IOWC WORKING PAPER SERIES
General Editor: Philip Gooding
Working Paper No. 19
October 2024 ISSN 2371 5111

Tracing The Maritime Slave Trade in The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden: The Intersection of Islamic Principles and The Socioeconomic and Political Practices in Yemen's Rasulid Dynasty (1229-1454 C.E.)

Mahnoor Zaman
McGill University
Please send your comments and suggestions to the author at mahnoor.zaman@mail.mcgill.ca

Abstract

This paper explores how the institution of maritime slavery in Yemen's Rasulid Dynasty (1229-1454 C.E.) was intricately embedded within the region's socioeconomic and political fabric. It was driven and justified by Islamic principles. Yemen's strategic geographical position allowed the Rasulid government to establish robust trade links with Egypt, Ethiopia, and India. Most enslaved individuals were taken from these regions and brought to Yemen via the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

While Islamic principles were firmly established in guiding practices of manumission and the ethical treatment of slaves, this paper also engages with more contentious issues surrounding race, concubinage, and castration. Despite certain prohibitions within the Islamic moral framework, practices including concubinage and the castration of eunuchs were upheld. Islamic principles also influenced a more fluid and nuanced relationship between race and local social hierarchies, blending religion with prevailing cultural norms.

Furthermore, through an analysis of the establishment of the Rasulid government and their taxation systems, the paper examines the dynasty's administrative complexity. Ultimately, it explains how the enforcement of Islamic guidelines were closely aligned with the dynasty's trade-driven ambitions, positioning Islam as both a regulatory framework and a legitimizing tool.

Introduction

The maritime slave trade during the Rasulid Dynasty (1229-1454 C.E.) in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, is primarily known through official records from port cities, the most important of which was Aden. Contemporary research on slavery in this era and region can largely be attributed to the work of Magdalena Moorthy Kloss, whose book *Unfree lives: slaves at the Najahid and Rasulid courts of Yemen (11th to 15th centuries C.E.)* has been a key resource for this paper. Historical sources include *al-'uqud al-lu'lu'iyah fi tarih al-dawlat al-rasuliyah*[1] written in the service of Sultan al-Ashraf Ismail, by court chronicler al-Hasan al-Khazraji, which provides detailed accounts of eunuchs in the court. There is also the *Nur al-marif* [2] compiled from administrative documents during the reigns of three sultans: al-Malik al-Mansur Umar (r.1229-1249 C.E.), al-Malik al-Muzaffar Yusuf (r.1249–1295 C.E.), and al-Malik al-Ashraf Umar (r. 1295–1296 C.E.). The *Tarih al-mustabsir*[3] by Ibn al-Mujawir, meanwhile, is an eye-witness account, and focuses on the Arabian Peninsula's western and southern regions. Lastly, *Masalik el-absar fi mamalik el-amsar*[4], written by Shihab ad-Din Ahmad ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari which is an encyclopedic collection addressing administrative practices in Syria, Egypt, Hejaz (present-day Saudi Arabia), and Yemen.

The Rasulid Dynasty, often regarded as the pinnacle of Yemen's early Islamic civilization[5], brought heightened levels of unity to the region in which Islam was key. Slavery persisted in Yemen until its abolition in 1967. Under the Rasulids, Islam not only played a role in establishing the dynasty, but it influenced the practice of slavery, shaping its regulations and the conditions for

[1] Translated: "The Pearl Strings of the Rasulid state"
[2] Translated: "The Light of Knowledge"
[3] Translated: "Enlightened History"
[4] Translated: "The Pathways of Sights in the Realms of Cities"
[5] Varisco, Daniel Martin. "Texts and Pretexts: The Unity of the Rasulid State under Al-Malik Al-Muzaffar." *Revue Du Monde Musulman et de La Méditerrané* 67, no. 1 (1993), 2.

enslaved individuals. The advent of Islam brought changes, including the institutionalization of the taxing system at ports, and it influenced perceptions of race, and justifications for practices such as concubinage and castration.

The lens by which this paper views Yemen is that of a littoral, Muslim society of the Indian Ocean World (IOW). The Rasulids maintained political and economic ties with Egypt, Ethiopia, India, China and Sri Lanka, supported by the flourishing maritime trade passing through the port of Aden. Situated strategically between the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, Aden became a crucial hub for major maritime trade routes, which also linked caravan paths leading to Mecca and Medina, Islam's holy cities. The Rasulid state leveraged this prime location by fostering trade through administrative oversight, infrastructure development, and security measures. In return, the state benefited from the wealth of merchants by imposing significant taxes on their activities.[6]

This paper asserts that the slave trade in Yemen, particularly related to women and eunuchs, was a well-integrated social practice, especially in the Rasulid courts. Female slaves were primarily involved in domestic work and concubinage, whereas eunuchs played advisory and military roles. Islam was significant in defining the treatment of slaves, specifically about manumission, justification of concubinage, race and taxation on slave trade. The paper also highlights areas of debate within socio-religious practices in some key areas of contention. These include issues related to having multiple wives, skin-color, and castration centers.

Background: Spread of Islam and The Role It Played In Rasulid Yemen

Around 628 C.E., the Persian Governor of Sana'a, Badhan, became Muslim initiating the conversion process in Yemen. After he converted, Yemen formally became part of Islam. The

[6] Margariti, Roxani Eleni. *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade: 150 Years in the Life of a Medieval Arabian Port* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 26.

reasons for this relatively quick conversion can be attributed to numerous factors. First, Islamic missionaries were often successful. The Prophet sent key figures including Muadh ibn Jabal who built the first mosque in Yemen, and his son-in-law Ali (who would later become the Fourth Caliph) is said to have converted the entire tribe of Hamdan in one evening. Moreover, Yemen at the time had been occupied by Persians, and as the Persian influence waned, Islam filled the void, offering a new social and religious framework to maintain power. The rapid acceptance of Islam was further facilitated by its promise of unity and support, which resonated with the local population, especially following the decline of previous powers like the Himyarites who had consistently been at war. There was also significant local resistance to the spread of Christianity, particularly under the last Himyarite kings who had converted to Judaism and actively opposed Christian influence. With the fall of these rulers and the introduction of Islam, there was opportunity for the religion to flourish.

Yemen, in the pre-Islamic era, was divided by tribal and dynastic conflicts. The Rasulids are known to have unified Yemen, mostly by buying the loyalty of the tribes to bring them together. The Rasulids governed through a familial dynasty[7]. Leveraging their riches, they incorporated adversaries and financed an administrative system that frequently employed a conventional but indirect Yemeni method of wielding power. Despite some state-like characteristics, Rasulid Yemen remained a venture rooted in familial connections, clan affiliations, and tribal bonds, primarily concentrated on overseeing trade routes[8]. The social and political framework revolved around sustaining a balance between tribal entities and centralized governance[9]. The Rasulids were able to do this because they solidified their political legitimacy by emphasizing their ethnic and

[7] Barrett, Roby C. "Yemen: A Different Political Paradigm in Context," *Operations in Urban Environments: Experiences and Concepts*. ADA544214 (Washington, DC: Defense Technical Information Center, 2010), 12.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Barrett, "Yemen: A Different Political Paradigm in Context," 31.

genealogical connections to Southern Arabia. In reality, they were of Turkomen origin, but they claimed to have descended from the Qahtan, a legendary Arab patriarch.

Author Daniel Mahoney explains how the Rasulids aligned themselves with Islamic rulers to elevate their status above other influential political actors in the region to establish this fictitious narrative[10]. One of the most significant ways they achieved this was through the use of Islamic and South Arabian cultural memory, particularly through the deployment of a prophetic poem in *Al-Uqud al-luʾluʾiyya*[11]. The poem begins by praising the ancient kings of South Arabia, setting a foundation of legitimacy for local rule prior to foreign domination. This praise is followed by a lamentation of foreign occupation, particularly by the Ethiopians, which al-Khazraji explains was a divine punishment for the region's decline. The poem then marks the emergence of the Prophet Muhammad, signifying a political and religious revival in Southern Arabia through the spread of Islam[12]. Interestingly, there are around forty hadiths which mention the characteristics of Yemen and Yemenis[13]. The poem not only connected the Rasulids to the kingship traditions of pre-Islamic Southern Arabia but also underscored the arrival of Islam as a revitalizing force that helped restore the region's fortunes. In Rasulid Yemen, the primary Islamic influence in Yemen was Sunni Shafi, with some Sufi elements, and strong Shiite presence as well[14]. The Rasulids themselves were Sunni-Shafi, and they maintained this identity but by positioning themselves as both heirs to ancient Yemeni kings and leaders of an Islamic resurgence, the Rasulids were able to strengthen their political legitimacy. Hence, it can be observed how the narrative ties together religion and the region.

[10] Mahoney, Daniel. "Writing the Ethnic Origins of the Rasulids in Late Medieval South Arabia." *The Medieval History Journal* 21, no. 2 (2018), 3.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid., 12
[13] Shah Daud Yasrab Syed, "40 Hadith about the Virtues of Yemen and Its People - Muslim Hands," https://muslimhands.org.uk/_ui/uploads/u1go8n/Yemen%2040%20Hadith.pdf. [Accessed: December 8, 2023].
[14] Barrett, "Yemen: A Different Political Paradigm in Context," 26

Defining Slavery In The Islamic Context, Manumission, and Slave Rights

The word "Islam" in itself means submission, and all Muslims are considered to be slaves (or servants in other translations) of *Allah*[15]. Slavery had been a part of Arabian society for centuries before Islam, and it persisted after the Quran was revealed. The Quran does not outright ban slavery, rather it acknowledges it as an integral and perpetual aspect of the prevailing social structure[16]. The Islamic definition of enslaved person comes from the Quran. In chapter 33 and 34, it reads "*ma malakat aymanukum*" or "what [your] right hands possess"[17]. It reads about slaves as personal property[18]. Notably, in most sources there is no specific mention of this verse as justification for slavery in Rasulid Yemen, but broadly it explains the legality of keeping slaves. This verse is often used to explain concubinage and the rightful ownership of a person. In Islam, there are two ways of obtaining a slave, that is as war captives or by taking children of two enslaved parents. There are also certain rights of a slave in Islam and it is important to note that while Islamic legal texts provide guidance on the humane treatment of slaves, there is no evidence of legal measures aimed at penalizing abusive slave owners.

Although in most Islamic societies, manumission is known to have been significantly present, this is seldom discussed in Yemeni historical records. The emancipation of slaves is considered a virtuous act that brings an individual closer to God, and freeing a slave could serve as a means of expiation of sins or a legal consequence. There are rare, recorded instances which show the implementation of this concept: The Rasulid queen Jihat Tagha, wife of the sixth sultan al-Afdal al-Abbas (r. 1363–77 C.E.) ruled that upon her death, which occurred in 1382 C.E.,

[15] Translated: God
[16] El Hamel, Chouki. *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

many slaves would be freed[19]. Another case was when a slave was set free to make up for committing a sin. Sometimes, in biographical dictionaries, there were stories of former slaves who were freed and went on to become saints or successful merchants[20]. Magdalena Moorthy Kloss suggests that "remarkable silence" around manumission could potentially be because it was rarely practiced in medieval Yemen, although that would be unlikely given its centrality in Islamic legal texts. She suggests that manumission could have been so common that court chroniclers and scribes did not bother recording it[21].

Why Slavery Existed, What It Looked Like, & Slave Origins

Slavery under the Rasulids was, in some ways, a continuation of a social system that had been entrenched before the rise of Islam. It nevertheless had its economic benefits that were distinct to the time-period in question. Kloss highlights two early dynamics that increased the number of slaves in Yemen. During the 8th and 9th centuries, a surge in mineral exploitation on the Arabian Peninsula created an urgent demand for cheap and plentiful labor. Additionally, in the 9th century, the Ziyadids in Yemen established the first enslaved army[22]. The extent to which Rasulids may have increased the volume of the trade is debatable, but they are certainly credited with formalizing it, establishing taxation, and galvanizing the ports for trade throughout the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Slaves in the Rasulid dynasty existed to serve in the courts as advisors, military generals, and soldiers. While most of the historiography centers around elite slavery of eunuchs and

[19] Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy. *Unfree Lives: Slaves at the Najahid and Rasulid Courts of Yemen (11th to 15th Centuries CE)* (Leiden: Brill, 2024), 23.
[20] Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy "Slavery in Medieval Arabia" *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Slavery throughout History* (Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023_. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13260-5, pg 164
[21] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, pg 23
[22] Ibid., 28

concubines, there are substantial attestations of slavery in regular society[23]. In particular, Geniza letters from the 12th century highlight how Jewish merchants and family members in Egypt corresponded with their associates in Yemen to organize the shipment of individual slaves[24].

Female slaves were responsible for tasks like cooking, cleaning, being attendants, and craftsmanship. They served as entertainers, and many domestic female slaves could also have been demanded to fulfill their masters' sexual desires, bearing and raising children for them. African concubines were a common presence in the households of Yemeni upper-class[25]. Male slaves, aside from those that became eunuchs, undertook various tasks such as domestic chores, agricultural work, and menial labor[26]. They also fought in battles and sometimes sacrificed their lives for their masters. Additionally, they engaged in trading activities on behalf of their owners.

Slaves came largely from Ethiopia among other East African regions, as well as India. These regions were used for trade of fabric, ivory, spices, and slaves. They had major ports used in international trade routes that made the slave trade possible, but in comparison to India, Somalia, even Egypt, Yemen's connection across the Red Sea with Ethiopia was especially long-term. The trade between Yemen and Ethiopia and the neighboring Gulf of Aden coastline in Africa are actually evident from the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, a Greco-Egyptian manual believed to have been written in the early 1st century C.E.[27] Later evidence from 575 C.E. also asserts the presence of Ethiopian slaves in Arabia. Namely that the presence of East African slaves in Mecca during the time of the Prophet Muḥammad has been connected to the defeat of the Aksumite army in Yemen in 575 C.E., after which the victorious Himyarite king (last leader of pre-Islamic Yemen)

[23] Kloss, *Unfree* Lives, 76
[24] Perry, Craig. "Historicizing Slavery in the Medieval Islamic World." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 1 (n.d.): 3
[25] Kloss "Slavery in Medieval Arabia," 166
[26] Ibid., 167
[27] Pankhurst, Richard. "Across The Red Sea And Gulf Of Aden: Ethiopia's Historic Ties With Yaman." *Africa: Rivista Trimestrale Di Studi e Documentazione Dell'Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente* 57, no. 3 (2002): 399.

Sayf Ibn Dhi Yazan, enslaved the Ethiopian soldiers[28]. Sayf Ibn Dhi Yazan was later assassinated by his slaves.

Generally, there is a long tradition of Ethiopian slaves in the Islamic World. This is not to say Islam subjected them to slavery or caused an increase in enslavement, but based on the social conditions at the time, an Ethiopian slave represented the ultimate example of humility or low status. Some hadiths include the Prophet mentioning: "You should listen to and obey your ruler even if he was an Ethiopian slave whose head looks like a raisin" or when he Prophet referred to Bilal, his first *muezzin*[29], as "the first fruit of Abyssinia"[30] or the promise that when the end of time comes, "an Abyssinian with short legs will destroy the Kaaba"[31]. This relationship may have generally informed slave raiding, as most slaves were sourced from Ethiopia[32]. Scholar Ayda Bouanga discusses that the term "*barya*" refers to slave in various texts, and that the term "*medr barya*" refers to "land of the slaves"[33]. *Medr barya* coincides with "pagan" areas, in particular it refers to southwestern Ethiopia, outside Christian polities where slave raids were frequent[34]. She explains how these regions were located in or near the vicinity of Damot[35], which was known for gold and slave exports[36]. Al-Umari, also confirms the area being "pagan", and provides details on boys from Damot being taken for castration[37]. In Islam, Muslims cannot enslave other Muslims, so they were sourced from non-Muslim areas. Kloss confirms that slave raids in non-Islamic regions

[28] Kloss, *"Unfree Lives*, 3
[29] Translated: The one who calls Muslims to prayer
[30] Pankhurst, "Across The Red Sea And Gulf Of Aden,' 407.
[31] Mishkat al-Masabih 2721 - the rites of pilgrimage - كتاب المناسك - sunnah.com - sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم), accessed September 2024, https://sunnah.com/mishkat:2721.
[32] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 36
[33] Bouanga, Ayda. "Gold, Slaves, and Trading Routes in Southern Blue Nile (Abbay) Societies, Ethiopia, 13th–16th Centuries." *Northeast African Studies* 17, no. 2 (2017), 45.
[34] Ibid., 40.
[35] Moreover, she remarks that Janjero (another kingdom which also exported gold and slaves), was a slave society for itself, whose people enslaved each other.
[36] Bouanga, "Gold, Slaves, and Trading Routes," 33.
[37] ابن فضل الله العمري، أحمد بن يحيى., and Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Umarī. *Masalik el Absar fi Mamalik el Amsar*. Edited by Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes. (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1927), 13

were sometimes portrayed as holy wars[38], even though the Rasulids were not actively engaged in warfare against non-Muslims who they could have captured or enslaved.

The Nur al-Marif also explains that captured children from this region were transported by Ethiopian traders to the port of Zayla[39]. In the beginning of Rasulid control, Zayla was controlled by the Ethiopian sultanate of Ifat (in the 15th century, it became part of the sultanate of Adal) which was paramount among a number of Muslim polities linking the Red Sea coast to the Ethiopian hinterland. Kloss mentions Ethiopian Christian hagiographies from the 15th and 16th centuries C.E. that indicate that many individuals sold into slavery abroad during this time were prisoners captured during wars and raids along the frontier between the Christian kingdom and the Sultanate of Adal[40]. At Zayla, they were sold to Yemeni merchants through an Ethiopian intermediary known as a "*nazil*". It can be observed that some rigid parts of Islam were not implemented. Without enslaved parents, enslavement of children was forbidden. The Yemeni merchants would then take these slaves, put them on ships with mixed cargo, and take them to the Port of Aden and Zabid. Zabid was one of two capitals of the Rasulid dynasty, Ta'izz was the other (whereas the port of Aden was in a strategic location, and advantageous due to its natural harbor, other ports were also key in the trade in convenient locations for some slaves to be taken to). At the ports, castrated young males were considered "higher quality" and were selected for government service by government officials, and the others were sold on the public market[41].

Yemeni authors writing about the period of 11th to 15th centuries primarily employ three distinct terms when referring to African slaves: *habashi*, which represented individuals hailing from present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea; *zanji*, which broadly referred to the regions of modern

[38] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 48.
[39] Kloss "Slavery in Medieval Arabia," 154.
[40] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 59.
[41] Kloss "Slavery in Medieval Arabia," 152.

Somalia and the coastal areas further south; and *nubi*, indicating the roots of those slaves in what is now southern Egypt and Sudan[42]. The terms also varied overtime, with various geographical nuances. Thus, while it is difficult to assert the exact origins of these slaves, new research on gene makeup shows female African contribution, specifically Ethio-Somali makeup in the Arabian Peninsula is three times higher than men, which can be further be attributed to concubinage and sexual slavery[43].

Many other slaves came from India. This demand for slaves was shaped by the cultural and social practices of the time, which placed an importance on exotic and skilled performers. Yemeni records reveal that female slaves from India were highly valued as entertainers and concubines[44]. Although there was a preference for female slaves, Indian males were also taken for bondage. During the 13th century, Ibn al-Mujawir, mentioned the importation of enslaved boys (referred to as *ghilman*) from India to Yemeni ports like Aden and al-Shihr[45]. As the Rasulids are mostly known for their consumption of Eunuchs and African slaves, the presence of Indian slaves can possibly be alluded to in the trade networks between India and Yemen. As they had connecting trade, slaves could be easily transported to Yemeni ports.

Race, Slavery, and Islam

Considering the presence of a large black community of slaves in Yemen, the notion of race-based social dynamics is a point to consider. Magdalena Moorthy Kloss asserts "racialized concepts are always geographically and temporally specific, and intersect in complex ways with

[42] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 51.
[43] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 59.
[44] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 53.
[45] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 54.

other local categories of hierarchization, such as gender and class"[46]. Despite early racialization of blackness in the medieval period, Yemenis knew that not all darker-skinned persons were slaves, and skin color was never a stable marker of social status in Yemen[47].This nuance can be partially understood by the patrilineal system. In Islam, the child takes on the fathers heritage, social status, religion, last name, and so on. This meant that if an Arab had a child with an African woman, the mixed-race child would be free, considered Arab first, and would be entitled to the right of his or her father, while the enslaved status and foreign origins of their mothers were legally inconsequential, at least in theory. It is also notable that perhaps more than hierarchies based on skin-color, there was an ethnic preference of the aforementioned Ethiopian boys. In the 13th century, a tribesman named Yahya b. Al-Ammak wrote a love poem titled 'In Praise of Blackness'. Not only does it account for how blackness was perceived, it also implicitly discusses concubinage. It was recorded by al-Khazraji[48]

> At black nightfall, after she had first
> stolen a glance at me from nearby
> And felt safe from the ambush of the secret enemy,
> The ear of his denouncer, and the eyes of the observer,
> She appeared to us between the houses
> Trailing the abundance of her new robe,
> Showing us the bone of her arm,
> The hooked nose
> The body of a twig and buttocks of a dune.
> A Muwallada of the mawālī's daughters,
> Like a strange gazelle, raised in the house.
> If people reproach me for loving her, they are never right.
> They say "[she is] Black", and although they judged correctly
> Still, this is not shameful
> For were it not for blackness
> And the wondrous beauty of mystery that God has endowed it with,
> It would not dwell at the centre of the eyes,

[46] Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy. "Race and the Legacy of Slavery in Yemen." *History and Anthropology* 35, no. 4 (2024): 934.
[47] Ibid., 942.
[48] Ibid., 943.

Nor would it dwell at the centre of the hearts.
Neither would the mole embellish the young man's cheek
Nor decoration adorn the scholar's paper.
Indeed, the cornerstone of the Kaʿba in Mecca
is the best of all stones
And musk the most delightful of all perfumes.
Indeed, people's passion in their lifetime
Is in praising [the black hair of] youth and disparaging white hair.
The eye is not embellished if the eyelids are devoid of kuḥl
And neither is the palm of the hand if it is not tinted.
Not every eye is like the eye of the lover
Nor every heart like the heart of the beloved.[49]

The speaker justifies her beauty by comparing her skin color to the holy stone from heaven, and the Kaaba which are both black. By making this comparison, he asserts her beauty as heavenly, where the stone is from, or divine by drawing comparisons to the Kaaba. At the same time, he is trying to prove here that there is nothing wrong with blackness, implying that the idea of being black is not considered beautiful or has some negative connotations attached to it.

The poem is written about a mixed girl whose mother is black and father Yemeni Arab, as per the use of the terms *muwallada* and *mawali* which refers to one foreign parent typically the mother. Simultaneously it means freed slave, and also non-Arab slave concubine[50] . Although it does not necessarily carry racial connotations[51], when looking into the etymology of the word there seems to be a consistent trend in the Arabian Peninsula. The terms "African" and "slave" evident in medieval Yemeni texts have a lengthy history within Arabic literary traditions, often conflating each other[52]. The term *muwallad* initially became used during the Abbasid caliphate (750-1258 C.E.). The time period coincides with several decades of the Rasulid dynasty. While little is known of the etymology from Rasulid sources, it is safe to presume that because of their geographical,

[49] Ibid., 943-4.
[50] Ehud R Toledano, "An Empire of Many Households: The Case of Ottoman Enslavement," *Slaves and Households in The Near East* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2011), 87.
[51] Kloss, "Race and the Legacy of Slavery in Yemen," 944
[52] Ibid., 941.

temporal, linguistic proximity that there was significant overlap in the meanings of the words. In the Abbasid caliphate, *muwallada* daughters, while considered themselves of local origin, actually followed their mothers into slavery, despite their fathers' free standing[53]. Moreover, in present day Yemen, the term is frequently used in a derogatory manner, and *Muwalladeen* (pl. muwallad) face discriminatory practices for many years including denial of citizenship rights, subjection to labor market discrimination, socially stigmatization, and lack access to education[54]. This is true particularly those with African ancestry, as compared to Asian or European families[55].

The topic of race provides insight on the extent to which Islamic legal thought defined slavery, and in this case, it seems to be ambiguous. While hierarchies based on skin color or ethnicity were forbidden, the language used to describe enslaved individuals opposes this notion.

Concubinage, Slavery, and Islam

Concubinage was not only common in the courts, but also among the wealthier Yemenis, and was justified using Islam[56]. Al-Khazraji mentions that the Rasulid sultan al-Ashraf Umar (r.1295–1296 C.E.) used to go on holidays to the date-gardens surrounding Zabid, accompanied by three hundred camel-litters, each of which transported one concubine[57]. Furthermore, in a first-hand account of Ibn al-Mujawir, who witnessed the sale procedures on the slave market of Aden in the 13th century. He writes:

> The slave girl is fumigated with an aromatic smoke, perfumed, adorned and a waist-wrapper fastened round her middle. The seller takes her by the hand and walks around the souk [market] with her; he calls out that she is for sale. The wicked

[53] Gordon, Matthew S. "Slavery in the Islamic Middle East (c. 600–1000 CE)." *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, edited by Craig Perry, David Eltis, Stanley L. Engerman, and David Richardson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 359.
[54] Sana'a Center, "Muwalladeen in Yemen: Racialization, Stigmatization and Discrimination in Times of War," Sana'a Center For Strategic Studies, August 5, 2022, https://sanaacenter.org/publications/main-publications/18105.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Kloss, "Race and the Legacy of Slavery in Yemen," 942.
[57] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 158.

> merchants appear, examining her hands, feet, calves, thighs, navel, chest and breasts. He examines her back and measures her buttocks in spans. He examines her tongue, teeth, hair and spares no effort. If she is wearing clothes, he takes them off; he examines and looks. Finally, he casts a direct eye over her vagina and anus, without her having any covering or veil. When he has examined, expressed his approval and bought the slave girl, she remains with him for about ten days. When [the buyer] has taken care of her, had his fill, become bored and tired of her and got what he wanted from her, his lust is at an end. Zayd, the buyer, says to ʿAmr, the vendor, "Indeed, sir, we have a case to settle in court!" So they attend in front of the judge and one makes a claim against the other, [suggesting there is] a defect [in the slave girl].[58]

This example highlights that slavery was brutal, and that there was inherent indignity that these people faced, regardless of whether there was Islamic approval (aforementioned, Islamically, female slaves cannot be forced into prostitution), or not. Here, this girl suffered objectification and humiliation through the actions of the seller and the prospective buyer, in full view of the public, and is then sexually exploited by her new owner[59]. Similarly, in the poem "In Praise of Blackness", the position of being a female descending from an enslaved mother (even of Yemeni heritage), shows the vulnerable position of these women, and their capacity to be harassed and insulted.

Author Chouki el Hamel discusses the justification of concubinage as an institution of slavery in Islam can be attributed to the influence of early Islamic scholars who were predominantly male, prone to blending pre-Islamic cultural customs, and selective interpretations of the Quran and Hadith to institutionalize slavery and concubinage. Legal frameworks that reflected the social and political circumstances of the time, rather than the Quranic intent, normalized and justified these practices, even though the Quran emphasizes releasing slaves and forbids behaviors like concubinage[60]. Similarly, author Taef El-Azhari asserts that apologists have refrained from allowing this interpretation and instead translate the definition as "female slaves". Al-Azhari's

[58] Kloss, "Slavery in Medieval Arabia," 155.
[59] Ibid.
[60] El Hamel, *Black Morocco*, 32.

broader argument is that, rather than just the interpretations of the Quran, the Quran and hadith in–and-of-itself are inherently patriarchal and inequitable towards women. Hence, contributing an ideological backing to female sexual slave trade, under the context that women were inferior to men, and could be used in such a manner. While this might be possible, there is also an example in the Rasulid dynasty of Queen al-Shamsiyya (d. 1295), which depicts some female agency. Queen al-Shamsiyya was daughter of the inaugural Rasulid monarch al-Mansur, who assumed a significant role in politics following her father's demise[61]. In his absence, she assumed control of Zabid, expending generously on military forces and the local militia after her father's death[62]. Upon al-Muzaffar's return to Zabid, he formally appointed her as queen, marking Zabid as the first city to witness a female ruler[63]. Throughout a turbulent political transition, al-Shamsiyya assisted her brother in seizing other pivotal citadels[64]. Although this example shows that certain women did have agency in this society, it is also important to note that she was not a slave.

Eunuchs, Castration, Slavery, and Islam

Eunuchs played specific roles in the Rasulid courts. Unlike other Islamic societies, there is no mention of a *harem* in this dynasty. There is also no mention of highly gender-segregated places, and eunuchs are not recorded to have been protectors of women, or harems, or other such institutions[65]. Thus, the role of eunuchs as intermediaries between male and female spaces was not their most crucial job. While they managed royal households, educated royal children, and supervised other slaves, al-Khazraji notes about the half of the thirty eunuchs as holding influential

[61] El-Azhari, Taef. "The Ayyubids: Their Two Queens and their Powerful Castrated Atabegs" *Queens, Eunuchs and Concubines in Islamic History*, 661-1257 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 33
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Although, similar to the topic of manumission, it may have been so obvious that it was not considered worthy of recording.

positions in the military and political administration. They also led military missions, commanded troops, and some even held the title of "amir", the highest military rank. Chief eunuchs often served as governors (*wali*) and envoys (*safir*), symbolizing the depth of their involvement in governance[66]. One standout figure, Abu al-Hazim Ahyaf, known as Amin al-Din (d. in 1385), significantly impacted Rasulid rule for over 66 years[67]. al-Khazraji writes:

> He was a eunuch of sound judgment, a horseman, energetic, brave, audacious, a shedder of blood, cultured and solemn. He was one of the senior amīrs, highly determined, of great spirit, severe in attack and of honest resolve. [...] He was the only one to advise the sultans, managing and controlling fully the matters he had been entrusted with. He did not know partiality in his words or deeds. He was the first whom the sultan al-Malik al-Mujāhid promoted. He entrusted him with the fortresses, charged him with the matters of the mis-sions, and appointed him over the soldiers. He was hardheaded and did not turn away from his determined goal. [...] He was severe in punishment, reckless with the sword.[68]

Rasulid sultans frequently appointed their former educators and mentors as administrators for their wives. Each noblewoman held a eunuch administrator (*zimam*)[69]. In short, this relationship is characterized by representation of the noblewoman by her eunuch, who is typically appointed by a male family member, responsible for overseeing her household affairs. This arrangement's significance is underscored by the fact that Rasulid royal women were identified not by their given names but by the name of their eunuch administrator. For example, the wife of the seventh Rasulid sultan al-Ashraf Ismail was recognized as Jihat Mutab, derived from her zimam's name, Jamal al-Din Mutab al-Ashrafi[70]. The eunuchs represented their mistresses in male-dominated spheres extending beyond the royal residences. Indeed, Rasulid sultans frequently appointed their former educators and tutors as zimams, ensuring that eunuchs remained close to the ruling family from

[66] Kloss, "Slavery in Medieval Arabia," 157
[67] Kloss, "Eunuchs at the Service of Yemen's Rasūlid Dynasty (626–858/1229–1454)." *Der Islam* 98, no. 1 (2021), 18.
[68] Ibid., 8
[69] Kloss, "Slavery in Medieval Arabia," 161
[70] Ibid.

childhood through adulthood, extending their service to the wives and children as well[71]. The closeness and responsibilities vested in these roles likely granted eunuchs a subtle influence within the ruling family[72].

The unpleasant nature of castration is recognized in Islamic law. There is no verse in the Quran allowing or forbidding such a practice as castration, however in one verse it states: "So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. Adhere to the fiṭrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah"[73], which is often interpreted as any physical change to any creation. This verse is often used to claim that tattoos, or cosmetic surgeries are forbidden, which may not be too telling of the permissibility, or lack thereof, of castration. According to the Prophet, however, he says "whoever kills a slave, him we kill. Whoever cuts off the nose of a slave, his nose will we cut off; and whoever, castrates a slave, him also shall we castrate"[74]. Indeed, a few sources state that the Prophet was gifted a eunuch, which he kept.

What is most interesting about this is that eunuchs were castrated in Muslim Egypt specifically at Aswan on the Egyptian border, and also at Asyut in upper Egypt, then they were brought to Yemen (there was also significant gifting of eunuchs between the two countries)[75]. Some authors imply that because of Islamic law, likely castration did not occur in Egypt, or in Muslim-controlled regions at all, but this is refutable. Jan Hogendorn asserts that despite religious prohibition, some of the most important castration centers existed in Asyut, Hejaz and Yemen. He

[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.
[73] "Surah Ar-Rum - 30." Quran.com. Accessed September 2024. https://previous.quran.com/30:30?font=v1&translations=131%2C20.
[74] Sunan An-Nasa'i 4736 - the book of Oaths (qasamah), retaliation and blood money - كتاب القسامة - sunnah.com - sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم), accessed September 2024, https://sunnah.com/nasai:4736.
[75] Hogendorn, Jan. "The Hideous Trade. Economic Aspects of the 'Manufacture' and Sale of Eunuchs." *Paideuma* 45 (1999), 150.

further explains that even outside these empires, the castration centers were "nevertheless actually or nominally Muslim"[76].

One example of such a region is Hadiya. Early 14th century texts, namely *Takwin al-Buldan*, reveal Hadiya as a locality where slaves who had been castrated in a place called Washlu (also located in SW Ethiopia, north of Hadiya), were taken for an additional operation before they were sold to Egypt[77]. Hadiya was one of the strongest of the seven states of the Muslim federation of Zayla, located near Southwestern Ethiopia[78][79]. Al-Umari recounts his discussions on this subject:

> It is to Hadiya that they import eunuchs from the countries of infidels. The merchant al-Ḥajj Faraj al-Funi told me the ruler of Amḥara outlawed the castration of slaves. As he disapproves of the act, he obstructs it. Instead, the brigands go to a town called Washlu. Its people are a rabble without religion, so they castrate the slaves there. Of all the inhabitants of the countries of Abyssinia, only the people there dare to perform the act. When merchants buy slaves, they leave with them and bring them to Washlu to be castrated there, as castration raises their price substantially. All the eunuchs are then brought to Hadiya, where they undergo a second surgery to remove the pus to unblock their urinary canal. They are taken care of in Hadiya until they recover, as the people in Washlu do not know how to care for them. I asked al-Funi why Hadiya particularly was known for this. He responded that Hadiya is closer to Washlu than the others, and its inhabitants developed a particular skill in caring for the eunuchs. Nevertheless, more of them died than survived, because it is dangerous to transport them from one place to another without any medical care. If they were cared for in the same place they were castrated, it would be healthier for them; yet, if they weren't transported to a place where they could be cared for, God knows, none of them would survive. The population of Hadiya follows the Hanafi tradition.[80]

---

[76] Hogendorn, Jan. "The Hideous Trade. Economic Aspects of the 'Manufacture' and Sale of Eunuchs." *Paideuma* 45 (1999), 150.

[77] Braukämper, Ulrich. "Islamic Principalities in Southeast Ethiopia between the Thirteenth and Sixteenth Centuries (Part Ii)." *Ethiopianist Notes* 1, no. 2 (1977), 8

[78] Idris, Anwar Ayano. "King Amda Tsiyon (R.1314-1344) Territorial Expansion to the Kingdom of Hadiya, South West Ethiopia." *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 9, no. 1 (2022), 1.

[79] The successful campaign of the Christian King Amda Tsiyon in Hadiya in 1316/17 does not imply that he was fighting against Muslim troops. According to him, based on the works of the 14th century scholar, Shihab ad-Din Aḥmad ibn Fadl Allah al-Umari, Hadiya may have been a pagan kingdom where growing number of Muslim merchants had been settling, and probably also converted some of the local people (Idris, "King Amda Tsiyon," 4)

[80] ابن فضل الله العمري، أحمد بن يحيى., and Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī. *Masālik El Abṣār Fi Mamālik El Amṣār*, 16-17

As Eunuchs often came to the Rasulids via Egypt or Ethiopia, it is possible that early 13th century eunuchs may have come to Yemen from Hadiya in particular.

Agents of Trade, Finance, and Islam

Rasulid domination was characterized by the imposition of military garrisons and the levying of taxes through tributes on all trades. Aden's customs were among the significant locations where the administrative culture of Rasulid Yemen was cultivated and developed[81]. The complexity of its tax procedures led to the presence of an imposing bureaucracy very early on[82]. Most of this is recorded in Nur al-Marif, but interestingly despite excessive trade with Ethiopia, the Nur al-Marif provides no indication of direct Rasulid state involvement in trade with Ethiopia, which contrasts sharply with the strict regulation of commerce with Egypt and India. At the time, Ethiopia did not produce its own currency. The standard form of money in Islamic regions was the *kamiliya*, a silver dirham. Additionally, there was a lesser silver coin called the *haras*.

The value of the dirham was typically determined by weight, and called *waqiya* approximately one ounce. Four *kamiliya* dirhams equaled one dinar. However, because Ethiopia was a gold-exporting nation with little access to silver[83] (this particular comment on gold exports is mentioned in the Nur al-Marif, but is qualified by Bouanga's study on Damot, Gamo, and Janjero; al-Umari also writes that "gold is imported from Damot and Siham, which are the mining regions

[81] Éric Vallet, *L'Arabie Marchande État et Commerce Sous Les Sultans Rasūlides Du Yémen, 626-858/1229-1454* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2010).
[82] Ibid
[83] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 59.

of Abyssinia"[84]). Barter was also common. For example, between Ethiopian and Yemeni trade of salt, two or three blocks of rock salt could often be traded for a single valuable slave[85].

Slaves were itemized alongside various other commodities to be assessed, traded, and subjected to taxation. For instance, a valuable eunuch (al-khadim al-jayyid) was deemed as highly costly, priced at up to one hundred waqiya in coins, signifying its preciousness. Similarly, a eunuch of moderate quality was valued between 50 to 60 waqiya, while a standard eunuch's price was around 40 waqiya. Regarding uncastrated slaves (referred to as al-Abid al-Fuhul), the top-tier quality was exemplified by "a pure Ethiopian slave boy", like the *jizli*, *amhari*, or *saharti*, whose value in Ethiopia amounted to 20 waqiya. What is notable here is that jizli, amḥari, and saharti refer to Ethiopian ethnic affiliations, implying that slave traders had a strong entrenched system in where there were ethnic preferences. Zanji slaves in Nur al-Marif were consistently quoted as worth half the amount paid for habashi slaves. Conversely, a medium-quality uncastrated slave fetched 14 to 15 waqiya, and the lesser-quality ones were priced between 10 to 12 waqiya. As for female slaves (al-jawar), the superior quality fetched 20 waqiya (al-Jayyida al-Wasifa al-Al), the mid-tier ranges from 15 to 16 waqiya, and the "lower-quality" ones were priced at 10 or 12 waqiya[86].

The Rasulids levied higher taxes per-unit ('*ushr*), intermediary costs (*dalala*), and sea protection tax (*shawani*), than previous rulers in Yemen. The Rasulids imposed 'ushr taxes on most imports to safeguard local products or assert authority after forming their state[87]. During the al-Muzaffar era (r. 1250-1295 C.E.), the *dallal* (the middleman or broker),aided the *muhtasib* in

[84] ابن فضل الله العمري، أحمد بن يحيى., and Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Umarī. *Masalik el Absar fi Mamalik el Amsar*, 13
[85] Owens, Travis J., "Beleaguered Muslim Fortresses and Ethiopian Imperial Expansion from the 13th to the 16th Century" (Dissertation, Naval Postgraduate School, 2008), 30.
[86] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 63
[87] Abudahesh, Abdulaziz A. "Taxation and Custom System during the Period of the Second Rasulid Sultan Al-Muzaffar 647-694 = 1249-1295 in Yemen." *Journal of Faculty of Arts*, no. 52 (2013), 13.

compiling market price lists for various goods, tailoring charges based on commodities and locations. Muhtasib refers to an official position or role in Islamic finance, who is responsible for supervising business in adherence to Islamic laws and ethical practices. The muhtasib oversaw commercial transactions, prices, weights and measures, and the overall conduct of marketplaces, aiming to maintain fairness, justice, and Islamic ethical standards in economic activities[88].

'Ushr is a religious concept and practice in Islam, where a portion (typically one-tenth) of one's income or agricultural produce is set aside and given as an obligatory religious tax, primarily for the benefit of the poor and needy. 'Ushr is a form of charitable giving, and it plays a role in Islamic economic and social principles to ensure the redistribution of wealth and support those less fortunate. There is little evidence on how the 'ushr was redistributed and how this differed from the system of Islamic Zakat in the dynasty. Zakat, which is not a per-unit tax, but a two-and-half-percent tax on assets each year, also was used for redistribution.

Moreover, Rasulid traders had to cover additional expenses like remunerating the nazil, handling transportation costs and travel provisions, and paying import taxes in Yemen. A specific quote breaks down these extra expenses related to eunuchs:

> The additional expenses upon the eunuch are twenty-one dinars. From this, the tithes ('ushr) in Zabid are five-and-a-half, and the hire [of the boat] is two dinars or three. The rest are provisions, because he eats meat and butter and is sustained by it. The eunuch can be taxed a little more than that. The 'ushr in Aden on the eunuch are four-and-a-half.[89]

Goods from India were generally subjected to 'ushr taxes, except in rare instances. Additionally, they imposed shawani taxes on a most commodities arriving from India[90]. Historical records state that all items arriving from the Indian Ocean had to be transferred through Aden for their further

[88] "Muḥtasib," Oxford Reference, accessed September 2024, https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100214762.
[89] Kloss, *Unfree Lives*, 65
[90] Abudahesh, "Taxation and Custom System," 13

transport via the Red Sea, despite the capability of ocean-faring dhows to reach Jeddah. The rationale behind this policy is reasonably understandable: the Rasulids imposed significant taxes and additional fees on both the import and export of pepper[91].

Conclusion

Slavery played a central role in the social and political structure of the Rasulid dynasty, with both male and female slaves occupying diverse roles in society. Female slaves often engaged in domestic work, concubinage, and entertainment, while male slaves, including eunuchs, held advisory, military, and administrative positions. Slaves, especially from Ethiopia and India, were integrated into the region's trade networks, with Yemeni ports like Aden and Zabid functioning as major hubs for the trade. Eunuchs, in particular, were highly valued, and while castration was prohibited in Islamic law, the trade in eunuchs continued between Egypt and Yemen, reflecting the complex interplay between religious doctrines and social customs.

The institution of slavery in the Rasulid courts was heavily influenced by Islamic law, which, while acknowledging the practice of slavery, emphasized humane treatment and manumission. While manumission is considered virtuous in Islamic law, Yemeni historical records rarely discuss its practice, with limited documented instances, possibly due to its commonality or low prevalence. Concubinage was common in Yemen and justified through selective interpretations of Islamic law, often blending pre-Islamic customs with Islamic principles, though it involved widespread sexual exploitation and objectification of female slaves. Similarly, on the topic of racialization, although skin-color was not a stable marker of social status, as patrilineal systems meant mixed-race children of Arab fathers and African mothers were

[91] Prange, Sebastian R., *Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

considered Arab and free, there was a long-standing association between African descent and slavery. A 13th-century Yemeni poem "In Praise of Blackness" praised the beauty of blackness, yet also reflected racialized views on blackness, showing both appreciation and stigmatization of African features. Terms like muwallad, which referred to individuals with one foreign parent, were linked to slaves and concubines in Yemen, reflecting complex racial and social dynamics that often conflated African descent with enslavement.

The Rasulid dynasty's advantageous strategic location between the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea allowed them to establish significant political and economic relations with regions as distant as Egypt, Ethiopia, India, China, and Sri Lanka. The Rasulids aligned themselves with Islamic rulers and South Arabian cultural memory, using religious and historical narratives, such as the prophetic poem in Al-Uqud al-luʾluʾiyya, to solidify their political legitimacy and claim continuity with ancient Yemeni kingship. The dynasty’s wealth and influence were reinforced by its control of trade routes and its ability to impose taxes on imports, exports, and intermediary trade activities. Aden's customs became a focal point for the development of the Rasulid administrative system, which oversaw the taxation of goods, including slaves, and established a sophisticated bureaucratic structure. Rasulid taxation systems included various forms like the 'ushr tax on imports, dalala (brokerage fees), and shawani (sea protection tax), with additional costs imposed on traders for transport and sustenance, particularly for slaves and eunuchs. Through this careful management of trade, military, and social structures, the Rasulid dynasty maintained its dominance, while blending Islamic principles with local customs to govern effectively.

References

Primary Sources

1. ابن فضل الله العمري، أحمد بن يحيى., and Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʻUmarī. *Masālik El Abṣār Fi Mamālik El Amṣār*. Edited by Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes. Paris: P. Geuthner, 1927.

2. Sunan An-Nasa'i 4736 - the book of Oaths (qasamah), retaliation and blood money - كتاب القسامة - sunnah.com - sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم), accessed September 2024, https://sunnah.com/nasai:4736.

3. Mishkat al-Masabih 2721 - the rites of pilgrimage - كتاب المناسك - sunnah.com - sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم). Accessed September 2024. https://sunnah.com/mishkat:2721.

4. Judgments (Ahkaam)," SAHIH BUKHARI, BOOK 89: Judgments (Ahkaam), accessed September 29, 2024, https://www.iium.edu.my/deed/hadith/bukhari/089_sbt.html#:~:text=Allah%27s%20Apostle%20said%2C%20%22You%20should,head%20looks%20like%20a%20raisin.%22.

Secondary Sources

5. Abudahesh, Abdulaziz A. "Taxation and Custom System during the Period of the Second Rasulid Sultan Al-Muzaffar 647-694 = 1249-1295 in Yemen." *Journal of Faculty of Arts*, no. 52 (2013): 2–29.

6. Barrett, Roby C. "Yemen: A Different Political Paradigm in Context," *Operations in Urban Environments: Experiences and Concepts*. ADA544214. Washington, DC: Defense Technical Information Center, 2010, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA544214.pdf

7. Braukämper, Ulrich. "Islamic Principalities in Southeast Ethiopia between the Thirteenth and Sixteenth Centuries (Part Ii)." *Ethiopianist Notes* 1, no. 2 (1977): 1–43.

8. Ehud R Toledano, "An Empire of Many Households: The Case of Ottoman Enslavement," *Slaves and Households In The Near East* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2011), 85–101

9. El-Azhari, Taef. "The Ayyubids: Their Two Queens and their Powerful Castrated Atabegs" *Queens, Eunuchs and Concubines in Islamic History*, 661-1257. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781474423199.

10. El Hamel, Chouki. "The Notion of Slavery and the Justification of Concubinage as an Institution of Slavery in Islam." Chapter in *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam*, African Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

11. Gordon, Matthew S. "Slavery in the Islamic Middle East (c. 600–1000 CE)." *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, edited by Craig Perry, David Eltis, Stanley L. Engerman, and David Richardson, 337–61. The Cambridge World History of Slavery. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

12. Hogendorn, Jan. “The Hideous Trade. Economic Aspects of the ‘Manufacture’ and Sale of Eunuchs.” *Paideuma* 45 (1999): 137–60

13. Idris, Anwar Ayano. “King Amda Tsiyon (R.1314-1344) Territorial Expansion to the Kingdom of Hadiya, South West Ethiopia.” *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 9, no. 1 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2139795.

14. Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy. “Eunuchs at the Service of Yemen’s Rasūlid Dynasty (626–858/1229–1454).” Der Islam 98, no. 1 (2021): 6–26. https://doi.org/10.1515/islam-2021-0002.

15. Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy. “Race and the Legacy of Slavery in Yemen.” *History and Anthropology* 35, no. 4 (2024): 931–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2023.2164927

16. Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy “Slavery in Medieval Arabia” *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Slavery throughout History*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, an imprint of Springer, 2023.

17. Kloss, Magdalena Moorthy. *Unfree Lives : Slaves at the Najahid and Rasulid Courts of Yemen (11th to 15th Centuries CE)*. Leiden: Brill, 2024.

18. Mahoney, Daniel. “Writing the Ethnic Origins of the Rasulids in Late Medieval South Arabia.” *The Medieval History Journal* 21, no. 2 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1177/0971945818775459.

19. Margariti, Roxani Eleni. *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade: 150 Years in the Life of a Medieval Arabian Port.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

20. McLean, John. “Early World Civilizations.” Lumen. Accessed September 2024. https://courses.lumenlearning.com/atd-herkimer-worldcivilization/chapter/the-sultanates-of-somalia/#:~:text=Ifat%20first%20emerged%20in%20the,from%20around%201415%20to%201577.

21. McLaughlin, Daniel. *Yemen: The Bradt Travel Guide*. Chalfont St. Peter, Guilford, Conn.: Bradt Travel Guides: Globe Pequot, 2007

22. Owens, Travis J., and Naval Postgraduate School (U.S.). “Beleaguered Muslim Fortresses and Ethiopian Imperial Expansion from the 13th to the 16th Century.” Dissertation, Naval Postgraduate School, 2008.

23. Pankhurst, Richard. “Across The Red Sea And Gulf Of Aden: Ethiopia’s Historic Ties With Yaman.” *Africa: Rivista Trimestrale Di Studi e Documentazione Dell’Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente* 57, no. 3 (2002): 393–419. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40761637.

24. Perry, Craig. “Historicizing Slavery in the Medieval Islamic World.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 1 (n.d.): 133–38. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743816001173.
25. Sana’a Center, “Muwalladeen in Yemen: Racialization, Stigmatization and Discrimination in Times of War,” Sana’a Center For Strategic Studies, August 5, 2022, https://sanaacenter.org/publications/main-publications/18105

26. Vallet, Eric. “Conclusion” *L’Arabie Marchande État et Commerce Sous Les Sultans Rasūlides Du Yémen*, 626-858/1229-1454. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2010. http://books.openedition.org/psorbonne/2441.

27. Varisco, Daniel Martin. “Texts and Pretexts : The Unity of the Rasulid State under Al-Malik Al-Muzaffar.” *Revue Du Monde Musulman et de La MéDiterranée* 67, no. 1 (1993): 13–24. https://doi.org/10.3406/remmm.1993.1584.