



White Gold: The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and Islam's One Million White Slaves

By Giles Milton

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The true story of white European slaves in eighteenth century Algiers, Tunis, and Morocco

In the summer of 1716, a Cornish cabin boy named Thomas Pellow and fifty-one of his comrades were captured at sea by the Barbary corsairs. Their captors--Ali Hakem and his network of Islamic slave traders--had declared war on the whole of Christendom. France, Spain, England and Italy had suffered a series of devastating attacks. Thousands of Europeans had been snatched from their homes and taken in chains to the great slave markets of Algiers, Tunis and Salé in Morocco.

Pellow and his shipmates were bought by the tyrannical sultan of Morocco, Moulay Ismail, who was constructing an imperial palace of such scale and grandeur that it would surpass every other building in the world, a palace built entirely by Christian slave labor.

Resourceful, resilient, and quick-thinking, Pellow was selected by Moulay Ismail for special treatment, and was one of the fortunate few who survived to tell his tale.

An extraordinary and shocking story, drawn from unpublished letters and manuscripts written by slaves and by the padres and ambassadors sent to free them, *White Gold* reveals a disturbing and long forgotten chapter of history.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

For this harrowing story of white captives in 18th-century Morocco, Milton (author of the highly praised *Nathaniel's Nutmeg*) draws primarily on the memoir of a Cornish cabin boy, Thomas Pellow, who was taken by Islamic pirates in 1716 and sold as a slave to the legendarily tyrannical Sultan Moulay Ismail. Pellow remained in Morocco for more than 20 years, his family barely recognizing him when he at last escaped home. Placing Pellow's tale within wider horizons, Milton describes how, during the 17th and 18th centuries, thousands of European captives were snatched from their coastal villages by Islamic slave traders intent on waging war on Christendom. Put into forced labor and appalling living conditions, they perished in huge numbers. As a pragmatic convert to Islam, Pellow fared better, earning a wife who bore him a daughter. Milton includes Pellow's years as a soldier in Moulay Ismail's army and draws out his cliff-hanging escape back to England. Pellow's sensational tale dominates the book, and though rendered in seductively poised prose, in the end it feels short on ideas and argument. Milton also fails to cite other historians working in this area (a prime example being Linda Colley). 16 pages of b&w illus. not seen by PW; 2 maps. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From [Booklist](#)

The horrors of the transatlantic slave trade have been extensively documented in print and eloquently portrayed on film and television. But chattel slavery was a well-established African as well as European institution, and its victims were not exclusively people of color. In the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, the Barbary states of North Africa used Islamic pirates, or corsairs, to conduct slave raids, which fed the flourishing slave markets of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. Many of the enslaved were white Europeans or North Americans captured at sea. Among them was Thomas Pellow, an 11-year-old English child who was seized in 1716 and served for 23 years as a personal servant to Sultan Moulay Ismail of Morocco. Milton relates Pellow's compelling story as a triumph of wile, pluck, and endurance; but this is also a tale of great brutality and suffering, as Milton eloquently shows that all of the indignities one associates with European and American slavery were visited upon those held in North Africa. A riveting account. *Jay Freeman*

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Review

Praise from Britain for *White Gold* :

"White Gold is lively, and diligently researched, a chronicle of cruelty on a grand scale. An unfailingly entertaining piece of popular history." --*Sunday Telegraph*

"[Giles Milton] is a popular, non-academic historian drawn to dramatic, even bizarre subjects, researched in highly enterprising ways, and told in a vividly swashbuckling style. An exciting and sensational account of a really swashbuckling historical episode, *White Gold* will do very well for this summer's beach read." --*The Spectator*

"White Gold delivers on its promise of exotic thrills." --Rhoda Koenig, *The Evening Standard*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Maria Macdonald:

The book *White Gold: The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and Islam's One Million White Slaves* has a lot of information on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of help. The book was authored by the very famous author. This article's author makes some research previous to write this book. This book is very easy to read; you can find the point easily after perusing this book.

Theodore Rios:

This *White Gold: The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and Islam's One Million White Slaves* is a great book for you because the content is full of information for you who also always deal with the world and also have to make a decision every minute. That book reveals its info accurately using great plain words or we can declare no rambling sentences within it. So if you read the item hurriedly, you can have whole information in it. Doesn't mean it only provides you with straight forward sentences but tricky core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having *White Gold: The Extraordinary Story of Thomas Pellow and Islam's One Million White Slaves* in your hand is like finding the world in your arm, data in it is not ridiculous. We can say that no publication that offers you the world within ten or fifteen small right but this e-book already does that. So, this is a good reading book. Hey Mr. and Mrs. active, do you still doubt this?

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