

An Introduction to the Papers of Aurelia Martín, Deborah Scolart and Maria Teresa González

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INTRODUCTION

After the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery the figure of 21 million of people around the world being treated with inequality and deprived of worthiness and dignity is something that might torment Humankind. As humans, any kind of slavery has to outrage everyone. The illegal trade of people will become much more important, in coming years, than traffic of weapons or drug trafficking, according to UN. The last UN report should enlighten us on what to do and how, in order to avoid slavery these days. However there are certainly million of victims of disregard, due to people with a blind ambition. Ambition of money, ambition of power and lack of values.

The most significant point of this situation is that it is not new anymore. Historical evidence provides to scholars a huge number of cases of humiliation and dishonour. And this is what Aurelia Martín, Deborah Scolart and Maria Teresa González presents through their researches, as many other people concerned with this topic. Aurelia Muñoz explains how Spanish rules for expelling Muslim communities from Spain had serious consequences for people that had been living from centuries as citizens in the Iberian Peninsula; and as a result they lost their freedom, with not other reason than religion. Deborah Scolart focuses her attention to Slavery and criminal law in some modern Islamic countries; Aurelia Muñoz has made a significant contribution with her research "The Royal Decree (Philip II, 1573) on slavery of *morisco* men, women and children and its consequences". She underlines how stereotypes existing in the collective imagination could justify the enslavement of Morisco men and women. Thanks to unpublished documents, in particular sales contracts from Spanish Archives, she analyses the arguments employed by

theologians to justify monarchical and ecclesiastical decisions against Muslim people and the controversy concerning the enslavement of Muslim children and women. Interesting are the problems caused by Christians who systematically infringed the royal decree that forbade the sale of Morisco children. This research has been made after studying a huge number of documents previous to the publication of the writs for the expulsion of Moriscos from the Kingdom of Granada and definitely from the Castile and Aragon Crowns.

Maria Teresa González in her essay "The Exploitation of Women in Northern Africa: The Case of Morocco" focuses on women slavery and women. Humiliation or dishonour were justified with the fact that women were "household needs". The situation caused a new division of people in the market, between primary and secondary sector. It is not a mere description, but a platform to analyse the ways to avoid exploitation of people, just at the moment of the implementation of new rules at the *al-Mudawwana*.

Deborah Scolart is the author of "Slavery and criminal law in some modern Islamic countries: a survey". The research was backed at the 1926 Geneva Convention against Slavery and proves that, at the beginning of the XIX century, the Islamic world was ready to cancel slavery as a legal institute. A decision that has been addressed thanks to new reforms of penal codes and shows that the responsibility of protecting against slavery should be offered by the States.

Finally, three different approaches to an old problem increased in the recent times due to globalization. A globalization that destroys local competition, prevents the growth of national businesses and drives poor people to a persistent misfortune. We must reflect on this situation and condemn it in order to get the public and private institutions involved.