

## Debunking the Myth of Jewish Involvement in the Slave Trade

### THE MYTH

In 1991, Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam's anonymous "Historical Research Department" published "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews," a libelous falsification of history dressed up with over 1,000 footnotes to make it appear to be credible scholarship.

The central thesis of this propaganda was that Jewish merchants, "dominated" the Atlantic Slave Trade. The book has since been widely condemned as an anti-Semitic canard, with no basis in fact, however, not before this conspiracy theory spread widely in the African American community. Unfortunately, this lie still gets promulgated today.

Dr Henry Louis Gates, Jr., head of the department of Afro-American studies at Harvard University, called the book "the Bible of new anti-Semitism" and added that "the book massively misinterprets the historical record, largely through a process of cunningly selective quotations of often reputable sources."

In 2016, Amazon banned the book from its site.

Here are three sources with more information on this dangerous antisemitic conspiracy theory:

- **Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr., Black Demagogues and Pseudo Scholars** (NY Times) [[LINK](#)]
- **The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews** (Wikipedia) [[LINK](#)]
- **Is Jewish Control Over the Slave Trade a Nation of Islam Lie or Scholarly Truth?** (Tablet) [[LINK](#)]

### THE TRUTH - JEWS AND THE SLAVE TRADE

The Jewish role in the American slave trade was minimal. According to historian and rabbi, Bertram Korn, there were Jewish owners of plantations, but altogether they constituted only a tiny proportion of the industry. Jews accounted for 1.25% of all Southern slave owners and were not significantly different from other slave owners in their treatment of slaves.

In 1830 there were only four Jews among the 11,000 Southerners who owned fifty or more slaves. Additionally, only one Jew served as an overseer on a plantation according to public records.

- 1790 - 697,681 Slaves in America, 209 owned by Jews (0.003%)
- 1820 - 1,538,022 Slaves in America, 701 owned by Jews (0.004%)

In regard to the slave trade itself, Jews accounted for less than 2% of the 600,000 slaves brought to the United States and less than 1% of the 10 million slaves brought to the New World (zero for instance of the 1 million brought to Brazil). [[LINK](#)]

### JEWSH POPULATION IN AMERICA

The reality is that the [Jewish population in America](#) was minimal until the 1900's:

- 1790 - 1,000–2,000 Jewish residents mostly Dutch Sephardic Jews.
- 1840 - Jews from England, and British subjects grew the Jewish population to about 15,000
- (Civil War to end slavery - 1861 to 1865)
- 1880 - To escape pogroms in Europe, the population swelled to 250,000

## **BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SLAVE TRADE**

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/how-slavery-flourished-united-states-chart-maps>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic\\_slave\\_trade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_slave_trade)

The vast majority of those who were enslaved and transported in the transatlantic slave trade were Africans from central and western Africa, who had been sold by other West Africans to Western European slave traders (with a small number being captured directly by the slave traders in coastal raids), who brought them to the Americas.

Most of the purchasers and shippers were the Portuguese, the British, the French, the Spanish, and the Dutch Empires. Europeans usually bought enslaved people who were captured in endemic warfare between African states. Some Africans had made a business out of capturing Africans from neighboring ethnic groups or war captives and selling them.

Africans played a direct role in the slave trade, selling their captives or prisoners of war to European buyers. The prisoners and captives who were sold were usually from neighboring or enemy ethnic groups.

These captive slaves were considered "other", not part of the people of the ethnic group or "tribe"; African kings held no particular loyalty to them. Sometimes criminals would be sold so that they could no longer commit crimes in that area. Although Europeans were the market for slaves, Europeans rarely entered the interior of Africa, due to fear of disease and fierce African resistance.

12 million slaves entered the Atlantic trade between the 16th and 19th century, but about 1.5 million died on board ship. There were also 6 million destined for Asian slave markets and the 8 million destined for African markets. Of the slaves shipped to The Americas, the largest share went to Brazil and the Caribbean.