



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on October 11, 2025

## Want Slavery Reparations? Go Ask Muslim Countries, Says Scholar

It's arguable that the people who complain about slavery most actually may love it, in a perverse way. After all, it provides so many with excuses for failure, anti-Western talking points, and opportunities to extract hand-outs. Just consider "reparations," which are now continually demanded (by people enslaved only by their own indoctrination). Why, California Governor Gavin Newsom, panderer-in-chief, just signed a bill Friday to create a reparations-administration agency. Never mind that California was never a slave state.



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But to African-descent people who want reparations, a British-Bangladeshi scholar has a message: You're barking up the wrong tree.

You need to seek your booty elsewhere — from Muslim countries.

Dr. Rakib Ehsan, a commentator and author of the book *Beyond Grievance*, mentions the Ottoman Empire in particular. Now the nation of Turkey, chattel slavery was a major part of its economy and society for more than six centuries, Ehsan points out. He [elaborates](#) at *The Telegraph*:

Millions were enslaved — including Slavs, Eastern Europeans, Africans, and people in the western Mediterranean.

The Ottoman Empire captured and utilised "white slaves" — primarily European Christians — through various methods such as raids into European territories and the Black Sea slave trade originating from the Balkans and Caucasus.

Under the "Devshirme" system, Christian boys were conscripted and forced to convert to Islam, trained to serve as slave soldiers (the Janissaries). The gradual rolling back of Ottoman imperial slavery was ultimately the result of Western pressure.

Note here that white slavery, in a de facto sense, wasn't unknown in the early United States, either. According to the 2007 book *White Cargo*, in fact, more than 300,000 white de facto slaves [were sent from Europe](#) to the United States over two centuries. And among some groups within this number, the mortality rate was 25-50 percent.

### It's a Funny Thing....

As for the Ottoman trespasses, Ehsan notes something odd: There's no effort whatsoever to extract reparations from the Turks. With the West, however, it's a different story.



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Aside from Newsom's new agency, also demanding reparations recently was a British comedian, "Sir" Lenny Henry. (The Brits probably should stop knighting people who, as thinkers, are more *sirloin* than *filet mignon*.) In fact, Henry has authored a new book on this titled *The Big Payback*. It demands that the U.K. cough up £18 trillion in compensatory payments. This is more than \$24 trillion.

Oh, this would be delivered to Caribbean Commonwealth countries and black Britons. Never mind that as *The Telegraph* [writes](#) in a Tuesday article:

Most of Britain's 2.4 million black population is of direct African descent, and therefore not the descendants of people enslaved in the Caribbean.

For Henry and others are unmoved. All black people in Britain (and by extension America) should get reparations because they're victims of the Legacy of Slavery™. That's their story and they're stickin' to it.

Now, Ehsan explains the magnitude of Henry's demand. The \$24 trillion amounts to more than \$347,000 per Briton and almost \$847,000 per family. This is expected, too, from a country that's now less rich than the poorest U.S. state: Mississippi. Why, the \$24 trillion figure is seven times more than the U.K.'s total 2024 GDP.

## **An Age-old Institution**

Besides being an outrageous demand that would bankrupt Britain and thus hurt all its citizens, the reparations effort is ahistorical. For the reality is that Western nations bear no special culpability regarding slavery. As *The Telegraph* [wrote](#) in 2023:

Slavery was a universal institution, practised on every continent by people of every skin colour. Africans were capturing and selling other Africans to Romans and Arabs centuries before Europeans entered the market in the mid-1400s. In the 1700s the Comanche ran what one historian calls "a vast slave economy" in the south-west of what's now the United States. At the same time, black slaves in Jamaica who escaped the plantations and hid out in the forested interior — the Maroons — kept slaves of their own. As did some freed slaves in the State of North Carolina on the eve of the American Civil War in 1860. For most of history slavery was normal and the involvement of Britons in it was completely unremarkable.

## **No Good Deed Goes Unpunished?**

But here's what is remarkable: Britain's role, and that of the West generally, in ending slavery. As Ehsan informs:

The decades-long operation by the Royal Navy's West Africa Squadron (also known as the Preventive Squadron) to intercept the more sophisticated and dynamic slave ships and liberated [sic] captured Africans destined for the Americas, should be a source of British national pride.

This was a mission carried out under incredibly challenging conditions, with many sailors losing their lives in combat operations or because of tropical diseases. It was the most expensive moral action in history and is not given the attention it deserves.



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As to this, Britain's Royal Navy once devoted 13.1 percent of its total manpower to anti-slavery efforts. It wasn't just the U.K., either. We in the United States fought a bloody civil war that served to end slavery. What's more, there was a legislative effort to combat the institution way back in 1777 in Vermont.

Regarding Britain, however, the point is that it was the point-man nation in ending slavery in the 19th century. It expended incalculable blood, sweat, tears, and treasure to extinguish an institution as old as humanity itself. And its efforts included saving countless sub-Saharan Africans from a life of bondage.

### **Where the Money (and Suckers) Is**

So it wasn't Asians, South Americans, Africans, North American Indians, or Eskimos who ended slavery. The West did that. In contrast, points out Ehsan:

Slaves served across the Middle East and North Africa as labourers, domestic servants, concubines, and in some cases, were eunuchs. The Arab Muslim slave trade is widely recognised as the longest in history, spanning over 1,300 years.

Will the reparations hustlers now, Ehsan wonders, ask wealthy Arab countries for payouts? What about Turkey?

They won't, of course, but for practical not moral reasons. These Muslim nations would laugh them out of town. The West, however, [not only has money](#), but multitudes of morally confused suckers.

Yet developing moral clarity and a spine could end this debate quickly. Simply answer, passionately and resolutely, every single [reparations demand](#) thus:

"Westerners/white people were perhaps not the first to practice slavery."

"But they *were the first to end it.*"

"You're welcome."

For those interested, the following video contrasts the Christian and Muslim slave trades. (Hat tip: Ehsan.)



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