead: “pro nullo”, without rights or duties, or any legal capacity, because completely under the dominium of his master. The descendants of slaves, even though born in the homeland of their masters, continued to be natively alienated in that they had no rights deriving from birth and were considered not to belong to the societies of their masters, belonging instead to their masters with their existence as recognized social beings entirely mediated through him.

Today, because slavery is no longer legally sanctioned, the closest approximation to traditional natal alienation are persons who find themselves illegally transported to foreign countries where they are fearful of seeking the protection of law enforcement and other state authorities and are isolated from familial and social ties. Persons who are trafficked and enslaved in the country of their birth, while they technically have the right to state protection, may be terrorized into fearing such

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<sup>4</sup> Jean Allain, A Legal Consideration of ‘Slavery’ in Light of the Travaux Préparatoires of the 1926 Convention,” in *Twenty First Century Slavery*, Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, Hull, U.K. 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Verlinden. “L’esclavage dans l’Europe medievale, (Bruges, De Tempel, 1956)vol. 2, 999-1010.

<sup>6</sup> See especially Sally Stoecker & Louise Shelley, *Human Trafficking and Organized Crime: Eurasian and American Perspectives* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

authorities by their slave-holders. We will use the broader term social isolation, rather than natal alienation, to take account of the non-legality of modern slavery. Nonetheless, the psychological reality of the modern slave's isolation may be no less devastating than that suffered by the natal alienation of traditional slaves.

Psychologists have now come to identify the need to belong, to gain acceptance and avoid rejection, as the most fundamental of five core motives that underlie human behavior. Alan and Susan Fiske summarized a long tradition of scholarship showing that this basic need underlies the other fundamental human motives: "to maintain socially shared understanding, a sense of control over outcomes, a special sympathy for self, and trust in certain in-group others."<sup>7</sup> In other words, blocking the activation of this most basic human motive, as the slave-master and his community did, crippled the slaves' capacity to be fully human. It is hard to imagine a better description of the everyday sociological and social-psychological reality of slave life throughout the world, past and present, than that they are people who are inhumanly prevented from developing stable, shared understandings of their world, any sense of control over their lives, any deep confidence in and sympathy for themselves as autonomous, self-cherishing and self-confident persons capable of self-improvement, and any deep trust in others.

Third is the absolute degradation attached to slave status, the fact that the slave is a person without honor, having no dignity that any free person is required to respect, and that this dishonor parasitically aggrandized the power and honor of the slave-holder. What Jan-George wrote of the Swahili of East Africa holds for all slaveholders of all times: "the number of the owner's dependents determined the degree of honor and respect they could command in their respective communities."<sup>8</sup> Injuries against slaves in nearly all slave-holding societies were compensated with payments to the master, not the slave. Tragically, slaves themselves come to consider their condition one of dishonor and this sense of degradation is often used by the slaveholder as a means of maintaining his hold on the slave and as a way of parasitically enhancing his own sense of power and mastership. Additionally, the degradation of slavery defines the slave as the ultimate 'other' in the eyes of non-slaves--- someone beyond the pale, base and irredeemably dishonored---which, in turn, enhances her isolation, a key element in the master's control over her.<sup>9</sup> For many poor and disadvantaged non-slaves the otherness of the slave also offers the parasitic sense of pride in not being among the lowest of the low, even a sense of freedom.

An important additional feature of historical slavery which, we will see, is of great relevance to the situation today, is the gendered nature of slavery and the centrality of the body in the slave relation. Throughout the ages of slavery, women were not only the main and preferred source of slaves in most slave-holding societies, but the condition of non-slave women provided the psychological, socio-economic, legal, and physical model of enslavement . In numerous societies, slaves were ready substitutes for non-slave women, in labor and in bed. And, as several scholars have noted, the male- female and especially the marital relationship often provided the model for the master-slave relationship, a point first made by the 19<sup>th</sup> century student of comparative slavery, Tourmagne.<sup>10</sup> The economist Frederic Pryor has argued that there is a parallelism "between dominant husband and exploited wife, on the one hand, and a master and his slave, on the other . The exploited wife and slave (either male or female) fulfill the same role, namely, to exercise power."<sup>11</sup> More recently, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch has gone even further: "Particularly in the most

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<sup>7</sup> Alan P. Fiske and Susan T. Fiske, "Social Relationships in Our Species and Culture," in S. Kitayama and D. Cohen, eds., *Handbook of Cultural Psychology*, New York: Guilford Press, 2007): 283-284.

<sup>8</sup> Jan-Georg Deutsch, "Prices for Female Slaves and Changes in their Life Cycle," in G. Campbell et al eds., *Women and Slavery*, p.132.

<sup>9</sup> On the persisting relevance of the "other" in contemporary trafficking , see Jonathan Todres, "The Importance of Realizing 'Other Rights' to Prevent Sex Trafficking," *Cardoza Journal of Law and Gender*, Vol. 12, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> A. Tourmagne. *Histoire de l'esclavage ancien et moderne*. Paris, 1880.

<sup>11</sup> Frederic Pryor, "A Comparative Study of Slave Societies", *Journal of Comparative Economics*, Vol 1 #1 (1977) pp. 81-102

patriarchal of the patrilineal societies," she writes, "the function, if not the status, of a free wife differed little from that of a slave."<sup>12</sup>

However, beyond the sheer exercise of power, I would add the peculiar claim of possession of the other's body in both kinds of relations of domination. The ownership of the slave, unlike other forms of domination, was quintessentially carnal. Aristotle gave us one of the earliest and most chilling expressions of this view: "The part and the whole, like the body and the soul have an identical interest; and the slave is a part of the master in the sense of being a living but separate part of his body."<sup>13</sup> The master owned not just the labor of the slave, but her corporeal being, with the power not only to use and enjoy its fruits (typically, the kiSawhili generic term for slave is *mtumwa*, meaning "one who is sent or used"<sup>14</sup>), but as the ancient Romans put it, the power to "use it up" (*abusus*);<sup>15</sup> All slaves, but especially women, were held in this distinctive "bodily subjection," a "vocal instrument" always answerable with their bodies, in antiquity as they are today.<sup>16</sup> Sharifa Ahjum, drawing on the insights of Lacanian psychoanalysis to decipher the relations of power in Cape Colony slavery, as revealed in contemporary writings on the subject, found that "slave women became intelligible solely through the contradiction engendered by their corporeal desirability, on the one hand, their visibility as body, and on the other hand, their erasure in the phallogocentric economy of desire," the latter being the domain of legitimate marital relations, the foundation of community and social order for free persons.<sup>17</sup>

In the long annals of slavery no slaveowner wrote more prolifically and candidly about the brutally gendered nature of slavery and its consequences for female, and male, slaves than the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Jamaican Thomas Thistlewood who kept a diary of his sexual and other corporeal using up his slaves over a period of 37 years during which he engaged in 3852 sexual acts with 138 slave women. Although he had an average of 14 different partners per year, some of whom he raped, most of whom he compelled into casual relations, he nonetheless developed close physical relations with several of them, who served him as stable concubines or "wives," in exactly the way a successful mack pimp today has a special woman from his stable of slave prostitutes. In spite of this, indeed, because of it, he was as savage to his slaves as the other planters: "Thistlewood whipped slaves; rubbed salt, lemon juice, and urine into their wounds; made a slave defecate into the mouth of another slave and then gagged the unfortunate recipient of this gift; and chained slaves overnight in the 'bilboes' or stocks."<sup>18</sup> As his own and other independent sources indicate, his was quite normal behavior in Jamaica. This was the real face of slavery as it existed everywhere: the intensely personal nature of domination and the very gendered nature of its execution. As Burnard perceptively commented, masters "molested slave women in part because they could do so without fear of social consequence and in part because they constantly needed to show slaves the extent of their dominance. ...*institutional dominance ... had to be translated into personal dominance.* Slave owners needed to show that they were strong, violent, virile men who ruled the little kingdoms of white autocracy that were Jamaican plantations as they pleased. What better way for white men to show who was in control than for them to have the pick of black women whenever they chose."<sup>19</sup>

One important consequence of my definition of slavery is that it sharply differentiates the relation from other forms of domination, in contrast with modern usages which have tended to

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<sup>12</sup> Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, "Women, Marriage, And Slavery in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Nineteenth Century," in G.Campbell, S. Miers and J.C. Miller, eds., *Women and Slavery: Africa, The Indian Ocean World, and the Medieval North Atlantic*, ( Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007):43.

<sup>13</sup> Aristotle, *The Politics* (Translated by Ernest Barker(New York: Oxford University Press1958) Bk.1, chap.6.

<sup>14</sup> Jan-Georg Deutsch, "Prices for Female Slaves and Changes in the Life Cycle," in G. Campbell et al, *Women and Slavery in Africa*, p.131.

<sup>15</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> Carolyn Osiek, Margaret Macdonald with Janet Tullloch, *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006)103.

<sup>17</sup> Sharifa Ahjum, "The Law of the White Father," in G.Campbell et al, eds, *Women and Slavery*, p.94

<sup>18</sup> Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, & Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004):149-150

<sup>19</sup> Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire*, p. 160.

confound these different forms. Thus, it makes clear the distinction between slaves and persons in debt bondage and serfdom. The medieval and modern East European serfs were not natively alienated or socially isolated and, however diminished, had some honor that could be defended. It was often the case that medieval serfs went to war with their lords in defense of their common homeland. Similarly, today it is not usually the case that debt bondsmen are natively alienated or socially isolated persons. As Ruwanpura and Rai have noted, “in South Asia there are notable links to religious, cultural, and caste-based social relationships and skewed land-ownership patterns, which is closely related to the local social and economic structures.”<sup>20</sup> And all over Latin America, it was the deeply rooted native Indian populations who were reduced to peonage by outsider Hispanic elites,<sup>21</sup> a classic case in point being the Diriomenos of Nicaragua who became peons, sometimes willingly, to the owners of the coffee fincas.<sup>22</sup> If anything, it was their very integration in their communities that partly facilitates their entrapment in poverty. Furthermore, as Dore documents in the case of the Diriomenos of Nicaragua, it is economic impoverishment, coercive labor laws and the political power of patriarchal elites, sometimes interacting with the gendered inequality among the peons themselves, that are usually the causes of persons entering into, and remaining in, debt bondage, whereas economic necessity, while certainly an indirect cause, is often not what directly leads to slavery. In Pakistan, where debt bondage has spread from agriculture to the highly decentralized industrial sector people are driven into debt bondage by the combination of wages below subsistence level leading to shortfalls in household incomes and expenditure ‘spikes’ such as deaths and marriages, the latter incurring costs that are, on average, 80 percent of laborers annual income.<sup>23</sup> People, both in past and present times, are usually either forced into slavery or trapped into it by fraudulent means.

Further, in general, bonded persons are not corporeally owned or possessed as slaves traditionally were. There was. To be sure, an element of this in traditional debt bondage in South Asia, especially in agriculture where landowners from the upper castes maintained unequal patron-client relationships with lower caste share-cropping and other landed laborers, vestiges of which remain today. Thus Ramphal, a 28-year old (in 2004) Indian who was born into bondage recalls cases of women being raped and burnt by their exploiters. Such actions, however, are clearly illegal (as they were not in traditional slavery) and represent extreme cases. Modernization has radically changed this pattern into one in which laborers are increasingly alienated from traditional contractual relationships and are instead recruited by middlemen contractors and sub-contractors many of the latter from the exploited laborers own kin-group and castes. According to Khan, indebted and bonded factory workers, like their counterparts in the modernized farming sector, “have little or nothing to do with the recruitment of labor, apart from the few regular employees that make up the formal workforce.”<sup>24</sup> In both Latin America and South Asia traditional, pre-capitalist labor exploitation has mutated under modern capitalistic pressures into new patterns of exploitation collectively designated “neo-bondage” by scholars of the process. Basile and Mukhopadhyay summarize as follows: “While bondage in pre-capitalist economy is a form of interpersonal and permanent link, “neo-bondage” refers to a form of ‘less personalized, more contractual and monetised’ bondage that does not provide, as in the past, ‘protection’ and a ‘subsistence guarantee’ to bonded workers.” Rather it is “rooted in the asymmetry of power relations between capital and

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<sup>20</sup> Kanchana Ruwanpura and Pallavi Rai, *Forced Labour: Definitions, Indicators and Measurement*, Geneva, ILO, 2004 p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Eduardo Bedoya, A. Bedoya & P. Belser, “Debt Bondage and Ethnic Discrimination in Latin America,” in Beate Andrees & Patirck Belser, eds., *Forced Labor: Coercion and Exploitation in the Private Economy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2009)

<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth Dore, *Myths of modernity: peonage and patriarchy in Nicaragua* (Duke University Press, 2006)

<sup>23</sup> Ali Khan, “Bonded Labor in Pakistan,” in Beate Andrees & Patirck Belser, eds., *Forced Labor: Coercion and Exploitation in the Private Economy*, p. 65-68.

<sup>24</sup> Khan, “Bonded Labor in Pakistan,” p.62.

labour” resulting in “a form that is intermediate between the autonomous commoditization of wage labour and the heteronomous commoditization of slavery.”<sup>25</sup>

A fourth feature of traditional, legally sanctioned slavery applies less to modern times. It is the fact that slavery was hereditary and permanent. Now while, again, one can cite many cases of children taking on the debt burdens of their parents, especially in South Asia, not only is such inheritance illegal but the overwhelming tendency, even among adults, is toward short term contracts. In Latin America the vast majority of such contracts last no more than one harvest.<sup>26</sup> In India the younger generation has adopted a simple solution to the burden of their parents’ debt: they simply walk away from them, creating what Jan Breman calls the “footloose proletariat” who choose with their feet the “more risky but freer life of a day worker.”<sup>27</sup>

To conclude this section, we define slavery as *the violent, corporeal possession of socially isolated and parasitically degraded persons*.

In its traditional form the master’s power was legally enforceable and absolute, the slave’s status usually, though not always, heritable and the slave’s social isolation amounted to a state of natal alienation, meaning that he or she had no legal personality or formally recognizable membership in the society of their enslavement. Viewed in monothetic terms, such an institution no longer exists. However, in polythetic terms, there are relations of domination today that have enough of these properties to justify being designated slavery.

## 2. Bales’ view of the “Old” and “New Slavery”: A Critique

In a series of recent works, Kevin Bales has attempted to distinguish between traditional and modern-day slavery as part of his effort to redefine nearly all forms of modern forced labor as slavery, which he claims to be now more widespread than at any other time in history, his estimate of 27 million slaves today being the most widely cited figure on the subject.<sup>28</sup> I need hardly add that this critique of Bales is in no way meant to diminish the extraordinary work he has done in promoting the modern abolitionist cause. To the contrary, by correcting this error in his work, it is hoped that the effort to achieve the aims we both share will be strengthened.

“The basic fact of one person totally controlling another remains the same,” he writes, “but slavery has changed in some crucial ways.” He argues that there are seven basic ways in which the “old” slavery differs from the “new.” First, in traditional slavery legal ownership was asserted, whereas today there is no attempt to do so, especially in light of the fact that slavery is now illegal in most societies. Secondly, it is claimed that slaves were relatively expensive previously, whereas the purchase cost today is very low. Third, that previously, slavery provided very low profits, whereas today slavery is an extremely high-profit business. Fourth, that there was always a shortage of potential slaves in older systems, whereas today there is a glut of potential slaves. Fifthly, that slavery previously was a long-term relationship, whereas today it is a short-term one. Sixth, slaves were maintained by their owners as long as possible in traditional slavery, whereas today slaves are disposable commodities. Finally, he argues that under previous systems of slavery there were important ethnic and racial differences between masters and slaves, whereas today such differences are not important.

Bales attributes the rise of the new slavery and these important differences to the rapid increase in population after the middle of the last century, especially in places where slavery was already prevalent, as well as government corruption. Available resources could not meet the needs of all and

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<sup>25</sup> Elisabetta Basile & Ishita Mukhopadhyay, *The Changing Identity of Rural India: A Socio-historical Analysis* (Anthem Press India, 2009), p.48

<sup>26</sup> Bedoya et al, “Debt Bondage and Ethnic Discrimination in Latin America,” pp.45-46.

<sup>27</sup> Jan Breman, *Footloose Labor: Working in India’s Informal Economy* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.238

<sup>28</sup> See, in particular, Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, chapter 1; *Understanding Global Slavery: A Reader*,(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) pp. 52-68; *The Slave Next Door: Human Trafficking and Slavery in America Today* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), chapter 1.

hence the price of humans decreased. A second factor accounting for the increase, and cheapening, of the value of slaves was the growth in inequality due to modernization, especially in rural areas where small-scale subsistence farming was replaced by labor-saving techniques. More generally, globalization has not only exacerbated the above trends, but has made transportation much cheaper both between and within countries, thereby facilitating the growth of trafficking and slavery.

Most of the above distinguishing features argued by Bales are open to question. Bales' fundamental error is to equate what he calls "the old slavery" with the capitalistic slave systems of the Americas, especially the United States South. However, it makes little sense to so confine the old slavery, especially for Bales, whose entire work is concerned with the global nature of the new slavery, facilitated by the processes of globalization. As he himself notes, these modern developments are most prone to worsen the condition of people in traditional, non-western societies which already harbored many forms of forced labor.

The claim that legal ownership is asserted in the old slavery whereas it is not today is the only one of Bales distinguishing features that stands up to some scrutiny. We have already noted the importance of legality as a distinguishing feature of traditional slavery, but even this must be carefully qualified. While it is true that almost no society legally condones slavery today, the situation under previous systems of slavery varied widely. In some more advanced societies with established legal systems, rights of ownership were indeed sanctioned as they were in ancient Greece and Rome and in the modern Americas. However, most traditional societies had no such formal systems of law and it is anachronistic, as well as legally ethnocentric, to claim that legal ownership was generally asserted in the old systems of slavery. Exclusive legal ownership is a distinctive principle originating in ancient Roman law and is not attested in many traditional systems of law.<sup>29</sup> As defined earlier, the concepts of corporeal possession, violence and of extreme power over another are more appropriate terms in defining the slave relation which, as it happens, also facilitates its application to certain modern forms of domination.

A further qualification is that, while slavery is declared illegal in nearly all societies today, it is not entirely the case that all extreme forms of modern forced labor are illegal or that laws, including those against slavery, are taken seriously. The legal scholar, Jane Kim, has forcefully argued that the trafficking of women via the foreign-bride industry is legal practice in the U.S., and nearly all countries of the world, in spite of the fact that the condition of these women often amount to modern enslavement.<sup>30</sup> In many countries laws against servitude are often dead letters. This is true of Niger, Mauritania and Sudan, where traditional slavery persists.<sup>31</sup> And although Pakistan (in 1992) and Nepal (in 2000) declared bonded labor illegal in response to international pressure local elites and often the government have "systematically failed to honor or defend the fundamental rights of the working population to live in freedom."<sup>32</sup> But the simplest and most effective way in which laws are rendered ineffective is by the recruitment of foreign trafficked labor. Thus, in Thailand, the country with one of the worst records for both sexual and non-sexual forced labor, all international protocols against trafficking and forced labor have been duly ratified but are then made moot by virtue of the fact that migrant workers in the country are prohibited from organizing to improve their labor condition, in outright contravention of ILO Convention No.122 which bars such prohibitions.<sup>33</sup>

The claim that modern slavery is characterized by the low purchase price of slaves compared with the high purchase price under former slavery is simply incorrect once one goes beyond the Americas. There was, in fact, wide variation in the price of slaves in different times and parts of the world, as is true today. In the Ancient Near East, medieval Ireland and Iceland and some traditional African

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<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of this issue see Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, pp. 17-34.

<sup>30</sup> Jane Kim, (2011) "Trafficked: Domestic violence, Exploitation in Marriage, and the Foreign-Bride Industry," *Virginia Journal of International Law*, Vol. 51, No 2 .

See also, Suzanne H. Jackson, "Marriages of Convenience: International Marriage Brokers, 'Mail-Order Brides,' and Domestic Servitude," *University of Toledo Law Review*, Vol. 38 (2007)

<sup>31</sup> Galy kadir Abdelkader, *ed.*, *Slavery in Niger: Historical, Legal and Contemporary Perspectives*(Anti-Slavery International, 2004)

<sup>32</sup> Jan Breman, *The Long Road to Social Security: The Political Economy of Unfree Labor in South Asia: Determining the Nature and Scale of Debt Bondage.* p.. 8

<sup>33</sup> Elaine Pearson, *The Mekong Challenge, Human Trafficking :*

societies such as the Mende, slaves were often used as units of value and could, indeed, be relatively expensive. A “big, strong thrall” was worth 24 cows in medieval Iceland, not cheap. However, in many other areas, the price of slaves could be incredibly low: the price of a good horse in 16th century Burma was 40 Indian slaves, and in 1872 in the glutted Bagirimi slave market of the Sudan women were being sold for \$5, a single cow valued at 10 slaves and young males were going for as little as 6 chickens a head.<sup>34</sup> As with present times, the price and supply of slaves depended on factors that influenced the state of the market such as warfare, internal conflicts and post-conflict conditions, unemployment, age, gender discrimination, famine or other sources of economic distress.<sup>35</sup>

The same holds for profits. Contrary to Bales’ claim, the old slavery could be very profitable, and this includes, most notably, the very society on which he based his assertion: the plantations of the U.S. South, contrary to what was once the common view, were highly profitable, as were those of the West Indies right up to the near the end of slavery.<sup>36</sup> Highly profitable, too, were the sale and use of slaves in pre-Columbian West Africa and the Sahel.<sup>37</sup>

There was no shortage of potential slaves in most traditional slave societies. Here Bales was completely misled by his reliance on the U.S. case which, between the ending of the slave trade and its abolition was exceptional among comparative slave systems in the growth of demand for slaves at a time when external supplies were cut off. Such shortages, however, were rarely true even of the other slave societies of the Caribbean up to the end of the slave trade in 1807. As late as the late 19<sup>th</sup> century slave markets in the Sahel and what is now western Nigeria were often glutted especially following the Fulani jihad and the collapse of the Yoruba Oyo Empire.<sup>38</sup> In the nineteenth century, when Cuba began to rapidly expand its slave plantation system, slaves were so abundant in West Africa that Cuban planters had little difficulty buying and greatly expanding their stock of slaves, in spite of the embargo of the British navy against slave trading after 1807.<sup>39</sup>

Whether or not all slavery today can be characterized as short-term relationships is questionable. Millions of the debt bondsmen in Pakistan and India, considered to be slaves by Bales, inherited their status and original debts which both accumulate and are passed on from generation to generation. The modern restavek system of child slavery in Haiti is certainly a long-term relationship, as is the well documented cases of child slavery in the cocoa and other farms of West Africa. Other forms of domestic servitude, including many documented by Bales himself in more recent work,<sup>40</sup> are also very long-term. Bales’ error here is to focus too narrowly on sexual trafficking in some modern Western societies where trafficked prostitutes are sold from one trafficker to another. However, even here, one can cite numerous counter-cases in which trafficked prostitutes maintain long-term relationships with their pimps and masters. This is especially true of prostitutes trafficked domestically in the U.S, but there are many cases of internationally trafficked women who are held in long-term slave-like relationships.

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<sup>34</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, pp. 166-169

<sup>35</sup> On factors determining trafficking today see Louise Shelley, *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chapter 1; on current prices for female sexual slaves, see Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010) p.19. Kara estimates the current average global price of a female slave at \$1895.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, *Time of the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974); Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Eve of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977)

<sup>37</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000) pp.56,171; Patrick Manning, “Contours of Slavery and Social change in Africa,” *American Historical Review* (1983), Vol. 88, #4: 851-852.

<sup>38</sup> Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, p.195

<sup>39</sup> Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

<sup>40</sup> Kevin Bales, *The Slave Next Door: Human Trafficking and Slavery in America Today* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 18-42.



Two kinds of cases will do. First, there is the growing problem of forced marriages, especially in China, to which we return later. In addition it has now been well documented that many East-Asian women who marry foreign servicemen are forced into prostitution upon returning to America with their husbands, this being true of hundreds of Korean “army wives;” others are similarly held in long-term bondage and prostitution, amounting to slavery, after being recruited as mail-order brides.”<sup>41</sup> Second, there are many cases of long-term relationships in Europe and the U.S. today involving both commercial sexual exploitation as well as other forms of labor exploitation. Thus in both the US and Britain, many Asian “Snakeheads” such as the notorious “Sister Ping” maintain long term relationship with their victims who incur human-smuggling debts often amounting to over \$50,000 which may take the better part of a life-time to pay off.<sup>42</sup> In Italy, where there are an estimated 10,000 Nigerian prostitutes, women are recruited from their home provinces (mainly from the state of Edo) into long-term relationships with a madam that is highly structured and reinforced by both kinsmen and officiating priests known as *ohens*. Some of the more enterprising of the prostitute victims who survive their ordeal sometimes end up as madams themselves after working many years with the madam who recruited them, reproducing the system by then recruiting younger women from their home provinces through their kinsmen and men known as *trolleys* who smuggle the women through well established trafficking routes.<sup>43</sup>

What is said here applies equally to Bales’ distinction between maintained and disposable slaves. The typical American “player” pimp who depends on his stable of three prostitutes (the average in America) hardly considers them disposable; and the same holds for Snakeheads and their smuggled victims as well as relationships between Nigerian madams and their expensively recruited prostitutes. Women held in domestic servitude in Europe and the U.S. are often essential labor for their exploiters who rely on them to work sometimes 16-18 hour days looking after their children and their households so that they can pursue their own careers. Recently two young West African women were released from slavery in New Jersey by the police and one of their slave-owners sent to prison for 24 years. The young slaves were anything but disposable, being essential, long-term labor (who were also sexually abused) in their owners’ thriving hair-braiding business.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, the claim that modern day slavery differs from former slavery in the absence of ethno-racial differences is simply incorrect. It is well known that many of the victims of debt-bondage belong to different ethnic groups from their exploiters. A large number of women trafficked into prostitution into India come from Nepal where their ethno-somatic difference (mainly their lighter complexion) is an important part of their attraction to Indian johns.<sup>45</sup> Cambodian and Myanmar girls also come disproportionately from minority groups in these countries. In Japan there is a strong ethno-racial factor in the recruitment of women from South-East Asia. Many of the women recruited into prostitution in Europe come from ethnically different East European countries or from Africa.<sup>46</sup> A recent study by Anti-Slavery International has left no doubt on this issue. In discussing what they describe as “the global link between slavery and discrimination they wrote:

In the vast majority of cases involving slavery there is a discriminatory element which underpins that practice, regardless of which part of the world it takes place in. At the start of the 21st century, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights highlighted this fact: “Victims of slavery and slavery-like practices frequently belong to minority groups, particular racial groups

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<sup>41</sup> Janice Raymond, Donna Hughes and Carol Gomez, *Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States: International and Domestic Trends* (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, 2001):50-51

<sup>42</sup> Patrick R. Keefe, *The Snakehead: An Epic Tale of the Chinatown Underworld and the American Dream* (New York: Doubleday, 2009)

<sup>43</sup> Jorgen Carling, “Trafficking in Women from Nigeria to Europe,” *Migration Information Source*, Online article posted July 2005.

<sup>44</sup> *New Jersey Star Ledger*, August 18, 2010.

<sup>45</sup> Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (Columbia University Press, 2008) chapters 2 & 8. See also Patricia McCormick’s deeply moving account of the enslavement of Lakshmi, a Nepalese 13-year-old, in India: *Sold* (New York: Hyperion, 2006)

<sup>46</sup> Alexis A. Aronowitz, *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The global Trade in Human Beings* (Westport,CT: Praeger): 88-93

or categories of people who are especially vulnerable to a wide range of discriminatory acts, including women, children, indigenous people, people of 'low' caste status and migrant workers.<sup>47</sup>

Any number of other recent studies have arrived at the same conclusion."<sup>48</sup>

Beyond these specific criticisms of Bales there is one that is more general and applies to all who insist on blurring the distinction between slavery and other forms of forced labor. It is the problem this conflation creates for professional historians or anyone who takes history seriously. If we accept the fact that all forms of forced labor today amount to slavery, then we are compelled to view the entire history of the world, and especially of all the advanced societies from Near Eastern antiquity up to the rise of modern industrial capitalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the history of slavery. Sauce for the goose of the present is sauce for the gander of the past. Medieval European societies, with this conflation, were large-scale slave societies since the vast majority of persons in them were serfs and bondsmen; Eastern European societies up to the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (when serfdom was finally abolished in Russia) were slave societies; so too were China and India and Korea and all of Latin America, indeed, the whole world down to the early twentieth century apart from modern Western societies and egalitarian hunter gathering tribes. Does the anti-trafficking and more general abolitionist community really want to back itself into such an untenable historiographic corner?

### **3. The gendered nature of trafficking and slavery in traditional societies: A quantitative analysis**

As already noted, slavery in traditional societies, as is the case today, is a highly gendered relation of domination; the great majority of persons ever enslaved were women.<sup>49</sup> There are several reasons for this. First, because of their greater bodily mass and brute strength, and the fact that they tended to monopolize the instruments of violence, women were often easier to capture than men. Secondly, women were invariably far more useful for their slaveholders than men, especially in traditional societies. In many traditional economies people often lived at subsistence level and the procurement of a male slave could often end up as an economic burden for their holders. For this reason, male slaves were in demand only in certain more advanced traditional societies, such as those with class divisions where they were held by elite men to augment their power and display their status.<sup>50</sup> Women, on the other hand, were always utilizable in all but the most primitive of societies. They could be exploited in a much wider range of occupations--in the fields where women were producers, but also within the household in jobs not traditionally performed by men. However, even if not needed for economic activities, women were always usable as reproducers. At the very least, the sexual exploitation of slave women made them attractive possessions in a large number of societies where captured men were generally not needed.

In the following analysis I have used the final version of the standard sample of 186 representative pre-modern world societies originally developed by George Peter Murdock and his team, later revised by Douglas White.<sup>51</sup> My own codes for this sample have been added to those of other scholars and are now publicly available.<sup>52</sup> The main variables used in what follows are:

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<sup>47</sup> Mike Kaye, *Arrested Development: discrimination and slavery in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (U.K: Anti-Slavery International, 2008), p.5.

<sup>48</sup> For examples: Melissa Farley, A. Cotton, J. Lynne et al, 2003, Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on violence and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, *Journal of Trauma Practice*, Vol. 2, No. 3-4: p. 63; Bedoya et al, "Debt Bondage and Ethnic Discrimination in Latin America."

<sup>49</sup> Claire C. Robertson and Martin Klein, Introduction to their edited volume, *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Heinemann, 1997). Classical Greece and Rome from at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. as well as the Zandj of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century Iraq, Medieval Korea, and the modern capitalistic slave systems of the Americas and the Cape Colony of South Africa were the main exceptions.

<sup>50</sup> On geographic variation in the demand for male and female slaves in Africa during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries see Paul Lovejoy, "Internal Market or an Atlantic-Sahara Divide?" in G. Campbell et al, eds., *Women and Slavery*, 259-280

<sup>51</sup> See Murdock and White. "The Standard Cross- Cultural Sample", pp. 329-369; George P. Murdock and Diana O. Morrow. "Subsistence Economy and Supportive Practices: Cross-Cultural Codes" *Ethnology* 9

1. "Slavery: present" v "absent", slavery present referring to societies in which slavery existed, was hereditary and highly institutionalized.
2. "Fempart": which refers to the relative participation of women in the labor force. This is a 3-category ordinal code classifying societies according to whether (1) there were fewer women than men in the prevailing labor force (2) women were about equal to men in the labor force (3) women were proportionately greater than men in the labor force.
3. "Bride" or "Bridewealth": Present if a brideprice was the prevailing norm in marriages; absent or other consideration (such as dowry) otherwise. Bridewealth or brideprice is the payment of property and/or services by the relatives of the groom to the family of the bride-to-be.
4. "Polygyny": plural marriages by men, coded "present" if more than 20% of marriages are fully polygynous, "absent" if the norm is monogamy, or polygyny is less than 20% or limited to the sororal type.
5. "Extensive" v "Intensive" agriculture. In the former shifting agriculture, usually hoe-based, prevails, and there is a high ratio of land to farmers, as in West Africa; in the latter which is usually plough-based, there is a high ratio of farmers to land and far greater yield per unit of labor.  
This distinction draws on the famous work by Esther Boserup who found that in extensive systems women did most of the agricultural work whereas in intensive systems men predominated.<sup>53</sup>
6. Frequency of Warfare: Following Otterbein,<sup>54</sup> whose codes are incorporated in the codebook for the Standard Sample, warfare is defined "as armed combat between political communities." We re-coded the Otterbein codes to form a simple dichotomy: 1.Warfare Infrequent v "Warfare Frequent and Endemic" Both external and internal warfare (that between similar culture groups) were consolidated .

#### Findings:

The first finding to note (see figure 1) is that there is no association at the bivariate level between the level of female participation and slavery. The simple fact of women's

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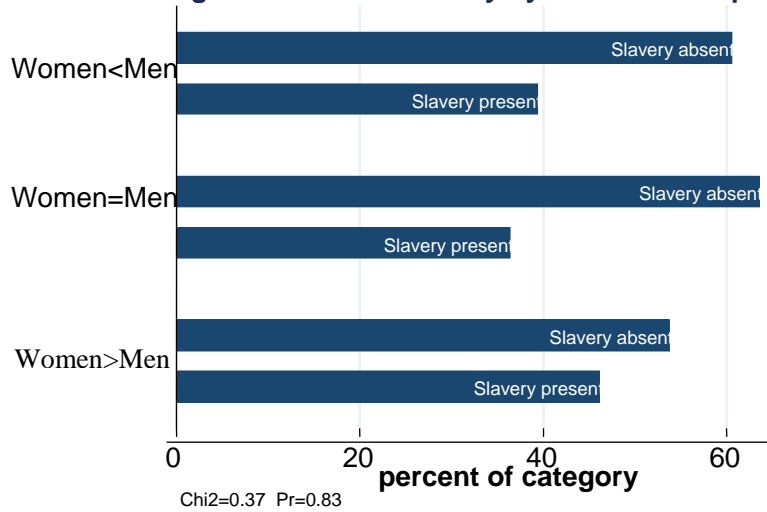
(1970), pp. 302-330; and George P. Murdock and C. Provost. "Measurement of Cultural Complexity". *Ethnology* 12 (1973), pp. 203-225.

<sup>52</sup> See Orlando Patterson. "Codes from Slavery and Social Death". In William Divale (ed.). *Pre-Coded Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample*. New York: York College, CUNY, 2000: Codes 917-920. Available on-line at <http://eclectic.ss.uci.edu/~drwhite/worldcul/SCCS2.pdf>. Note, however, that I have revised these codes for this essay, adding seven societies to the list of societies with slavery

<sup>53</sup> Boserup, Esther 1970 (reprinted 1997). *Women's Role in Economic Development*. London: Earthscan.

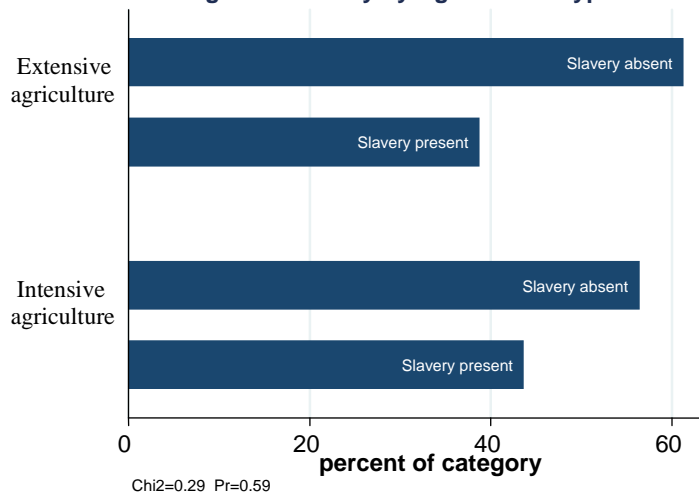
<sup>54</sup> Otterbein, Keith F. 1970. *The Evolution of War: A Cross-cultural study*. HRAF Press.

**Figure 1. Percent Slavery by Female Participation**



engagement in, or absence from, the dominant mode of production does not predict slavery. What is more surprising is a similar absence of association between slavery and type of agricultural system. In her classic study on women and economic development, Boserup had shown that there was a far greater reliance on female labor in farming among extensive agriculturalists than intensive ones, which might have suggested an association with slavery.<sup>55</sup> However, Figure two indicates that that slavery is equally likely in both. We will see later that the distinction has implications for slavery when considered in more complex multivariate terms.

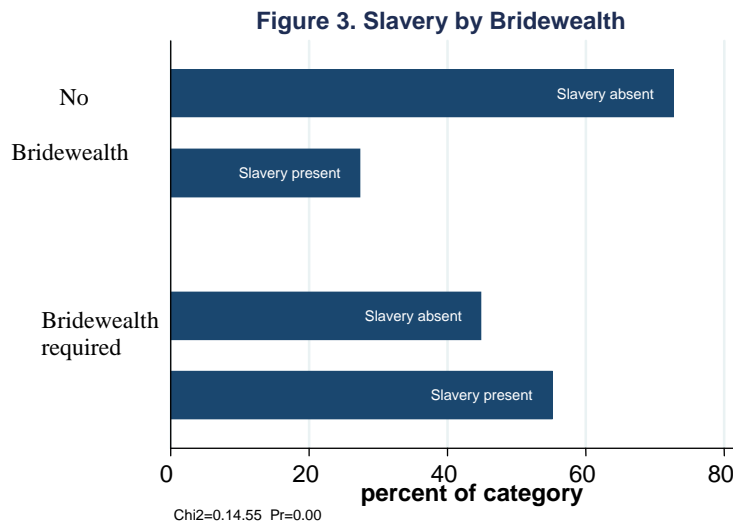
**Figure 2. Slavery by Agricultural Type**



Over half of all societies with bridewealth hold slaves: the presence of bridewealth more than triples the odds of finding institutional slavery. (See Figure 3) This suggests a reformulation of Pryor's view regarding the role of marriage as a model for slavery: not marriage, per se, but certain forms of it, most notably those involving bride-price, tend to be associated with slavery. In some cases, such as the Marghi of Northern Nigeria, captive women were the main consequence of frequent warfare and were quickly absorbed as secondary wives by powerful men, their status equivalent to that of "a wife

<sup>55</sup> Esther Boserup, *Women's Role in Economic Development* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1970)

acquired without benefit of bridewealth.”<sup>56</sup> In other cases, slaves were used as part of the payment for brides, but we found this to be true in only a small minority of societies. More often what happened was that men unable to pay the brideprice for a wife turned to slaves to meet their sexual and conjugal needs as well as their need for female labor on their farms. This situation was not peculiar to Africa. Of medieval Scandinavia, especially during the Viking Age, Seaver tell us that “it can often be difficult to know when a woman was considered a wife and when she was simply a temporary female companion, free or slave. The line between a bride price and a slave’s purchase price could be very fine indeed.”<sup>57</sup>



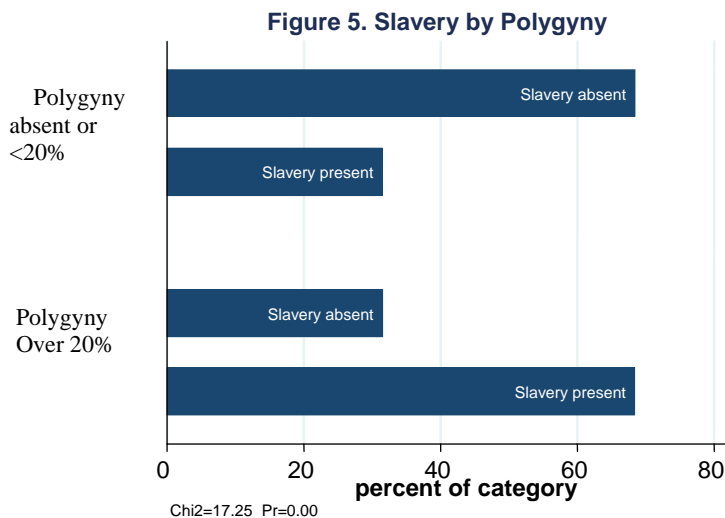
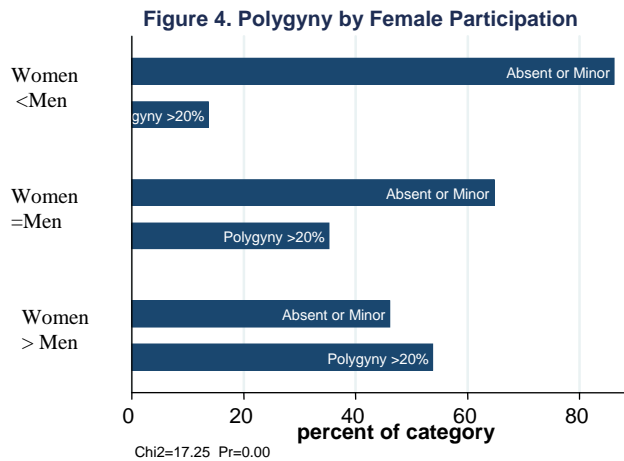
This brings us to the other powerful independent influence on slavery: polygyny. Figures 4 and 5 confirm the long established view that polygyny is strongly related to both the sexual division of labor and slavery.<sup>58</sup> In over a half of all societies with polygyny women dominate the primary mode of production and slavery is present in nearly 70 percent of them. Korotayeva has further noted that the polygyny and sexual division of labor relationship is especially marked in societies with extensive agriculture: “an average intensive plow agriculturalist in a culture with a very low female contribution to subsistence would never even consider seriously the possibility of having five wives (as he would not be able to feed all of them). Yet, this would not constitute a serious problem for a hoe horticulturalist within a culture with a very high female contribution to subsistence” because “getting five wives, first of all acquires 10 hands which may feed the horticulturalist himself.”<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> James Vaughn. “Mafakur: A Limbic Institution of the Margi.” In Suzanne Miers and Igor Kogytovff (eds.) *Slavery in Africa*, (Madison: 1977: University of Wisconsin Press) p. 91

<sup>57</sup> Kristen Seaver, “Thralls and Queens: Female Slavery in the Medieval Norse Atlantic,” in G. Campbell et al, *Women and Slavery*, p. 155.

<sup>58</sup> Michael Burton, Lilyan Brudner, Douglas White. “ A Model of the Sexual Division of Labor.” *American Ethnologist*, 4.2 (1977), pp. 227-251. Michael L. Burton, Douglas R. White. ‘Sexual Division of Labor in Agriculture.’ *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 86.3 (1984), pp. 568-583.

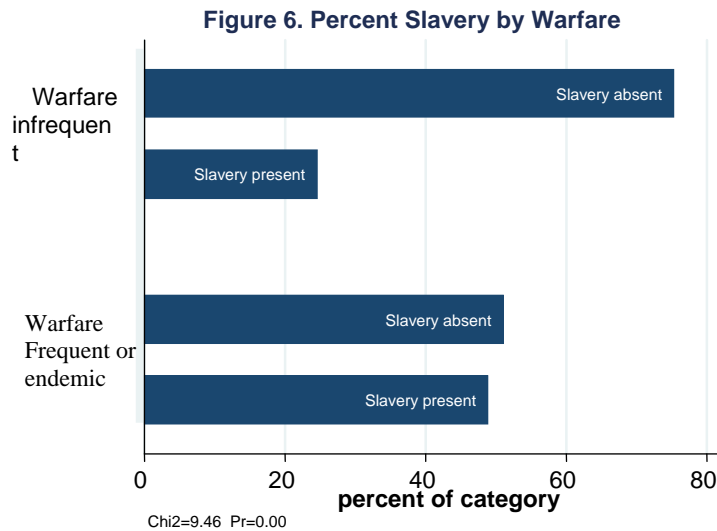
<sup>59</sup> An Apologia of George Peter Murdock. “Division of Labor by Gender and Postmarital Residence in Cross-Cultural Perspective: A Reconsideration.” *World Cultures* 12(2)date, pp. 179-203. For an informative case study see H. G. Jacoby. “The Economics of Polygyny in Sub-Saharan Africa: Female Productivity and the Demand for Wives in the Cote d’Ivoire.” *Journal of Political Economy*, 103.5 (1995), pp. 938-971.



We have already seen, however, that neither extensive agriculture nor the sexual division of labor by themselves is associated with slavery. Thus polygyny would seem to be one critical factor promoting slavery, both independently and in interaction with these other variables (as we will see below), especially the existence of bridewealth, or bride-price as it is sometimes called. Where the latter exists (and especially where payments are high) along with polygyny there will be a chronic shortage of women for younger men since older and/or a minority of powerful men with resources will tend to monopolize marriageable women. One solution to this problem is the capture, trafficking and enslavement of women to satisfy the needs of these younger men shut out of the marriage market. Indeed, this became normative in many Islamic societies and is explicitly advocated in the Koran as one solution for younger men and a way of avoiding the sin of adultery.<sup>60</sup> This is pointedly brought home in Shaun E. Marmon’s study of slavery in the Mamluk empire which documents the “primacy” of the female slaves’ role “as sexual object and as a potential mother of free children,”

<sup>60</sup> Murray Gordon. *Slavery in the Arab World*. New York: New Amsterdam Books, 1990, especially chapters 2 & 4.; R. Brunschwig, “Abd,” *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1961) Vol.1.

brutally expressed in the formula for manumission – *farjuki hurrun*—which literally means: “your sexual organ is free.”<sup>61</sup>



Finally, there is the role of warfare, internal and external, which is as potent a factor in generating the capture, trafficking and enslavement of persons, especially women, in traditional times as in the present.<sup>62</sup> Figure 6 shows a strong association: over a half of societies with chronic warfare also had institutionalized slavery, compared with only a quarter of the more pacific ones.

To better understand the complex interactions between slavery and the other variables we have examined I ran several ordered logistic regressions, reported in Tables 1A and 1B (See Appendix 1) which each present four nested models predicting slavery, one for extensive agriculturalists, the other for societies with intensive agriculture. The patterns of interactions are broadly similar in both kinds of societies, but there are important differences worth noting.

The non-significance of female labor participation as a predictor of slavery, already indicated by the bivariate coefficients, is largely confirmed by our regression models. Only in the full model for extensive agriculturalists (Appendix 1: Table 1A: Model 4) does it achieve significance at the .05 probability level, after warfare is added, and it is striking that each unit increase in female participation (from less females to equal to more females in the dominant mode of production) substantially *lessens* the odds of slavery, holding the other variables constant. In both agricultural systems, brideprice increases the odds of slavery although it should be noted that among extensive agriculturalists this finding is acceptable only if we set our alpha level at .10, which is not unreasonable in light of the small cell frequencies. Among intensive agriculturalists the influence of brideprice, though less strong, is still robust and highly significant in all models. Bridewealth is far less frequently the consideration in marriage among intensive agriculturalists where the dowry tends to be the norm. What this suggests is that in that minority of cases where bride-price is found among such societies there is a very strong association with slavery.

<sup>61</sup> Shaun E. Marmon. “Domestic Slavery in the Mamluk Empire: A Preliminary Sketch.” In Shaun E. Marmon (ed.) *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1999, p.4.

<sup>62</sup> On pre-historic Europe, see Mike Parker Pearson and I.J.N. Thorpe (eds.) *Warfare, Violence and Slavery in Pre-History* Oxford: British Archeological Reports, International Series, 2005; on ancient Rome, see Keith Hopkins. *Conquerors and Slaves*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978: chapter 1. On warfare and slavery in Africa see, Claude Meillassoux. *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold*. (trans. Alide Dasnois). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, part 2; Jok Madut Jok, *War and Slavery in the Sudan*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001; more generally, Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, eds., *Women, War, Peace, Progress of the World’s Women*, Vol. 1, 2002.

If we accept the .09 significance level for bridewealth among extensive agriculturalists we are left with what seems like a puzzle: bridewealth strongly predicts slavery, and is also strongly associated with high female participation in the primary mode of production, whatever this might be; however, female participation does not predict increased slavery, but rather the opposite: a reduced level of slavery. To understand how this is possible we have to take a more dynamic view of the capture, trafficking and enslavement of persons.

First, it makes sense that societies with high levels of female participation should have little need for slaves as workers: free women are doing the work of both production and reproduction. It is also no wonder that the bride price is high in such societies since women were extremely valuable to men. Those who cannot afford wives may turn to trafficked and enslaved women, but they tend to marry them and sooner or later they are manumitted, joining the ranks of free women in the dominant mode of production.

However, the bride price also exists where women play minor roles in the dominant mode of production and it is especially here that the demand for slaves is high. The problem becomes acute especially among pastoralists where men exclude women from the high status task of tending cattle. Free women are nonetheless highly valued as wives and reproducers, and in inter-group alliances, especially if polygyny prevails, but there is still a need for labor to do necessary but undesirable tasks such as agriculture, gathering fuel and disposing of waste. Such work tend to be done almost exclusively by slaves where they are available which is often the case among pastoralists who tend to engage in a great deal of both internal and external warfare, leading to the capture of both cattle and women.

Polygyny is the most powerful predictor of slavery in these models, increasing the odds of slavery more than fivefold among extensive agriculturalists. However, although the effect is strong among intensive agriculturalists its predictive value is significant only at the .10 probability level. Polygyny, for reasons noted earlier, is far less frequent among intensive agriculturalists where men dominate the primary mode of production and added wives likely to be a serious economic burden. It is striking, too, that the prediction fails statistically when warfare is introduced in the full model.

Our analysis permits the following conclusions about the gendered nature of slavery in traditional societies. First, we have found that the decisive factors determining trafficking and slavery in these societies was the demand for the exploitation of women's bodies, as sex objects, as concubines and as secondary wives where free women were relatively scarce or too expensive or were disproportionately monopolized by wealthier and older men.

Secondly, we have found that women's participation in the labor force was not a direct predictor of slavery although it was related in complex ways. Where women worked, and especially where they played equal or dominant roles in the main mode of production, they were highly valued (at least economically), and this was reflected in the high cost of marrying them. When they were enslaved in such societies they tended to be manumitted and assimilated into the status of free working women, the fate of perpetual slavery being largely reserved for males.

However, in most societies of the world where women were not important agents in the economy, their fate was no different from that of male slaves, and indeed likely to be worse, being exploited twice over as manual and sexual laborers. They became kinless, natively alienated persons whose lives were often brutish and short. La Rue's description of the Hobbesian condition of slave women in 19<sup>th</sup> century Egypt is chilling, but hardly atypical: "many were raped at young ages; frequently they bore children by Egyptian masters rather than by African slave men; their children suffered high rates of infant mortality; the women themselves aged rapidly; and both mothers and children were swept away by epidemics."<sup>63</sup> The world has recently had a view of this face of traditional slavery in the capture, trafficking, enslavement, mass killings, gang raping and mutilation of Southern Sudanese black Africans, mainly women, by Arabs from the north of the country.

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<sup>63</sup> George M. La Rue, "African Slave women in Egypt, CA. 1820 To the Plague of 1834-1835," in G. Campbell et al, eds., *Women and Slavery*, p. 183.



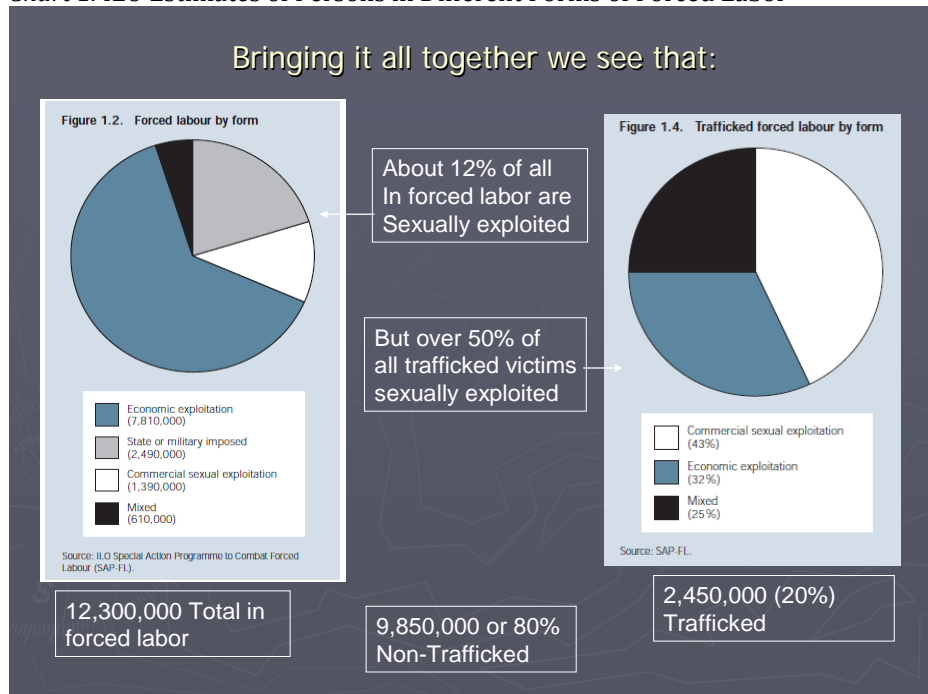
## 4. Trafficking, Gender and Slavery Today

### 4A. Types and estimates of Slavery

The context of slavery in our globalized world today may be different, but an abundant and growing body of evidence from observers and from enslaved women themselves, clearly show that this mode of domination is personally experienced in almost exactly the same way by today's slaves as the slaves of yesterday. Classic slavery persists, however, mainly among three groups of persons: those cases such as Mauritania, Niger, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, the Sudan and other parts of the middle East and Africa where old systems continue into modern times; children held in the worst forms of forced labor; and in the trafficking and exploitation of women for domestic and commercial sexual purposes.

Estimates of the total number of slaves today vary wildly, "seeming to overwhelm critical faculties" and "gaining acceptance through repetition," as a recent UNESCO report caustically notes.<sup>64</sup> The most reliable available estimates are those provided by the ILO which I have collated and summarized in Chart 1. The ILO estimates that there were 12.3 million persons in forced labor throughout the world in 2005, of whom 12% were sexually exploited, a total of 1,390,000 persons, nearly all women. Of the total in forced labor, 20% or 2,450,000 were trafficked, at least a half of whom were trafficked for commercial sexual purposes. Thus the ILO estimates that the vast majority of persons who are sexually exploited have been trafficked, approximately 1,225,000 of the 1,390,000 total.

Chart 1. ILO Estimates of Persons in Different Forms of Forced Labor



Source: Global Alliance Against Forced Labor, 2005 (Geneva: ILO, International Labour Conference, 93<sup>rd</sup> Session 2005) pp. 10-15

The ILO cautions that these should be taken as the most conservative possible estimates.

Two recent studies, while in line with these estimates, have suggested increases since 2005. Belser estimated the total number of people in forced prostitution in 2005 at 1,695,500, of whom

<sup>64</sup> UNESCO, Trafficking Statistics Project (Bangkok: Trafficking and HIV/AIDS Project)

<http://cms2.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=1022>

1,357,082 were trafficked (80%).<sup>65</sup> Kara began with an estimate of 1.2 million trafficked sex slaves in 2006, agrees with the American State Department estimate of between 500,000 and 600,000 new victims annually and, taking account of those escaping their exploitation, estimated a net gain of 43,000 between 2006 and 2008.<sup>66</sup> He also claims a mean per cent growth rate of 3.5 which reflects a slight slowing ( and maturing) of the process compared to previous years. Unfortunately, Kara has joined the chorus of those who conflate all forms of forced labor with slavery, claiming recently that the total number of slaves in the world ranges between 24 and 32 million.<sup>67</sup> Nonetheless, his estimate of an annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent in the growth of persons trafficked into sex slavery seems reasonable as a lower estimate for both trafficked and non-trafficked persons (if anything, underestimating the number of non-trafficked women and girls forced or induced into prostitution due to the world-wide recession), and we use it to update the ILO estimate of 1,390,000 in 2005 to a 2010 rounded total of 1,650,900 in 2010.

To this one must add those still in traditional slavery as well as new forms of genuine slavery. It is usually assumed that there are only a few cases of traditional slavery remaining and that their numbers are declining. However, a series of studies by Anti-Slavery International and other groups indicate that an alarming number of persons are still trapped in this traditional form of the institution lingering from the past. Thus, in Niger alone a rigorous recent study<sup>68</sup> based on thousands of interviews, found an alarming 810,363 slaves out of a total population of 15.2 million; in Mauritania, fully 18 percent of the population of 3.2million have been reliably estimated to be enslaved, a total of 502,300 persons; and a conservative estimate places the number of slaves in Sudan at 200,000.<sup>69</sup> This adds to a lowest possible estimate of 1,512,663 souls in traditional slavery, not counting other countries such as Chad long suspected to have persisting traditional slavery. As in the past, most of these slaves are women.

We come next to non-sexual forms of modern slavery that meet our definition, the most difficult category to identify and numerate. [“Non-sexual” here means simply that sexual exploitation is not the main reason for recruitment into forced labor, but for a high proportion of women, sexual abuse is a collateral risk in all forms of forced labor] Children in forced labor constitute the largest number. I consider children in forced labor who are categorized by the ILO and the U.S. Department of Labor as being in “the worst forms of child labor” to be slaves, while excluding adults in debt bondage labor.<sup>70</sup> Why? Because children are always in this condition as a result of choices made by others (often their parents or guardians or persons to whom they have been sold) , are under the direct control and domination of an adult who claims complete bodily possession of them, are invariably subjected to severe corporeal punishment and other forms of violence, are very often isolated from, or abandoned by their families (often after being sold by their own relatives), are forced to work with no provision for education, cannot leave their forced employment without facing death or re-enslavement, and are rarely protected by law enforcement agencies. The main forms of child exploitation identified by the ILO are forced, bonded and domestic labor, those in illegal activities such as the illicit drug trade and armed conflicts, organized begging and commercial sex, and HIV induced child labor. Whatever the form, all such children are slaves, “denied basic rights and access

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<sup>65</sup> Patrick Belser, *Forced labour and human trafficking: Estimating the profits*, (Geneva: ILO 2005)

<sup>66</sup> Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010)

<sup>67</sup> Interview with CNN, by Anne Keehn, March 9, 2011., “Slavery in the News”.

<sup>68</sup> Galy kadir Abdelkader, ed., *Slavery in Niger: Historical, Legal and Contemporary Perspectives* (Anti-Slavery International, 2004); Mike Kaye, ed. *Arrested Development*, 2008, pp. 8-9.

<sup>69</sup> For personal accounts of slavery in the Sudan and Mauritania, the former by an ex-slave, the latter by an ex-master, see Jesse Sage and Liora Kasten, eds., *Enslaved: True Stories of Modern Day Slavery*(New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), chapters 2 and 8. And for vivid journalistic accounts of slavery in Africa and modern sex slavery in Europe see E. Benjamin Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-Face with Modern-Day Slavery* (New York: Free Press, 2008)

<sup>70</sup> The ILO, *Accelerating action against child labor* (Geneva, 2010): especially pp.56-61.;

U.S. Department of Labor, *2009 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* (Washington, D.C: 2010)

to family, and made completely dependent on the employer for whom the child is a form of property to be humiliated, abused, tossed aside, and otherwise treated as he or she wishes.”<sup>71</sup>

In 2008 there were an estimated total of 215 million children who worked, most on family farms. Of these, 115 million were in hazardous working conditions. From these numbers the ILO estimates that 5.7 million are in forced or bonded labor, representing about a half of all victims in these categories;<sup>72</sup> these are slaves. Although the great majority of these children are in Asia and Africa, one society in the Americas (where the condition of children has been generally improving) stands out for its number of child slaves, namely, Haiti, which has some 225,000 children in the slave condition known as Restavek.<sup>73</sup>

One of the most striking findings of the ILO study is the very gendered nature of child exploitation. The majority of those in the worst forms of child labor which we identify with slavery are girls. In Haiti, which is one of the best studied sites, two-thirds of all Restaveks are girls. While the 100 million girls in child labor are less than the total number of boys (115 million) they “work longer hours than boys as part of a ‘double burden’; but what the ILO found “especially alarming” was that girls constituted a large proportion of those in the very worst forms of child labor that meet our definition of slavery: “As child domestic workers, girls face the risk of literally being locked away from outside view. Girls, too, have ended up as sex slaves to armed groups in some of the most intractable civil conflicts of recent years.”<sup>74</sup>

The final category of genuine slaves today are found in varying degrees, but always a minority, among adults who are exploited in industrial, modern agricultural and other rural enterprises and in domestic labor. While sweatshops producing goods for multinationals are often cited as sites of slave labor, the best evidence indicates that this rhetorical strategy has little empirical support and is dismissed by even liberal economists such as Paul Krugman.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, a recent study found that most sweatshops in the less developed world provide an above average standard of living for their workers when compared to the average income in these countries,<sup>76</sup> and even when conditions are harsh the exploitation involved rarely comes close to any meaningful definition of slavery, certainly not mine. The same holds for legal and illegal migrants who work in the agricultural sector of advanced and transitional economies such as the 3.5 million migrant and seasonal farm workers in the U.S. (in 2006). The great majority of these are undoubtedly economically exploited, often earning well below minimum wage, and a substantial minority may properly be classified as forced laborers, especially those indebted to labor contractors who are increasingly used by U.S. and large-scale farmers in other countries to evade penalties for violating employment laws.<sup>77</sup> Not many of these exploited workers, however, qualify as slaves although far too many fall into what may properly be called the worst kinds of forced labor or servitude, a term I prefer to “slave-like.” This is certainly true of the thousands of internal migrant laborers in the pig-iron, lumber and gold-mining industries

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<sup>71</sup> Jonathan Blagbrough, “ ‘This is nothing but slavery,’ : Child Domestic Labor in the Modern Context,” in Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, Joseph Miller, eds., *Child Slaves in the Modern World* (Ohio University Press, 2011) p. 203

<sup>72</sup> ILO, *Accelerating action against child labor*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>73</sup> Yves-Francois Pierre, Glenn Smucker, Jean-Francois Tardieu, *Lost Childhoods: Quantifying Child Trafficking, Restaveks & Victims of Violence*, (Port-au-Prince: PADF: 2009); See also, Benjamin Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous*, chapter 1.

<sup>74</sup> ILO, *Accelerating action against child labor*, p. 57.

<sup>75</sup> Krugman, Paul (1997) “In Praise of Cheap Labor, Bad Jobs at Bad Wages are Better Than No Jobs at All.” *Slate*. March 20.

<sup>76</sup> Benjamin Powell and David Skarbek, “Sweatshops and Third World Living Standards: Are the Jobs Worth the Sweat?” [http://www.independent.org/pdf/working\\_papers/53\\_sweatshop.pdf](http://www.independent.org/pdf/working_papers/53_sweatshop.pdf)

<sup>77</sup> Verite, *Regional Report: Immigrant Workers in U.S. Agriculture: The Role of Labor Brokers in Vulnerability to Forced Labor*, (Amherst, MA: 2010. )

in the interior of Brazil and Peru trapped in debt bondage and unable to leave their horrendous working conditions.<sup>78</sup>

Much the same holds for the millions of Philippine, Bangladesh and other South-East Asian migrant workers in Malaysia, Taiwan and other receiving countries in Asia and the Middle East, many of whom are also under a level of control by labor contractors that amount to temporary debt-bondage verging on servitude.<sup>79</sup> It is clear that in a number of cases migrants in debt bondage to labor contractors, or who have been sold by them to employers, have been reduced to genuine slavery. This was true, for example, of the 18 girls from Laos, aged 11 to 14 who were rescued by the Thai police from a submerged cell where they had been hidden by their employer, a producer of jeans in Bangkok, who forced them to work without pay from 6 am to midnight each day.<sup>80</sup>

The greatest risk of persons in exploitative working conditions falling into genuine slavery occurs among migrant laborers in domestic service, nearly all of whom are women. A recent study by Anti-Slavery International specifies the typical set of conditions under which migrant domestics work:

- “Workers are not protected or recognised under the legal and regulatory frameworks.
- They receive little or no legal or social protection.
- They are unable to enforce contracts or have security of property rights.
- They are rarely able to organise for effective representation and have little or no voice to have their work recognised and protected.
- They are excluded from or have limited access to public infrastructure and benefits.
- They have to rely as best as they can on informal, often exploitative institutional arrangements, whether for information, markets, credit, training or social security.
- They are highly dependent on the attitudes of public authorities”<sup>81</sup>

An additional problem which greatly increases the risk of falling into forced labor and, sometimes, ultimately slavery is that, in most countries, domestic work by women, no matter how onerous and objectively productive, is not usually considered work, which means that they end up being employed by private persons not recognized as employers and “work in the private sphere which is not considered as a workplace,” often dependent on their employers for shelter and food.<sup>82</sup> The case of Beatrice Fernando, a Sri Lankan migrant domestic violently held in a Lebanon household, vividly illustrates how the migrant domestic laborer can end up in what is unambiguously a slave condition.<sup>83</sup>

Several studies have emphasized that it is the social and psychological aspects of domestic labor that make it so easily transferable to forced labor and ultimately even genuine slavery. As Judith Rollins pointed out in her ethnographic and participant study of domestics in Boston during the early eighties: “While any employer-employee relationship is by definition unequal, the mistress-servant relationship--- with its centuries of conventions of behavior, its historical association with slavery throughout the world, its unusual retention of feudal characteristics, and the tradition of the servant being not only of a lower class but also female, rural, and of a despised ethnic group—provides an extreme and ‘pure’ example of a relationship of domination in close quarters.”<sup>84</sup> Bridget Anderson’s work on immigrant domestics in Britain compellingly identifies the key element making domestic labor so vulnerable to genuine slavery, the fact that very often what the employer wants to control is

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<sup>78</sup> Leonardo Sakamoto, “‘Slave Labor’ in Brazil,” in Andrees and Belser, eds. *Forced Labor*, chapter 1. Michael Smith and David Voreacos, “The Secret World of Modern Slavery,” (Bloomberg Markets, December 2006.)

<sup>79</sup> Verite, *Vulnerability to Broker-Related Forced Labor among Migrant Workers in Information Technology Manufacturing in Taiwan and Malaysia* (Amherst, MA: 2010)

<sup>80</sup> ILO, *The Mekong Challenge: Human Trafficking; Redefining Demand* (Bangkok, ILO, 2005), p. 2

<sup>81</sup> Anti-Slavery International, “Trafficking in Women, Forced Labor, and Domestic Work; in the context of the Middle East and Gulf region (Anti-Slavery International, Working paper, 2006), p. 3

<sup>82</sup> Anti-Slavery International, “Trafficking in Women, Forced Labor, and Domestic Work, p. 25

<sup>83</sup> Beatrice Fernando, “Trapped on the Balcony: A Tale of a Sri Lankan Held Hostage in Lebanon,” in Sage and Kasten, eds., *Enslaved*, p. 103.

<sup>84</sup> Judith Rollins, *Between Women: Domestics and their Employers* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985) 7-8

not just the labor power of the domestic but her “personhood,” the reason for this being that what the domestic produces is “concerned with the physical, cultural and ideological reproduction of human beings. Paid domestic workers reproduce people and social relations, not just in what they do but in doing it... In this respect the paid domestic worker is herself, in her essence, a means of reproduction. It is not just her labor power that is being harnessed to the cause of the employer’s ... but it is the very fact that she, the domestic worker, and not her employers, is doing the work... The employer is buying the power to command, not the property in the person, but the whole person.”<sup>85</sup>

Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo’s recent study of Mexican and Central American domestics in Los Angeles would seem, at first sight, to cast some doubt on this interpretation. While documenting quite a range of treatment, she uncovered nothing that could be called slavery or even slave-like relations of domination. Indeed, she found that it was the domestics who wanted to interact in a more personalistic way with their employers while the latter strongly resisted such overtures, preferring the relationship to remain more formal and materialistic. However, this does not mean that the unequal relations she studied lacked the element of power over the personhood of the domestic as a surrogate producer and reproducer whose work makes her an extension of her employer’s body. Significantly, another important finding of Hondagneu-Sotelo was that these middle class Los Angeles employers, while shunning the humanizing friendship sought by their employees and preferring formality, nonetheless refused to agree to the one formal provision the employees requested—a clear statement of their job description—insisting instead on a vague and diffuse description of what the job required, implicit in which was the desire to control the whole person of their maids.<sup>86</sup>

No one has even attempted to give a global estimate of the total number of persons in domestic service, much less what proportion fall into forced labor and ultimately slavery ; all we know is that the number is vast. To give some idea of the magnitude, the total number of Asian migrants working in other Asian countries (including the Middle East) in 2008 has been estimated at 14.8 million, 8 million of whom came from the Philippines alone.<sup>87</sup> A substantial majority of these are women, the average percentages for Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka being, for example, 79, 72 and 64 respectively.<sup>88</sup> If we conservatively assume an average of 60 percent women and that at least two thirds go into domestic service, then at least 5.92 million migrant women are in domestic service in Asia alone, not counting those who have migrated illegally or are internal migrants. The total global figure must be at least twice this, or something in the region of 12 million, the conservative nature of which may be judged by the fact that the U.N estimates the total number of female migrants in 2010 at 104,794,962.<sup>89</sup>

A recent report from the International Organization of Migration states that “gender is perhaps the single most important factor shaping migrants’ experiences—more important than their country of origin or destination, their age, class, race or culture.”<sup>90</sup> That a significant proportion of these women have been exploited and abused has now been thoroughly documented.<sup>91</sup> Bearing in mind that in their “normal” non-slave state, within the bosom of their own families, “one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime,”<sup>92</sup> I have no doubt that tens of thousands of socially and legally isolated foreign domestics around the world have crossed

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<sup>85</sup> Bridget Anderson, *Doing Dirty Work? : the global politics of domestic labour* (Zed Books, 2000), p. 113.

<sup>86</sup> Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Domestica: Immigrant workers cleaning and caring in the shadows of affluence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

<sup>87</sup> Philip Martin, *Another Miracle? Managing Labour Migration in Asia* (U.N. Expert group meeting on international migration and development in Asia and the Pacific, Sept. 2008), 14-15

<sup>88</sup> U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Key Trends and Challenges on International Migration and Development in Asia and the Pacific* (Bangkok, 2008), Table 1, p. 8.

<sup>89</sup> U.N. International Migration Stock, <http://esa.un.org/migration/index.asp?panel=1>

<sup>90</sup> IOM, *Gender and Migration*, <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/gender-migration0les>

<sup>91</sup> See Human Rights Watch, “Swept Under the Rug: Abuses against domestic workers around the world,” *Human Rights Watch* Volume 18, Number 7 (C) July 2006.

<sup>92</sup> UNIFEM, *Violence Against Women: Facts and Figures*, Nov. 2007, [http://www.unifem.org/attachments/gender\\_issues/violence\\_against\\_women/facts\\_figures\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_2007.pdf](http://www.unifem.org/attachments/gender_issues/violence_against_women/facts_figures_violence_against_women_2007.pdf)

the fateful boundary from extremely exploitative relation of labor domination to the violent, corporeal relation of domination of their personhood, their degradation enhancing the sense of power of their mistresses who, being often themselves under the patriarchal and even abusive control of their own husbands, are only too desperately in need of this parasitic and compensatory humiliation of another woman.<sup>93</sup> What percentage? One? Five? Ten? Twenty? Only further research on the issue will allow us to say, but it is a reasonable guess that, even making the most optimistic assumption about man's and woman's propensity to behave humanely to vulnerable and isolated women, the figure, when we get it, will add substantially to our estimate of the total number of persons in slavery. At this stage of our knowledge, however, it would be reckless to add any figure on the number of domestic slaves to our estimate of total slavery in the world.

To conclude, we can conservatively add to the 1,628,000 persons in traditional slavery and 1,650,900 in commercial sex slavery, 5.7 million children in slavery, making a minimal total of 8,978,900. This number, to repeat, will increase when we are in a position to add migrant women in domestic slavery. The most important take-away point from this final figure is that the vast majority of these 8.98 million genuine modern slaves are adult women and girls.

#### **4B. Sexual slavery: two preliminary considerations**

In what follows I will focus on sexual trafficking and enslavement (and, in passing, to the closely related system of domestic slavery which often morphs into sexual oppression) since the nature of traditional slavery has already been thoroughly documented. Two preliminary points should be made before proceeding. First, by sex slavery I refer not to all forms of prostitution but to cases where women are trafficked either within their own countries or between states and held under the total, violent control of another person—a pimp or madam or other abuser-- who exploits them both economically and psychologically. I exclude women that are independent sex workers who voluntarily chose this kind of work, keep their earnings and freely turn to other forms of livelihood when they choose. It is important to bear this distinction in mind. While the great majority of teenaged streetwalkers are under the control of pimps, some studies indicate that most older career prostitutes and high-end call-girls in America work without pimps and are clearly not slaves.<sup>94</sup> Nor do all associations with pimps result in sexual slavery; Steven Levitt and Sudhir Venkatesh's study of streetwalkers in Chicago found that women who used pimps earned more and were better protected, even after paying them a 25 per cent commission; and although they experienced an average of 12 acts of violence annually, these beatings came as often from johns as from their pimps.<sup>95</sup> How typical Chicago is of the U.S. must await further research? One former trafficked sex worker I spoke to who now directs an organization committed to rescuing victims of sex trafficking in the Washington D.C. area strongly disputes the relevance of these findings to her area.<sup>96</sup>

We should further point out that the co-existence of international migration and prostitution does not necessarily lead to slavery or other forms of forced labor, a case in point being sex workers in the Dominican Republic town of Sosua who "use sex, romance, and marriage as means of turning Sosua's

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<sup>93</sup> See, further, Anderson, *Doing Dirty Work?*, chapter 8; and on the U.S., Joy M. Zaarembka, "America's dirty work; migrant maids and modern-day slavery," in Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Hochschild, eds., *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (Holt paper 2004)

<sup>94</sup> Alexander Murphy and Sudhir Venkatesh, "Vice Careers: The changing contours of sex work in New York City," *Qualitative Sociology*, June 2006.  
Ronald B. Flowers, *The Prostitution of Women and Girls* (Jefferson, NC:McFarland & Co., 1998) chapter 13.

<sup>95</sup> Steven D. Levitt and Sudhir Venkatesh, "An Empirical Analysis of Street-Level Prostitution," Sept. 2007, <http://economics.uchicago.edu/pdf/Prostitution%205.pdf>

<sup>96</sup> Tina Frundt, in conversation with the author.

sex trade into a site of opportunity and possibility, not just exploitation and domination.”<sup>97</sup> Sexual slavery tends to occur primarily among girls and very young women trafficked internally and internationally. Many in the sex trafficking field, however, are likely to take issue with view that prostitution can ever be a site of “opportunity and possibility,” especially when women are crossing international borders.

There is currently a bitterly waged controversy among scholars and activists working in the trafficking field as to whether adult women and professional sex workers who are trafficked are always to be considered victims or can sometimes be persons exercising their right to do as they please with their lives.<sup>98</sup> The “Central ideological problem,” as O’Neill notes, is whether “the exchange of money for sex is taken to be the exchange of equivalents.”<sup>99</sup> Whatever the outcome of this debate—and it is doubtful whether this, like most philosophical and moral debates, can ever be settled—it should be understood that some cases of professional sex workers who allow themselves to be trafficked knowing that they will be working as prostitutes in the destination country clearly do not end in sexual slavery. This is the case, for example, of the Korean sex workers in New York interviewed by DeStefano who had relative freedom of movement, lived in apartments away from the brothels where they worked, and could earn up to \$10,000 a month, allowing them eventually to pay off the brokers who had recruited them and arranged for their travel to the U.S.<sup>100</sup> And in her study of commercial sex in San Francisco, Elizabeth Bernstein finds that the modern global economy, while facilitating trafficking and sexual slavery, also creates the need for a new recreational sex ethic met by sex workers in a non-exploitative way.<sup>101</sup>

My second preliminary point is that there is a direct historical link between contemporary trafficking and that which existed in the past. Globalization with its modern means of communication and intensified demand for bodies did not invent trafficking anew, rather it revived a tradition that never quite died out, a point well made by John T. Picarelli in a recent chapter which “demonstrated that trafficking in persons retains the legacies of prior forms of servitude and the trade in human beings... Evolving from chattel slavery, trafficking retains some of the core aspects of these historical forms while also adapting to meet new realities.”<sup>102</sup> The point has been made even more forcefully by Karen Bravo in her superb critique of the superficial use of the analogy between the Atlantic slave trade and modern trafficking which, by focusing on the emotional appeal of the comparison for rhetorical and abolitionist ends, fails to exploit the striking underlying similarities between past and present experiences of slavery.<sup>103</sup>

There are actually two ways in which former patterns of trafficking, including the Atlantic and Trans-Saharan slave trades, influences modern trafficking. One is the simple, direct link emphasized by Picarelli, and it is worth noting that such continuities pertain not just to Africa but to Asia and Eastern Europe as well. The trafficking of women into forced marriages and concubinage, and of children into forced adoption, in China is an ancient practice given new life by more efficient modern means of Gendercide (discussed below); and the trafficking of Roma girls and children from Eastern

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<sup>97</sup> Denise Brennan, “Selling Sex for Visas: Sex Tourism as a Stepping –stone to International Migration,” in Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie R. Hochschild, eds., *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (New York: Holt paperbacks, 2004) p.168.

<sup>98</sup> For a thorough review of the issues see Maggie O’Neill, *Prostitution and Feminism: Towards a Politics of Feeling* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 2001): 15-41.

<sup>99</sup> O’Neill, *Prostitution and Feminism*, p.31. See also Donna Dickenson, “Philosophical Assumptions and Presumptions about Trafficking for Prostitution,” in Christien L. van den Anker and Jeroen Doomernik, eds., *Trafficking and Women’s Rights*, (London: Palgrave, 2006):43-53.

<sup>100</sup> Anthony M. DeStefano, *The War on Human Trafficking: U.S.Policy Assessed* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 87-88.

<sup>101</sup> *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007)

<sup>102</sup> John T. Picarelli, “Historical approaches to the trade in human beings,” in Maggy Lee, ed., *Human Trafficking* (Portland, Oregon: Willan Publishing, 2007) p. 45.

<sup>103</sup> Karen E. Bravo, “Exploring the Analogy Between Modern Trafficking in Humans and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade,” *Boston University International Law Journal*, Vol.25 (2007): 207-295.



to Western Europe has deep roots in earlier patterns of trafficking and enslavement of this ethnic group.<sup>104</sup>

There is also an indirect, but no less potent, effect of traditional patterns of trafficking on modern practices. An important branch of scholarship on the effects of the Atlantic slave trade has explored the consequences of the trade for current under-development in Africa and it has been shown in recent studies, most notably those of the economic historian Nathan Nunn, that the degree of economic backwardness in African states today is strongly predicted by their degree of involvement in the Atlantic Slave trade.<sup>105</sup> This economic failure, combined with the tradition of slavery, mainly accounts for the large number of African women who are being trafficked into prostitution in Europe. A tragic example of a region where modern trafficking is the result of both historical continuities and the long-term economic consequences of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade is Edo state in Nigeria, mentioned earlier.

#### **4C. Sexual Slavery Today**

The growth of sexual slavery today is largely driven by the enormous profits to be made from it, as was the case in most of the large scale slave systems of the past. In ancient Rome, the prostitution of slaves was an important source of livelihood for many Roman slave-holders<sup>106</sup> as it was in the Caribbean and other slave societies of the Americas.<sup>107</sup> Two recent estimates of the profits made from sexual slavery indicate this might be the most profitable business today. Belser,<sup>108</sup> estimated average annual profits per sex slave in 2005 at \$45,000, ranging between \$10,000 per slave in Sub-Saharan Africa to \$67,000 in the industrialized countries. Total annual profits globally were estimated at \$33.90 Billion. In 2009 Kara<sup>109</sup> estimated a weighted average annual profit per sex slave in 2007 at \$29,210, yielding a total global profit in that year of \$35.7 billion from revenues of \$51.3 billion.

The enslavement of women into sex slavery bears striking family resemblances to the process of enslavement in traditional slavery: they are recruited either through force or fraud, transported from one country to another or from one part of a country to another where they have no contacts, are brutally seasoned into sexual enslavement by pimp-masters or Brothel madams by means of physical violence – beatings, gang rapes, starvation—and by psychological terror such as threats to kill members of their family or publicizing pornographic pictures of them. Once broken and seasoned they become totally dependent on their masters and willingly work for him (or her, the number of women pimps and madams being unusually high) for near to zero pay. They are degraded constantly by their owners who parasitically achieve an enhancement of their masculinity or sense of power from humiliating their slaves.

The recruitment of modern sex slaves is usually through deception or fraud, women being promised good jobs in the destination countries or other parts of their own countries.<sup>110</sup> However, old-fashioned kidnapping, as in the African slave trade, still exists and, indeed, is on the increase. In

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<sup>104</sup> Ian Hancock, *Pariah Syndrome: An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution* (Karoma, 1987)

<sup>105</sup> Nathan Nunn, “The Long-Term Effects of Africa’s Slave Trades,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (2008) Vol. 123#1: 139-176.

<sup>106</sup> Thomas A. McGinn, *The Economy of Prostitution in the Roman World* (University of Michigan Press, 2004).

<sup>107</sup> Morrissey, Marietta Morrissey, *Slave women in the New World* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1989).

<sup>108</sup> Patrick Belser, *Forced Labour and Human Trafficking: Estimating the Profits* (Geneva: ILO, 2005)

<sup>109</sup> Siddharth Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*, chapter 1 & Appendix B.

<sup>110</sup> For two capable recent overviews of the methods of operation and organizational structures of traffickers see: Alexis A. Aronowitz, *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The Global Trade in Human Beings* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2009), chapter 5; and Louise Shelley, *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010) chapters 3 & 4.



Albania and other parts of Southwestern Europe girls are regularly kidnapped from clubs, the streets and even rural areas.<sup>111</sup> However, it is in several Asian countries, especially China, that this old form of recruiting is seeing a resurgence due to the growing asymmetric sex ratios caused by the preference for male children.<sup>112</sup> Modern medical techniques now make it possible to detect the gender of fetuses from an early age resulting in the aborting of female ones. This has been exacerbated by China's one-child policy. The end result is what has been aptly called "gendercide." The *Economist* magazine has reported that at least 100 million girls have been aborted or killed in Asian countries, as well as the western Balkans and the Caucasus, leading to highly distorted sex ratios: over 120 boys to 100 girls in China and northern India for the generation born after 2000, and in some provinces of China over 130 to 100.<sup>113</sup> This has resulted in a serious shortage of women of marriageable age for many young men in these countries and a growing number of them have turned to buying wives who have been kidnapped and transported by traffickers. Very recently, the *New York Times* reported the case of a northern Vietnam village, Hop Tien, where young girls and children have been repeatedly kidnapped and sold as wives in neighboring China, the Chinese authorities claiming to have rescued 1800 such victims between 2001 and 2005.<sup>114</sup> North Korea is another major source of trafficked and enslaved wives in China.<sup>115</sup> The U.S. State department estimates that the majority of wives in some villages have been stolen and trafficked, and the president of the NGO, *All Girls Allowed*, recently presented evidence to the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs documenting substantial numbers of women captured and trafficked as wives into China, especially the Putian region where it is claimed that some 120,000 women were trafficked and sold as wives between the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>116</sup>

One of the main forms of control, as in the traditional systems of slavery, is the deliberate isolation of trafficked women from any familial or stable relationships with others.<sup>117</sup> This is the closest modern counterpart to the natal alienation of the traditional slave (though not quite the same thing, in view of its illegality, and the questionable eagerness of the authorities in the destination countries to deport them home.). A study of Ukrainian sex slaves in Greece observed that this isolation is "easily achieved due to their poor grasp of the local language and their illegal status in the host country. A typical isolation strategy is to trick or coerce a woman into surrendering her passport making her, in effect, a 'non-person'. They are deprived of their human rights and freedoms, are forbidden to leave the places without permission, threatened by deportation, violence and humiliation if they ask authorities for help."<sup>118</sup> However, enslaved domestic prostitutes are also isolated. Eighty-seven percent of U.S. prostitutes in one major study "stated that pimps and traffickers controlled contact with their friends and family. Some were never allowed contact with their families. Others reported vigilant scrutiny and being forced under duress or armed guard to assure loved ones that they were doing fine."<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> See E. Benjamin Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous*, chapter 6, esp. pp. 187-190. Skinner documents cases of kidnapping not only in eastern Europe, especially Moldova, but in the Netherlands.

<sup>112</sup> Francesco Bosco et al, "Human Trafficking and Corruption: Triple Victimization?" in Cornelius Friesendorf, ed. *Strategies Against Trafficking : The Role of the Security Sector* (Vienna: National Defense Academy, 2009),p.35.

<sup>113</sup> "The War on Baby Girls: Gendercide," *The Economist*, March 4, 2010.

<sup>114</sup> Julie Chon, "In Vietnamese Village, Stitching the Wounds of Human Trafficking," *New York Times*, August 16, 2011

<sup>115</sup> Jane Kim, "Trafficked: Domestic Violence, Exploitation in Marriage, and the Foreign-Bride Industry," *Virginia Journal of International Law*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (2011)

<sup>116</sup> Testimony of Chai Ling, *All Girls Allowed Field Report*, June 13, 2011. <http://www.allgirlsallowed.org/2175-stolen-children-and-child-bride-city-putian-exposing-chinas-massive-trafficking-problem>

<sup>117</sup> See also Karen Bravo's exploration of the quasi-personhood of the modern trafficked slave resulting from her natal alienation, in "Exploring the Analogy Between Modern Trafficking in Humans and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade," pp.272-274.

<sup>118</sup> Donna Hughes and Tatyana Denisova, *Trafficking in Women From Ukraine* (2003) [www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants](http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants)

<sup>119</sup> Raymond et al, *Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States*, pp. 66-67

However, it is sometimes the case that sexual slavery results from, rather than being the cause of, isolation. Girls who have run away from home become extremely vulnerable to enslavement by pimps, less through initiating violence, writes Ronald Flowers, “than the sense of isolation most runaways and street youth feel in their estrangement from family and lack of a sense of belonging.”<sup>120</sup> Modern pimps, like traditional slave holders, make themselves, through physical and psychological terror, the only object of belonging for the sex slave.

Until recently, the trafficked slave prostitute could find no legal redress for her victimization – assuming that she had not been so broken that she sought help—because the laws of most countries doubly penalized her by criminalizing her prostitution while not prosecuting her johns and having little influence on her pimp-masters. Typical of their experiences with the law is that told by Jerri, a woman who had been raped at gunpoint by a john: “...I called the police and told them. They came. I described the guy to the police and showed them the spot. I told them ...everything. They never even wrote anything down. They ran me for warrants, and when I didn’t have any, they left.”<sup>121</sup> Exactly similar experiences are recounted by European sex slaves in Europe.<sup>122</sup> (Fortunately, this is now beginning to change with the passing of laws recently in the U.S. and Europe that recognize the trafficked prostitute as a victim, although many police departments are yet to acknowledge, much less implement, these laws.)

The breaking of modern slave prostitutes by their holders is as brutal as anything recorded in the annals of traditional slavery. Kara has given several searing accounts from his research: gang rapes, torture, broken arms, the forced use of opium, being compelled to watch the most resistant having their throats slit then being required to clean up the blood.<sup>123</sup> No less sadistic, however, are accounts by American sex slaves such as Jill Leighton, a runaway teenager seduced into slavery, blindfolded and trafficked then tortured into submission.<sup>124</sup> Jill’s story replicates all we know of the corporeal nature of traditional slavery: the obsessive possession of her body by her pimp-master, his compulsive desire to own, use and use up her physical being and entire personhood. Jill’s holder forced her to sign a “contract” which stated “explicitly that I was a sex slave owned by Bruce. I would be available to him sexually anytime he desired in any way he desired... Bruce was the master, I was the slave.” Later she adds details that are frighteningly reminiscent of entries from Thomas Thistlewood’s 18<sup>th</sup> century plantation diary :

“Mistakes were punished with a cattle prod or by being hung by my wrists and whipped. Lessons were taught in using appropriate verbiage to describe Bruce, Bruce’s penis, the customers, and myself. Bruce had a very specific series of words I was to use when he was being given oral sex. I was his slave, his hole, his cocksucker... the list went on with far more graphic descriptions.”

This vicious urge to abuse and use up the slave need not be sexually motivated. We know from accounts of plantation slavery that male and female owners gratuitously beat slaves simply as a way of expressing their possession of the slave’s body. This is what Frederick Douglass called the “fatal poison of irresponsible power,” which soon transformed naturally decent and kind persons such as the white mistress Sophia Auld into demons.<sup>125</sup> Beatrice Fernando, whom we mentioned earlier, a Sri Lankan enslaved in domestic servitude for several months in Lebanon, describes in harrowing detail the gratuitous beatings she received from her slave-holder who could offer no reason for her sudden bursts of sadism. “Why are you hitting me?” I cried out, covering my eyes, but she didn’t answer or stop hitting me until the brush broke in her hand.”<sup>126</sup> Fernando’s case closely resembles

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<sup>120</sup> *Runaway Kids and Teenage Prostitution: America’s Lost, Abandoned and Sexually Exploited Children* (Praeger, 2001), 122.

<sup>121</sup> Celia Williamson & Terry Cluse-Tolar, , “Pimp-Controlled Prostitution: Still An Integral Part of Street Life,” *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 18, #9 (2002): p. 1088

<sup>122</sup> E. Benjamin Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous*, p. 137.

<sup>123</sup> Kara, *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*, p.

<sup>124</sup> Jill Leighton, “My Life as a Slave in America,” in Jesse Sage and Liora Kasten, *Enslaved*, 61-80.

<sup>125</sup> Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas: An American Slave*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>126</sup> Beatrice Fernando, “Trapped on the Balcony: A Tale of a Sri Lankan Held Hostage in Lebanon,” in Sage and Kasten, eds., *Enslaved*, p. 103.

similar reports of inexplicable violence and psychological sadism from women trapped in domestic slavery in the U.S.<sup>127</sup> and, in their unpredictability, bear remarkable resemblance to the beatings of the Baltimore domestic slaves, Henrietta and Mary, described by Frederick Douglass, one of whom was so frequently and inexplicably abused that she became known as “Pecked.”

Means of control, once broken, are also strikingly similar to classic methods used in traditional slavery. Janice Raymond et al report the following: first, simple control of their freedom of movement such as being locked naked inside a room or located in isolated places, denied access to motor vehicles or having other women keep constant surveillance of them. Many international prostitutes, unable to speak the local language, were completely dependent on their supervisors for the most basic necessities such as food and water. The same holds for many mail-order brides who end up as prostitutes under the complete control of their “husbands.”<sup>128</sup> Denial of access to money, the forced use of drugs, being tricked or forced into pornography and gratuitous violence from other prostitutes were among the methods employed. “Women reported that they were treated like animals: “I was like a dog on a short leash. When I pulled just a bit, they threatened to put me in jail ...” said a trafficked prostitute in the U.S.<sup>129</sup>

A recent comparative study on prostitution as slavery in nine countries found that prostitution “dehumanizes, commodifies and fetishizes women” and that it was “multi-traumatic: 71% were physically assaulted in prostitution; 63% were raped; 89% ...wanted to escape prostitution but did not have other options for survival...68% met criteria for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).”<sup>130</sup> Like slaves throughout history “for the vast majority of the world’s prostituted women prostitution and trafficking are experiences of being hunted down, dominated, sexually harassed and assaulted.”

Like slaves of old the slave prostitute is an utterly dishonored and degraded person in the eyes of free members of the states in which she is exploited. Her feeling of degradation and fear of exposure, in fact, are often used as a tool in her exploitation. Even after they are rescued the sense of shame and humiliation continues to exact a heavy emotional toll. Tatiana, an East European woman who had escaped enslavement in the Netherlands, told Benjamin Skinner that a sexually enslaved person “can be freed physically, but she will never be freed emotionally. That shame is a shadow you can’t shake. Sometimes it’s smaller, sometimes it’s bigger. But it’s always with you.”<sup>131</sup> One is reminded of a phrase attributed by Marcus Aurelius to the philosopher Epictetus, a former slave tormented by the emptiness of his freedom: that he was “a little soul carrying around a corpse.”<sup>132</sup>

As in the traditional slave relation, the dishonoring and humiliation of the slave prostitute serves a parasitic purpose beyond simply breaking her or using up her body: it also perversely enhances the sense of manly power and honorific pride of her pimp- master. Giobbe found that pimps constantly make pronouncements about their manhood and one of them explained the basis of his success: “I figure if you have it together, you can bluff any woman; you can feel that power. When you feel that power, you know that usually works. You have them under your control.”<sup>133</sup> Another study of the pimp-prostitute relationship found that a “final ingredient for successful pimping is that a pimp must

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<sup>127</sup> Joy M. Zarembka, “America’s Dirty Work: Migrant Maids and Modern-Day Slavery,” in Ehrenreich and Hochschild, eds., *Global Woman*, p. 146.; Kevin Bales, *The Slave Next Door*, chapter 2.

<sup>128</sup> Marie-Claire Belleau, “Mail-Order Brides in a Global World,” *Albany Law Review*, Vol. 67.(2003)

<sup>129</sup> Janice Raymond et al, *Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States*, p.68

<sup>130</sup> Melissa Farley, J.Lynne, S Zumbeck et al, “Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on Violence and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder ,“ *Journal of Trauma Practice*, Vol 2, 2003:33-74. p. 34

For additional evidence on the mental trauma suffered by sexual slaves see, Mazed Hussain, C.Zimmerman et al, “[The Relationship of Trauma to Mental Disorders Among Trafficked and Sexually Exploited Girls and Women](#),” *American Journal of Public Health*, December 2010, Vol 100, No. 12 Celia Williamson & Terry Cluse-Tolar, “Pimp-Controlled Prostitution: Still An Integral Part of Street Life,” *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 18, #9 (2002): p.1079.

<sup>131</sup> E. Benjamin Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous*, p. 191.

<sup>132</sup> Aurelius, *Meditations*, Bk.4.

<sup>133</sup> Evelina Giobbe, “An Analysis of Individual, Institutional, and Cultural Pimping,” *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law*, 1993, 1 (1): 33-57.

have a woman or women that want to see him on top. He is looking for dedication.”<sup>134</sup> The feeling of power and dedication from another comes most intensely in the act of degradation, as one pimp, Iceberg Slim, told the urban anthropologists, Richard and Christina Milner: “That’s where the thrill was. In the absolute vilification, in the degradation. I had this intense hatred.”<sup>135</sup> This is exactly similar to the honorific parasitism found in traditional slavery. A contemporary Mauritanian master turned abolitionist explains that the master “sees his slave as an instrument of his prestige,” and recalls a saying among them that “paradise is under the master’s foot” for the slave.<sup>136</sup>

Sexually enslaved women, like all slaves, are often traumatized into emotional dependency on their victimizers, which explains why there are so few successful prosecutions of pimps and traffickers, given the large number of estimated victims. Tina Frundt, the survivor of domestic trafficking mentioned earlier, attempts to answer a question that puzzles many people: “Why didn’t you just leave?” She points out that, in addition to physical violence, pimps also psychologically manipulate their victims:

Pimps prey on young women and girls by finding their weaknesses and exploiting it.. After the pimp gets into your mind, it’s easy for him to maintain control, much like a domestic abuser. From then on you have to call him ‘daddy” and he will punish you if he feels like you have stepped out of line. You are required to bring him \$500-\$2000 every night. You are not a woman, you are always a ‘bitch” or a ‘ho” and are reminded of that daily. You are part of his “stable”. If you do not follow the rules, then he may sell you at anytime to another pimp...In the dictionary, the definition of slavery is the “state of one bound in servitude”. If someone sells you to someone else, is that not slavery? If someone forces you to do things against your will and you are not allowed to leave, is that not slavery? Then I ask you why, when pimps traffic young women and girls on the streets of America, isn’t this a form of modern-day slavery?<sup>137</sup>

Academic studies of the pimp-prostitute relationship corroborate Frundt’s account.<sup>138</sup>

What this distinctive relation of domination adds up to is something very familiar to this author, having spent so many years studying the social death of the slave in the traditional slave systems of the world, so I was hardly surprised, though pleased, to read the following account of what was entailed in “the chronic traumatic stress, captivity, and totalitarian control” of modern slave-prostitutes, written by the authors of one of the most thorough comparative work on modern sex slavery:

“...the objectification and contempt aimed at those in prostitution can become internalized and solidified, resulting in self-loathing that is long-lasting and resistant to change. *Existing in a state of social death, the prostitute is an outsider who is seen as having no honor or public worth.* Those in prostitution, like slaves and concentration camp prisoners, may lose their identities as individuals, becoming primarily what masters, Nazis or customers want them to be. As one woman said about prostitution: “ It is internally damaging. You become in your own mind what these people do and say with you.” (emphasis added)<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Celia Williamson & Terry Cluse-Tolar, “Pimp-Controlled Prostitution: Still An Integral Part of Street Life,”

<sup>135</sup> *Black Players: The Secret World of Black Pimps* (New York: Little, Brown, 1973)

<sup>136</sup> Abdel Nasser Ould Yessa, Amazing Grace: A Slave Owner’s Awakening in Mauritania,” in Sage and Kasten, *Enslaved*, pp. 182,184.

<sup>137</sup> Tina Frundt, “Enslaved in America: Sex Trafficking in the United States,” Women’s Funding Network, Posted on line: <http://www.womensfundingnetwork.org/resource/past-articles/enslaved-in-america-sex-trafficking-in-the-united-states>

<sup>138</sup> See, for example, Evelina Giobbe, “An Analysis of Individual, Institutional, and Cultural Pimping,” *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law*, 1993, 1 (1): 33-57.

<sup>139</sup> Farley et al, Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on Violence and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, p. 58

## Conclusion

I hope that I have gone some way in demonstrating that there is no reason to demarcate an “old” from a “new” form of slavery since the traditional pattern, polythetically defined, is so thoroughly exemplified in certain current practices: in those areas where the old institution never died out, whatever abolition laws may have been passed, in the worst cases of the exploitation of children and migrant domestic workers, and in the condition of women trafficked for commercial sexual purposes between and within countries. Polythetic definitions, however, have their limits. The other forms of forced labor and servitude in the world today may share some slave-like properties, and are no doubt as pernicious in their victimization and exploitation, indeed may in some cases be even more brutal than some high end forms of sexual slavery, but they are not slavery, which is quite distinctive in its perfidy and its social, economic, cultural and psychological attributes and consequences.

Furthermore, I have argued that there are at least 8.98 million genuine slaves in the world today. That is 8.98 million too many and quite enough to encourage outrage and promote abolitionist activism. Inflating these already horrendously high figures by conflating slavery with all forms of human domination and forced labor, however well meaning, and whatever the rhetorical payoffs, simply invites skepticism and the charge of waging moral crusades,<sup>140</sup> undermining the desperately needed effort to abolish, once and for all, these evils from the world.

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<sup>140</sup> See, for example, Ronald Weitzer, “The Social Construction of Sex Trafficking: Ideology and Institutionalization of a Moral Crusade,” *Politics & Society*, 2007 35: 447-475

Appendix 1.

**Table 1A. OLR Models: Slavery among Extensive Agriculturalists**

	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>
	<u>OR* P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>OR P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>OR P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>OR P&gt;chi2</u>
fempart	1.3 0.45	0.83 0.67	0.53 0.20	0.24 0.05
bride		4.13 0.01	3.0 0.09	4.05 0.09
polygyny			6.23 0.00	5.50 0.05
warfare				4.89 0.04
#Obs	61	61	61	46
LL	-40.65	-37.85	-34.34	-23.03
LR chi2	0.46	6.07	13.09	15.52
Prob>2	0.50	0.05	0.00	0.00

**Table 1B. OLR Models: Slavery among Intensive Agriculturalists**

	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>
	<u>OR* P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>OR P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>OR P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>OR P&gt;chi2</u>
fempart 0.88	0.72	0.64 0.26	0.58 0.18	0.49 0.12
bride		3.64 0.00	3.89 0.01	2.62 0.04
polygyny			3.11 0.04	2.68 0.10
warfare				2.17 0.07
#Obs	122	122	122	110
LL	-81.70	-76.40	-74.36	-66.14
LR chi2	0.13	10.74	14.83	14.93
Prob>2	0.72	0.00	0.00	0.00

\*Ordered logit coefficients have been exponentiated to proportionate odds ratios