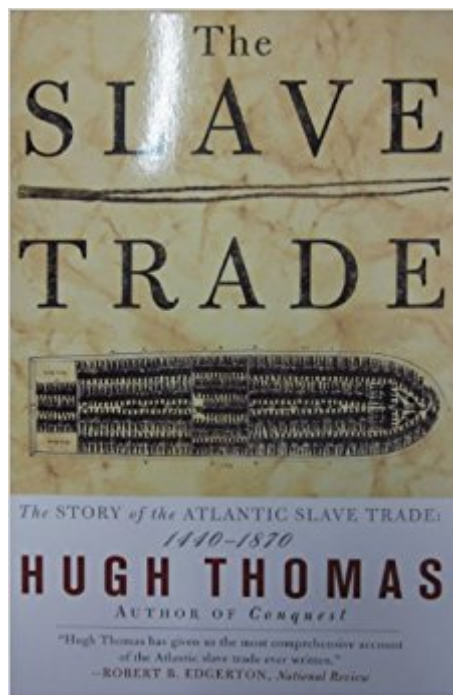


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The SLAVE TRADE: THE STORY OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE: 1440 - 1870



Synopsis

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

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Customer Reviews

Robert B. Edgerton National Review Hugh Thomas has given us the most comprehensive account of the Atlantic Slave Trade ever written. Gregory Kane Baltimore Sun The Slave Trade is more than just a history of the transatlantic peddling of human flesh. It is the story, in microcosm, of four continents: Europe, Africa, North America, and South America. Thomas weaves a tale of merchants and slaves; of diplomats and clergymen; of philosophers, statesmen, abolitionists, and rulers that readers will find surprisingly engaging. John Thornton The New York Times Book Review Well researched...engaging...a fine narrative history. Hardy Green Business Week Masterly....With its uncompromising show of erudition drawn from a wealth of original and secondary sources, The

Slave Trade is an indispensable account of a repugnant institution. Barbara Stanton Detroit Free Press Thomas has taken a sprawling subject and turned it into a disciplined, compelling narrative.

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

It's taken a long time to get through it, but it is worth the journey. An epic, detailed examination of the African Slave Trade from its inception by the Portuguese in the 15th century to its demise in Brazil in the late 19th. There is so much missing from our popular understanding of the slave trade, the biggest - in my opinion - being the participation of coastal African peoples as kidnappers and traders themselves. You will learn in fine, granular detail about every aspect of the trade, from the financing of voyages to the relative merits (as slaves) of the various groups that populated Africa. One thing I really like about Thomas' treatment of this subject is his avoidance of overtly shrill moralizing, instead letting the appalling facts reveal themselves in the details he provides. His chapter on the slaves' experience of crossing the Atlantic is horrifying. Overcrowded ships was merely one aspect of the crossing. All in all - a fantastic book.

This is a very deep, comprehensive read -- rich with history and information, very educational and enlightening on an enormously important subject. But some sections are extremely thick with details and it can be a slow read through some parts, especially the first few chapters. But it's worth the time to get through. Not a light read. In fact, I took my time with this book, setting it aside for lighter reading from time to time.

Hugh Thomas understands the true role of a historian in our civilization. That role is one who dispels myths and provides context for events rather than retrospectively applying 21st century western

values.

Absolutely exhaustive and enlightening. Refreshingly bereft of political advocacy, eye-opening in its portrayal of slavery's economy-wide importance to England's fledgling commercial and industrial development, Thomas' book makes it quite plain that elites in every population involved in the slave trade (African, European and American) avidly wished for it to exist and expand. This is a masterpiece of balanced scholarship for a uniquely volatile topic.

It is a bit too long, but it is a very deep analysis of the slave trade ! if you are interested in finding out about humanity, this is the right book. It discloses, fearlessly, the reality of the character of the human being. It is a deep voyage into the character, soul and cruelty of the human being. Worth reading. Excellent work by the historian Hugh Thomas.

This book had a lot of info in it about the slave trade in the Atlantic. It is not an enjoyable read, but it lets you know about a very sensitive subject. I did study quite a lot of it in college and writing essays on it was not pleasant, but at least I would rather know about the unfortunate happenings of other people, so that I can help them with the kind of work that I do. Hugh Thomas's work is a good stepping stone.

I did not give it 5 stars because the book is too detailed for my taste, but it is extremely well documented and well written; many facts, few judgements, fine humor. The author has profound knowledge on the subject. I skimmed over the details and enjoyed the book. It gives me 402 on Hawkins (David R Hawkins) scale = Reason; highly truthful.

A thoroughly scholarly and detailed history that will overturn every common notion of slavery for those who read it. Compelling , phenomenally well supported, impartial in its penchant, and powerful to read.

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