Slave Trading in the British Isles and the Czech Lands, 7th-11th Centuries

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Slave Trading in the British Isles and the Czech Lands, 7th-11th Centuries

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A thesis presented for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Department of History
Faculty of Arts & Humanities
King’s College London
Abstract

This thesis examines slave trading from a regional, comparative perspective for the British Isles and the Czech lands, from the seventh through eleventh centuries. The aim is to add nuance to the picture of the early medieval slave trade by distinguishing between different possible aims, forms of organisation, and trading practices across time and space. The first chapter examines textual sources and outlines the types of material in which slave trading can be found, along with their limitations. The second looks at archaeological ‘indicators’ for slave trading which are commonly taken for granted, but which have never been examined together. It functions alongside the first chapter to provide a comprehensive discussion of source material for the medieval slave trade in these two regions. A chapter on methods of enslavement outlines the creation of chattel slaves, emphasising the role of warfare, as well as the symbolic, political, and economic motivations behind raiding. Following from this, a chapter on small-scale slave trading examines opportunistic slave sales which were the by-product of raiding, whereas a chapter on large-scale slave trading studies the long-distance trade networks and economic demand for slaves which began to motivate raiding. These studies of scale examine who conducted the raiding, who traded slaves, and whether points of trade can be identified. The final chapter on the role of centralised authority seeks to determine how and by whom slavery was accepted and upheld, to better understand possible links between enslavement regulations and processes of political consolidation, as well as the role of religion in determining suitability for enslavement, sale, and slave ownership. This research contributes to our understanding of the role of slave trading within the social, political, and economic development of the British Isles and the Czech lands in the early Middle Ages.
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Lastly, this dissertation is dedicated to LaVina Fontaine, my grandmother, and to the memory of Robert and Lucille O’Keefe, my grandparents. They have always believed in the power of education, and ensured that I had every opportunity to pursue it, even though it took me far from home.
### Abbreviations

<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Capit.</td>
<td><em>Capitularia regum Francorum</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>LL Nat. Germ.</td>
<td><em>Leges nationum Germanicarum</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>MGH</td>
<td><em>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH</td>
<td><em>Monumenta Poloniae Historica</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td><em>Scriptores</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>SS rer. Germ. (N.S.)</td>
<td><em>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum (Nova Series)</em></td>
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<td>SS rer. Merov.</td>
<td><em>Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum</em></td>
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Introduction

Slavery has never been a static aspect of history, nor has slave trading. The goal of this thesis is to examine the social, political, and economic changes which impacted slave trading processes throughout the seventh to eleventh centuries in the British Isles and the Czech lands. Focus on slave trading informs us not just about trade networks and exchange, but about the societies who normalised and legitimised the ownership of people as property. Early medieval slave trading existed to meet the demands of the moment, be it the removal of a political enemy or pure profit. Study of this process contributes to a fuller understanding of society and economy in early medieval Europe. This thesis primarily concerns chattel slaves, those individuals who were bought and sold, and who were therefore considered the property of another person.

Comparative study has recently emerged as a fruitful means of investigating medieval slavery, particularly in regions where documentary evidence is sparse.\(^1\) The far-flung and seemingly disparate regions of the British Isles and the Czech lands are, in fact, well-suited to comparison. Slave raiding in these cultures took place across smaller-scale political borders – those of the constantly fluctuating Anglo-Saxon, Welsh, and Irish kingdoms, and those of Czech ducies. In England and in Bohemia especially, this period proved formative for strong central authority. They were part of separate trade networks, cultures, and spheres of influence, but studying these regions together allows us to view similar and distinct slave trading practices which existed beyond the Frankish territories. Northern and East Central Europe became Christianised relatively late, and thus the early Middle Ages reflects the negotiation of religious dividing lines between pagans and Christians. The significance of such a comparative study lies in determining the extent to which early medieval slave trading varied regionally and what the points of divergence were.

To this end, this investigation assesses the reasons for enslavement and how the slave trade influenced those reasons, including the transition from slave trading as a by-product of warfare based on raiding to an economically-motivated practice which encouraged captive taking. It also seeks to determine whether larger patterns are detectable. Key aspects of this include determining the relationship between warfare and enslavement,

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who created slaves, who traded slaves, whether specific trade groups and points of trade can be determined, and ultimately, how and by whom slave trading was accepted and upheld. To address these issues, the thesis will look at the evidence of those individuals whose sale is indisputable, with particular emphasis on sale over distances, which tends to be more visible in the source material than local trading. It will not encompass the gifting, bequethal, theft, or manumission of servile people, nor their movement between estates for marriage, since these transactions, though they dealt with changes in ownership, cannot be termed sales. Sources addressing crimes or sins committed by and against slaves, as well as those regarding the uses of slave labour will not be discussed except where such examples appear in the context of a slave sale or are relevant to a demand for slave labour. These sources are listed in the Appendix, Tables 2 and 3.

This study is framed chronologically by the emergence of texts at one end, and fundamental changes in warfare at the other. The seventh century saw the emergence of Anglo-Saxon texts in England and of a substantial documentary record in Ireland. Material for the Czech lands, however, is extremely limited before the ninth century, with almost no reference to events which can be associated with slave raiding or trading. Other Slavic groups enslaved people through raiding in the sixth and seventh centuries, but problems of interpreting a cohesive early Slavic identity make extrapolating these events on the Byzantine frontier to the inhabitants of the Czech lands unwise. As such, discussion of the Czech lands will principally address the period from the eighth century onwards.

The eleventh century was marked, across Europe, by fundamental changes in warfare which saw the disappearance of slave taking. That this shift had a significant impact on slave trading will be discussed in Chapter 6. Up to the point of change, warfare appears to have consisted principally of the slaughter of male enemy combatants and the subsequent enslavement of women and children. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, this pattern gradually shifted to one in which high-ranking enemy combatants were captured for ransom, and enslavement was no longer practiced. This change had begun in Frankish territory perhaps as early as the ninth century, and was introduced to England with the

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Norman conquest in the second half of the eleventh century. Norman territorial expansion and political influence over the following century brought it to Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, though raiding was slow to cease. Change in Frankish warfare similarly appears to have influenced Czech captive taking only slowly, as slaving was still practiced through the end of the eleventh century (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Nineteenth-century studies of unfree people in early medieval England generally avoided the topic of slavery. These historians may have been loath to draw attention to the long history of slavery in Britain during and immediately following the British Empire’s lead role in abolishing the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Classic twentieth-century works by Frank Stenton and Dorothy Whitelock acknowledged the existence of slaves during the Anglo-Saxon period, but discussed them more within the context of developing manorialism than as part of a separate social and legal precedent. It was not until the 1980s that English slavery received dedicated study in a series of articles and later a monograph by David Pelteret. These works highlighted the presence of chattel slavery throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. His 1981 article on slave raiding and trading remains the only dedicated study of those practices in England, despite the article’s main goal being only to establish the long history of such traditions. Pelteret’s work has provided a foundation for modern scholarship of English chattel slavery, and more recent studies have explored the topic through language and penitentials.

Research on other areas of the British Isles has likewise been considerably limited. For Ireland, Alfred Smyth’s 1977 monograph addressed the importance of slave trading

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5 Gillingham, ‘Christian’, 240-3, 249. Though twelfth-century accounts of Scottish brutality in raiding were often English literary topoi, it is significant that they do not describe captive taking for enslavement, M. Strickland, War and Chivalry: The Conduct and Perception of War in England and Normandy, 1066-1217 (Cambridge, 1996), 294-304.
6 D. Wyatt, Slaves and Warriors in Medieval Britain and Ireland, 800-1200 (Leiden, 2009), 1-2.
during the Viking Age, though some of his suggestions have since been disproven archaeologically.\textsuperscript{10} A few years later, Poul Holm published an extensive analysis of slave raiding in the Irish annals, demonstrating how Viking warfare changed native Irish raiding and illustrating the drastic increase in captive taking in the tenth century, which he suggests was connected to slave trading.\textsuperscript{11} Other studies have addressed slavery in Irish law, but Holm’s article is, to date, the only close examination of slave raiding and trading processes in Ireland.\textsuperscript{12} These practices perhaps lie under the shadow of Dáibhí Ò Cróinín’s assertion that before and even during the Viking Age, ‘the institution of slavery, and its concomitant, a slave economy, remained alien to the Irish way’.\textsuperscript{13}

Discussion of slave trading in the British Isles as a region remains limited. David Wyatt’s 2009 monograph on slave raiding and enslavement covers only the ninth century onward. Wyatt attributes slave raiding on either island almost entirely to social ideas of hyper-masculinity and its resultant sexual exploitation.\textsuperscript{14} His study recognises the importance of political fragmentation and violence for study of raiding, but he dismisses all economic factors. Only Alice Rio’s monograph on slavery in Europe has endeavoured to understand the economic relationship of slave raiding and trading within the context of the British Isles as an interconnected region.\textsuperscript{15} Rio compares the British Isles with the Slavic frontier and southern Europe, but her study paints only a broad picture of raiding and trading processes, principally during the Viking Age.

On the other hand, the Slavic frontier of the Frankish world, inclusive of the Czech lands, has held a prominent place in western studies of medieval European slave trading. The enslavement and sale of Slavs features heavily in Charles Verlinden’s discussion of the early medieval period, but his extensive, two-volume study of medieval slave trading is largely devoted to the later Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{16} Michael McCormick’s studies of early medieval slave trading fit the Slavic trade into vast networks of exchange, but only as the victims of

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item\textsuperscript{11} P. Holm, ‘The slave trade of Dublin, ninth to twelfth centuries’, \textit{Peritia} 5 (1988), 317-45.
\item\textsuperscript{13} First stated in 1995, and reiterated in the second edition, D. Ò Cróinín, \textit{Early Medieval Ireland, 400-1200} (Abingdon, 2017), 282.
\item\textsuperscript{14} Wyatt, \textit{Slaves}, 396-7.
\item\textsuperscript{15} Rio, \textit{Slavery}, 29-34.
\end{itemize}
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This limitation may be the result of McCormick’s sources; he does not examine slave trading beyond the Carolingian period, when Slavic raids into Francia become more visible as a result of Frankish territorial expansion and independent Slavic sources begin to emerge. Alice Rio’s study of slave trading in early medieval Europe challenges the role of the Franks as the orchestrators and primary beneficiaries of the long-distance trade in Slavs to the Islamic world. She argues instead for the existence of shorter trade routes which did move slaves south and east from the Slavic frontier, but only as part of an indirect trade network. This approach allows us to view Slavs as active and willing participants in the slave trade rather than as merely its victims, though her study does not encompass a close reading of Slavic source material. Archaeological studies have attempted to discern physical indicators of slaving along the Frankish-Slavic frontier, though as Chapter 2 will discuss, this evidence should not be deemed conclusive.

Czech and Slovak scholars have long been interested in the slave trading attested in Bohemian, Moravian, and Frankish texts. Twentieth-century political developments in Central Europe have been enormously impactful on these works, and the historiography has sharply changed direction more than once: first with the rise to power of the Communist Party in 1945, and second with Czechoslovak independence from the Soviet Union in 1989. Research on Bohemian and Moravian slave trading has been, and remains, largely published in Czech and Slovak. This means that it has been generally overlooked by western historians, and I will provide more extensive summaries of the material available.

Discussion of the subject as a significant aspect of Czech history began in 1899, when Josef Šusta published his article, ‘Slavery and the estate in Bohemia’. This work argued that prior to the mid-tenth century, slaves were primarily an article of trade, and slave raiding thus fed directly into a system of slave export. Šusta believed that the hunter-gatherer societies of Bohemia had no need for large-scale production or even agricultural labourers.

18 Rio, Slavery, 24-8.
This also served to explain why the price of female slaves in the Raffelstetten customs tariff was so much higher than that of their male counterparts. Women could at least be given domestic chores, and were therefore less likely to be sold onwards. This created a shortage of female slaves on the market, which drove up prices.\textsuperscript{21} This argument has been termed ‘pre-archaeological’ by Martin Ježek in recent years, since over a century of research has demonstrated that the idea of hunter-gatherers in ninth-century Bohemia is untenable.\textsuperscript{22} From the mid-tenth century onwards, however, Šusta argued that the coalescence of the Czech state and the development of an estate system necessitated slave labour, and that these slaves were no longer exported, but imported.\textsuperscript{23} To Šusta, there was no doubt that the \textit{servi} and \textit{ancillae} listed on charters from the tenth through twelfth centuries were anything but slaves.\textsuperscript{24} Slave raiding, therefore, was a necessary component in establishing an estate framework based on unfree labour throughout Bohemia.\textsuperscript{25} This opinion was repeated in 1919 by Kamil Krofta in his \textit{History of Peasant Status}, with the addition that the slave population in the tenth and eleventh centuries must have been relatively small. He argued that land management was still not advanced enough to support extensive agricultural slave labour, and that slaves, created from war captives and criminals, were primarily put to use as craftsmen.\textsuperscript{26}

With the Communist Party’s rise to power in Czechoslovakia following World War II, Marxist theory soon found a place in the historiography of Czech slavery. In 1953, František Graus published his two-volume history of rural society in Bohemia throughout the medieval period, up to the Hussite Wars of the fifteenth century. This work has guided Czechoslovak and Czech interpretation of early medieval Bohemian agricultural production up to the present day. Not only did Graus dismiss the arguments of the ‘bourgeois’ historians before him, namely Šusta, Krofta, and even Marc Bloch, but he disavowed slavery as a means of agricultural production in favour of feudal serfdom.\textsuperscript{27} Since plantations and \textit{latifundia} did not exist in Bohemia, the direct cultivation of land via slave labour could not have existed either.\textsuperscript{28} This idea was echoed for Great Moravia by Matúš Kučera in 1974, who

\textsuperscript{21} Šusta, 73.  
\textsuperscript{23} Šusta, 77.  
\textsuperscript{24} Šusta, 82.  
\textsuperscript{25} Šusta, 78.  
\textsuperscript{26} K. Krofta, \textit{Dějiny Selského Stavu} (Prague, 1919), 25-6.  
\textsuperscript{27} F. Graus, \textit{Dějiny Venkovského Lidu v Čechách v Době Předhusitské}, 2 vols. (Prague, 1953), 162, 186.  
\textsuperscript{28} Graus, \textit{Dějiny}, 185.
argued that while the legal text *Zakon Suydnji Ljudem* certainly addressed slavery, these slaves were destined for sale outside Great Moravia, and thus played no role in production or class struggle.\textsuperscript{29}

The main objective of Graus’ work was to demonstrate that medieval Bohemia could not have been a slave society, because ‘a slave society requires rather advanced production and trade, and in production slave labour must dominate’.\textsuperscript{30} This construct allowed Graus to reject the presence of a ‘slave society’, while still conceding the use of slave labour in domestic and craftworking settings, as these were not the predominant means of production.\textsuperscript{31} By Graus’s Marxist definition, even if slaves were used as domestic servants in every household in Bohemia, their detachment from agricultural production would still exclude Bohemia from designation as a slave society.\textsuperscript{32} Nonetheless, Graus insisted that the presence of serfs precluded a demand for slave labour, and thus slaves (created from war captives) were predominately items of export through the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{33}

Following from this, in 1985 Jiří Sláma published an article which linked raiding and captive taking to internal resettlement and colonisation programs. Drawing on a broad base of place names, Sláma insisted that war captives were much more common in the early medieval Czech lands than explicit references would suggest.\textsuperscript{34} However, in line with Marxists’ rejection of the use of slave labour within the Czech lands, these captives were not enslaved, but resettled. Sláma avoids the term ‘serf’, but it is clear he had unfree tenants in mind.\textsuperscript{35} Thus from a late Soviet-era perspective, raiding and captive-taking practices could function entirely separate from enslavement, in a process akin to twelfth- and thirteenth-century German colonisation in the same region.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{30} Graus, *Dějiny*, 160.
\textsuperscript{31} Graus, *Dějiny*, 186.
\textsuperscript{32} By comparison, M. Finley describes the slave society as ‘an institutionalised system of large-scale employment of slave labour in both the countryside and the cities’, the introduction of which was not linked to production, efficiency, or profitability, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (Harmondsworth, 1980), 67-92.
\textsuperscript{33} Graus, *Dějiny*, 186.
\textsuperscript{34} J. Sláma, ‘K některým ekonomickým a politickým projevům raně středověkého přemyslovského státu’, *Archeologické Rozhledy* 37 (1985), 338.
\textsuperscript{35} Sláma, ‘K některým’, 340.
In 2000, Dušan Třeštík returned to the idea of slave-raiding as integral to the
development of the Přemyslid ‘state’, though his approach differed from that of pre-
communist authors, and he ignored any potential internal outlets which drove demand for
slaves. Slave trading was once again widespread, and this was fuelled by extensive warfare
between the recently Christianised Bohemians and their pagan Slavic neighbours in the
teninth century. Třeštík broadly associates this with the expansion of both the Přemyslids in
Bohemia and the Piasts in Poland, as well as the role of these two groups in wars led by
Ottonian rulers in Francia. Třeštík refrained from discussing any internal outlets for these
slaves. Conversely, Martin Ježek has refuted the idea of widespread slave raiding in Central
Europe, stating that ‘such raids are undocumented’.38

Most recently, Tomáš Petráček has argued that war captives indeed played a
significant role in Bohemian slavery up through the tenth century.39 This harks back to
Šusta’s and Krofta’s two-phase history of slavery in Bohemia. However, where Šusta and
Krofta increasingly from the tenth century onwards saw these captives as slaves labouring
within a developing estate system, Petráček views them almost exclusively as serfs. Like
Sláma, Petráček views captive taking as a resettlement process, largely separate from slavery
in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and possibly as early as the tenth.40 When captives
were enslaved, it was usually for the purposes of sale abroad, though he declines to
comment on the proportion this represented.41

While there are few chronological gaps in the Czech and Slovak historiography of
slave trading, these works have been heavily influenced by political doctrine. In the effort to
reconcile sparse evidence with a clear narrative, both western and Central European
scholars have tended to rely on assumptions about the sources or the situation of medieval
slavery in general. These will be highlighted throughout the thesis. Pairing a study of
Czech slave trading with a better-documented system allows us to reach new conclusions

38 Ježek, 636.
39 T. Petráček, Power and Exploitation in the Czech Lands in the 10th-12th Centuries (Leiden, 2017), 196.
41 Petráček, 409.
regarding ambiguous material, such as the extent of non-Christian, outsider control over slave trading, the role of insiders in creating tradable chattel slaves, and changes in enslavement and slave trading practices over time. Both the British Isles and the Czech lands are generally perceived as having a ‘peripheral’ status in the early Middle Ages - to Rome and its legacy, to Christendom, and to the Frankish world. While England is considered less so than Ireland or the Czech lands, it was still a world of pagan Viking kingdoms and firmly integrated into the trade networks of Scandinavia and the Irish Sea. Examining these regions together allows us to observe similarities in slave trading practice, such as the means of enslavement and the types of people targeted, as well as the roles of merchants, markets, and central authority. Such study also flags up the differences resultant from distinct cultural and legal traditions, access to markets, and proximity to people who could be enslaved. On a macro level, we are made aware of similar, contemporary changes taking place in slave trading in unconnected areas, such as its rapid tenth-century expansion and late-eleventh century decline, which suggests Europe-wide phenomena not solely linked to demand from the Arab caliphate.

The thesis as a whole consists of six chapters. The first examines textual sources, and outlines the types of material in which slave trading can be found, along with their limitations. The second looks at archaeological ‘indicators’ for slave trading which are commonly taken for granted, but which have never been examined together. It functions alongside the first chapter to provide a comprehensive discussion of source material for the medieval slave trade in these two regions. A chapter on methods of enslavement outlines the creation of chattel slaves, emphasising the role of warfare, as well as symbolic, political, and economic motivations behind raiding. Following from this, a chapter on small-scale slave trading examines opportunistic slave sales which were the by-product of raiding, whereas a chapter on large-scale slave trading studies the long-distance trade networks and economic demand for slaves which began to motivate raiding. These studies of scale examine who conducted the raiding, who traded slaves, and whether points of trade can be identified. The final chapter on the role of political authority and religious involvement seeks to determine how and by whom slavery was accepted and upheld, to better understand possible links between enslavement regulations and centralised power structures, as well as the role of religion in determining suitability for enslavement, sale, and slave ownership.
NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY

The term ‘Czech’ refers to people living in the regions of Bohemia, Moravia, and Czech Silesia: members of the modern Czech national identity. In the early Middle Ages, these groups were linked by language, material culture, religious identity, and, by the mid-eleventh century, continuous Přemyslid rule. When referring to these places in a historical context, I have relied upon the term ‘the Czech lands’, or specified the region where possible. ‘Moravia’ and ‘Moravians’ refer exclusively to the geographical region and the people therein, whereas ‘Great Moravia’ refers to the ninth- and tenth-century polity. Likewise, ‘Bohemia’ is geographically distinct from the political territory ruled by the Přemyslid family, and every effort has been made to distinguish the two.

This thesis also operates under the conviction that the ‘megale Moravia’ (μεγάλη Μοραβία) referred to by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus should be identified with the ninth- and tenth-century culture which existed in the region of the Morava River in what is now the Czech Republic and Slovakia.\(^\text{42}\) In 1971, Imre Boba proposed that ‘megale Moravia’, the destination of the Byzantine missionaries Constantine/Cyril and Methodius, should be associated with present-day Serbia.\(^\text{43}\) Boba principally based his reasoning around the idea that the sclavi Marahenses of Frankish sources did not belong to a region called Moravia, but to ‘a patrimonial principality around a city named Marava’.\(^\text{44}\) This city was located in Sirmium, now known as Sremska Mitrovica. Boba’s study rightly addresses glaring problems with the source material, such as the fact that Methodius was made Bishop of Pannonia, an ancient diocese which did not align with Czech lands north of the Danube.\(^\text{45}\) Boba’s theories found support amongst some authors, and Martin Eggers later located Moravia at the Lower Tisza river in present-day Hungary and Romania.\(^\text{46}\) Both Boba’s and Eggers’ ideas have remained unpopular amongst scholars of Czech history, and of Moravia more generally.\(^\text{47}\) Since the publication of these theories, substantial archaeological evidence


\(^{44}\) Boba, 2.

\(^{45}\) Boba, 11-4; M. Betti argues that the surviving texts indicate the bishopric was not territorially defined, *The Making of Christian Moravia (858–882)* (Leiden, 2014), 215.


\(^{47}\) J. Poulik, ‘Předmluva’, in B. Chropovský and J. Poulik (eds.), *Velká Morava a Počátky Československé Státnosti* (Prague, 1985), 6-7; J. Macháček, ‘Disputes over Great Moravia: Chiefdom or state? The
has accumulated; recent assessment indicates that the region of the Morava river experienced a population explosion in the second half of the ninth century, which coincided with the construction of churches and the military expansion of fortified settlements. No comparable activity has been demonstrated in the regions of Sirmium or the Tisza river, which lends strong argument to the location of Great Moravia within the Czech lands. By locating Great Moravia north of the Danube, this thesis will address any slave trading associated with this polity as slave trading occurring within the Czech lands and on the eastern Frankish frontier.

I have chosen to use the standard Anglicised versions of proper nouns where these exist (e.g. Wenceslas for Václav). Otherwise, names have been given in their accepted vernacular forms.
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Slave Trading in Textual Sources

Slave raiding and trading appear in a wide range of sources from both the British Isles and the Czech lands over the course of the seventh through eleventh centuries. This variety in source type is matched by the range of contexts for slave trading. It could function as a narrative device, designed to shock ecclesiastical audiences with tales of good Christians sold into slavery at heathen hands, or it could illustrate proper saintly or benevolent behaviour through the redemption of captives. Enslavement and slave trading also appear as facts of life, to be regulated by secular and ecclesiastical authorities just like any other socio-legal status, or to be noted in passing as an everyday occurrence. This chapter seeks to examine how different types of sources record enslavement and slave trading, and the extent to which these genres and their authors have impacted our view of slavery. It also highlights how genre and authorial intent varied regionally, a key methodological problem of comparative study.

Narrative Sources

Medieval Historiography

Early medieval works of history such as annals, chronicles, and historiae have often been disparaged for their skewed depiction of the past. After all, ‘historicity’ and ‘rationality’ are modern inventions. Like modern ideas of ‘heritage’, medieval chronicles were inherently exclusive, biased, and ‘concerned with the legitimisation of power through knowledge’. Even when taking the personal agendas of authors into account, medieval historiography provides a wealth of critical information regarding slave raiding and trading practices.

Annals and Chronicles

Despite some debate over terminology, I will define annals and chronicles in a conventional sense: records of events given chronologically, without overt effort to interpret

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or relate the events to each other.\textsuperscript{51} While these texts provide valuable information on individual raiding practices throughout the early Middle Ages, the likelihood of slave raiding being recorded by any one source is dependent on the author's motive, audience, and social norms.

The intended audiences greatly impacted how authors portrayed captive taking and slave raids. Generally, these early medieval texts focused on the deeds and deaths of important secular and ecclesiastical persons, some to the extent that they are little more than regnal lists.\textsuperscript{52} Battles or attacks are mentioned only rarely, with little information other than the parties involved. Court-focused texts such as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Annals of Fulda provide more information regarding when and where conflict occurred, but they only rarely discuss raids and captives. These chronicles were produced at or in close relation to royal courts, where the audience included not only ecclesiastics, but also potentially a literate laity, especially in the case of the vernacular Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.\textsuperscript{53} For such audiences, information regarding captives taken during a raid or battle was not as important as the victor. Where scribes wished to emphasise the extent of a victory or defeat they refer to plunder, but only rarely does this explicitly include people.

Ecclesiastically-focused chronicles, especially the Irish annals, are much more likely to mention the human prey of raiding, particularly when the situation involved Christians captured by non-Christian attackers.\textsuperscript{54} Irish clergymen would have been shocked and appalled to see their Christian flock and fellow clergymen carried off by marauding pagans, and the their churches and monasteries destroyed. This would explain why captive taking is rarely recorded in Irish annals before the Viking incursions; raids were predominately conducted by Irish Christians on Irish Christians, meaning that the souls of any enslaved captives were not at risk. A similar situation would explain the silence of East Frankish sources on any captive taking associated with known Bohemian raids in the tenth and


\textsuperscript{52} Namely the Scottish Chronicle and the Polish annals. An early, laconic set of Bohemian annals has not survived, but they are believed to be the basis of the earliest Polish annals. They appear to have offered little information on raiding. D. Třeštík, ‘Anfänge der böhmischen Geschichtsschreibung: die ältesten Prager Annalen’, \textit{Studia Žrúdloznawcze} 23 (1978), 1-37.


\textsuperscript{54} CI, 6.
eleventh centuries, since the Bohemian rulers were Christian by that time. The difference in focus of early medieval chronicles holds significance for the study of slave raiding practices; when chronicles do not mention raids or captive taking, this could be a result of the intended audience than an absence of such practices.

Conversely, discussion of captive taking in chronicles and annals does not necessarily point to its ubiquity. The practice is more visible in chronicles produced in locations where slave-raiding had fallen out of practice. When such acts were committed against the author’s society, they were more likely to be recorded as demonstrations of brutality. Such is the case with the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle’s 1079 record of a raid by Malcolm, king of Scotland, into Northumbria,55 after the Norman Conquest saw the shift of warfare away from raiding.56 A similar situation appears in late-eleventh century Frankish chronicles, such as Bernard of Constans’s scathing condemnation of Bohemian raiding in Swabia in 1077.57 Where slave raiding was no longer practiced, it appears in condemnatory language designed to emphasise the barbarism of the attackers.

More generally, annals and chronicles were used to shape readers’ perceptions of the past, especially through the inclusion or exclusion of particular information.58 Furthermore, variation in authorship over centuries of annalistic production could lead to different messages throughout.59 For example, the Common Stock of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (to 892) sought to promote Alfred’s West Saxon dynasty, but it also focused on the unification of the English and a shared past for these formerly-disparate kingdoms brought under Alfred’s rule.60 However, later scribes had different goals which impacted their portrayal of

55ASC E, s.a. 1079, p. 92.
59This is despite the intention of appearing as a continuous history from the Incarnation, Foot, ‘Finding’, 96; D. Třeštík, Kosmas (Prague, 1966), 53.
warfare, such as the propaganda-like promotional annals for Alfred’s son, Edward the Elder, or the distinctively negative view of Æthelred the Unready’s reign in a series of retrospective annals. All of these motives could variously emphasise or disguise captive taking. On one hand, there is a lack of information regarding battles fought before 802, when Alfred’s ancestors came to power. On the other, the Chronicle’s author pays particular attention to Danish plundering during Æthelred’s rule, giving the impression that raiding was only a development of later Anglo-Saxon warfare.

Raiding itself could also significantly impact the production of chronicles and annals. David Dumville has argued that Viking attacks fundamentally altered the way in which the annalists working on the Chronicle of Ireland (the reconstructed equivalent of the Common Stock for Irish annals) wrote their entries. Describing Viking raids ultimately required scribes to change their criteria for inclusion in the Chronicle, the vocabulary employed to describe these events, and even the language in which they recorded them.

It is with these contexts in mind that we should evaluate raiding as recorded by chronicles and annals. Where certain texts are silent on slave raiding, we must consider that the authors of those texts did not think such episodes worthy of record, in addition to the possibility that raiding did not occur. And where later texts, especially from the latter half of the eleventh century, depict raids in morbid detail, this does not mean that these attacks were more cruel or brutal than those of earlier centuries. Instead, it simply means that the authors lived in societies where raiding was no longer acceptable and widely practiced. We must be particularly aware of these issues when engaging in comparative analysis; were we to examine the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Irish and Welsh annals without reference to the audiences of these texts, we would have to imagine that Vikings active in the British Isles took captives almost exclusively from Ireland. Without consideration of changing attitudes, we would have to assume that late eleventh-century raids were more violent and brutal than the raids of previous centuries.

**Histories**

The medieval concept of a *historia* was broader and looser than the modern understanding of impartial historical writing. Models of narrative historiography were

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61 Jorgensen, 14; Dumville, ‘Vikings’, 353.
drawn from classical authors, particularly Cicero in his methods of rhetoric and argument, and early Christian historians such as Eusebius, Augustine, and Orosius. Variation in the chosen form and style of different medieval authors, however, demonstrates that rules for composing *historiae* were not rigid, and often these works combined genres such as hagiography and annals, which we now view as distinct. While authors often stressed the importance of truth in their works, this ‘true’ vision of the past need not be objective or impartial. Knowledge could be, and was, controlled by the author’s selectivity of information. Often these inclusions or omissions in narratives of the past aided in the construction of an identity, be it ethnic or religious. The messages of any one text and the way in which past events are moulded to fit those ideas are ultimately unique to each individual work. Here, it is worth reviewing such considerations with reference to two works fundamental to much of this thesis: Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* and Cosmas of Prague’s *Chronica Boemorum*. Despite the chronological and geographical separation of these works, they appear in remarkably similar contexts. Both are the first historians of their people, and they serve as the major, if not the only, sources of information on the early history of the English and the Czechs, respectively.

*Bede*. Bede completed his *Historia Ecclesiastica* in 731 at the abbey of Wearmouth-Jarrow. Drawing primarily on Eusebius as a model, Bede’s five-book opus traced the story of Britain’s return to the fold of Roman orthodoxy from Julius Caesar’s (wrongly dated) arrival in 60 BC through the triumph of the Roman dating of Easter at the Council of Whitby in 671, and the establishment of the Rome-focused Wearmouth-Jarrow. To accomplish this monumental undertaking, Bede relied not only on oral traditions, but hagiography, borrowed episcopal documents (particularly from Canterbury), and information provided

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66 Jezierski, 105; on a broader scale, P.J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, 1994).
by other monasteries. His thoroughness in collecting source material and his general avoidance of outright criticism in his writing have contributed to Bede’s epithet as the father of English history.

Despite Bede’s methodical and critical treatment of his source material, the Historia Ecclesiastica, like all works of medieval historiography, was composed with an agenda. Patrick Wormald argued that Bede’s foremost concern was with the unity of the English Church and the history of a common people under that church. Opposing arguments have claimed that Bede’s predominant concern was with his own people, the Northumbrians, and not with any broader sense of Englishness. While he did draw information from as far away as Kent, this was part of a desire to link the Irish-influenced church of Northumbria to the Roman church of Canterbury. Regardless of Bede’s intention vis-à-vis English unity, his concern for alignment with the Roman church was certainly paramount. Bede was also interested in the reestablishment of an archiepiscopal see at York, in order to follow Gregory the Great’s original plan for two archdioceses in Britain.

The importance of these themes lies in how Bede structured his work to suit them. Bede shaped his narrative carefully, omitting that which he did not like or felt obscured his focus on the triumph of the Roman Church in Britain. He records little of the history of Mercia, the political enemy of Northumbria, and remains tight-lipped regarding the activities of Irish missionaries in Britain. Even where he was clearly working from source material, those sources could be moulded to suit his intentions. That said, Bede is careful and considers his evidence. His expansive work preserves a great deal of information from sources no longer extant. However, each and every reference to slavery, particularly the sale of slaves, serves a purpose; they have been carefully selected in order to convey a particular

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72 Thacker, 185.
73 Goffart, 325; D.P. Kirby, Bede’s Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum: Its Contemporary Setting (Jarrow, 1992).
74 Thacker, 184-5; V. Gunn, Bede’s Historiae: Genre, Rhetoric, and the Construction of Anglo-Saxon Church History (Woodbridge, 2013), 68-78.
76 Campbell, ‘Bede’, 159-90.
ecclesiastical message. Wilfred and Aidan acquire slaves and immediately free them, as saints and good clergymen ought to do.\(^{77}\) Imma’s elaborate story of capture and sale ultimately serves to demonstrate the power and efficacy of mass.\(^{78}\) While the *Historia Ecclesiastica* remains an invaluable source for early Anglo-Saxon history, we must continually bear in mind that Bede only includes anecdotes regarding slavery for thematic reasons.

**Cosmas.** Completed in 1124, Cosmas’s *Chronica Boemorum* traces the origins of the Czech people from a legendary, pagan past through to Cosmas’s own time. Despite the title’s focus on the Bohemians, the *Chronica* encompasses the history of other regional groups under Přemyslid rule, namely the Moravians and Silesians. Cosmas’s work has long been accepted as straddling the boundaries between *chronica* and *historia*.\(^ {79}\) The form of his work is certainly that of a chronicle: years listed in an unbroken sequence even when there is no information included with them, and the occasional use of laconic entries.\(^ {80}\) However, this structure belies a content distinctly moulded by Cosmas’s agenda; his brief, annalistic sentences imply causation for more detailed narratives of events.\(^ {81}\) This may be the result of influence by Cosmas’s model, Regino of Prüm, whose chronicle also contains aspects of a history,\(^ {82}\) but Cosmas does fall within a wider twelfth-century trend of ‘national’ history writing, which in Central Europe included the anonymous *Gesta Hungarorum* and Gallus Anonymus’s *Gesta Principum Polonorum*.\(^ {83}\)

Unlike Bede and his ecclesiastical focus, Cosmas’s goal was the creation of a political history. He held three primary interests: the Přemyslid dynasty,\(^ {84}\) the history and

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\(^{77}\) HE, IV.13, pp. 374-6; III.5, p. 228.

\(^{78}\) HE, IV.22, pp. 400-4.


\(^{80}\) Years listed without any description appear in manuscripts of all three types (A, B, C), some of which can be dated to as early as the twelfth century. All types are believed to be at least one exemplar removed from the autograph copy, and B and C are from a different exemplar than A. It would therefore appear that the dates were included in both non-surviving exemplars which were in turn based on the autograph. This suggests the dates were inserted by the author in the autograph copy. For the transmission, CB, pp. lxxxvi-xliv.

\(^{81}\) Třeštík, *Kosmas*, 54.

\(^{82}\) S. MacLean, *History and Politics in Late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe* (Manchester, 2009), 12; D. Třeštík, ‘Kosmas a Regino’, *Český Časopis Historický* 8 (1960), 564-87.

\(^{83}\) Wolverton, *Chronicle*, 9; Třeštík, *Kosmas*, 57.

\(^{84}\) Wolverton, *Chronicle*, 11.
promotion of Prague as both a city and the most important Czech bishopric, and the establishment of a Czech identity as a gens. Which idea Cosmas believed to be most important is still debated, though all are connected. He believed the Přemyslid dukes had held a social contract with their people since time immemorial. Through the history of these rulers and the promotion of the native saints Wenceslas and Adalbert, Cosmas sought to establish a unified Czech identity. Given that one saint had been a Přemyslid duke and the other a bishop of Prague, Cosmas’s celebration of their cults linked Czechs further with their rulers and with a Christian identity.

Like Bede, Cosmas relied on a great deal of material which no longer survives, including letters, oral testimony, and a lost set of Bohemian annals. And while Cosmas professes concern for their credibility and the ‘truth’ behind his sources, the third book of the Chronica begins with Cosmas’s trepidation regarding the honest telling of events in living memory. Declaring that it is better to remain silent than tell the truth, he turns even this declaration into a critique of the dukes by alleging that current rulers prefer praise, whereas their forebears wanted truth. This is perhaps best illustrated by his treatment of Vratislav II and his conflict with the bishop of Prague, Gebhard; Cosmas disliked both men, and much of the information on the former’s reign was fabricated or exaggerated to suit Cosmas’s ‘truth’ and his celebration of the Přemyslids (Gebhard was also one). Cosmas is also highly critical of ‘outsiders’, namely foreigners and Jews. His anti-Jewish mentality is nothing unusual for the period, but his dislike of foreigners can be associated both with his desire to promote a Czech identity, as well as his disapproval of foreign rulers attempting to take advantage of Přemyslid dynastic conflict. Most importantly, for Cosmas, references to enslavement and slave trading serve as commentary on the good and bad behaviour of the Přemyslid dukes. Campaigns to Poland brought back great numbers of slaves, which could

85 O. Králik, Kosmova Kronika a Předchozí Tradice (Vyšehrad, 1976), 206-38.
87 Třeštík, Kosmas, 87; Baumann, 35.
90 CB, III.Prologue, 159-60; Cosmas was hardly alone of medieval authors in this assertion, see above, p. 22, n.65, also Bak, 172.
92 Třeštík, Kosmas, 84-7; Bak, 174, 178.
either symbolise the extent of a victory, or add to a list of reprehensible actions.\footnote{CB, I.40, p. 75; II.5, p. 90.} Even the mass redemption of Christian slaves from Jewish owners in Prague in 1124 is lauded by Cosmas as good ducal behaviour.\footnote{CB, III.57, pp. 231-2.} Cosmas provides a great deal of information which would be otherwise unavailable to us, but we must always interpret this within the scope of his agenda.

Both Bede and Cosmas provide detailed depictions of enslavement and slave trading which are, for the most part, entirely unique. They have the potential to vastly expand our knowledge of these practices, and in many instances, they have been taken at face value.\footnote{See especially the discussion of Imma, Chapter 4, pp. 125, 128.} While the motives of these authors should caution against accepting such episodes verbatim, they do provide valuable context. The incidental details of Imma’s capture or enslavement as an integral part of eleventh-century military campaigns are probably more reliable, and in some senses more important, than the precise truth of these stories. Histories are also significant in that they allow us to view enslavement and slave trading through the eyes of contemporaries, even if these authors were male ecclesiastics with personal agendas. With careful consideration, they are essential to the study of early medieval enslavement and slave trading.

**Hagiography**

As a genre of literature devoted to the promotion of a saint and their cult, ‘hagiography’ lumps together *vitae*, martyrologies, calendars, and other works linked by their focus on saints.\footnote{For ‘hagiography’ as an anachronistic label, F. Lifshitz, ‘Beyond positivism and genre: “hagiographical” texts as historical narrative’, *Viator* 25 (1994), 95-113; A. Taylor, ‘Hagiography and early medieval history’, *Religion Compass* 7:1 (2013), 5-7.} Here, ‘hagiography’ will refer exclusively to saints’ lives and miracle texts, since these are the texts which address slave trading. The primary goal of hagiographical authors was to promote a saint, and these works are heavy with literary motifs which impact our perception of slave raiding and trading practices.\footnote{P. J. Geary, ‘Saints, scholars, and society: the elusive goal’, in S. Sticca (ed.), *Saints: Studies in Hagiography* (Binghampton, NY, 1996), 15; F. Graus, *Volk, Herrschaft und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger: Studien zur Hagiographie der Merowingerzeit* (Prague, 1965), 39.} We must always be conscious that we are viewing events, especially slavery, through a lens of idealised Christian behaviour and overt authorial motives. This is especially true when we
consider that early medieval hagiography may have been largely intended for a clerical audience, who would have been familiar with not only the literary *topoi*, but also the ecclesiastical politics behind many of these early medieval works.  

Slaves occur most commonly in hagiography as props for emphasising the piety of the subject. Even where the saint themselves spent part of their life as a slave, such as in the Lives of Findan, Brigit, Naum, and Balthild, the author’s implication is that this social debasement served as a test of faith, and their eventual release from slavery indicates not only the glory of God, but also the importance of that particular person in God’s plan.

Through this lens, it is possible to grasp details regarding slave trading practices at least in the author’s own time. These are presumably aspects which were recognisable to both author and audience, such as locations where sales took place, as well as the identities of the buyers and sellers. Context is always key in determining which of these details were recorded for their mundanity or their sensational quality.

More often, slaves appear as nameless beneficiaries of a saint’s charitable acts or miracles. The purchase of slaves for manumission and/or baptism – usually referred to as ‘redemption’ (*redemptio*, *redimere*) - is a common theme of these early medieval texts across Europe, and it is not always clear whether these activities were included as a historical record of the saint’s actions, or simply because it was what saints were expected to do, or both. Slaves could also be the recipients of miracles, though the author’s motive for including such stories can usually be traced to a desire to illustrate saintly intercession on behalf of the least fortunate members of society. Locations where slave trading occurred can be identified as incidental details of hagiography, but in most cases it remains impossible to determine anything more, such as the number of slaves for sale or the frequency with which slaves were available or purchased. The notable exceptions to this are the Lives of Adalbert and of Wulfstan, which describe the regularity of slave trading as an important background detail for both men’s efforts to prevent their sale. Some slaves may be altogether fabricated, either by the author or via oral tradition, as in the case of Pope Gregory’s slave boys in Rome, supposedly Anglo-Saxons whose physical beauty and

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98 Hagiography could also be intended for lay audiences, but this is often difficult to demonstrate, W.S. Van Egmond, ‘The audience of early medieval hagiographical texts’, in M. Mostert (ed.), *New Approaches to Medieval Communication* (Turnhout, 1999), 41-67.

paganism inspired the sending of Augustine’s mission. In order to illustrate regional differences in the portrayal of slave trading, I will address separately Irish, Welsh, English, and Czech hagiography, the contexts from which references to slave trading survive.

**Ireland and Wales.** Where surviving Irish hagiography dates from the first half of the seventh century, the earliest example being Cogitosus’ *Vitae Brigitae*, the earliest surviving Welsh Life is Rhigyfarch’s *Vita Davidi*, composed c. 1095. In both cultural milieus, hagiographical texts reflect the period of their composition rather than any historical context regarding the subject. The earliest Irish Lives were all produced in Latin, though by the ninth century the vernacular was the preferred form, potentially a result of the disruption to Latin learning caused by Viking raids on monasteries. It is unlikely that any Latin *vitae* were produced in Ireland between c. 850-c. 1050, though the form was revived in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. While the early Lives certainly drew compositional inspiration from the *vitae* of the Church fathers and some motifs recur, there appears to have been no unifying style or structure in Irish hagiography.

Consensus amongst scholars of Irish hagiography is that these texts hold little to no historical value for the saints themselves or for their period. Instead, the incidental details in these works reflect the world of their authors. Given that the trend of writing about one’s teacher or immediate predecessor never seems to have become popular in Ireland, most hagiography depicts a remote past. The basis for these works so far removed from their subjects appears to have, in some cases, included oral traditions regarding the saint, and some saints display attributes of legendary, secular, Celtic heroes. The production of

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100 *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great*, ed. B. Colgrave (Lawrence, 1968), 90; For oral tradition, HE, 133 n.2. See discussion, pp. 133-4.
102 M. Herbert, ‘Latin and vernacular hagiography of Ireland from the origins to the sixteenth century’ in G. Philippart (ed.), *Hagiographies: histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographique latine et vernaculaire en Occident des origines à 1550* (Turnhout, 2001), iii.340; R. Sharpe asserts there is no evidence that Vikings were responsible for the increase in vernacular writing or a supposed decline in Latin, *Medieval Irish Saints’ Lives* (Oxford, 1991), 21.
103 Many Hiberno-Latin *vitae* survive only in fourteenth-century copies, and much of this content remains undated. Many of the texts surviving in late medieval form may date to as early as the seventh or eighth centuries, Sharpe, *Medieval*, 15.
hagiographical texts in Ireland appears to have been driven largely by a concern for the saint’s ‘contemporary legacy’.

For example, Cogitosus composed his work by redacting all information from the original vita which didn’t pertain to the promotion of Kildare, including Brigit’s origin as a slave. As a result, Richard Sharpe believes that Irish hagiography proves more valuable in a literary than a historical context. However, because slavery usually appears as an incidental detail within these texts, they provide a valuable perspectives on the conditions of slavery at the time of composition.

In Wales, the Vita Davidi served as a model for the only other pre-twelfth-century hagiography, Lifris of Llancarfan’s Vita Cadoci. Both works, written during the Norman conquest of the Welsh principalities and the subjection of the Welsh church to Canterbury, sought to establish an ancient and independent Welsh ecclesiastical tradition by creating vitae of saints who lived some six centuries before the authors. These Lives also sought to promote the churches of each saint in a struggle for archiepiscopal primacy during this period of ecclesiastical restructuring. As with Irish works, there is also a tendency to combine secular heroic traits with the saint themselves. As a result, references to slaves as seductresses and unlikely warriors seem more representative of topoi than of reality.

England. Anglo-Saxon Lives, which survive from the turn of the eighth century, varied widely in style, technique, and motive depending on date and place of production. Early works range in style from the eighth-century Life of Gregory, clearly undertaken with very little information regarding its subject, to the Life of Cuthbert, authored by someone close to him. Up to 800, most English hagiography was produced in Latin, and Viking disruption of monasteries appears to have halted hagiographical production between c. 800-c. 950. Texts written in Latin after c. 950 were largely composed by foreigners in England, also potentially as a result of the decline in Latin literacy during the Viking Age, while there

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106 Herbert, iii.330.
108 Sharpe, Medieval, 10.
113 Lapidge and Love, iii.212.
was a corresponding rise in Old English hagiographical production.\textsuperscript{115} It is this context in which the Latin hagiography of St. Swithun arose in Winchester, and perhaps the repeated references to slave trading there are because these English processes seemed unusual to Frankish authors in the second half of the tenth century. The result is a varied situation in which slave trading is portrayed uniquely by author and individual context, rather than by broader stylistic trends.

Later Anglo-Saxon hagiography also appeared in the context of monastic reform, and it thematically centred around the promotion of a holy society.\textsuperscript{116} Similarly, the popularity of hagiography during the reign of Æthelred the Unready may be linked to the political and social upheaval of the period, and the perceived need for saintly intercession.\textsuperscript{117} Where the majority of Anglo-Saxon saints’ lives were produced for the promotion of a cult via records of miracles, from the eleventh century, hagiography in England increasingly tended towards a style of intimate biography.\textsuperscript{118} This focus became more widespread in the twelfth century, and it is from this milieu that we receive information about Wulfstan of Worcester’s personal campaign against the slave trade of Bristol (via William of Malmesbury’s translation of a lost Old English Life).

\textit{The Czech Lands.} Hagiography relating to the Czech lands may be split into two major styles during the medieval period which illustrate slave trading in different ways. Byzantine-style hagiography was a result of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission in the mid-ninth century, and Frankish-style replaced the Byzantine model in the tenth century as part of increasing Frankish political and ecclesiastical hegemony over the Přemyslid realm. While the saints’ lives which address the Czech lands follow this stylistic division fairly consistently, many were authored by foreigners whom the Czech saints came into contact with during their careers. For example, the Lives of Clement of Ohrid and Naum, both of whom were Moravian disciples of Cyril and Methodius, were written in Bulgaria, primarily in relation to their work as fathers of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. And while several Lives of


\textsuperscript{116} Vernacular texts may have been produced for preaching to the laity, Whatley, 432-42.


\textsuperscript{118} Lapidge and Love, iii.254.
Adalbert, Bishop of Prague were composed soon after his death, none of these were written by someone from that see. Instead, they were the product of foreign authors such as John Canaparius and Bruno of Querfurt.

The historicity of Byzantine-style hagiography of the ninth and tenth centuries provides a unique picture of slavery. The Lives of Cyril and Methodius have been described as ‘semi-secular biography’, as part of a trend in which authors were increasingly concerned with portrayals of contemporary issues, both political and theological.\textsuperscript{119} The Slavonic Life of Naum and the Greek Life of St. Clement of Ohrid, based on a lost Slavonic Life, followed in this trend as well, illustrating the political and ecclesiastical dispute which led to the sale of Moravian clergymen as slaves in Venice. The Great Moravian influence on the early Přemyslid realm also led to the production of some Byzantine-style, Old Church Slavonic hagiography there in the tenth century following the martyrdom of Duke Wenceslas and the promotion of the figure who would become the first native Bohemian saint.\textsuperscript{120} Unlike much of the hagiography of the British Isles, these Byzantine-influenced texts provide detailed information about these saints and their contemporary world, as well as their connections to slave trading.

The Bohemian shift towards a western, Latin literary culture occurred in the tenth century, and it is likely that the establishment of a Prague bishopric in 973 particularly fuelled the creation of Latin, Bohemian hagiography.\textsuperscript{121} This style of text, which encompasses a wide range of early medieval hagiographical works focused on native Bohemian saints (especially Wenceslas, Ludmila, and Adalbert), is noticeably less biographical than its Byzantine stylistic predecessor. A greater focus on miracles and saintly behaviour means that we view slave trading in a more stereotypical context – the redemption of anonymous slaves and attempts to protect their Christian status. While the authorship of these texts is often far-removed from the saints themselves, some did have close connections, and therefore provide intimate details about their dealings with slaves. For example, two Lives of Adalbert by John Canaparius and Bruno of Querfurt were based


\textsuperscript{120} Medieval Slavic Lives, 3.

\textsuperscript{121} Baumann, 18-9; In the following century, this emphasis on Latin led to the duke’s expulsion of the monks from the remaining centre of Slavonic liturgy, Sázava monastery, and the destruction of their library, L. Wolverton, Hastening Toward Prague: Power and Society in the Medieval Czech Lands (Philadelphia, 2001), 134-5.
on information provided by those close to the saint, in the form of a lost original text informed by Adalbert’s brother, Gaudentius, as well as independent testimony by fellow monks at a monastery where Adalbert had lived and by his friend and fellow Bohemian, Anastasius, Archbishop of Esztergom.  

The hagiography of Wenceslas, in which multiple references to slave trading appear, represents the largest group of Czech Latin Lives; it is also the most problematic in terms of dating and use. Wenceslas was not only the first native Bohemian saint, but a martyred duke and member of the Přemyslid dynasty which ruled from Prague through to the early fourteenth century. As such, the veneration of this saint and the promotion of his cult were inherently linked to the consolidation and centralisation of Přemyslid power. The first surviving Life of Wenceslas to reference the Bohemian slave trade is the text known as Crescente fide, which may have been written soon after the death of Wenceslas’s brother and murderer, Boleslav I, in 967. It was certainly written before 983, the latest date of composition for Gumpold of Mantua’s Life of Wenceslas, which was based on this text.

The later Legenda Christiani, which describes Wenceslas himself purchasing slaves in Prague, suffers from critical issues of dating. The text, based in part on the Crescente fide, is generally accepted to have been a Bohemian production by a man named Christian, and though it contains a dedication to Adalbert, the second bishop of Prague (982-997), the earliest manuscripts date only from the fourteenth century. While current scholarship tends to accept a tenth-century date for this text, the debate has not been settled with any finality; it is worth reviewing the justifications for an earlier date.

Apart from the late manuscript dates, mid-twentieth-century studies focused on the transmission of information – which texts the Legenda used as sources – in order to date the text. Despite extensive discussion of the various Latin and Old Church Slavonic Lives of

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122 Baumann, 26; J. Nechutová, *Die lateinische Literatur des Mittelalters in Böhmen* (Cologne, 2007), 59-60.
Wenceslas, little consensus was reached, and many of these texts could have been based on the *Legenda*, rather than served as a source for it. Research by Jaroslav Ludvíkovský established that Christian may also have authored some other texts which are attested from as early as the twelfth century, and a recent synthesis has taken this as support for dating the *Legenda* to before 1200. References in the text to money via almsgiving and the use of mercenaries were once considered to indicate a later date, but archaeological and numismatic research has demonstrated that both the Přemyslids and their political rivals, the Slavnikids, were minting coins by the end of the tenth century. Thus, the implied presence of Bohemian coins does not preclude a tenth-century date of authorship. The *Legenda* was also designed to promote the veneration of Wenceslas’s martyred grandmother, Ludmila, and uncertainty surrounding the acceptance of her sanctity throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries could also indicate that the *Legenda* was composed in the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries, when she was officially accepted by the Prague church and canonised. However, this, too, may be viewed as an inadequate reason to reject an earlier date, since her sanctity was repeatedly demonstrated to doubting bishops, who then accepted Ludmila’s saintly status. Arguments that the Latinity of the text is too sophisticated to be a tenth-century Bohemian creation are also tenuous, since the surviving corpus of texts from this period is too small to sustain such a generalisation.

Dušan Třeštík’s arguments have proven influential in the acceptance of a tenth-century date. He identified the author, Christian, with the Christian who is attested as the brother of Boleslav II (r. 967-99). Třeštík also argued that this Christian must therefore also be the son of Boleslav I whom Cosmas referred to as ‘Strachkvas’, who was born on the day of Wenceslas’s murder. While a recent study of the *Legenda Christiani* admits that no final

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127 Kalhous, *Legenda*, 66-100; The Origins of Christianity in Bohemia: Sources and Commentary, ed. M. Kantor (Evanston, IL, 1990), 17-8; Nechutová, 44.


129 J. Kalousek, ‘Nejstarší kronika česká?’, *Osvěta* 33 (1903), 122; Coins may have been minted in Prague as early as the 960s, for example Z. Petrán, *Promi České Mince* (Prague, 1998). See also the discussion of coins in Chapter 2, pp. 79-85.


131 Kalhous, Anatomy, 189.

132 Kalhous, Anatomy, 190.

133 D. Třeštík, ‘Přemyslovec Kristián’, *Archeologické Rozhledy* 51 (1999), 602-13; The name means ‘terrible feast’, an allusion to the Feast of St. Emmeram after which Wenceslas was killed, and is the only attestation of a son of Boleslav I by that name.
consensus on dating may be reached with the evidence at hand, an early date is certainly plausible.\(^\text{134}\) We must also consider that Christian drew from many earlier works, some of which are presumed lost and remain unidentified.\(^\text{135}\) The details of the saint’s life, which include the purchase of slaves in Prague, may well reflect a tenth-century reality or at least a situation believable to a late-tenth century audience.

Despite the overt political motivations of authors, as well as its use as part of conventional stylistic patterns and motifs, slave trading often appears as precisely the sort of incidental detail which scholars typically accept as indicative of the author’s, if not the saint’s, world. Even where the redemption of slaves or campaigns to prevent their sale may be literary motifs, such action must have been believable to a contemporary audience, which suggests that slave trading was ongoing. Each text must be examined within its own context, but overall, hagiography provides valuable information regarding the early medieval slave trade and how ecclesiastics interacted with it.

### LEGAL AND LEGAL-ISH SOURCES

**Penitentials**

For our purposes, penitentials allow a glimpse not only into the social context of slavery, but also into how clergymen responded to complications posed by the regularity of slave raiding and slave trading. They outline where slavery overlapped with sin in the mind of the early medieval clergy, which in turn provides a framework for viewing other genres of ecclesiastical writing. There are also indications that penitentials and secular law were related during the Anglo-Saxon period, though the extent of this is much discussed. Allen Frantzen and Carole Hough both believe that secular law upheld and supported penitentials, while Stefan Jurasinski argues for a more fluid situation, in which penitentials and codes were considered together as law by the late Anglo-Saxon period.\(^\text{136}\)

The earliest surviving penitential, that of Finnian, dates from the sixth century in Ireland, and appears to have been created with the intent of providing private penance via as-necessary personal meetings with a confessor as an alternative to the system of public,


\(^{135}\) *Origins of Christianity*, 18.

once-in-a-lifetime confessions maintained by the early Church.\textsuperscript{137} The penitentials served to arm confessors with a catalogue of sins they might encounter, along with recommended forms of penance which could be adjusted at the confessor’s discretion based on severity of the sin, the intent with which it was committed, and a myriad of other unique circumstances, including personal status.\textsuperscript{138} The Carolingian reform promoted the reintroduction of forms of public penance and disavowed some penitentials as wrong. Frankish penitentials advocating penance in both forms influenced later British and Irish collections. In England, this led to the production of four vernacular texts - the \textit{Sciftboc}, the \textit{Old English Canons of Theodore}, the \textit{Old English Penitential}, and the \textit{Old English Handbook}. For the most part, they consist of canons copied from earlier works, though Stefan Jurasinski has argued that many of these canons were adapted to local circumstances rather than poorly translated.\textsuperscript{139} English and Irish penitentials represent a considerable proportion of those relevant to slave raiding and trading. Penitentials for the Czech lands are scarce, with only two surviving which are believed to have been in use at Czech foundations in the ninth through the eleventh centuries, \textit{Někotoraja zapověd} and \textit{Zapovědi světzchь otyсь}. It may have been the case that some Frankish penitentials, or perhaps even copies of earlier English and Irish texts transmitted via Frankish influence, were in use at Czech foundations from the ninth century onwards. \textit{Zapovědi světzchь otyсь} was based on a Latin text similar to the \textit{Penitential of Merseburg}, which itself partly derived from the \textit{Penitential of Cummean}.

Penitentials were probably widely in use wherever there was a Christian population and a clergy established enough to administer regular confession, especially from the ninth century onwards.\textsuperscript{140} While many surviving manuscripts occur in episcopal contexts, this is likely because penitentials were commonly produced as small handbooks, to be carried around and consulted regularly; they would have worn out over time.\textsuperscript{141} Many are short enough to be memorised.\textsuperscript{142} That said, we have no way of discerning how often the

\textsuperscript{137} R. Meens has argued that although an Irish origin of private penance has been taken for granted, the practice must have been widespread enough that Theodore of Tarsus had no problems with implementing it during his time as Archbishop of Canterbury, \textit{Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200} (Cambridge, 2014), 37, 93-4.

\textsuperscript{138} P. Payer, ‘The humanism of the penitentials and the continuity of the penitential tradition’, \textit{Mediaeval Studies} 46 (1984), 341.


\textsuperscript{140} Meens, \textit{Penance}, 139.

\textsuperscript{141} Frantzen, \textit{Literature}, 58.

prescriptions of the penitentials were put into effect verbatim, and how often they were
adjusted to suit the circumstances. We also do not know how often these sins were
committed, and more importantly, how often they were actually confessed.\textsuperscript{143}

Many penitentials contain no reference to slavery whatsoever, and those which do
present slavery through the lens of sin, and how the circumstances of slavery or the
practicalities of captive taking played into broader ecclesiastical themes, especially the
delineation of marriage.\textsuperscript{144} For Old English penitentials, there has been some debate on the
extent to which these texts reflect an ‘amelioration’ of the condition of slavery from the ninth
century onwards. David Pelteret has argued that Anglo-Saxon penitentials, along with
secular law codes, depict a changing attitude to slaves as fellow Christians rather than as chattel.\textsuperscript{145} This increasingly ‘humane’ view of slaves persisted throughout the late Anglo
Saxon period and was directed by ecclesiastical perspective as implemented through
penance.\textsuperscript{146} Stefan Jurasinski has argued more recently that while Old English translations
of Latin penitentials may appear to protect slaves from abuse by their owners, their
increased specificity in fact sought to protect slave owners from having to do penance under
the broader terms of the original Latin texts.\textsuperscript{147} The penitentials sought to make clear
distinctions between the treatment of slaves and free people, even while holding slaves
accountable for sinful behaviour, especially as regards extramarital sex.\textsuperscript{148}

Often canons regarding captive taking and slave trading in later penitentials are
lifted directly from older texts, which gives a somewhat deceptive view of ecclesiastical
opinion on slavery as unchanging throughout the entirety of the early medieval period.
However, penitentials could be worked and reworked to suit local and cultural concerns,
especially in relation to captive taking and slave trading. When the canons of Theodore
were collected into the Latin Penitential of Theodore, probably in the early eighth century after
Theodore’s death in 690, the abduction of people as captives had clearly caused issues with
regulating the practice of marriage. The canons suggest that the archbishop, who would
have been unable to find sufficient answers in the Irish penitentials of Finnian and
Cummean, made his own rulings regarding how long a spouse needed to wait to remarry

\begin{footnotes}
\item 143 Payer, Sex, 8.
\item 144 Payer, Sex, 115.
\item 145 Pelteret, Slavery, 87.
\item 146 Pelteret, Slavery, 105
\item 147 Jurasinski, ‘Old’, 108.
\item 148 Jurasinski, Old English, 112; 139-48.
\end{footnotes}
after their husband or wife was taken in a raid, and what to do if the first spouse returned from captivity after their husband or wife had remarried.\textsuperscript{149} Not only was this canon repeated in tenth- and eleventh-century Old English translations, but the \textit{Old English Handbook of Penance} expanded the ruling to include betrothed couples, which suggests that the clergy in England (at the very least) continued to grapple with the social and moral complications caused by captive taking.\textsuperscript{150}

Problems also appear to have arisen very early on regarding the use of church funds for the redemption of captives. Canons which punished the collector who lied about needing ransom funds in order to acquire money,\textsuperscript{151} who collected ransom money from within a community alone and without permission,\textsuperscript{152} or who kidnapped a captive instead of paying their ransom targeted monks in particular.\textsuperscript{153} It suggests not only that monks still keenly felt ties to their families and communities outside the monastery, but also that religious institutions’ financial resources played an important role in the ransom process. Overall, canons related to captive taking illustrate the practicalities of life in a slaving society, and how churches were forced to adapt for their own interests and those of their congregations.

The same is true of canons regarding slave trading, which feature as far back as the earliest surviving penitential. The sixth-century \textit{Penitential of Finnian} went so far as to prescribe the sale of a female slave with whom her owner had fornicated, but who had not borne him children, an idea which was repeated in the seventh-century \textit{Penitential of Cummean}.\textsuperscript{154} The eighth-century \textit{Penitential of Theodore} also placed the minimum age for self-sale into slavery at fourteen.\textsuperscript{155} However, the recurrence of canons addressing slave trading indicates that medieval confessors continually needed to create and revise official stances on the subject, either in relation to local circumstances or change over time. The sale of one’s children into slavery was clearly an issue of moral debate within the ecclesiastical community, and perhaps one which stemmed from the commonality of the practice,

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{149} Poenitentiale Theodori, in \textit{Councils & Ecc.}, II.xiii.20, II.xiii.22, p. 200.
\footnote{150} ASP, Corpus Christi College, 201, f.119 (LIV.xxiii).
\footnote{151} Penitentialis Vinniani, in IP, §30, p. 85.
\footnote{152} Synodus I S. Patricii, in IP, §1, p. 54. This text predates penitentials as a genre, possibly originating from a synod as early as the mid-fifth century. However, the document provides punishments for bad behavior, here excommunication, in a manner very similar to later Irish penitentials.
\footnote{153} Synodus I S. Patricii, §32, p. 58.
\footnote{154} Penitentialis Vinniani, §40, p. 88; Poenitentiale Cummeani, in IP, §26-27, p. 116.
\end{footnotes}
especially during times of hardship. The Old English *Schriftboc* (late ninth century\textsuperscript{156}) and the *Old English Canons of Theodore* (c. 690-1025\textsuperscript{157}) both repeated a canon from the Latin *Penitential of Theodore* which allowed the sale of a child under the age of 7. Children older than 7 must consent to their own sale.\textsuperscript{158} The *Old English Penitential*, however, banned the practice of selling one’s child or any near kin, under pain of exclusion from the Christian community until the person sold could be redeemed or another redeemed in their place.\textsuperscript{159} The redemption of slaves was also introduced as a means of commuting long sentences of penance in texts, and indicates an environment in which slaves could be purchased.\textsuperscript{160}

Stefan Jurasinski has argued that the Old English penitentials represent the adaptation of Irish and Frankish ecclesiastical rulings to specifically English circumstances, for consumption by an English audience.\textsuperscript{161} This would indicate a milieu in which penitentials and their canons regarding captive taking and slave trading were actively in use. They provide a window into how ecclesiastical authors reacted to the realities of these practices in the tenth and eleventh centuries. A similar situation for the Czech lands may be presented by the *Někotoraja zapověď*, an Old Church Slavonic penitential which survives only in a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century Russian manuscript, but which is believed to have originated in Bohemia between the ninth and eleventh centuries based on linguistic evidence.\textsuperscript{162} One canon in this text prohibits castratio by force or by a parent for the purpose of sale, an idea which is completely unique in both western and eastern European penitential tradition, and which may reflect local ecclesiastical attempts to impose regulations on the Prague slave trade.\textsuperscript{163} The canon could be the result of a later Russian addition, but it is worth noting that in 993, Břevnov monastery in Prague was granted rights to a tenth of the proceeds from the Prague slave trade.\textsuperscript{164} Even if ecclesiastical institutions were profiting from the sale of people, there may have been some concern amongst the clergy as to how that slave trade was supplied.

\textsuperscript{156} Jurasinski, *Old English*, 83.
\textsuperscript{159} ASP, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 482, f.16b (VLIV.xxii).
\textsuperscript{160} *Old English Handbook of Penance*, ASP, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 201, f.119 (LIV.xxiii).
\textsuperscript{161} Jurasinski, ‘Old’, 104-6.
\textsuperscript{162} J. Vašíča, ‘Čirkevněslovný penitenciál českého puvodů’, *Slavia* 29 (1960), 31-2.
\textsuperscript{163} *Někotoraja zapověď*, ed. Vašíča, ‘Čirkevněslovný’, 45; For connection to the Prague slave trade, P. Charvát, *The Emergence of the Bohemian State* (Leiden, 2010), 156-7.
\textsuperscript{164} CDB I, no. 375, p. 348; For the validity of the charter’s content, see Petráček, 236-40.
While certain examples appear to reflect contemporary concerns of the church regarding captive taking and slave trading practices, the static copying of older canons over time and in different locations does not necessarily indicate continued problems. Many later penitentials include earlier canons about slaves without reworking them or introducing new ones, and it was probably at the discretion of each author or compiler as to how much space to devote to slaves. The penitentials discussed here are the best indicators of issues contemporary to the author or translator; they reflect revision to meet a specific perspective or set of circumstances. Penitentials rarely illustrate an outright conflict between secular practices of enslavement and slave trading and ecclesiastical opinion. Rather than depicting a pious and moralistic opposition to slavery, penitentials demonstrate that the Church sought to adapt to the norms of local communities. Ecclesiastical leaders established rulings when slavery practices and Church doctrine created more questions than answers. They also tweaked ecclesiastical regulations to meet specific circumstances. Even in those instances which do not reflect change over time or regional differentiation, the penitential genre illustrates an ecclesiastical response to slavery which was practical and adaptable.

**Law Codes**

Despite the umbrella term of ‘law code’, the surviving form of these documents, along with their authorship and intent, varied greatly by region. As such, English, Irish, Welsh, and Czech law tracts will be outlined separately, to better address their unique historiographical traditions, problems of text transmission, and contexts of laws regarding slave trading. This section will ultimately show that law codes sought to protect slave owners’ property rights through the control of slaves and, more importantly, the control of third party access to slaves. The social application of these documents – the extent of their practical use and their implications regarding attempts to control enslavement and slave trading – will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Even when there are enormous differences in authorship and transmission across regions, these documents all tend to address slavery in similar terms. After all, slaves were valuable items of property, and one would expect early medieval law to seek to protect, or at least demonstrate a desire to protect, the property rights of those wealthy and powerful enough to own slaves. Law codes generally sought to preserve the slave owner’s rights over
their slave\textsuperscript{165} and prohibit third party access to their slaves via sex or violence.\textsuperscript{166} They also issued punishments for slaves who injured others or stole as part of comprehensive lists of such clauses pertaining to all social statuses.\textsuperscript{167} Law codes rarely sought to protect the rights of slaves.\textsuperscript{168} There was also a great deal of concern expressed over the reduction of free people into slavery, either unjustifiably or through penal enslavement.\textsuperscript{169}

\textit{England.} The intent of early English law codes has been intensely debated, and little consensus has been reached as to whether these texts supported the king’s authority ideologically when functional law was otherwise orally promulgated,\textsuperscript{170} or whether the texts accurately outlined legal judgements for cases, the details of which no longer survive.\textsuperscript{171} Anglo-Saxon codes appear to have begun as the transcription of oral law in the vernacular. Over the centuries, from Æthelberht’s first Kentish code of the early seventh century to Cnut’s series of codes through the mid-eleventh, Anglo-Saxon laws demonstrate an increasing expression of royal power through law-making, in addition to focuses and goals unique to the circumstances in which each code was issued.\textsuperscript{172} They indicate a concern for protection and peace within a kingdom, as well as the extent to which that protection and peace could be guaranteed by a king.\textsuperscript{173} As a result, they regularly legislate on matters regarding enslavement and slave trading.

The wider chronological range of surviving English law uniquely allows us to assess any change in the perception of slavery over a full five centuries. Though individual codes vary in how they deal with slaves and the punishments they assign, David Pelteret has argued that Anglo-Saxon law codes, alongside penitentials, illustrate a general trend

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{165} \textit{Gesetze}, i.112 (Ine §53), 128 (Alfred & Guthrum §4), 176-7 (VI Æthelstan §6); \textit{Zakon} §32, p. 23; For Irish law examples see Kelly, \textit{Guide}, 95-7 and Appendix, Table 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{166} For restricting sexual access to slaves by third parties, see for example \textit{Die Gesetze}, i.3 (Æthelberht §11); for protection against violence, see for example \textit{Gesetze}, i.8 (Æthelberht §89), 62-4 (Alfred §25), \textit{Zakon}, §6, p. 11. Further examples in the Appendix, Table 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{167} \textit{Gesetze}, i.8 (Æthelberht §90), 14 (Wihtred §27), 172 (IV Æthelstan §5-7), \textit{Zakon}, §27, p. 21. Also see the Appendix.
  \item \textsuperscript{168} The most commonly-cited exception is Alfred’s provision that slaves may keep earnings from goods they sell on four specific days of the year, \textit{Gesetze}, i.78 (Alfred §43).
  \item \textsuperscript{169} See Chapter 3, pp. 94-101 and Chapter 6, pp. 196-202.
  \item \textsuperscript{171} T. Lambert, ‘Theft, homicide and crime in late Anglo-Saxon law’, \textit{Past and Present} 214 (2012), 3-43.
  \item \textsuperscript{172} P. Wormald, ‘“Inter cetera bona genti suae”: Law-making and peace-keeping in the earliest English kingdoms’, in Wormald (ed.), \textit{Legal Culture}, 179-99; Wormald, \textit{Making}.
\end{itemize}
towards the betterment of slaves’ position within Anglo-Saxon society. Even if the law codes are idealised and not prescriptive, Pelteret suggests that they represent a changing popular opinion of slaves and an increasing tendency to view them as humans rather than property, thanks to the influence of Christian thought.\footnote{Pelteret, \textit{Slavery}, 87-8, 101.}

The problem with this argument lies in the assumption that Christianity sought to improve the status of slaves. Law codes from the late Roman Empire and Byzantium certainly had no problem treating slaves simultaneously as people and property, despite long-standing acceptance of Christian doctrine\footnote{K. Harper, \textit{Slavery in the Late Roman World, AD 275-425} (Cambridge, 2011), 349-494; Y. Rotman, \textit{Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World} (Cambridge, MA, 2009), 131-76.}, and medieval authors more often took issue with the sale of Christians to non-Christians than with slave ownership itself (see Chapter 6). As with penitentials, Stefan Jurasinski has demonstrated that the addition of stipulations to clauses regarding the punishment of slaves were actually designed to more clearly delineate slaves as a social category and to prevent any free person from being treated \textit{like} a slave.\footnote{Jurasinski, \textit{Old’}, 118; Jurasinski, \textit{Old English}, 112.}

English law codes do remain consistent in their concern for protecting the rights of slave owners over their property, even after the Norman Conquest. Regarding slave trading, laws did not seek to prevent the practice, declaring only that slaves were not to be sold outside of a political territory, and especially not to non-Christian buyers.\footnote{\textit{Gesetze}, i.94 (Ine §11), 238 (V Æthelred §2), 250 (VI Æthelred §9), 310 (II Cnut §3), 488 (Ten Articles of William I §9).} Anglo-Saxon codes are explicitly linked to royal authority, and thus the guarantor of political boundaries. After all, Æthelberht’s Kentish code did not seek to restrict slave trading only a few years after that king’s conversion to Christianity and in the earliest English promulgation of written law. In England, this limitation on slave trading was repeatedly codified, but over the course of the seventh through eleventh centuries it was adjusted and readjusted to suit the desires of a growing administrative apparatus. That codes sought to place restrictions on slave trading is certainly linked with these ideas of political protection by a ruler and territorial boundaries, in addition to that ruler’s obligation to protect the Christian souls of his subjects (see Chapter 6).

\textit{The Czech Lands.} The two surviving Czech legal texts from the period between the seventh and eleventh centuries arise from very different and immensely problematic contexts,
making it very difficult to perceive any similarities within a Czech ethnic legal tradition, or change in the treatment of slavery over time. The earlier document, *Zakon Súdnej Ljudem* or *Court Law for the People*, has a complex transmission history and an even more complex web of nineteenth- and twentieth-century nationalistic historiography. *Zakon* survives only in thirteenth-century and later Russian manuscripts, but it is attributed to the mid or late ninth century based on the similarity of the language to known ninth-century Old Church Slavonic documents. It is almost certainly a collation of laws assembled by the scribe for private use or as a supplement to unwritten law, since *Zakon* makes no mention of murder and does not include provisions of civil law. The document is heavily based on the Byzantine *Ecloga*, a law code promulgated 736 x 741, and includes Mosaic law. The author of *Zakon* generally sought to lessen the harsh corporal punishments of the *Ecloga* by replacing many of them with penal enslavement. Because penal servitude had been outlawed in the Byzantine Empire since 536, the regular appearance of it in *Zakon* almost certainly derives from Slavic practice.

Several theories have developed regarding the origin of the text, with the strongest arguments being for Moravian, Bulgarian, and Macedonian provenance. The Bulgarian theory is the oldest of the three, having been first argued in 1829 by the Russian scholar G.A. Rozenkampf. Proponents of this theory believe that *Zakon* must have been drawn up for Khan Boris’s newly Christianised Bulgarian empire in 866-8. The softening of punishments prescribed by the *Ecloga* could have been the result of Boris’s mistrust of the Byzantine Empire and reliance on papal guidance, but this is speculation, and seems contrary to *Zakon*’s heavy dependence on the *Ecloga*. The Macedonian theory states that the code was written by Methodius during his time as military governor of that region (c. 830-840), specifically for the Slavic border guards stationed there. If the collation was geared towards young men of fighting age, it could help to explain the author’s decision to include a preponderance of laws focused on subjects such as warfare and men’s sexual access to

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179 G.A. Rozenkampf, *Obozrenie korničej knigi v istoričeskom vide* (Moscow, 1829), 133.
180 *Zakon*, vii.
women.\textsuperscript{182} It is worth noting, however, that many early medieval law codes appear skewed in this manner but are not perceived as pertaining only to a certain subset of society.\textsuperscript{183}

The Moravian theory is the strongest, stating that Zakon was compiled by a member of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission to Great Moravia in the 860s or by one of their disciples.\textsuperscript{184} The surviving collection represents all or part of the Christian laws which, according to the Life of Constantine, the Moravian duke Rastislav requested along with missionaries from the Byzantine emperor in 862.\textsuperscript{185} This theory also supports claims of Bulgarian features in the surviving thirteenth-century text, since Methodius’ disciples were expelled from Moravia and fled to Bulgaria following his death in 885. The laws could have travelled with these men and been adopted by the recently Christianised Bulgarians. Most importantly, however, Zakon has a number of passages which parallel other ninth-century Old Church Slavonic texts linked to the Great Moravian mission, such as Methodius’ own translation of the Nomokanon and his Life, believed to have been written by one of his disciples soon after his death.\textsuperscript{186} Some words and phrases were clearly unknown to Eastern scribes, who garbled or altered these passages during the copying process.\textsuperscript{187} Given the greater strength of the Moravian argument, I will treat Zakon Suydnji Ljudem as a Moravian text.

Arguments on origin aside, the source itself poses a number of significant problems. Regarding the interpretation of clauses on penal slavery, scholars disagree on the meaning of ‘da prodastь sę’ in Old Church Slavonic as a term denoting sale into slavery or sale of property for compensation.\textsuperscript{188} In many instances, the sale of property makes little sense in context. For example, §28 states that in the third offence of stealing livestock, the wrongdoer should be punished da prodastь sę. The first and second offences are punished with flogging.

\textsuperscript{182} Troickij, 96, 100-111.


\textsuperscript{184} V. Procházka, ‘Le Zakon sudnyj ljud’m’ et la Grande Moravie’, Byzantinoslavica 29:1 (1968), 146-8; Zakon, viii.


\textsuperscript{187} Procházka, ‘Le Zakon’, 128-30.

\textsuperscript{188} The translation by Dewey and Kleimola interprets this as sale into slavery. The edition and Czech translation in Magnae Moraviae Fontes Historicci relies on the interpretation of a penalty, Zakon, 147-98, esp. 185 n.32 for explanation of the phrase.
and exile, and, if we presume that the third offence warranted the harshest punishment, penal enslavement is the better interpretation. The same is true of §30, where theft from an altar requires *da prodastь sę*, and theft from anywhere else in the church requires flogging, hair-cutting, and exile. Where theft from an altar is the greater crime, we would expect a harsher sentence – the loss of free status. As such, *da prodastь sę* will be treated as reference to enslavement throughout this thesis. Clauses in which this phrase occurs are given in the Appendix, Table 2.

A further issue – the code’s incompleteness – has already been mentioned. As a private collation or a supplementary code, it does not provide the full scope of ninth-century Moravian law, though this problem is certainly not unique to Moravia in the early Middle Ages. Because there is no relevant case law, we cannot know whether the laws were even put to practical use, and whether they impacted society on any level. The national interests embodied in the historiography can also pose problems. We should not ignore that nearly all proponents of the Moravian theory are Czech, or that, as H.W. Dewey and A.M. Kleimola pointed out in their edition of Zakon, many refutations of other theories resort to *ad hominem* attacks rather than a deconstruction of evidence. While I will treat Zakon as a Moravian text based on the strength of the supporting evidence, I acknowledge that the debate over provenance has proven inconclusive over the past two centuries, and that arguments have been coloured by patriotic ties to state origins in the early Middle Ages.

Given Zakon’s status as a reworking of the Ecloga, it is extremely difficult to determine whether the presentation of the ruler as law-giver and the highest lay judicial authority is merely a result of the code’s Byzantine source material or an accurate portrayal of a Great Moravian political context. In either case, Zakon is somewhat distinct in that we can be certain the ideas behind the clauses were not initially inspired by the context in which they were ultimately promulgated. Czech historiographical focus has largely remained on demonstrating that Zakon was indeed written for a Moravian milieu. Within that scope, there has been no doubt that Zakon was designed to bring a Christian system of written law to Great Moravia. Attempts to distinguish whether this system remained ideological or practical are few and far between, partly owing to the problematic transmission of the text,

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189 For a discussion of these attacks in various languages, see Zakon, x. Procházka went so far as to entitle one section of his article ‘The imaginary historical evidence for the Bulgarian origin of ZSL’, ‘Le Zakon’, 122.
and partly to the general paucity of Great Moravian texts, which severely limits the possibility of corroborating evidence.  

The second Czech text does not survive as an independent legal document, but rather as Cosmas’s record of an edict issued by Břetislav I in 1039. This record takes the form of direct speech in the Chronica Boemorum, completed in 1124, in a decree issued by Břetislav on the occasion of the translation of St. Adalbert’s remains in Gniezno. Despite this suspect presentation, scholarly consensus remains that Cosmas was likely working from a document which no longer exists, perhaps a copy of Břetislav’s decrees which were presumably promulgated within the Přemyslid duchy, or at the very least preserved at the cathedral library in Prague where Cosmas was writing. Cosmas may still have manipulated certain aspects of the text for his own ends, but this is not suspected of the ruling on slavery. Given the difficulties in the transmission of the text, scholars have generally avoided addressing any potential for practical application, regardless of whether they believe Cosmas’ record to be authentic. Both the Czech texts - Zakon and Břetislav’s decrees - do appear to position the ruler as the authoritative law giver in the separate contexts of Great Moravia in the ninth century and Přemyslid Bohemia in the eleventh.

Given the limitations of Czech law, we can only conclude that the sale of penal slaves appears to have been typical in both ninth-century Moravia and early eleventh-century Bohemia. This one aspect sets Czech law apart from anything we know from the British Isles, and this will be fully discussed in Chapter 3. Apart from that, we can only glimpse legal perceptions of slave trading at these two moments of promulgation, though it is significant that neither Zakon nor Břetislav’s decrees sought to place limitations on this activity as we see in English law (see Chapter 6). Particularly in Zakon, the absence of such injunctions could result from any number of problems surrounding the source itself - its

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191 CB, II.4, pp. 85-90.


193 Cosmas may have included issues of inheritance in Břetislav’s speech in order to explain divisions of power which occurred after the duke’s death, N. Berend, P. Urbánczyk and P. Wiszewski, Central Europe in the High Middle Ages: Bohemia, Hungary and Poland c. 900-c. 1300 (Cambridge, 2013), 166-7. A separate copy of these decrees preserved in a thirteenth-century manuscript in Olomouc suggests that Cosmas’s audience took him at his word, V. Vaněček, ‘Nový text (varianta) dekretů Břetislavových z r. 1039’, Slavia Antiqua 3 (1951-52), 131-4.
adaptation from the *Ecloga*, its likely existence as a collation rather than a complete code, or its status as the first example of Christian law in Moravia.

**Ireland.** Irish and Welsh law tracts are entirely different, in that they appear to have operated, or at least been produced, separately from royal authority. Irish law books are anonymous, undated, and frame themselves as records of an unchanging legal tradition, where developments were only recorded in later glosses. While they are believed to have first been written down between c. 650-750 based on linguistic archaisms, the tracts exist today as copies dating predominantly from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Transcribed by jurists from an extensive corpus of orally-transmitted customary law, these tracts may have initially been committed to writing in response to the spread of Christianity and with it, an alternative ecclesiastical legal system which ascribed authority to written texts.¹⁹⁴ Though separate law ‘schools’ existed, both the *Senchas Már* and *Bretha Nemed* legal traditions may have served as expressions of the political hegemony of the *Ui Néill* and their allies. That no attempts to further record customary law were undertaken after the eighth century may reflect the collapse of these political conditions favourable towards broad statements of cultural unity via Irish law.¹⁹⁵

Irish law names few kings and even fewer historical ones. This gives Irish law the appearance of having operated entirely separately from royal authority, and it is certainly true that professional judges known as *brithemain* (sing. *brithem*) adjudicated cases, with kings only being asked to make judgements as a last resort. This separation is somewhat artificial, since kings and ecclesiastical councils almost certainly issued their own edicts, though these may never have been written down, and jurists may have only regarded these promulgations as clarifications of existing law rather than as new laws in their own right.¹⁹⁶ Very little non-legendary case law exists to demonstrate how Irish law tracts functioned, but that which does exist in, for example, hagiography suggests that the tracts, or at least the customary law recorded in them, were in active use during the early medieval period. Regulation of slave trading, especially the prohibition of slaves to foreign or non-Christian buyers, probably do not appear in Irish law tracts since they portray – or seek to portray – a

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legal tradition which transcended political boundaries. Given that much of the law was recorded within a hundred-year time frame and was intentionally preserved as archaic, we have little opportunity to perceive change over time. As with English and Czech law, these texts express a general concern for the protection of slave owners’ rights over their property, and the delineation of free and unfree categories of status (see Appendix, Table 2).

Wales. Welsh law remains even more problematic. The tracts which survive date from the thirteenth century, when conflict with England prompted a desire to express independence via the demonstration of an ancient, independent legal tradition.197 These lawbooks claim to pronounce law as laid down by the mid-tenth-century king Hywel Dda, thus attributing to it royal authorship, but at the same time describing a judgement system independent of royal tradition, operated by professional judges known as ynaid (sing. ynad). Much work has been sought to tie the relatively late recording of Welsh practice to ancient Celtic tradition via comparison with Irish texts, but this may be misleading. Robin Chapman Stacey has argued that the privileging of royal authority may reflect thirteenth-century English and Continental influence.198 Even the ynaid, although they appear similar to the brithemain of Irish tradition and thus tend to be seen as belonging to an earlier legal tradition, may also represent a much later development, emerging as a professional class around the time that the laws were committed to writing.199 However, some portions of the Welsh tracts may still reflect a ninth-century, or at least pre-Norman, legal tradition. Thomas Charles-Edwards has argued for the dating of content by individual tracts, with the idea that the law as recorded in the thirteenth century must have been based on pre-existing tradition.200 Attention has also been drawn to the otherwise unnoteworthy figure of Hywel, which suggests that the attribution of legal reform to his kingship might have a factual origin.201 That said, the difficulties of transmission and dearth of earlier legal material mean that scholars may never be able to prove unequivocally pre-Norman dates for Welsh law.

Within these circumstances, we are blind to any changing, or even static, perceptions of slave trading from a legal standpoint. Even so, Welsh law provides little information on slave raiding or trading. The Three Columns of Law, which Charles-Edwards believes to have

201 Charles-Edwards, Welsh, 85.
been written in the ninth century, establishes only that slaves from across the sea were known in Wales, which could result from either slave trading or long-distance raiding.202

Charters

Charters record transactions of land or other property, including unfree people, and generally these legal texts are preserved at the monasteries or ecclesiastical institutions to whom the gift or sale was made.203 While charters were certainly issued to lay people, these are less likely to survive than those which were kept in church archives and repositories.204 Chronological survival is likewise uneven. Whereas in England charters survive from the seventh century,205 Bohemian charters exist only from the late tenth century at the earliest,206 and some Welsh charters claiming to attest transactions as early as the eighth century survive only in early twelfth-century form.207 Charters recorded grants of land, goods, and rights, it was not unusual for ecclesiastical institutions to make a claim to these things by altering the contents of older charters, or outright forging them.

The only charter which provides explicit evidence of slave raiding or trading in either the British Isles or the Czech lands granted ‘decimum hominum captivum’ from Boleslav II to Břevnov monastery near Prague. Supposedly containing contents from 993, the donation charter only survives in thirteenth-century form. Previously believed to be spurious, rather than a copy, based on the palaeographical dating and in the inclusion of immunities, its content is now considered by some to be original and representative of the


205 Keynes, ‘Church’, 20.


207 Charles-Edwards, Wales, 245-56; For these charters as authentic, W. Davies, The Llandaff Charters (Aberystwyth, 1979); as spurious, C.N.L. Brooke, The Church and the Welsh Border in the Central Middle Ages (Woodbridge, 1986), 44-8.
late tenth century ‘with certain reservations’. The tenth of captives is granted along with a tenth of the ducal income from the Prague market (‘In civitate quoque Pragensi decimum forum’) and a tenth of the ducal income from the courts (‘decimum denarium de iudicio’). While the ‘decimum hominum’ could mean that one in ten captives were granted to the monastery, the reference to cash in the other tenth payments implies that Břevnov received a tenth of the profits or fees from the sale of captives.

Charters have held a prominent place in studies of unfreedom on early medieval estates because they often record settled unfree people being transferred to a new owner or institution along with land. The status of these people, slave or otherwise, is relevant to establishing a potential internal demand for slave labour, as in the case of sclavi in ninth- and tenth-century Frankish diplomas (see p. 170). However, even if their status as chattel slaves can be detected, their presence on estates does not necessarily indicate a flourishing slave trade; the slaves could easily have been born into their status, penally enslaved, or have sold themselves to secure food and shelter. Where charters discuss manumission, this likewise tells us nothing about how the freedmen came to be enslaved, or to be present on that land, or the nature of their service. Replenishing agricultural labour with chattel slaves would also have been enormously costly, and we cannot presume that all, or even most, unfree labourers in charters were chattel slaves. As such, apart from the aforementioned Břevnov charter, I will not utilise these texts as evidence of slave trading.

Wills

Anglo-Saxon wills existed only as records of binding oral declarations, and did not hold legal force in and of themselves. Written copies served to inform absent parties of the oral declaration, which was often made when the testator was expected to for live quite some time. The testator then revised it as necessary up until their death. While they

208 Petráček, 236-40. The unusual donation may itself indicate authenticity of the gift, P. Charvát, Boleslav II: Sjednotitel českého státu (Prague, 2004), 82.
209 CDB I, no. 375, p. 348.
210 For example, Pelteret, Slavery, 164-72; Petráček, Power; Sutt, Slavery; C.I. Hammer, A Large-Scale Slave Society of the Early Middle Ages: Slaves and Their Families in Early Medieval Bavaria (Aldershot, 2002). For discussion of unfree status on estates, Rio, Slavery, 175-211.
do not elucidate slave trading, multi-gift wills do provide valuable information on enslavement, chiefly penal enslavement. The 816 Synod of Chelsea, which required bishops to manumit the people acquired on Church estates during their time in office, is often referenced with regard to episcopal wills, though not all surviving examples demonstrate this rule in action.\textsuperscript{214} Though wills are the principal witness to the actual presence of penal slaves in Anglo-Saxon England (considering that law codes may not be representative of functional, orally-prompted law – see Chapter 6), the contexts of their appearance, manumission or bequest, provide very little information regarding how they came to be enslaved, or why they ended up as the property of a particular landlord. It is certainly significant, however, that penal slaves appear exclusively settled on estates, and the relationship between this and eligibility for sale will be addressed in Chapter 3.

The majority of wills date from the tenth and eleventh centuries, with a handful of early examples from the ninth. This likely demonstrates a growing trend in creating written testimonies of oral acts, but given that wills were only preserved when the contents were of interest to ecclesiastical institutions, it is likely that many original documents have been lost to us. Geographical distribution is also skewed, with no wills at all from Northumbria, and the majority of later examples surviving only from East Anglia.\textsuperscript{215} Of this corpus, only a third survive as single-sheet charters from before the end of the eleventh century; the rest exist in post-Conquest cartularies and chronicles.\textsuperscript{216} Latin copies of original vernacular wills which no longer survive are more likely to omit, summarise, or truncate the contents, which may explain why these offer no information on slaves; the chief concern of later copyists and translators was ecclesiastical land, and information deemed irrelevant was discarded.\textsuperscript{217} While wills offer no definitive information on slave raiding or trading practices, they do provide important context for enslavement in later Anglo-Saxon England by demonstrating the creation of slaves separately from warfare.

\textbf{Manumission Documents}

The manumissions recorded in the margins of gospel books are unique British sources, dating from the mid-ninth through the twelfth centuries. They are overwhelmingly associated with the southwest, with a few exceptions in the Durham \textit{Liber Vitae}. Most occur

\textsuperscript{215} Pelteret, \textit{Slavery}, 109.
\textsuperscript{216} Lowe, ‘Nature’, 23.
in the Bodmin Gospels and the Exeter Book. While over 100 of these brief records are readily visible, recent infrared scanning of the erasures in the Bodmin Gospels has brought many more to light, and may reveal more in the future.\textsuperscript{218} These documents illustrate the process of manumission, revealing the persons and the ritual involved in the transition of status.\textsuperscript{219} They also attest to the importance of manumission not just for the benefit of the manumittor’s soul, but also as a tool for memorialising the manumittor through the freedman’s new hereditary status.\textsuperscript{220} The recording of the Bodmin manumissions may also have served to make retroactive claims to royal patronage, and may not be datable based on the kings mentioned in them.\textsuperscript{221}

Manumission documents are of limited use for study of slave raiding and slave trading. The appearance of a slave with an Irish name (Muelpatrec) in Cornwall in the second half of the tenth century is certainly suggestive of Irish Sea slave-trading links, or even of long-distance raiding, but this is the only such example.\textsuperscript{222} It is possible that records which feature slaves with Anglo-Saxon names might paint a similar picture, but the southwest of Britain had also come under West Saxon control by the tenth century. Anglo-Saxon elites may have resettled their slaves on western estates or renamed their Cornish slaves. In the Durham Liber Vitae, the Scandinavian-named son (Gamal) of one very Anglo-Saxon-sounding Ælsie likewise indicates that Scandinavian names do not necessarily indicate enslaved Vikings.\textsuperscript{223} Manumission documents are significant for the study of slavery as an institution in early medieval Britain, but they shed little light on the slave trade.

\textit{Sermo Lupi ad Anglos}

This sermon written by Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, stands apart from other sources. Its author’s heavy involvement in both lay and ecclesiastical legislative activity in the late tenth and first half of the eleventh century gives this homily a special legal

\textsuperscript{219} Pelteret, \textit{Slavery}, 140-55.
\textsuperscript{220} Rio, \textit{Slavery}, 117, 126.
Many of the grievances Wulfstan expresses within the *Sermo Lupi* he tackled directly in the law codes he authored for Æthelred the Unready and Cnut, giving the impression that the *Sermo Lupi* functioned as Wulfstan’s statement of legal intent. Possibly written between 1009 and 1014, the sermon bewails the state of affairs in England in the context of Æthelred the Unready’s tumultuous reign, his defeat by Swein, and his exile. Whatever the precise date, the text reflects a period of political and social upheaval.

Wulfstan believed that with the turn of a new millennium, Christ’s second coming must have been all the nearer. His writings, especially the *Sermo Lupi*, sought to address the sins of the English so that they might be rectified in the creation of a holy society. The impact of this apocalyptic tone is that we do not know whether his examples of captive taking and slave trading are exaggerated, fabricated, or entirely factual. Where Wulfstan gives the impression that these activities were rampant during such troubled times, it is quite possible that they did not occur with any frequency. On the other hand, the specificity with which he describes them indicates that Wulfstan had some familiarity with these situations. This is especially true when we consider that Wulfstan does not draw from other authors in his *Sermo Lupi* as much as in his other works, suggesting that this text was an impassioned piece inspired by what he had witnessed.

That said, Wulfstan’s references to enslavement and slave trading do indicate a certain perspective on these activities. One of Wulfstan’s chief concerns was ensuring an orderly and structured society. Fluidity of status created a situation antithetical to the holy society Wulfstan desired to shape. Thus, Wulfstan did not stand against slavery or slave trading generally, but he is careful to stipulate the conditions in which he views slave taking and slave trading to be reprehensible. He predominantly objects to situations in which the boundary between free and slave status becomes blurred and those in which the acts of captive taking and slave trading expose the victims to sin. To a lesser degree, and perhaps

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225 Whitelock dates it to 1014, which has become generally accepted, *Sermo Lupi*, 6; S. Keynes suggests the sermon may have originated as early as 1009 and was updated at various points to suit the political climate, ‘An abbot, an archbishop, and the viking raids of 1006-7 and 1009-12’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 36 (2007), 203-13.


227 *Sermo Lupi*, 35, 37.

228 *Political Writings*, 43.

tied to the second point, Wulfstan also expresses concern with enslavement which he feels to be morally wrong, if not necessarily sinful. This is particularly apparent in his discussion of a legal tradition which allowed for the penal enslavement of infants should their older family members be party to theft. Wulfstan decried this custom in his *Sermo Lupi*, and later issued legislation against it in II Cnut.

The *Sermo Lupi* thoroughly outlines one man’s opinion of medieval slave raiding and trading practices. While the focus remains on perceived abuses, reading between the lines indicates the degree to which enslavement and slave trading were socially accepted and legally upheld. These are the opinions of an individual, but Wulfstan was responsible for extensive legislation attributed to two kings, as well as other lay and ecclesiastical codes such as Edward and Guthrum, the Bishop’s Duties and the Northumbrian Priests’ Law, many of which issue rulings on slavery in accordance with the views Wulfstan expressed in his sermon (see Appendix, Tables 2 and 3). That these views were promulgated in royal law codes suggests that Wulfstan’s opinions were at least shared by other members of the highest ranks of Anglo-Saxon society, and the activities he condemns indicate that people of lower status perhaps had even fewer qualms regarding the exploitation of enslavement and slave trading for their own ends in the first decades of the eleventh century.

**OTHER SOURCE TYPES**

**Domesday Book**

Great Domesday Book and Little Domesday Book are the final products of the survey of all the landed resources of England commissioned by William the Conqueror at Christmas in 1085. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle suggests that Domesday was intended to ascertain how and by whom the land was being worked, as well as how much it was worth. This straightforward explanation may not provide the whole story, and other motivations – either overt or underlying, practical or symbolic - for Domesday’s commissioning have been much discussed. Domesday itself provides details as to the

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230 *Gesetze*, i.92 (Ine §7.1).
231 *Gesetze*, i.364 (II Cnut §76.2-3). For greater discussion, see p. 97.
232 ASC E, s.a. 1085.
233 For recent contributions, see, for example, the substantial fiscal discussion in S. Harvey, *Domesday: Book of Judgement* (Oxford, 2014), especially pp. 133-271, or the symbolic reflection on authority discussed in D. Roffe, ‘Talking to others and talking to itself: Government and the changing role of the records of the Domesday inquest’, in D. Roffe and K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (eds.), *Domesday Now: New Approaches to the Inquest and the Book* (Woodbridge, 2016), 289-303. For a summary of the
estates, landlords, and labourers present in England under William’s rule in 1086 and, in the case of Little Domesday, livestock at the time of Edward the Confessor’s death in 1066. Servi and sometimes ancillae are documented on many estates, often listed with ploughs and plough-teams. Most frequently, Domesday servi have been used to estimate the servile population, evidence the decline of medieval slavery, and describe the tasks required of unfree people in the eleventh century. Their presence is not ubiquitous, however, and they are sparse or entirely absent in the counties of Circuit VI (Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Rutland, Lincolnshire, and Huntingdonshire). This is probably not indicative of a dearth of servi in these areas; given the regular presence of servi throughout the rest of England and particularly the appearance of slaves on the Huntingdonshire estates of Ely abbey in the Inquisitio Eliensis, it seems rather a result of the commissioners’ decision to omit them.234

This choice itself poses questions regarding the relationship between servi/ancillae and estate production, namely whether these individuals should be identified as chattel slaves or as another type of unfree worker. Early scholars of English manorialism differed in their views as to whether these servi were slaves or serfs, though F.W. Maitland and Paul Vinogradoff both agreed that they were an Anglo-Saxon holdover, and that their decline in numbers under Norman rule indicated an imminent end to such practices.235 Maitland believed the servi and ancillae to have been chattel slaves, the þeowes of the Anglo-Saxon law codes, and this idea has been regularly repeated, more recently by John Moore and David Pelteret in their studies of ‘Domesday slavery’.236 Not all historians agree with this interpretation, and Alice Rio has argued that these servi were unfree labourers or tenants placed by the lord in the households of his tenants to assist with their work. The ambiguity of status caused by such a situation could explain why some commissioners felt that servi could be omitted.237

236 Maitland, 27-8; Moore, 191-220; Pelteret, Slavery, 185-240. See also Stenton, 477; H.B. Clarke, ‘Domesday slavery (adjusted for slaves), Midland History 1:4 (1972), 40-2.
237 Rio, Slavery, 171.
Even if the Domesday servi/ancillae were chattel slaves, there are significant problems which prevent us from connecting these unfree agrarian workers with the need for regularly creating and selling slaves. One major issue is that we do not know whether the servi represent individuals or heads of households. Any population estimates, and thus determination of how many slaves were involved in estate production, are heavily contingent upon this question. Furthermore, servi could easily have been hereditary slaves, penal slaves, or self-sellers, none of whom would have needed to be the victim of a raid or a market transaction in order to be present on an estate (see Chapter 3). Another problem of identification is that Domesday servi are typically believed to have been adult men, as these were the people usually assigned to laborious agricultural tasks like ploughing. Ancillae are mentioned only rarely, and their presence is probably the result of their having occupations which contributed directly to the production of the estate, such as dairying. This means two things: firstly, that domestic servants remain invisible, and secondly, that any potential wives and children of these agricultural servi are likewise undetectable. Chattel slavery in a domestic setting is likely to have carried on beyond the demise of agricultural slavery, meaning that Domesday omits the servi and ancillae most likely to have been victims of raiding and slave trading. The same is true of women and children; as Chapter 3 will discuss, these were the people typically targeted by raiding. Domesday, therefore, probably fails to record the majority of chattel slaves in late eleventh-century England, and therefore cannot be used to paint an accurate picture of the demand for chattel slave labour which drove enslavement and slave trading.

These limitations provide the most likely explanation as to why Domesday’s geographical distribution of servi does not match anticipated zones of raiding and slave trading. Servi are not more numerous immediately along the Welsh border than further inland - in fact, they are less so. The majority of ancillae listed in Domesday do occur in counties along the Welsh border, but this may only be a particularity of the commissioner for Circuit V, given the extreme paucity or complete lack of ancillae in all other circuits but

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239 This would also suggest that such ancilla were unmarried, either young women or widows, Pelteret, *Slavery*, 202.
Circuit IV. While the lower numbers of *servi* in Middlesex can be attributed to a higher availability of wage labour so near to London and the cash to pay for it, this is precisely where we would anticipate larger numbers of domestic slaves, especially if landowners had more cash to hand for slave purchases and wished to staff their more urban estates. The high proportion of *servi* in Cornwall does, however, remain consistent with the large population of *servi* and *ancillae* in that region as suggested by the tenth- and eleventh-century Bodmin manumissions. These individuals could have been linked to slave raiding and trading across the Irish Sea (see Chapter 5), but only if we accept Domesday *servi* as chattel slaves. Domesday Book remains enormously important for our understanding of unfree labour in the second half of the eleventh century in England, regardless of whether its *servi* and *ancillae* represent chattel slaves. It does not, however, serve as a useful source for study of slave raiding and slave trading, given that it largely omits the most likely victims of these practices because of their age, sex, or especially their role on an estate.

**Letters**

Letters allow us to view the author as they wished themselves to be perceived through this semi-public genre. They witness contemporary opinions on enslavement and slave trading, and are thus critical to our understanding of these processes and how contemporaries viewed them. Though early medieval letters were generally the products of only the highest echelons of lay and especially ecclesiastical society, they illustrate when and where these events occurred, as well as the impact on communities. Our perspective is limited by which documents were preserved in letter collections, and many missives regarding slave trading may not have survived. While Classical and Late Antique models

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243 Moore, 205.

244 Pelteret, *Slavery*, 192; Padel, 10.


246 The number of extant letters is likely to be a mere fraction of those which were written, since survival can be attributed to a wide range of reasons from the popularity of a letter’s author to sheer luck, M. Garrison, “Send more socks”: On mentality and the preservation context of medieval letters’, in M. Mostert (ed.), *New Approaches to Medieval Communication* (Turnhout, 1999), 69-99.
for letter-writing such as Cicero, Augustine, Sidonius Apollinaris, and Jerome were well-known, early medieval letters were as diverse and unique as the authors themselves.\textsuperscript{247}

Surviving letters were communications between the most important members of society, often regarding matters of secular or ecclesiastical governance and procedure; slavery was generally not a matter of interest or relevance. Where mentions of raiding and trading practices do occur, they are often the only attestation of these particular occurrences. This is especially significant regarding Alcuin’s letter to Higbald in 793, which discussed the Viking raid on Lindisfarne. The letter demonstrates that slave raiding was a component of Viking attacks in Britain from very early on, and it is the only surviving contemporary record which mentions that monks were taken captive.\textsuperscript{248}

The style of letter can certainly impact how any slave raiding or trading is perceived, and these communications fall into two major categories: literary/didactic and administrative. Literary or didactic correspondence is typically much longer than its administrative counterpart, and is designed to instruct rather than to report fact. Administrative letters are more likely to describe issues as they arose, with greater focus on the content than the quality of presentation. Alcuin’s didactic letter to Higbald only addresses the captive taking at the very end of a long lecture disparaging sinful behaviour; he viewed the raid as a consequence of the excesses of the Northumbrian nobility and the Lindisfarne monks themselves, as well as their laxity in adhering to Christian standards.\textsuperscript{249} Administrative letters portray raiding and trading as accepted, everyday practices, so long as they did not put Christian souls in danger. A letter from Brihtwold, Archbishop of Canterbury, to Forthhere, Bishop of Sherborne, in the first half of the eighth century does not condemn the act of captive taking itself when the bishop seeks to act as an intermediary in negotiating the return of a girl to her family in exchange for a ransom payment.\textsuperscript{250} In his 595

\textsuperscript{247} New Testament epistles were not used as models, perhaps because the emulation of holy texts for everyday communication was deemed inappropriate, J.T. Rosenthal, ‘Letters and letter-collections’, in J.T. Rosenthal (ed.), \textit{Understanding Medieval Primary Sources} (London, 2012), 74. A simpler explanation is that the epistles were not practical models, W. Ysebaert, ‘Medieval letters and letter collections as historical sources: methodological questions, reflections, and research perspectives (sixth-fifteenth centuries)’, in C. Høgel and E. Bartoli (eds.), \textit{Medieval Letters: Between Fiction and Document} (Turnhout, 2015), 45-6.

\textsuperscript{248} Alcuin to Higbald, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, Epistolae 4 (Hannover, 1895), 58; Alcuin to Æthelred, Ibid., 49-56. Symeon of Durham includes this information in his twelfth-century tract on the Durham monastic community, so a lost set of Northumbrian annals may have also included this information, Symeon of Durham, \textit{Libellus de Exordio atque procursu Istius, Hoc Est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie}, ed. D. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), 88.

\textsuperscript{249} Alcuin to Higbald, 42-4.

\textsuperscript{250} Brihtwold to Forthhere, in \textit{Councils & Ecc.}, III.284.
letter to the priest Candidus, Pope Gregory I appears to have had no qualms regarding the purchase of slaves (pagans, specifically) or their ready availability at a market.\textsuperscript{251} Though few letters reference slave raiding or slave trading, they appear to illustrate a general acceptance of slavery by the clergy, within certain parameters.

**Arab Geographies and Travelogues**

Arab geographies and travelogues serve as valuable sources of information on slave trading in Central and Eastern Europe during the early Middle Ages, when local sources are especially scarce. The authors of these works were often civil servants, who aided in the function of highly-developed and, in some periods, vast states. Their work reflects such involvement, recording details of the long-distance exchange which linked the Arab and Slavic worlds, such as the origin and transport of the slaves who would become domestic and civil servants and soldiers in Al-Andalus and the Middle East. For example, Ibn Khurradādhbih, author of the earliest geography in the mid-ninth century, served as head of postal communications and intelligence in the Abbasid Caliphate, and his professional interest is reflected in his description of the Jewish long-distance trade routes which crossed the lengths of Europe and Asia.\textsuperscript{252} Ibrāhīm ibn Ya’qūb’s account was likewise shaped by his probable occupation as a merchant; his travelogue of northern Europe demonstrates a keen interest in exchange and foreign culture.\textsuperscript{253} His attention to military aspects of Slavic societies also suggests that he held some sort of diplomatic position.\textsuperscript{254} Describing his travels in the 960s, Ibn Ya’qūb’s account is the most valuable Arab source for this dissertation; after his visit to Prague, he recorded not only the sale of slaves in the market there, but also details about the currency used and the merchants who arrived from all over eastern Europe to purchase these slaves.

There are limitations to these texts, however. In addition to containing potentially fabricated information, we are unable to corroborate the details of the trade or the slavery they describe. This is true of accounts based on second-hand information, as well as

\textsuperscript{251} Gregory I to Candidus, ed. P. Ewald, MGH, Epistolae 1 (Berlin, 1891), 388-9.
\textsuperscript{253} His vocation as a merchant is generally accepted despite a lack of explicit evidence, e.g., ‘Ibrāhīm ibn Ya’qūb on northern Europe 965’, in *Arab Travellers*, 162; A.A. El-Hajji, *Andalusian Diplomatic Relations with Western Europe during the Umayyad Period* (Beirut, 1970), 233-4.
travelogues supposedly recording what the author saw. Ahmad Ibn Fadlân’s account of a Rus funeral and slave sacrifice may be a fabulous or embellished story, inserted to pique the interest of Ibn Fadlân’s audience, though some scholars have stressed his objectivity in relating the event. The authors of these texts were also writing within a developing Islamic genre, which emphasised alternatively Mecca or Baghdad as the centre of the world, and the otherness of the peoples beyond the borders of Islam. Ibn Ya‘qûb’s account also suffers from issues of transmission. It is preserved neither independently, nor in its entirety. Instead, it has been pieced together from quotations inserted by other authors in their own works. Nevertheless, even in its broken form, Ibrâhîm ibn Ya‘qûb’s travelogue remains accepted as an honest eyewitness account of Central Europe’s towns and trade networks, and it is a significant text for this thesis. Arab geographies and travelogues are invaluable for reconstructing the slave trading networks of the early Middle Ages.

CONCLUSIONS

Slave trading appears in a variety of texts, but their perspective is always shaped by the author’s priorities. No one genre provides a full or impartial picture of early medieval slave trading. Even so, the texts suggest that slavery was a fact of life, a legal status to be regulated, and a tool for expositing social and Christian mores. Some of these intentions have skewed perceptions more than others, especially when religious motives are in play, but even this outlook provides valuable insight into how medieval authors dealt with or reacted to slave trading. Similarities of genre indicate that slave trading was often portrayed similarly in the British Isles and the Czech lands, despite variation in style and source survival. Slave trading appears overwhelmingly within administrative and ecclesiastical contexts, but this is a common theme of early medieval history. Our understanding of early medieval slave trading will always be impacted by the intentions of our texts, which indicate that raiding and slave trading affected and influenced all members and all levels of society.

255 R.M. Karras, Slavery and Society in Medieval Scandinavia (New Haven, 1988), 71; Arab Travellers, xxiv-xxv.
257 El-Hajji, 236-7.
Archaeological Evidence

The early medieval slave trade has long been used as a tentative explanation for a variety of archaeological phenomena, though our understanding of the slave trade itself is only beginning to benefit from intensive research. It has received the most attention in Central and Eastern Europe, though still only from a handful of scholars. No attempt to synthesize more than two indicators together has yet been published, and a comprehensive look at these supposed material markers of slavery is much needed. This is especially the case in the Czech lands, given that the few publications which do exist are often used to make sweeping generalisations about not only the presence of slavery, but also the efficacy of archaeology in slavery studies. Similarly in Britain and Ireland, historians and archaeologists are prone to mentioning the slave trade as a probable catch-all explanation for a wide range of artefacts and historical phenomena, without providing any deeper or more comprehensive analysis.

Given that little archaeological assessment of the slave trade has been published to date, this chapter will address methodological problems, to better highlight the possibilities and difficulties that a full, detailed study could bring. In order to identify these issues and offer potential solutions, I will largely draw from those studies which have been published for the Slavic lands more broadly, supplemented by work on early modern slave trading sites in Africa and Scandinavian mortuary archaeology. Through examination of the processes and methodologies employed by archaeologists for these areas, four main criteria emerge as potential indicators of a slave trade: shackles, fortified settlements, monetary exchange, and deviant burials. In order to encompass both the coin and coin-less economies in the British Isles and the Czech lands, ‘monetary exchange’ will be treated under a more general study of currency.

Close study of either region will demonstrate not only the potential for future research, but also any regional historical and cultural limitations. We cannot assume that the same practices and attitudes towards slavery occurred everywhere in Europe. Interpreting these criteria within the context of the slave trade can pose new questions, but archaeological finds and features have their own biases and subtleties. By applying similar methods to both regions, it will become clear that the foremost concern should be the
interpretation of the artefacts and sites within their unique cultural and historical contexts, their kingdoms, and even their individual settlements rather than the assumption that certain finds are indicators of slave trading. Only then can we begin to tease out the implications of archaeology for the study of the medieval slave trade.

SHACKLES

Roman and Iron Age shackles are well-represented across Europe, with many textual and pictorial attestations of their use on slaves in the Roman world. The use of medieval shackles is not as thoroughly investigated. Joachim Henning’s typology of Central and Eastern European examples is the only catalogue of post-Roman finds, and is in much need of updating. Despite a great deal of interest in medieval British and Irish single finds, there are no published studies comparing them from multiple sites. Authors frequently reference these as slave shackles, but little effort is made to contextualise them. This investigation will attempt to place shackles within their historical and archaeological context. A comparison with shackles featured in textual sources will allow us to understand their various uses, and show that there is little evidence to link shackles exclusively to slavery.

Joachim Henning remains a proponent of shackles as an indicator of the slave trade. Having published several articles on shackle finds from Slavic regions, he has compiled a typology of these shackles through to the late medieval period. This typology begins where F.H. Thompson’s analysis of Roman and Iron Age finds left off. However, Henning has yet to put forward the reasons for his certainty that shackles represent the presence of slaves. Areas believed to be key Central and Eastern European slave markets such as Prague have yet to produce any such finds. A recent study of shackles from the Czech lands by Luděk Galuška builds upon Henning’s work and records several new Great Moravian finds, but he, too, fails to justify why shackles for humans must signify slavery, when so many alternative explanations for their presence exist. Thompson acknowledges this problem even for Roman shackles, though he believes the use of shackles in prisons to have been a predominantly urban phenomenon, thereby allowing him to connect rural finds to slavery. Even so, he concedes that these may only be animal hobbles, despite his personal disbelief.

260 For Prague as a slave market see Jankowiak, ‘Two’.
261 Galuška, ‘O otrocích’, 75-86.
that complex locking mechanisms and iron-working skill would be expended on animals.\textsuperscript{262} Shackles, then, present problems of interpretation even when their use on slaves is widely-attested, as it is in the Roman period. While it is certainly possible, and even plausible, that shackles from both the Roman and medieval periods can be linked to slavery, they were likely employed in different contexts with different intent.

One example of this is the often-referenced collar found at the Brno-Líšen hillfort of Staré Zamky, discovered in the context of a Great Moravian iron hoard. Iron hoarding is an early medieval practice unique to areas of Central and Eastern Europe by which tools, implements, and axe-shaped ingots were deposited in a variety of contexts.\textsuperscript{263} The phenomenon was first discussed in 1969 by Boris Novotný, who attributed a ritual significance; since then the debate has widened to include internal exchange and tribute payments.\textsuperscript{264} With this in mind, interpreting the Brno-Líšen collar in terms of its location or function becomes anything but straightforward. Buried in a pit with a variety of iron implements, quern-stones, and bone skates, the Brno-Líšen collar could have represented a symbolic offering to old gods, a tribute payment to the official residing in the hillfort, or a merchant’s wares, though the excavating archaeologist viewed them as evidence of slavery.\textsuperscript{265} Other Slavic shackle finds lack sufficient published information regarding their context \textit{in situ}, and it is possible that one or more of these were once associated with hoards.\textsuperscript{266} The likelihood that many shackles were melted down for reuse of the valuable iron also means that the distribution of surviving examples should not be taken as indicative of early medieval usage.

\textsuperscript{262} F.H. Thompson, ‘Iron Age and Roman Slave Shackles’, \textit{Archaeological Journal} 150 (1993), 58.
\textsuperscript{263} Such hoards have been discovered across East Central Europe, the Balkans, Bulgaria, and Romania, clearly demonstrating a wider cultural trend, F. Curta, ‘New remarks on early medieval hoards of iron implements and weapons’, in Machaček and Ungerman (eds.), \textit{Frühgeschichtliche}, 310. In Great Moravia alone, iron hoards have been discovered in sunken-feature buildings (Pohansko), below church floors (Mikulčice), and as at Staré Zamky, within fortifications. The range of contexts makes it difficult to interpret iron hoarding as a cultural phenomenon, Curta, ‘New remarks’, 329-330.
The circumstances emphasise the need to interpret medieval finds individually, and consider various explanations for shackle use and deposition. Regardless of whether iron hoards are evidence of ritual, exchange, or tribute, the Brno collar cannot be linked to slavery at the time of its deposition. Its meaning lay in its metallic composition rather than its functionality. Even if it were originally forged as a slave collar, it is vital that we consider changes in ascribed meaning over time, in any region of Europe. Shackles also fulfilled the highly symbolic, visible role of expressing domination, in addition to their practical function. This in and of itself should temper our eagerness to interpret shackles entirely in the light of economy and logistics.

For clues regarding function, we can turn to textual sources. References to chaining are relatively common in British and Irish sources and more limited in the Czech lands. This seems to be a consequence of the general paucity of early medieval sources rather than an aversion to chaining. Throughout the pre-Viking and Viking periods in Britain and Ireland, textual sources repeatedly describe chaining in contexts outside of slavery, demonstrating that iron shackles almost certainly had multiple functions. Anglo-Saxon laws issued by Æthelberht, Alfred, and Cnut also refer to ‘binding’ (gebindan) in circumstances which almost certainly denote prisoners in a criminal context, not slaves. Similarly, the Crescende fide and the Legenda Christiani describe the chaining of criminals in tenth-century Prague. The Wooing of Emer, an Irish mythological tract compiled c. 1050 and probably based on sixth-century oral tradition, includes a brief anecdote of how Emer ‘binds’ a group of would-be rapists, chains them together, and brings them to Ulster to be her slaves. The story is not clear as to whether they are chained for their crime or because they are slaves, but in either case the chains are employed to prevent escape and to express Emer’s dominance and status. A similar context occurs in the early eleventh-century Encomium Emmae Reginae, when Godwine’s men, who are protecting the ætheling Ælfred in Guildford, are captured and shackled following an attack by Harold Harefoot. Though some of these men are eventually enslaved, the chaining is described as an unrelated means of subjugation. These

267 Gesetze, i.8 (Æthelberht §88), 68 (Alfred §35), 340-1 (II Cnut §42). Æthelberht §88 refers to the binding of an ense, who was probably a free servant. Alfred §35 also refers to the binding of an ‘unsinning ceorl’ as a criminal offense. See Appendix, Table 2 for legal examples.


sources make it clear that the presence of shackles does not constitute evidence of slavery at any one point throughout the seventh through the eleventh centuries.

Later texts do describe the chaining of slaves, though often they are vague regarding how the slaves were bound. In the Viking period, these references usually describe slaves in transit or at holding points. In the Vita Findani, Findan is chained up while being transported on his Northman owner’s ship, and is only unchained as a reward for helping to defend this ship from attack.\textsuperscript{271} Similarly, the early eleventh-century poem Moriult by Warner of Rouen describes the enslaved titular character as being shackled for transportation on a Norse ship.\textsuperscript{272} The ninth-century Miracula Sancti Benedicti by Adrevald of Fleury references chained prisoners held by the Vikings on an island in Francia, though the status of these prisoners is unclear, and probably was so at the time (see Chapter 3).\textsuperscript{273} Possibly related to this is a 938 entry in the Annals of the Four Masters which indicates that prisoners were held on Dalkey Island, but the location has yet to yield any shackle finds.\textsuperscript{274} This trend may have continued as the result of Hiberno-Scandinavian influence, as the Vita Wulfstani describes lines of people chained together, awaiting sale to Ireland at the market in Bristol in the second half of the eleventh century. It would seem that binding was a common part of the Viking slave trade, but we cannot be certain that these bindings were solely iron shackles. Though the Latin use of vinculum and concatenatus evokes iron restraints for chaining slaves together, it is important to note that no gang shackles equivalent to the Iron Age Llyn Carrig Bach find exist for the early medieval period in Britain and Ireland.\textsuperscript{275}

Chains in textual sources are commonly related to miracle stories, in which their presence serves as symbolism rather than everyday detail. The trope derives from Acts 16, in which Paul and his companions have been imprisoned and chained for preaching, but are miraculously freed.\textsuperscript{276} In English sources, this relates to slaves particularly in Lantfred’s Translatio et Miracula Sancti Swithuni, which credits St. Swithun with the freeing of three individuals on separate occasions at his shrine in Winchester cathedral, and Bede’s story of

\textsuperscript{271} Vita Findani, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, SS 55 (Hannover, 1887), 503.
\textsuperscript{272} Warner of Rouen, Moriult, ed. C.J. McDonough (Toronto, 1995), 18.
\textsuperscript{273} Adrevaldus, Miracula Sancti Benedicti, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, SS 15.1 (Hannover, 1887), 494.
\textsuperscript{274} AFM, s.a. 938, p. 639. For a discussion of these related accounts, see Holm, 328.
\textsuperscript{276} Pelteret, Slavery, 58.
Imma, whose chains repeatedly fall off through the intercession of his brother’s prayers. Stories featuring the symbolic act of freeing through miraculous intervention typically involve a person chained in exceptional circumstances, usually by a cruel or unjust individual, and are common throughout the medieval world. We see this as a regular trope in the Crescente fide and the subsequent Latin and Old Church Slavonic Lives based on it, in which prisoners and debtors are regularly freed from their chains through Wenceslas’s intercession.

David Pelteret also links literal unchaining with the common religious theme of releasing slaves as a charitable act. However, examples in the Miracula Swithuni attribute literal freeing to Swithun’s relics, and the unchained slaves, though usually removed from an abusive situation, remain slaves. Ecclesiastical authors may have wished to emphasise that God aided even the lowest members of society. Michael Lapidge believes that the slaves appealed to Swithun because they had no recourse under Anglo-Saxon law, and these episodes might therefore reflect an everyday rather than exceptional event. Perhaps slaves often appealed to saints, or perhaps Swithun gained a reputation with these stories. Either way, this link between shackles and the saint’s cult, rather than practical use, could explain at least the preservation of three tenth- or eleventh-century padlocked shackles at the site of the Old Minster as votive deposits, and even the proliferation of similar padlocks in medieval Winchester (see Appendix, Table 1). In eighteenth-century Spain, Christian captives redeemed from North Africa were often required to prove their continued Christian faith by displaying their shackles in churches. This case raises numerous questions regarding the Winchester shackles, especially when we consider the contemporary, pagan, Viking slave trade in Britain. If these shackles were the remnants of West Saxon captives redeemed from the Vikings, their deposition could again be symbolic, as evidence of freed people in Winchester rather than a local slave trade.

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278 Crescente fide, 62.  
279 Specifically, Wilfrid and several accounts in Ælfric’s Lives of Saints, Slavery, 59-60.  
280 Cult of St. Swithun, 289.  
281 I. Goodall, ‘Locks and Keys’, in M. Biddle (ed.), Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester, (Oxford, 1990), 1011. Fragments of Type D padlocks, which Goodall describes in his report as a type used for securing people and animals, have been found in relatively great quantities in Winchester through the late medieval period.  
In all of these textual examples, the chaining of prisoners and slaves appears in exceptional circumstances. The chaining of slaves may only have been considered worth noting when it became extreme, such as for severe crimes or when used arbitrarily by cruel individuals. This is in line with the wide range of early sources which describe the chaining of people of free status, clearly a matter that prompted outrage and even legislation against some instances of binding. Chaining as an extreme measure is also found in Viking-era sources such as the *Vita Wulfstani* and the *Vita Findani*, the description usually given by a religious commentator lamenting the barbaric treatment of his countrymen. Because of this, it is difficult to determine whether the chaining actually happened, or if it was a trope designed to elicit the sympathy of the audience. In any case, authors considered chaining to be a harsh punishment and a matter of outrage. These sources make it clear that such punishment or arbitrary cruelty was not always reserved for unfree people. Though Viking-era sources implicate the use of chains in the slave trade, there is little to suggest that this was universal or frequent, especially when we account for authorial motives. The binding of captives may have been a familiar part of the Viking ransoming and slave-trade systems, but this is speculation, as will become evident with the examination of the finds themselves.

One pictorial example survives as part of the bronze doors of Gniezno Cathedral in Poland, believed to have been produced in the late twelfth century. These doors illustrate scenes from the Life of Adalbert in a series of panels, one of which depicts two slave merchants leading two captives bound at the neck and wrists, while Adalbert admonishes Boleslav II.\(^{283}\) The image is in reference to a story in which Christ appears to Adalbert, and claims that for every Christian sold into slavery, Christ himself is sold.\(^{284}\) The text does not describe chained or bound captives; it merely acknowledges that Christians are being sold to Jewish merchants. Whether the doors were produced by western artisans working near Gniezno, or whether they were imported from the Frankish world remains uncertain.\(^{285}\) The panel may represent an eyewitness account of the slave trade or a more distant perceived account, or perhaps fetters were simply the easiest and most effective way to visually represent slavery. With the latter, we again see shackles as symbol of domination, rather than as a practical feature of the slave trade. To complicate matters, the craftsmanship,

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\(^{283}\) T. Dobrzensiecki, *Drzwi Gnieźnieńskie* (Cracow, 1953), 5.


which so carefully provides etched details for the beards and fur collars of the merchants, offers few clues as to the material binding the slaves. Both neck and wrist bindings are vague shapes, and could just as easily be rope as chains.

Typologies present interesting clues regarding the use of the same types of shackles across different regions, which suggests trade contact, though it is impossible to prove that such types were spread exclusively though the slave trade. The majority of finds in Britain and Ireland dated to the ninth through eleventh centuries closely resemble Henning’s types D, F, and G from Central and Eastern Europe. Two finds from Leicestershire and five from Winchester correspond in type to a find at Haithabu. All of these may be medieval, though closer dating is likely impossible for the Leicestershire finds. In the case of one late fourteenth or early fifteenth century Winchester example, the date does not correspond to the period of extensive slave trading. These types can be traced from Roman examples all the way through the seventeenth century. This makes it difficult to presume that the slave trade was the sole reason for the spread of these types.

Many surviving shackles post-date medieval slavery, as in the case of a thirteenth-century find at Old Sarum and a set of shackles from the crannog at Knowth, Co. Meath, discovered in a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century context. Many of those shackles featured in Henning’s typology were made as late as the sixteenth century. If chaining denoted the slave trade as some sources suggest, the majority of medieval shackle finds ought to correspond in date and location to market sites; it is significant that they do not. Henning has argued that the increase in continental shackles in the Carolingian periphery corresponds to the period of increased slave raids and the slave trade. Nonetheless, this period – in both the British Isles and the Czech lands – was also one in which power structures became more centralised. This applies to Anglo-Saxon, Great Moravian, and Bohemian polities, as well as the consolidation of power by the Uí Neill and later alliances between the Irish and their Scandinavian neighbours. This point is underscored by the number of shackles discovered at high-status sites, as it is likely that these sites were also the locations from which justice was dispensed, and thus where criminals were prosecuted.

287 Thompson, 124-6. See descriptions in the Appendix, Table 1.
288 Thompson, 124-6.
This explanation could certainly apply to those shackles which post-date the medieval slave trade.

The number of finds also presents a problem when we confront the issue of the scale of the slave trade. Iron shackle production required a considerable amount of resources, which may also help to explain their prevalence at high-status sites. There is no doubt that professional iron workers in Ireland had the skill and resources to make shackles, since various sources of iron were available, and professional smiths enjoyed high social status. However, the numbers given for the slave trade in the Irish annals suggest that shackles as a primary form of restraint would have been unfeasibly expensive, even when we account for the unreliability of the figures. The Annals of Ulster describe a raid by Vikings on Kells in 951, which resulted in three thousand men being taken captive. Here we can assume that the author was shocked by the size of the raid and wished to emphasise that an unbelievably large number of people were carried off. Other entries provide similar information (see Chapter 5), but as few as five known shackles from all of Ireland date to the tenth century (see Appendix, Table 1). Even accounting for the substantial reuse of iron and undiscovered shackles, we can hardly consider the number of finds to be representative of captive taking. Similarly, despite Prague’s well-attested tenth-century slave market and the importance of ironworking for the growing urban centre, no shackles have been discovered there. Shackles produced in Prague could have been taken west with the slaves purchased, but the lack of shackles from Francia certainly calls this into question. This problem of reconciling scale with shackle finds suggests that iron shackles were not manufactured systematically to suit the needs of the slave trade in either of these major slaving zones, nor does their rate of survival reflect the scale of slave trading. Other reasons for their presence (or absence) must be seriously considered.

The binding of criminals and prisoners serves as one alternative explanation. This would help to explain the stronger correlation of shackle finds to high-status sites than to identifiable slave markets. Again, that the period of the ninth through the eleventh centuries was one of political reorganisation and consolidation in both the British Isles and the Czech

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292 AU, s.a. 951, p. 397.
lands could play a significant role. Shackles may also have been used to chain or hobble animals. B.G. Scott has suggested that a decorated collar found at Lagore may have been used for domesticated dogs. He cites the example of the hound in the Táin Bó Cuálnge, which Cú Chulainn kills, and which is restrained with iron chains. Though this particular dog is monstrous and bloodthirsty, it does not seem so far-fetched that a nobleman or woman might leash a domesticated animal.

This same Lagore collar, because of its craftsmanship and evidence of a later repair, has also been accepted by Francis John Byrne and Harold Mytum as a hostage restraint. Hostages had a much higher social status than slaves, and held special responsibilities in the peacekeeping process. Furthermore, only kings were allowed to hold and bind hostages, which may explain the shackle finds at Lagore and Knowth, both known royal sites. There is even some textual support for the chaining of hostages in the eighth-century legal text, Críth Gablach. It dictates that forfeited hostages, whose people had broken the agreement the hostage stood surety for, were to be chained and located in the northeast corner of the king’s hall. Unforfeited hostages, who stood surety for intact agreements, sat unchained in a place of honour. The binding of hostages for display and as an expression of power and dominance may contribute to the presence of iron shackles at royal sites beyond the demise of medieval slavery in Ireland.

A similar case could be made for the Czech lands, though the written sources are not as clear regarding hostage exchange, and few Czech records survive which discuss it. While Frankish records repeatedly note the taking of hostages from both the Bohemians and the Moravians, they give only one example of Slavs taking Frankish hostages. From this, we can assume that at least the Bohemians and Moravians were familiar with hostage exchange, and it certainly factored into their diplomatic relations with the Franks. This process could explain the shackle finds clustered in Great Moravia.

297 Kelly, Guide, 175.
300 AF, s.a. 849, p. 38.
The concentrated finds in the Great Moravian areas of the southeast Czech Republic and western Slovakia were mostly discovered in or around fortifications, and their dating (ninth and tenth centuries) corresponds to Great Moravian skirmishes with the Hungarians and Franks (see Appendix, Table 1). Joachim Henning and Matej Ruttkay have argued that the shackles at these fortifications are representative of slaves captured in those conflicts. While it is almost certain that these skirmishes and raids created slaves on both sides, it seems just as likely that the chains served to bind high-status hostages or captives for ransom, or even functioned as part of judicial punishment in these border regions.

The presence of iron shackles in a medieval context cannot, then, be exclusively explained by slavery, let alone the slave trade. The archaeological sites themselves and the textual references provide few direct and explicit links between iron shackles and the slave trade. Textual evidence points to a variety of uses for shackles, and it is probable that in some locations, particularly royal sites, one set of shackles fulfilled a variety of purposes. Power consolidation and political restructuring may have been major factors in the increased number of shackles from the ninth century onwards in both the British Isles and the Czech lands.

That many shackles do not date to the early medieval period, or only barely fall within it, is certainly notable; it suggests that if shackles were used for slaves, this was only one of a variety of functions which they could fulfil. There is ample evidence for the chaining of criminals throughout the medieval period. Shackles have been taken for granted as indicators of slaves in the Czech lands, but there is almost no textual evidence to confirm or deny this conviction. In Britain and Ireland, for which there are many references to shackles in the source material, just as many indicate prisoners and religious symbolism as they do slaves. In either case, we can see that shackles must have operated beyond the scope of slave restraints. Their functionality was primarily perceived within the sphere of symbolic subjugation – by barbarians, by heathens, or by more powerful political entities. These two regions may have operated under distinct cultures and differing historical traditions, but they are inherently similar in their multifunctional application of shackles.

302 J. Dunbabin and R. Stacey, Captivity and Imprisonment in Medieval Europe, 1000–1300 (New York, 2002).
and the symbolic charge of these devices. This widespread symbolism of domination should be the primary concern. Their presence at a site should by no means be assumed as an indicator of slavery, and their relationship with other potential indicators of slavery will be discussed below.

FORTIFIED SITES

Fortified sites and settlements have been proposed by several archaeologists and historians as important locations for the slave trade in the Slavic world. In his *Origins of the European Economy*, Michael McCormick put forward the idea that future archaeological investigations might take inspiration from studies of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and search for holding pens near major trade routes. He tentatively suggested that evidence for these pens may already exist in the form of Slavic ring forts, many of which date to the early medieval period. In a similar vein, Joachim Henning believes that because a large proportion of Central and Eastern European shackles were found in the context of fortifications and urban centres, this likely provides evidence of a slave trade. Marek Jankowiak has expanded upon these ideas in unpublished research, and proposed that large, minimally occupied ring forts in southern Poland, Bohemia, and western Ukraine represent the holding points at which slaves were collected before being sold downriver to Prague. His investigation only addresses liminal forts, and does not include fortified sites which have yielded direct evidence of trade. In Britain and Ireland, efforts to directly link fortified sites with the medieval slave trade have not yet been attempted, despite longstanding interest in high-status and Viking sites. This could be the result of historiographical trends, which have tended to overlook slaves in studies of enclosures.

The limitations of site interpretation clearly emerge in archaeological studies of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in Africa which have investigated sites such as ‘trading lodges’ in

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Benin and Guinea\textsuperscript{308} and market centres such as Gorée Island, Senegal.\textsuperscript{309} Excavations have all uncovered clear evidence of a European presence during the height of this slave trade, as well as potential ‘barracoons’, settlements for housing captives prior to their export.\textsuperscript{310} Even so, finding explicit archaeological evidence of a slave trade in these locations has proven extremely difficult. The barracoons are assumed, as the actual dwellings discovered are indistinguishable from housing for free natives.\textsuperscript{311} The same problem arose on Gorée Island, as archaeologists could not distinguish between free and unfree dwellings, or even African and Afro-European.\textsuperscript{312} The difficulties with identification caused Kenneth Kelly to admit that ‘direct archaeological evidence of the trade in slaves… is exceedingly rare’.\textsuperscript{313} When this occurs for a time period with a relative wealth of textual sources and the benefit of local oral histories, it becomes clear that an early medieval investigation is not without its own problems. This is especially true when we consider that the material cultures of the medieval European groups involved in slaving were not nearly as distinct as eighteenth-century Europeans were from native African populations. Due to limited excavations and the melding of cultures in liminal areas, attributing construction and occupation to particular groups can prove extremely difficult.

By examining such criteria as who built the fortified sites, where and - to the extent that this is discernible - why they built them, and whether these sites produce evidence of trade, we can determine if fortified sites in the British Isles of the Czech lands can be linked with the slave trade, though the connection is tenuous at best. A reconsideration of the Czech evidence alongside a new investigation of Britain and Ireland will highlight commonalities of potential slave-trading centres and the limitations in identifying such sites. It will also question whether the focus on fortified sites should be as holding points along trade routes rather than actual points of exchange. Particular interest will be paid to urban and non-urban sites from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, during the height of Scandinavian and Slavic slave trades. Unlike earlier native slave trades, the high-profile trade of the Viking Age was of such a scale that it stands a chance of being more visible in

\textsuperscript{310} Kelly, ‘Contrasts’, 140-1.
\textsuperscript{311} Kelly, ‘Contrasts’, 140.
\textsuperscript{312} Thiaw, 152.
\textsuperscript{313} Kelly, ‘Contrasts’, 141.
the archaeological record, in the form of distinctive slave settlement patterns or trade paraphernalia.

One potential method for identifying slave trading in the early medieval period is to focus on the presence of those believed to be the dominant slave traders. For Britain and Ireland, this refers to Scandinavian merchants and Vikings; for Prague’s sphere of influence, the Jews. The role of Jewish merchants as slave traders has come under scrutiny in recent years and will be addressed in Chapters 4 and 5. Nonetheless, they remain the most textually visible traders. Such an approach can be met with varying degrees of success. Ireland is the most straightforward case, where Scandinavian trade, or Hiberno-Norse trade at the very least, can be generally interpreted from coins or hacksilver. The archaeological identification of Jewish merchants in the Czech lands, presents a more complex scenario; trade items carried by Jewish merchants are not so easily separated from those sold by foreign Christian merchants. References to Viking and Jewish slave traders in texts certainly do not mean that all Viking and Jewish merchants were involved in slave trading everywhere they went, or that they were the only participants. However, given the relative invisibility of Christian slave merchants, these non-Christian ‘outsiders’ must serve as our starting point, since we can be sure that at least some of them were trading slaves on occasion.

Because slave raiding is perceived as a cross-border phenomenon, it is very likely that liminal forts were a part of slave raiding. Attempts have been made to associate these locations with slavery, as in the attribution of shackles at Bojná in Slovakia to slave raiding. Marek Jankowiak’s theory for the role of Greater Polish forts in the Prague slave trade is by far the most extensive investigation of slavery’s relation to these liminal forts. Though it seems dubious that massive forts with little evidence of trade or human occupation could have been built specifically to house human trade goods, networks of exchange must have funnelled slaves through liminal forts to larger, urban trade centres. In England, earthworks along the Welsh, Scottish, and Danelaw borders may have fulfilled this role by temporarily housing captives after raids. These captives would have been taken farther from the border for sale, probably to urban locations like Chester and Bristol.

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315 Henning and Ruttkay, 284.
Viking era raids also took place along northern borders, and it seems probable that the situation there was much the same as on the borders to the west. The prevalence of pre-Viking urban settlements in Anglo-Saxon England sets this region apart from Ireland, and these areas such as York and London quickly became incorporated into Viking trade networks. It may be that captives taken on raids were channelled into these urban areas, as in Bede’s story of Imma, who was sold to a merchant in London (see Chapter 4, p. 125). As such, slave trading in both the British Isles and the Czech lands may only have occurred at forts and camps on a very limited scale.

This is not to say that urban centres are any more likely to yield explicit evidence of slave trading or slave markets. Dublin and Prague are both accepted as slave trading centres, or at the very least, centres in which slave traders operated. Dublin has yielded a vast array of Viking-era trade paraphernalia such as weights, scales, and hacksilver. Prague has the benefit of several textual accounts of slave trading in the market below the castle, in the present-day Lesser Town (Malá Strana). Despite our knowledge of slave trading in both cities, no evidence has yet emerged which could give a more precise location. Even after decades of excavations, these famous markets’ locations have not been pinpointed. Presumably, such a market would be characterised by a high degree of single coin finds, weights, scales, and exotic goods within a concentrated area.

While Dublin and Prague are roughly contemporary in their emergence and rise to prominence, the same case applies to the earlier fortified urban centres of Great Moravia. The Raffelstetten customs tariff alludes to the exchange of salt for slaves at the ‘market of the Moravians’.

There is no real consensus regarding the location of such a market, though Mikulčice, a settlement agglomeration on the Morava River, is often suggested. Such an argument is supported by the size and complexity of the fortified settlement compared to other Great Moravian sites. Despite this, a re-evaluation of trade evidence at Mikulčice by Lumír Poláček in 2007 was unable to find sufficient evidence to confirm or deny the presence of a market there. Only one weight has been discovered, and there have been no

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316 Inquisitio de thelonis Raffelstettensis, ed. A. Boretius and V. Kraus, MGH, Capit. 2 (Hannover, 1897), 249-252.
finds of scales or their components. This is even more remarkable given the archaeological clues to long-distance trade which have emerged over time. Donkey bones have been interpreted as indicators of trade across the Alps. The appearance of silk and glass also suggests more than mere gift exchange, as do more practical goods such as lead and quernstones at other Great Moravian sites. That said, despite extensive research the regularity of trade and the mechanisms by which it operated are still unknown. Coin finds are exceedingly rare in Moravia for this period, and we must assume that transactions were in kind. It has been argued that slaves were the goods exchanged for these imports, but this is largely an argument from absence. Honey, horses, and wax are equally likely explanations. Thus, it would seem that Mikulčice proves an even greater complication than Dublin and Prague; like these medieval towns, the textually-attested slave trade is archaeologically invisible, but there is no modern urban overlay to hinder excavation, and it has been the subject of intensive field work for decades.

Given that such difficulty arises in merely identifying general markets in these medieval urban centres, finding barely-traceable human goods will probably continue to prove exceedingly frustrating. Even when we are confident in the location of a slave market, we have yet to find hard evidence of it; this says nothing for locating the slave trade in urban centres with less direct, textual evidence, such as York or Olomouc. The situation also highlights the problems of discovering and excavating sites in modern urban areas. The frequent impossibility of accessing early medieval levels and the rarity of large-scale excavations clearly limits our ability to identify any distinctive slave housing associated with these markets, assuming the slaves were kept nearby prior to sale. We might also consider of Prague the nearby administrative and urban centre at Vyšehrad as a holding point for slaves. Perhaps when looking for slave settlement patterns, the periphery of these urban centres are reasonable starting points for investigation.

319 Poláček, 504. This may, however, be due to a lack of sieving, and many of these excavations took place before metal detectors were in widespread use.
320 J. Macháček, The Rise of Medieval Towns and States in Central Europe (Leiden, 2010), 459.
This brings us to a discussion of what may prove to be our most fruitful line of inquiry: trading settlements. For Britain and Ireland, this encompasses Irish crannogs, as well as Viking military camps. In the Czech lands, discussion will focus on a new type of site thought to be a Přemyslid toll house or ‘market village’. While all of these sites fall under the same broad terminological umbrella, they are vastly different in nature. They represent unique cultural interactions and developments, and so each type of site must be examined individually. That said, their diverse nature yields a broader picture of the early medieval economy; it highlights regional variations in slave trading, and the need to consider a wide range of potential slave markets when so little textual evidence is available.

As largely high-status sites, Irish crannogs functioned in part as trade centres, and as previously noted, some have yielded shackles. Excavations have produced particularly rich artefacts and trade paraphernalia such as weights and, from the Viking period, hacksilver and coins. Settlement patterns, and thus the location of potential slave quarters, on these artificial islands are still unclear. In the pre-Viking era, they may have functioned as part of a localised, opportunistic trade in slaves (see Chapter 4), or at the very least, the consumption of slave labour. With the introduction of the Scandinavian trade system, the wealth of these crannogs increased dramatically, and it is possible that the slave trade played a role in this. The crannog at Coolure Demesne in Co. Westmeath has produced a hoard of Viking arm rings, decorated Scandinavian weights and scales, and a set of leg fetters. The silver and weights speak to a profitable trade with Scandinavian merchants, and valuable goods on offer by the Irish, which probably included slaves.

Coolure Demesne crannog is an apposite example, as it may have been located on the border between two túatha, and it falls neatly into Dublin’s sphere of influence. Studies by Aidan O’Sullivan suggest that this crannog, along with similar examples such as one at Lough Ennell, Co. Westmeath, was part of a complex settlement system which included an adjacent ringfort. O’Sullivan also notes that a great many crannogs have associated ringforts, and he implies that these are features of wider, high-status settlement

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326 For border location see O’Sullivan, Coolure, 66; For Dublin sphere of influence, M. Valante, ‘Dublin’s economic relations with the hinterland and periphery in the Viking age’, in S. Duffy (ed.), Medieval Dublin I (Dubin, 1999), 69-83.
complexes.\textsuperscript{328} If we believe that captives awaiting sale required holding pens and mass housing, perhaps we may find evidence of it at this ring fort or elsewhere in the crannog’s immediate vicinity. However, these unique settlement features would be difficult to link exclusively to slaves, unless the remains of a large building also produced shackles or restraints, evidence of human occupation (such as a combination of bedding, vessels, and high phosphate levels), and a lack of craftworking (to suggest transient occupants rather than settled workers).

Regarding the Viking side of slave trading in Ireland, \textit{longphuirt} (sing. \textit{longphort}) hold the most promise. These fortified settlements were introduced by Viking raiders initially as temporary base camps, but some became permanent trade sites, such as Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford. Presumably, the plunder taken to these sites included captives. John Sheehan has argued that the role of early \textit{longphuirt} in trade should be seriously considered, given that a large quantity of Viking silver began to amass in Dublin by the end of the ninth century, before it could be considered to resemble a town.\textsuperscript{329} The raiding bases were located on or near navigable waterways, and the creation of a new word to describe them indicates that their construction and function differed from native Irish fortifications.\textsuperscript{330} \textit{Longphort} sites may, like crannogs, yield evidence of the slave trade through settlement patterns or trade paraphernalia such as weights and scales, though with similar constraints to link occupation specifically with slavery. Unfortunately, while several possibilities have been suggested, only Woodstown has been conclusively identified and universally accepted as a \textit{longphort}.

Textual sources indicate that the term itself changed in meaning over time, which causes further difficulty in identifying Viking \textit{longphuirt} locations. While in the ninth century it referred exclusively to the Viking raiding bases, by the tenth century it could denote any Irish or Scandinavian military camp, and need not be associated with ships.\textsuperscript{331} These early Viking fortifications are confirmed as holding points for captives by the Annals of the Four Masters, which states that in 839 an ecclesiastical site was raided, and high-

\textsuperscript{331} Sheehan, ‘\textit{Longphort}’, 283.
ranking men such as bishops were carried back to a *longphort* on Lough Neagh. The early date of the raid and the high status of some of the prisoners suggest the raiders had ransom in mind, but the episode certainly verifies that some captives were held at *longphuirt* specifically. These bases would have been the ideal locations for organising the sale of less-valuable captives farther afield as slaves, given their maritime links and defensible positions.

Focus has thus remained on the identification of the early Viking *longphuirt* associated with raiding in the ninth century. Proposed sites such as Dunrally Fort, Co. Laois; Athlunkard, Co. Clare; Rathmore, Co. Kerry; and Ballykeeran, Co. Westmeath have all have been singled out for their locations and construction, being roughly D-shaped, earthwork enclosures constructed next to navigable waterways, whose surroundings have produced Viking-era artefacts. Little to no excavation has been done at these sites, however, so whether they were Norse or Hiberno-Norse, at what date they were constructed, to what extent trading took place there, or even what type of trading was involved all remain mysteries. Even the known *longphuirt* at Dublin and Wexford have yet to be conclusively identified due to the superimposed urban environments and limited opportunities for excavation.

The only site to be conclusively identified as a *longphort* and undergo more than trial excavation is Woodstown. The site is rich in Hiberno-Scandinavian artefacts, including many indicators of trade such as weights, coins (including a dirham fragment), and hacksilver. The burial of a Viking warrior has also been discovered there. Though the original excavation report concludes Woodstown was an early ecclesiastical foundation later occupied by Vikings, the designation of *longphort* was eventually reached based on a lack of early ecclesiastical finds and the re-interpretation of radiocarbon samples. John Maas has

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332 AFM, s.a. 839, p. 461. J. Maas believes this entry is not a later addition, given a comparison with similar entries in the *Chronicon Scotorum* and the Annals of Ulster, ‘*Longphort, Dún, and Dúnaid* in the Irish Annals of the Viking Period’, *Peritia* 20 (2008), 267.

333 The identification of D-shaped sites as being of Scandinavian origin is based on a 1972 study of English sites by Charles Dyer, and the excavations of the Viking winter camp at Repton in the 1970s and 1980s. These are discussed below. For discussion and a list of Viking camps identified in texts, C. Downham, ‘Viking camps in ninth-century Ireland: sources, locations and interactions’, in S. Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin X* (Dublin, 2010), 93-125.

334 Ballykeeran Little underwent trial excavation, Annagassan, Co. Louth was found to hold undatable buildings, and the other proposed sites have only been surveying by field walking.

335 Sheehan, ‘*Longphort*’, 287.

336 Sheehan, ‘*Longphort*’, 287-8. For radiocarbon samples see R. Ó’Brian, et al., ‘Preliminary report on the archaeological excavation and finds retrieval strategy of the Hiberno-Scandinavian site of Woodstown 6, County Waterford’, *Decies* 61 (2005), 97-106; J. Sheehan notes that Woodstown has yet to produce the Mediterranean pottery common at early Irish ecclesiastical sites and that all the
even asserted that Woodstown may be the original foundation of Waterford, given the close proximity of the Viking settlements. As such, Woodstown could potentially prove valuable to studies of the slave trade. The same can be said of sites like Dunrally Fort and Ballykeeran Little. However, for the time being, we can only speculate as to the role they may yet play in the archaeology of Irish slavery.

Viking sites in England are characterised by the discovery of two winter camps, similar to the Irish longphuirt. The nature of Danelaw fortified sites was first discussed by James Dyer in 1972, before any had been confirmed or excavated. He attributed D-shaped earthworks to Scandinavian activity, basing this assessment on the construction of Hedeby and Birka. The idea was substantiated only a few years later by the excavation of the 873-4 Viking winter camp at Repton, though the finds were not so indicative of trade as those from Irish sites. From this we can infer that similar site construction did not mean a similarity of function as a settlement.

Recent survey work at Torksey has revealed another camp of the Great Army from 872-3, though this camp appears to have relied upon natural defences such as wetlands, given that no earthworks were constructed. This is especially notable given the wealth evidenced by finds of hackgold, hacksilver, dirham fragments, and over 350 weights. Clearly the Viking army was prepared to trade, and it is not difficult to imagine captives brought here for sale abroad, and at the very least for local ransoming. It is certainly notable that most of the Viking camps recorded in English written sources were near urban settlements or ecclesiastical sites, which would have provided pre-existing trade outlets and infrastructure. That Torksey lacks man-made defences may also be relevant to sites in radiocarbon samples were taken from ditch fill and associated with Viking-Age artefacts, ‘Longphort’, 287.

337 Maas, 267.
341 Hadley and Richards, ‘Winter camp’, 36-42.
342 Repton was itself a Mercian royal and ecclesiastic site, and the church which was incorporated into the Viking earthworks was home to the royal mausoleum. Other comparable sites include Reading, Thanet, and Sheppey. For Scandinavian settlers integrating into and adapting a pre-existing
Ireland, and perhaps archaeologists should expand beyond a preoccupation with D-shaped sites. After all, Dyer noted that the same construction may have been used by the Anglo-Saxons. Native adoption of Scandinavian earthwork construction may also be applicable in Ireland, given that none of the supposed longphuirt sites have proven to be exclusively Scandinavian. At sites such as Woodstown and Torksey, it is becoming increasingly apparent that Viking raiding and trade occurred within the same space. We must consider that slave raiders and slave merchants were probably the same people.

There are also complications caused by native sites taken over by Viking raiders and settlers, as with Llanbedrgoch in Wales, which ultimately became a Norse-dominated location with a mixed cultural assemblage. Because of this, its trade function cannot be easily marked out by the shape of its fortifications or by the high status of its inhabitants. Llanbedrgoch, being a Cambro-Norse site, does not adhere to the D-shaped formula, and exhibits a cultural blending which suggests that trading practices were not divided along Scandinavian and native lines. This fortified settlement on Red Wharf Bay in Anglesey existed from prehistoric times, but during the Viking Age it became a wealthy trade centre; the artefact assemblage, which includes hacksilver, coins, and a variety of weights, indicates trading of a scale comparable to Woodstown and Torksey. Its location on the Irish Sea suggests easy connections with slave trading networks throughout the British Isles, and like Woodstown and Coolure Demesne, remains suggestive of slave trading without providing what could be deemed direct evidence of it.

In East Central Europe, studies of the slave trade from the tenth century onwards tend to be dominated by discussion of Prague, even though it was probably not the only site of slave trading in the Přemyslid domain. While it may have attracted the longest distance trading and more visible, foreign merchants, there is still a need to consider other locations, such as the early towns of Olomouc and, intermittently, Cracow. Additionally, the discovery of what may have been a customs house or a ‘market village’ at Kostice, Czech Republic emphasises the need to look beyond Prague and consider smaller Přemyslid settlements. Kostice lies near the confluence of the Morava and Dyje rivers, close to the Great Moravian fortified centre at Pohansko. Following Great Moravia’s collapse in the

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343 Dyer, 227.

early tenth century and the shift to Přemyslid control, Kostice’s rise to significance in the
mid tenth century likely stemmed from its location on the border between the Přemyslid
realm and the developing Hungarian polity. More than a hundred coin finds – including a
great many single finds – date from 950 onwards, and represent mints in Bavaria, Hungary,
Austria, Bohemia, and Moravia.345 Additionally, enormous amounts of lead, fragments of
silver and bronze, and even a fragment of a Scandinavian-style folding balance have been
discovered in recent excavations, clearly establishing Kostice’s role as a trading settlement.346
Jiří Macháček believes that Kostice may represent a customs house along a northward trade
route from Regensburg which developed with the formation of the Hungarian kingdom and
the pacification of this area.347 The site is important, not only because it is the first of its kind
in this region, but also because it represents a settlement whose function may have been
specifically related to trade. It may in turn may have implications for our understanding of
the slave trade.

The role of fortified settlements in the archaeology of medieval slavery has yet to be
fully explored. Coolure Demesne holds promise given the intersection of trade evidence,
shackle finds, and settlement patterns at one site. However, this requires a great deal of
future excavation and analysis, and one can only hope that it will eventually be undertaken.
The cases of Prague, Dublin, and Mikulčice should be taken as cautionary; even when we
can identify slave markets textually, they remain invisible archaeologically. At liminal
hillforts, which likely aided in the transportation of captives to markets, this movement of
people may remain indistinguishable from regular settlement activity. Future research on
slave trading should expand to include locations of active trade, such as crannogs and their
surroundings within the Dublin trade sphere; Viking longphuir and winter camps; and
emerging categories of settlement such as that at Kostice. From these, we may eventually
find settlement patterns indicative of captives. This might include large buildings or open-
air structures for human occupation, especially within a fortification or defensible area for
deterring escape as much as attack. Nonetheless, a great deal of supporting factors would
be necessary to associate such features with slaves specifically, such as evidence of

345 J. Macháček and J. Videman, ‘Monetisation of early medieval Moravia in light of new
archaeological discoveries in the Lower Dyje region (Czech Republic)’, in Bogucki and Rębkowski
(eds.), Economies, Monetisation and Society, 190.
346 For an overview of site finds, see A. Balcářková, et al., ‘Archeologický výzkum rané
středověkého sídliště Kostice Zadní hrůd v letech 2009-2011’, Archeologické Rozhledy 65 (2013), 768-9;
For a discussion of the scale fragment specifically, see 763-5.
347 Macháček and Videman, 191-2.
temporary and forced occupancy. The likelihood of an intersection of all these factors in one feature is small. Instead, we should look to locations of trade itself. By understanding the role of these sites within the context of long-distance trade, we can assess the likelihood of slave trading at any one site, though we may never be able to draw more exact conclusions. In the meantime, settlement patterns and the archaeology of these fortified settlements are inconclusive. As with shackles, we see that despite our confidence in a large-scale slave trade, we have yet to discover distinctive archaeological evidence of it. We must at present interpret them cautiously, and from the perspective of general evidence for trade rather than the slave trade explicitly.

CURRENCY

Archaeologists and historians have long speculated about the role of Scandinavian dirham hoards in the early medieval slave trade. The involvement of slaves in the profitable balance of trade alongside fur and amber in Central and Eastern Europe has, until recently, been assumed but never investigated. While Michael McCormick’s work has focused on Western Europe and the Mediterranean, Marek Jankowiak provides careful analysis of documented slave prices and the immense quantity of dirham hoards in Central Europe and Scandinavia, presumably along Viking trade routes, and especially in Gotland.348 These studies go a long way to highlighting the importance of coinage in studies of medieval slavery. Certainly, the role of coins and hacksilver merits further investigation across the Viking world.

Unfortunately, the use of silver in exchange for slaves cannot be traced by such distinctive means as dirhams outside of Scandinavia and the Baltic. Finds of these coins in Bohemia and Moravia are rare.349 Analysis of mineral inclusions in the silver of Scottish hoards has proven that reused dirhams compose a portion of Viking Age silver objects such as ingots and ornaments.350 This reuse presents a second problem for Britain and Ireland, since it limits the visibility of incoming dirhams and makes circulation estimates incredibly difficult. We can at least be certain that the coins reached Britain and Ireland through Eastern trade, as the dating and Central Asian mints reflect patterns seen in Scandinavia and

349 Dirham finds in East Central Europe are mapped in Jankowiak, ‘Dirhams’, 2.
Russia, unlike dirhams in France which herald from Spanish and North African mints.\textsuperscript{351} But even this presents some difficulties with identifying which Scandinavian groups were responsible for the importation of silver to Ireland. Though it seems that Ireland was settled by Norwegians, Norway has yielded hardly any dirham finds in comparison with the rest of Scandinavia; and yet large quantities of Arab silver in various forms ended up in Dublin and its periphery.\textsuperscript{352} John Sheehan has suggested that it may have come through Denmark.\textsuperscript{353} At the very least, the dirhams of Ireland call into question the identity of some of the Dublin slave traders, and suggest a more complex operation that was not solely exploited by the Irish and the Hiberno-Norse.

The interpretation of silver is further complicated in both the British Isles and the Czech lands by pre-existing currencies: Anglo-Saxon coinage and Přemyslid cloth squares. Great Moravian axe-shaped ingots and iron hoards could be included in this category, but recent scholarship has put forward a strong case for their interpretation as tribute and not a currency of internal exchange.\textsuperscript{354} As such, they will not be discussed in this investigation. The English economy was heavily monetised and silver was widely circulated by the time Scandinavian long-distance trade routes were introduced to Britain. The previously-mentioned study of silver composition in Scottish hoards noted that some Scottish ingots resembled the silver of Anglo-Saxon coins, and even suggested that ring money from the Burray hoard was debased through the use of contemporary debased Anglo-Saxon coinage.\textsuperscript{355} This means that silver in Britain and Ireland cannot be linked solely to dirhams, and thus long-distance trade from the East, without extensive testing. Furthermore, unlike those made in surrounding areas, silver objects from England do not show clear signs of Arab silver composition. The silver was either taken from another source, or, most likely, a variety of sources. This has led Rory Naismith to speculate that circulation of dirhams in England was not great.\textsuperscript{356} Clearly, the pre-existence of silver in England, and the resulting mixing of Arab and Anglo-Saxon silver through reuse means we may never completely grasp how much silver was brought in through Scandinavian trade.

\textsuperscript{353} Sheehan, ‘Ireland’s’, 59.
\textsuperscript{354} See p. 59 n.251.
\textsuperscript{355} Kruse and Tate, 74, 76.
\textsuperscript{356} Naismith, ‘Islamic’, 205.
Prague’s currency is perhaps a bit less deceptive, in that it cannot be mistaken for Arab silver. These cloth squares, dubbed ‘handkerchiefs’, are textually attested only in the account of Ibrāhīm ibn Yaʿqūb, who visited Prague in the 960s. He designates their value as one tenth of a silver denier, and marvels over the use of such an inherently worthless item as currency.\textsuperscript{357} One example may be present in the archaeological record, discovered in a grave at Uherské Hradiště-Sady in 1970s, though the report offers little evidence as to why the small, folded piece of cloth should be identified as money.\textsuperscript{358} While this cloth currency was likely used for the Přemyslid realm’s internal trading needs, it at least partly obscures the extent of trade. It certainly aids investigation by eliminating the confusion between foreign and internal trade present in England, but it means that our interpretation of an explosion of early medieval foreign trade is somewhat coloured by a lack of traceable domestic exchange. While this should not preclude studies of tenth-century long-distance exchange, we must still factor it into our discussion of slave trading.

That said, the Czech lands and Ireland are particularly interesting for studies of exchange because of their coinless and largely silver-less economies before the mid-tenth and late-tenth centuries, respectively. While silver was present, it served liturgical purposes in Ireland and ornamental ones in Moravia and Bohemia; it was not used as currency. The foundation of mints in Dublin (997) and Prague (c. 960s-970s) and the development of Hiberno-Norse weighted armbands are indications of the volume of silver imported though burgeoning trade and the fundamental importance it had in these early medieval economies. In Ireland, some of this silver wealth probably came from the melting-down and reuse of Anglo-Saxon money, and these coins have been found in hoards throughout the Irish Viking period.\textsuperscript{359} Though Irish traders may have adopted the use of silver for their own dealings, it seems that silver was essentially used for exchange in Dublin and its sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{360}

For this reason, silver represents a less complicated indicator of long-distance trade in Ireland than in England. The same is true of the Czech lands, where in the tenth and

\textsuperscript{357} ‘Ibrāhīm ibn Yaʿqūb’, in Arab Travellers, 165.

\textsuperscript{358} K. Marešová, ‘Nález předmincovního platidla na slovanském pohřebišti v Uherském Hradišti-Sadech’, Časopis Moravského Muzea 61 (1976), 31-7. The author asserts that because the cloth was hemmed in the shape of a square, it should be regarded as an intentional creation rather than a scrap or a rag. Marešová firmly associates this cloth with the handkerchiefs described by Ibn Yaʿqūb, despite the find dating to a century before Ibn Yaʿqūb’s account and occurring in a Great Moravian context (as opposed to the Přemyslid one described by Ibn Yaʿqūb).

\textsuperscript{359} For examples of hoards containing Anglo-Saxon coins alongside dirhams, see R.A. Hall, A Check List of Viking-Age Coin Finds from Ireland (Belfast, 1973), 73-83.

\textsuperscript{360} M. Kenny, The Geographical Distribution of Irish Viking-Age Coin Hoards (Dublin, 1987), 514.
eleventh centuries, a rising demand for coins and an influx of silver indicate foreign trade. This is represented by the rapid introduction of coinage at Moravian markets such as Olomouc and Kostice. It is in these regions that silver serves as a possible indicator for the slave trade.

The next logical step must be to consider how much silver importation and circulation from anywhere in Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands can be associated specifically with the slave trade. Prices of slaves are rarely given in sources from these regions. English records from Ely note that in the late tenth century, men and women could be purchased for between sixty and one hundred pence (five oras), or in one case, half a pound (120 pence). These numbers do not appear to be extraordinary purchase prices, but we cannot know if these are representative of general market trends. Though Ine’s law code stipulates a wergild of sixty shillings, this price reflects compensation designed to protect the slave’s owner in the event of a loss of labour, as well as punitive measures designed to avert future crimes. Similar circumstances in Czech sources have not prevented their use in quantitative estimates of the scale of slave trading. Dušan Třeštík relied upon the figures of 300 deniers found in a Moravian charter from 1078 and 600 in a Bohemian charter of the late eleventh century, respectively. The Moravian charter only gives the conditions under which a slave may buy his or her own freedom, and like Ine’s laws, probably represents compensation for loss of labour. The Bohemian example stipulates the donation of one ancilla or 600 deniers by the villicus of Prague to the Vyšehrad chapter at Pentecost, which can also hardly be considered a market price. Such prices may have fluctuated widely depending on the availability of slaves, as well as their age, gender, and health. Ibn Fadlân’s account of the Rus slave traders along the Volga indicates that haggling may have caused considerable variation in the amounts Scandinavians charged for slaves. Although slaves probably represented a considerable export in both the British Isles and the Czech lands, we also have no idea how they compared to other goods, and thus how much of the incoming silver we can safely associate with the slave trade.

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361 For a discussion of substantial number of coin finds at Kostice from the mid-tenth century onwards and the monetisation of Moravia, see Macháček and Videman, 177-99.
362 Pelteret, Slavery, 180.
363 Gesetze, i.100 (Ine §23.3).
365 CDB I, no. 79, p. 84.
Assigning precise values to slaves may be highly speculative, yet the dramatic increase in the wealth of the Dublin periphery and the monetisation of the Přemyslid realm did coincide generally with the expansion of the early medieval slave trade. Michael Kenny’s mapping of hoards in Ireland clearly indicates that the highest concentrations of silver hoards fall in a 30-70-mile arc around Dublin. These assemblages were buried at or near native Irish sites, and their dates of deposition do not correspond to any known Irish raids on Dublin, suggesting peaceable trade.\(^{368}\) While there are many explanations for the depositions of these hoards, including tribute, it is possible that some of these could be linked to slave trading. Outside of Dublin’s sphere of influence, where silver deposition and Scandinavian contact were more infrequent, it is difficult to use silver as an archaeological indicator even for trade in general. The natural parallel to this is Great Moravia, for which we have fewer than a dozen coin finds and only silver jewellery, yet we know slaves must have been exchanged there. The Raffelstetten customs tariff implies that Bavarian merchants exchanged salt, slaves, and horses with the Moravians, which may give us clues to the goods exchanged in lieu of precious metals.\(^{369}\) These in-kind payments demonstrate that we should not interpret a lack of silver beyond Dublin as a lack of slave trading.

That the Hiberno-Norse and the Bohemians increasingly relied on coins, ultimately resulting in the foundations of Dublin and Prague mints, suggests a heavy trade in slaves with other coin economies. This is especially true since early Dublin coins emulate those of certain Anglo-Saxon mints, and early Bohemian coins those of the Franks. The situation in Bohemia has been explained by Marek Jankowiak as the result of a trade system stretching westwards from Prague to Iberia, which featured substantial interaction with the Frankish coin economy.\(^{370}\) For Ireland, however, the phenomenon has not yet been addressed, and it presents many interesting questions, as written sources only explicitly indicate the presence of Irish slaves in Scandinavia and Iceland, which did not operate on a coin-based economy. Coins may indicate that we should consider monetised England and Francia more closely as the potential destinations of Irish slaves.

This period of economic wealth and increased raiding also corresponded with the end of visible dirham circulation in England. With the latest find dating to c. 927 in the Bossal hoard, Naismith has pointed out that this decline coincides with increasing West

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368 Kenny, 514-5.
369 Inquisitio, 249-52. For more detailed discussion of this document, see Chapter 4.
It is possible that the conquests of the Danelaw in 925 and 954 had an important impact not just on Scandinavian political influence, but also on the slave trade and the degree of Scandinavian control over supply. Equally feasible is that English control resulted in a more rigorous program of recycling dirhams. David Metcalf believes that the comprehensive reuse of Arab silver was probably responsible for drastically changing the composition of the stock metal in the second half of the tenth century. One must wonder if silver coming into England through a Scandinavian slave trade was being systematically melted down and, in the late tenth century, being shipped back to Scandinavia as Danegeld.

As the flow of dirhams into Greater and Lesser Poland also slowed in the late tenth century, ceasing by the turn of the eleventh, western coins grew to prominence in this region. It is clear that with the elimination of southward trade routes, the emerging Piast state looked west for trade through Prague. Jankowiak believes this to be synonymous with a westward shift in long-distance slave trading, and such a situation would certainly help to explain the endurance of slave trading in Prague well into the twelfth century. The decline in dirhams cannot be explained by aggressive recycling; it may be linked to a weakening in the Arab demand for slaves with the collapse of the Samanid state. The cause for this monetary shift is hotly debated, and Stanisław Suchodolksi noted that the variety of arguments has grown to encompass political, cultural, and economic causes which blame upheavals at the Arab silver’s source, along the trade routes, or at its European destination. The transition from dirhams to deniers in Poland does, however, demonstrate Prague’s significance as a trade centre for not just the Czech lands, but for the surrounding polities of East Central Europe.

Silver is perhaps most useful in Ireland, which was impacted by long-distance Scandinavian trade and which had no pre-existing silver economy. This is not because of any inherent connections which can be singled out between silver and slavery. Indeed, perhaps the only connection is that we know the silver came from people involved in some degree of slave trading. We can only make educated guesses as to how much the slave trade

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373 Jankowiak, ‘Two’, 144. Trade through Prague is attested by the appearance of Bohemian coins in Poland.
375 S. Suchodolski, ‘Change of transcontinental contacts as indicated by coins in the Baltic zone around 1000’, in P. Urbańczyk (ed.), Europe Around the Year 1000 (Warsaw, 2001), 96.
contributed to this wealth. The picture becomes increasingly complex for Britain, which had its own silver coin economy, and for the Přemyslid realm, which already operated on a partly monetised system based on handkerchiefs and western deniers. In none of these regions do we know how the scale of slave trading compared to other goods or the degree to which incoming foreign silver was recycled as objects (though this is generally assumed to be large). Furthermore, our information on the price of slaves is extremely limited. While some scholars readily accept that the majority of the silver was exchanged for slaves, slaves were certainly not the only export. They may have represented a significant percentage of trade, but we have no way of being any more precise. Silver does tell us that a positive balance of trade existed in Ireland, especially those in those areas dominated by Scandinavian exchange. It also poses questions which force us to reconsider textual evidence regarding the identity of the actual slave traders in Dublin, and whether Anglo-Saxon expansion and state building in the tenth century significantly impacted the slave trade. At present, however, the link between silver and the slave trade in Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands remains hypothetical.

### BURIALS

Deviant burials have been proposed by McCormick as a potential indicator of holding sites along trade routes. He made the reasonable assumption that the general nature of a slave trade would lend itself to unsanitary conditions, which would then be compounded by the possibility of castrations performed *en route*. The resulting mortality rate, McCormick argued, would likely result in numerous unfurnished and hasty burials of otherwise healthy youths along trade routes. Further investigation has not been attempted, despite long-standing efforts to use slavery as an explanation for deviant burials in the British Isles and Scandinavia.

In Czech historiography, an effort was made in the mid-1950s by the archaeologist Ivan Borkovský to uncover a post-mortem identifier for early medieval unfree Slavs. Borkovský argued that knives deposited in burials must have symbolised the deceased’s right to property, particularly weapons. Such a right could only reflect those of free status; therefore, the absence of knives was to be a quantitative indicator of the unfree, half-free, and slaves in early medieval Slavic societies of East Central Europe. This argument was

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vehemently rejected within a few years by František Graus. Not least of his concerns was that the presence of grave goods should be used as an indicator of status during and after the Christianisation of these regions, when grave goods were perceived as irrelevant for the next life.³⁷⁸ Unsurprisingly, knives as a quantitative status indicator were rejected in Czech scholarship, and very little effort has been made since then to identify slave burials.

The subject of slave burials has been more thoroughly investigated by Scandinavian archaeologists, perhaps as a result of the notorious scenes of slave sacrifice described by Ibn Fadlān. Many deviant burials have been identified as slave sacrifices; these are typically richly-furnished male graves accompanied by a bound and/or executed body with no associated grave goods.³⁷⁹ These discoveries have influenced the interpretation of similar burials in Britain and Ireland and elicited strong scepticism from other scholars. Ruth Mazo Karras has questioned the acceptance of slave sacrifice among the early medieval Scandinavians, noting that Ibn Fadlān’s account is the only one of its kind. The rite appears elsewhere in the Eddic poems, but she believes that these may represent thousands of years of oral tradition. The Icelandic sagas, which record semi-historical events, do not mention slave sacrifice at all.³⁸⁰ Klaus Randsborg asserts that slave sacrifices appear in graves up to about AD 1000, but he also identifies as a ‘slave’ any individual who has been disenfranchised, short of criminals.³⁸¹ By this definition, ‘slave’ would encompass prisoners of war and free people murdered for whatever reason (such as revenge), making his terminology imprecise, to say the least. Perhaps the most important parallel for the supposed sacrifice of slaves is suttee, a Hindu term borrowed to describe the possible Scandinavian social requirement of a widow’s suicide.³⁸² This could explain many of the

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³⁸¹ K. Randsborg, ‘The study of slavery in northern Europe: An archaeological approach’, *Acta Archaeologica* 55 (1984), 158-9. Randsborg states that criminals would have been buried in a single pit without grave goods, whereas ‘slaves’ have ‘non-derogatory’ burials given their inhumation alongside members of the upper social strata.
³⁸² Suttee appears amongst Germanic and Slavic tribes in historical and mythological accounts, most notably Procopius’ *Gothic Wars*. This, along with a handful of references in sagas and poetry, seems to be the reason that some archaeologists believe suttee was practiced by Scandinavians and the early Anglo-Saxons. For sources, see A. Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages: Vol. 2, The Curse on Self-Murder* (Oxford, 2000), 566-7. In Scandinavia, the subject has antiquarian roots, H. Schetelig, *Traces of the Custom of ‘Suttee’ in Norway during the Viking Age* (London, 1910). Thietmar describes suttee amongst the Slavs, but this may only be a literary trope, S. Rosik, ‘Topiczny motyw uśmiecania słowiańskich
Scandinavian multiple inhumations, and perhaps played a role in the slave sacrifice described by Ibn Fadlān. Karras argues that the sacrifice of a slave girl was more out of concern for providing the chief with a wife in death than with her status in life.\(^{383}\)

A joint study at the University of Oslo and Stockholm University took a quantitative approach by conducting DNA and isotopic tests on individuals from presumed slave burials in Scandinavia - that is, individuals from multiple burials whose bodies were treated as grave goods. The study suggests that there is the potential to identify lower status individuals through diet, as evident in the formation of their teeth.\(^{384}\) Mitochondrial DNA analysis also demonstrated that the people buried together were not maternally related. However, the sample size (10 individuals) was too small to make sweeping assumptions of a link between status and diet. The practical and social roles of unfree people could also change over time, making it impossible to as yet exclusively link any dietary variation to status. The study also did not rule out paternal relationships. Whether such studies could be applied to the identification of slaves or the unfree in British and Irish contexts, where similar burials are much rarer, remains to be seen.

There are many problems connected to the identification of slave burials in the medieval period. The first is the nature of unfurnished burials in a Christian context, in which the general lack of grave goods offers few hints regarding the social status of the deceased. Because of this limitation, studies of potential slave burials in Britain and Ireland follow similar patterns by focusing on time periods and deviant burials which provide more clues regarding status. The burials are all inhumations from either the pre-Christian or Viking periods, when non-Christian burials are easily identified. Usually, they are multiple inhumations, which the studies connect to Ibn Fadlān’s account, and the status is usually implied by the positioning of the bodies relative to each other. Some burials have been uncovered alongside shackles, but we know from the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century inhumation in the ambulatory at Old Sarum that these individuals were not necessarily of low status.\(^{385}\) We must also be careful to consider cultural context. The Irish believed it

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\(^{383}\) Karras, *Slavery*, 71.


\(^{385}\) Hope, 116-7. An adult male skeleton (carbon dated to AD 584-651) was discovered with a metal ring around his neck at Owenbristy, Co. Galway, J. Lehane, et al., ‘Three cemetery-settlement excavations in County Galway at Carrowkeel, Treanbaun and Owenbristy’, in C. Corlett and M.
appropriate to bury kin and warriors in the same grave, so multiple inhumations in a native Irish context should not be considered in terms of slave sacrifice.\textsuperscript{386} Excavations of multiple inhumations in the Czech Republic have also tended towards the identification of spouses or family groups.\textsuperscript{387}

Studies of deviant burials in East Central Europe have tended to place significant emphasis on anti-vampirism practices, which may also have precluded consideration of slave status. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century ethnography of vampirism in Eastern Europe led to the broad assumption that early medieval deviant burial practices in this region stem from a fear of the deceased, though such a blanket application has come under scrutiny. There is little unity in the so-called ‘anti-vampirism’ practices, which have been used to describe anything non-normative about burials.\textsuperscript{388} In Slovakia, the discovery of shackles still clasped around the ankles of a Great Moravian inhumation earned the explanation of ‘vampire’ rather than ‘slave’.\textsuperscript{389} Vampirism in Eastern Europe, like slave sacrifice in Britain and Ireland, appears to function as a catch-all explanation for non-normative burials. It seems to have precluded attempts to link these types of inhumations with slavery. By comparing this trend with that of slave sacrifice in Britain and Ireland, we can see how vastly different cultural contexts can be used to describe similar phenomena, and why smaller, more localised interpretations of evidence are necessary. Though some of these deviant burials may seem akin to the supposed slave sacrifices of Britain and Ireland, Slavic examples have instead been linked to the spread of Christianity. In Slovakia, these ‘anti-vampiric’ burials peaked in the ninth and tenth centuries, during which Christianisation was fundamentally altering burial practices and perceptions of death.\textsuperscript{390}

This change in religion illustrates the ways in which deviant burial can reflect trends

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\textsuperscript{386} S.L. Fry, \textit{Burial in Medieval Ireland 900-1500: A Review of the Written Sources} (Dublin, 1999), 149. A skull was found with marks from sword cuts and an associated neck collar, W.G. Wood-Martin, \textit{The Lake Dwellings of Ireland} (Dublin, 1886), 237.


\textsuperscript{389} L. Galuška, \textit{Slované Dotyky Předků: o životě na Moravě 6.-10. století} (Brno, 2004), 56.

unrelated to status. We should only consider slavery when such major factors have been ruled out.

Problems may also arise in determining what a burial indicative of slave trading would look like. For foreign slaves traded from afar, their roles as domestic servants may have led to their acceptance as valuable members of the household, who merited respectful interment. This would make the unfurnished grave of a domestic slave in the Christian period indistinguishable from that of a free peasant. If we assume slaves were treated as chattel by merchants, this would theoretically make slaves buried along trade routes more identifiable, characterised by hastily-dug graves, with positioning suggestive of careless burial, if excavators were lucky enough to find the graves. However, if fellow captives were tasked with burial, this might not be the case. They would potentially have shared a culture or ethnicity with the deceased, or at the very least, been sympathetic; such a burial would not be a haphazard deposition of worthless merchandise. These points are purely conjectural, but they illustrate the difficulty of gauging slave status from the style of burial.

In England, the most prominent multiple inhumations potentially associated with slavery all pre-date the Viking Age, and thus the existence of an extensive slave trade network. If the individuals were indeed slaves, they must have come from somewhere, but none of the burials are indicative of casualties along trade routes. Excavations at Spong Hill, Norfolk and Sewerby, East Yorkshire have revealed what archaeologists assume to be execution or sacrificial burials. A chamber burial at Spong Hill was surrounded by several other graves, though only one, the flint-packed burial of a 17-25 year old woman, was interpreted to be direct evidence of sacrifice. At Sewerby, the richly-furnished burial of a young woman was topped by the face-down, splayed body of a 35-45 year old woman, who had been weighed down by a quernstone fragment on her pelvis. The older woman appears to have been buried alive at the same time as the younger woman’s interment. Susan Hirst noted that while it is tempting to assign this woman a slave status, it is just as plausible that she was viewed as responsible for the girl’s death or that she had been under the girl’s protection, which ended with her premature death.

391 C. Hills, et al., The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Spong Hill, North Elmham, Part III: Catalogue of Inhumations (Dereham, 1984), 41. For the woman’s age, see p. 102.
393 Hirst, 39.
394 Hirst, 42-3.
The Sewerby burial highlights the myriad of possible explanations for the graves of supposed sacrificial victims, and that we must resist the automatic assumption of slavery. The need for careful interpretation is further emphasised by deviant burials at Sutton Hoo, which were initially viewed as early Anglo-Saxon sacrifice. Further analysis demonstrated that the individuals were most likely the victims of judicial execution from as late as the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{395} In this and other Anglo-Saxon execution cemeteries, violent death and deviant burial tell us little about the individual’s standing in life.\textsuperscript{396} Though these cemeteries consist of haphazard burials and remains with \textit{perimortem} trauma, we cannot assume execution or sacrifice to reveal evidence of slavery, or even status in general.

Viking-age multiple inhumations indicative of ‘slave sacrifice’ have been noted in Orkney, the Isle of Man, and in Dublin, but antiquarian excavations mean that little information can be gleaned besides the location and positioning of the bodies.\textsuperscript{397} For example, the sparsely-documented discovery at Donnybrook in Dublin of a Viking warrior by construction workers in 1879 showed that there were also two smaller skeletons at his feet. These associated skeletons were assumed to be female given their smaller size, but this was never scientifically confirmed.\textsuperscript{398} The find has been cited as an example of Viking ritual sacrifice, though a later investigation by R.A. Hall notes that suttee cannot be ruled out.\textsuperscript{399}

Because of the previously-mentioned cultural contexts in East Central Europe, attempts to identify specific burials as those of slaves are rare. At the Great Moravian site of Pohansko, Jiří Macháček has argued that bodies discovered on individual plots in the craftworking section of the settlement may be those of the slaves forced to labour there.\textsuperscript{400} Other than their location, the graves provide no evidence to distinguish them from free peasants, or the craftsmen themselves.\textsuperscript{401} The use of location to derive status is shaky, but


\textsuperscript{397} For Orkney and the Isle of Man, Davidson, 334.


\textsuperscript{399} Hall, ‘Viking-age’, 74.

\textsuperscript{400} Macháček, \textit{Rise}, 306.

\textsuperscript{401} This argument assumes that free labourers and craftsmen would have been practising Christians, and therefore buried in a church cemetery. Consequently, the original excavator, Bořivoj Dostál, supposed that these inhumations might be representative of pagans, Macháček, \textit{Rise}, 306.
could prove more valuable to attempts to identify slave inhumations in Britain and Ireland than positioning of the body itself has been so far.

In Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands, our knowledge of potential slave burial comes from pre-Viking and pre-Christian inhumations suggestive of sacrifice, and from inhumations within production environments, neither of which elucidate the slave trade. If these murdered individuals were slaves, they only provide evidence of conspicuous consumption and the desire or obligation to supply a wealthy, deceased individual with servants in the afterlife. Similarly, the potential slave labourers at Pohansko only demonstrate the use of slaves in the production of goods, rather than as goods themselves. No matter where burials of this kind are discovered – at potential holding sites, along trade routes – it will remain immensely difficult to associate these exclusively with slave status. One possibility we must also consider for Northern Europe is that Viking maritime trade routes may have necessitated burial at sea for those slaves who died in transit. Given the difficulty of establishing status in unfurnished burials, this line of investigation is the least useful criterion for establishing the presence of a slave trade.

CONCLUSIONS

Without context, finds such as shackles and coins are virtually meaningless, and fortifications and burials tell us little about the cultures they represent. Similarly, we cannot draw conclusions regarding the medieval slave trade without an intersection of these indicators. Because of this, studies regarding the archaeology of slavery should focus on individual sites, rather than entire regions. While Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands provide examples of all four archaeological indicators, the Croydon hoard tells us little about the shackles in Winchester, and the burials at Pohansko have no obvious connection with the ‘market of the Moravians’. Across wide geographical areas, individual finds do not provide a context for slavery. Only when we examine the intersection of these finds at individual sites can we begin to speculate about their role in the slave trade.

Unfortunately, there are few sites at which all, or even most, appear. The only place in either region which has yielded shackles, currency, fortified settlement, and one potential slave burial is Dublin. Even so, the longphort at Dublin has yet to be discovered, and the potential slave burial is not one which can clearly be associated with slave trading. Prague, so often cited as a major slave-trading centre for the early Middle Ages, has produced no shackles and no identified slave burials. Coolure Demesne crannog has presented all except
potential slave burials, but this may follow when further excavation reveals the crannog’s context within a wider settlement complex. Even with the potential of sites in the Dublin and Prague peripheries or of future excavations at currently known and unknown sites, these archaeological indicators are incredibly difficult to prove as distinctive indicators of slavery. Shackles, coins, and trade at fortified settlements all have so many alternative explanations that taking them as direct evidence for slave trading is a highly dubious enterprise. As such, these criteria, despite having gained increasing currency in discussions of the slave trade, are unrealistic and easily linked to cultural and historical phenomena completely unrelated to the slave trade. While the discovery of unambiguous archaeological indicators for the slave trade is not impossible, the odds are against it, and our speculation about them will likely remain just that.
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Methods of Enslavement

The slave trade was a multi-dimensional aspect of early medieval society, involving not just merchants and markets, but also the means of creating slaves to meet demand. As this chapter will argue, methods of enslavement are vital for understanding the role of chattel slavery in society, as well as the extent to which the supply and demand of the slave trade impacted various groups of people. To fully comprehend the social and economic impact of early medieval slave trading, we must examine how tradable slaves could be created. This chapter addresses techniques for reducing the status of otherwise free individuals which could be employed to meet a demand for tradable chattel slaves. These methods included the enslavement of both outsiders via raiding and insiders via penal enslavement and self-sale. Discussion of hereditary slave status will not be included here, since slave births could not widely fluctuate depending on demand, and there is no real evidence to suggest that early medieval slaves were encouraged or forced to procreate as slaves were in, for example, the American South. Slaves by birth could be sold as chattel slaves, but as Chapter 4 will discuss, many of the recorded examples focus on the exceptionality of the sale or its justification.

Raiding, penal enslavement, and self-sale will all be examined in order to determine the extent to which different procedures could influence a person’s eligibility for sale. It will be demonstrated that the means of creating chattel slaves varied regionally and chronologically, and it will become apparent that war captives were not the only tradable slaves from the seventh to eleventh centuries in the British Isles and the Czech Lands. For captives, the likelihood of enslavement depended on such variables as gender and status. Penal slaves were individuals whose legal transgressions warranted removal from their social sphere. Self-sale, on the other hand, reflected an individual’s voluntary entry into slavery, for instance during a famine. While not a punitive action, self-sale meant that the enslaved person revoked their social and legal rights and responsibilities in exchange for a guarantee of food and shelter. Penal enslavement and self-sale represent counterpoints to enslavement through warfare. As will be shown, they did not contribute to the pool of tradable slaves consistently, as raiding did, but it was possible for some of these individuals to become eligible for sale. The degree to which we can consider enslavement via legal
agreement a factor in creating tradable slaves varied greatly by time and location, and must be considered accordingly.

PENAL ENSLAVEMENT

Penal slavery was widespread during the early medieval period, and the crimes deserving of such a punishment were typically very serious, most commonly murder and theft. Alice Rio has argued that the experience of some penal slaves was fundamentally different from that of chattel slaves, and though that experience differed by region, criminals in the early Middle Ages were not enslaved out of any demand for slave labour.\textsuperscript{402} She notes that penal slavery was a flexible institution, with means by which convicted individuals could avoid the sentence, such as compensation payments.\textsuperscript{403} It is also likely that penal slaves could expect manumission more readily than chattel slaves, and that there may have been some expectation of temporariness upon enslavement.\textsuperscript{404} Within this framework, penal slavery operated on the level of local politics and kin groups; compensation payments were too high to be paid by any one individual, so the decision to make such a payment, and thereby keep someone out of penal slavery, was a communal, and especially familial, decision. Through this process, penal enslavement was not dependent on the strength of the governmental apparatus. By serving the judicial needs of smaller communities, penal enslavement also existed separately from any market demands for slaves.\textsuperscript{405}

Britain and Ireland would appear to largely fit this model. Irish law featured two types of penal unfree status, whose treatment varied by circumstance. A \textit{fuidir} was in most cases a half-free tenant, and only the lowest class can be linked to penal servitude. This category, which the \textit{fuidir}-text of the Senchas Már describes as a ‘\textit{fuidir} of the gallows’, was connected by Rudolf Thurneysen to a case in Adomnán’s \textit{Vita Columbae}.\textsuperscript{406} Here, a man named Librán is ransomed from a death charge by a wealthy kinsman, and is therefore obligated to serve this relative.\textsuperscript{407} This type of \textit{fuidir}, then, was one who served the person who had ransomed them from the death penalty, a gradation of unfree status very like penal

\textsuperscript{403} Rio, ‘Penal’, 79.
\textsuperscript{404} Rio, ‘Penal’, 92-7.
\textsuperscript{405} Rio, ‘Penal’, 106.
\textsuperscript{406} R. Thurneysen, \textit{Irisches Recht} (Berlin, 1931), 66, 77 n.3.
privilege. Because the *fuidir* was not considered a slave, it is unlikely that they ever faced sale. There do not appear to be any recorded cases of it. Furthermore, the heavy symbolism of the *fuidir*’s service would most likely preclude sale. After all, the *fuidir* did not only owe money to his ransomer; the *fuidir* owed his or her life, a debt repaid through service.

A *muirchrech* was punished for a range of crimes by being set adrift in a boat, to be enslaved wherever it washed up.\(^{408}\) Fergus Kelly notes that setting adrift was used especially for women who had committed serious crimes, and probably served as an alternative to outright execution.\(^{409}\) The physical removal of a criminal from their home and their subsequent ‘social death’ were thus attained without sale of any kind.\(^{410}\) It would seem that enslavement was only the second aspect of punishment, should God decide that the offender ought to live after enduring thirst, starvation, and exposure at sea. This method was clearly not linked to sale, since the punishers had no way of receiving the payment. Furthermore, if the *muirchrech* washed up on their own shore, they were regarded as a *fuidir*, suggesting that they were viewed differently from chattel slaves, and sale may have been prohibited or frowned upon by custom.

Welsh law describes a type of penal servitude which appears to have been similar to the *fuidir*, known as the *lleidr gwerth*, or ‘sale thief’. For the price of seven pounds, a thief could either ransom himself, or he could be purchased by someone else for the same price.\(^{411}\) If this sum could not be met, the *lleidr gwerth* faced banishment rather than execution.\(^{412}\) The purchase of a thief most likely reflects collective ransoming by a kin group or by a very wealthy patron. After all, a ransom of seven pounds was the equivalent to twenty-eight cows.\(^{413}\) It is possible that like the *fuidir*, the *lleidr gwerth* was expected to serve those who had paid the ransom for him. In such a scenario, we should avoid equating the *lleidr gwerth*’s status with that of the chattel slave. Examples of penal slavery in the source material do not particularly help to clarify this, though they do support the idea of penal


\(^{410}\) O. Patterson, Slavery and Social Death (London, 1982).


slaves as less saleable than enslaved captives. The eleventh-century *Vita Cadoci* describes a thief condemned to service at a monastery, who was probably a *lleidr gwerty*. 414 A charter from Llandaff describes a man and his family entering into service for the church as part of the settlement in a case involving the violation of sanctuary at St. Arvans in 955. 415 Neither of these instances illustrate the sale of a criminal, only the imposition of service for the benefit of the victim. Such sales may have occurred, but neither the Welsh nor the Irish material leaves any trace of them.

In the majority of surviving examples, English penal slavery also follows this model. Where penal slaves, *witeþeowes* (sing. *witeþeow*), appear in Anglo-Saxon wills of the tenth and eleventh centuries, they are settled on estates, and in most instances, are being given their freedom. 416 While some are bequests, none overtly appear within the context of sale. The difference between penal slaves and tradable chattel slaves is most emphatic in those wills in which the testator refers to slaves whose enslavement he or she oversaw. 417 Once a criminal was enslaved, from at least the tenth century onwards, they may often have remained within the same jurisdiction. Most Anglo-Saxon law codes from the seventh through the eleventh centuries present a similar picture. Criminals were enslaved for theft, and in the case of Ine’s seventh-century West Saxon law, for working on a Sunday. 418 That penal slaves remained in the same area after their enslavement is suggested by another of Ine’s laws which releases the family of slaves from any obligations of kinship. 419 In order for this law to have been necessary, penal slaves must have remained in close enough proximity to their kin that ties were not completely severed by distance alone.

414 ‘Tunc rusticus valde perterritus pedibus illius clerici pronus advolvitur, reatum confitendo dicens, “Pro amore Dei, et Sancti Cadoci, indulge mihi, nam scelus furti in bove perpetravi, quinimo quoque perjurium feci.” Quo cognito, rex cum astantibus, evangelio Gilde obtulit, nec non cleric donativo ditavit, atque furem in servitio cenobii Sancti Cadoci perpetuo mancipavit.’ Lifris of Llanearfan, 66.

415 ‘Sed hoc pretereundum non est quod ante iudicium redacti sunt uiri illi idguallaun filius moriud & guinan . iunathan . et guelfird tres filii ceretic. & totus ager generationis guoruot cum campo & fontibus cum filius et ancipitribus cum omni censi qui antea dabatur regi inmanu episcopi . & ipotestate ecclesiae sancti teliauí.’ J.G. Evans, *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv* (Oxford, 1893), 220. W. Davies believes the length of the recorded story indicates that it was written within a few years of the events, *Llandaff Charters*, no. 218, p. 120.


417 *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, especially the wills of Archbishop Ælfric, p. 54, ‘And he wyle þ man freoge æfter his dæge ælene witefæstne man þe on his timan forgylt wære’; Ætheling Æthelstan, p. 56, ‘þ man gefreoge. Ælcne witefæstne mann. Þe ic on spræce ahte.’; Winflæd, p. 12, ‘7 gif þær hwylec witeþeow “man” sy butan þyson þe hio gefeowede hio gelyfð to hyre bearnon þæt hine willon lyhtan for hyre saulle’.

418 Gesetze, i.90 (Ine §3.2); Regular theft, Gesetze, i.14 (Wihtred §26), 92 (Ine §7.1), 144 (II Edward §6).

419 Gesetze, i.122 (Ine §74.2).
There is, however, evidence to suggest that the idea of who could be penally enslaved changed over time. In late seventh-century Kent, penal slaves could potentially be considered tradable goods. Wihtred §26 (c. 695) stipulates that a thief caught in the act faced one of three possible punishments: execution, ransom for the price of his wergild, or sale 'ofersæ'. In early Kent then, penal enslavement allowed for an individual to be removed from both social and geographical spheres through sale, suggesting that the line between penal slave and chattel slave was blurred. This practice could not have been ubiquitous in England, however, since the contemporary West Saxon laws of Ine (688 × c. 694) forbade the sale of any man abroad, slave or free, even if he were guilty of a crime. Though Wihtred’s law makes it clear that the sale of a penal slave was certainly possible, it is reasonable to assume that only very troublesome people were sold ‘ofersæ’, especially those who did not have kin able or willing to vouch for them. Sale was only one of three possible punishments, and the laws of Ine indicate that the long-distance sale of penal slaves may have been generally frowned upon. Unfortunately, no relevant case law survives to demonstrate how often this penalty was implemented, if it was even used at all. As previously mentioned, later testamentary evidence for penal enslavement in England only shows these slaves to be settled on estates, and not in trade contexts.

During Cnut’s reign, Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, sought to further restrict penal enslavement. II Cnut §76.2-3 stated that an infant could not be regarded as an accessory to theft, a law which must have referred back to Ine §7.1. The latter stipulated that all the thief’s immediate family members were to be penally enslaved if the household knew of the crime. By ruling that an infant could not be an accessory to theft, young children could not be penally enslaved when they were otherwise too young to participate in the legal system. The easing of Ine §7.1 probably reflects a particular grievance of Wulfstan’s. In his Sermo Lupi ad Anglos, written before Cnut’s laws, Wulfstan names the enslavement of infants for theft as one of the terrible injustices prevalent in contemporary English society. Wulfstan certainly believed penal slavery to be an acceptable punishment for criminals, and legislation restricting it by no means indicated a movement away from the practice. Instead,

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420 ‘Gif man fringe man æt hæxbendre handa gefo, þanne wealde se cyning ðreora anes: oðde hine man cwelle ofer sæ selle ofer hine his wergelde alesæ’, Gesetze, i.14.
421 ‘Gif hwa his agenne geleod bebycgge, ðeowne oðde fringe, ðeah he scyldig sie, ofer sæ, forgielde hine his were’, Gesetze, i.94 (Ine §11).
422 Gesetze, i.364.
423 ‘Gif he ðonne stalie on gewitnesse ealles his hiredes, gongen hie ealle on ðeowot.’ Gesetze, i.92.
424 ‘Cradolcild ȝeþeopede þurh pæålheopu unlæga for lytelre þyfþe wide ȝynd þas þeode’, Sermo Lupi, 52.
Wulfstan’s restrictions on who could be penally enslaved may have been prompted by his view, iterated in V and VI Æthelred and the *Sermo Lupi*, that only the sale of *innocent* people out of England should be prohibited.\(^{425}\) He must have, conversely, perceived penal slaves as eligible for sale, though by the time he assisted with writing II Cnut, he had extended the prohibition on the sale of people ‘out of this land’ to all Christians.\(^{426}\) Even before Wulfstan changed his stance, however, he never mentioned the sale of penal slaves directly, and these oblique references ultimately tell us more about the sale of people who were not criminals than about penal slaves. It is also possible that in specifying innocent people, Wulfstan may have been discussing the sale of slaves convicted of a crime, though the language of his insinuation covers penal slavery.\(^{427}\)

With the exception of two seventh-century Anglo-Saxon laws and one possible eleventh-century insinuation, penal slaves in Britain and Ireland do not appear within the context of sale, suggesting that penal slaves were often treated differently than enslaved captives. While we cannot completely rule out their ability to be sold for compensation, or for any other reason, from the seventh through the eleventh centuries, the only sources to discuss such activity are very limited in geographical and chronological scope. There is, of course, the possibility that the sale of penal slaves was more widespread than official legal sources would care to admit. Sixth- and seventh-century examples of the sale of penal slaves appear in Continental sources, with the sale being a key component of the criminal’s removal from society.\(^{428}\) The general lack of evidence regarding English penal slavery during this period means that we cannot completely rule out the practice amongst the early Anglo-Saxons. And while Anglo-Saxon royal authority may not have had the final say over the sale of penal slaves in actuality, it is certainly notable that there were increasing attempts to control the creation of and access to penal slaves over time. The connection between royal authority and the sale of slaves will be discussed in much greater depth in Chapter 6.

The evidence of ninth-century Great Moravia, however, stands in direct contrast to this assessment. Knowledge of early medieval penal slavery is limited, and in Great

\(^{425}\) ‘þæt man Cristene men 7 unforworhte of earde ne sylle, ne huru on hæpene leod’, *Gesetze*, i.238 (V Æthelred §2); ‘þæt man Christene men 7 unforworhte of earde ne sylle, ne huru on hæpene þeod’, *Gesetze*, i.250 (VI Æthelred §9); ‘Earme men syndan sare bespicene 7 hreolcise besyrpe 7 ut of þysan earde pide gesaede spyþe unforporhte fremdum to þeperalde’, *Sermo Lupi*, 51-2.

\(^{426}\) ‘We beodaþ, þæt man Cristene men ealles to siwe þe eardan ne sylle ne on hædendome huru ne bringe, ac beorgan man georne, þæt man þa sawla ne forfare, þe Crist mid his agenum life gebohte’, *Gesetze*, i.310.


\(^{428}\) Rio, ‘Penal’, 86.
Moravia it stems almost entirely from the Zakon Saydni Ljudem. Nearly half of its clauses involve slavery, with many of those stipulating enslavement as the punishment for crimes ranging from rape, to oath breaking, to theft. The lack of such exemplars in the Ecloga could reflect the author’s preferred adaptation of the code which presumed state judicial oversight, but it could also reflect a more extensive reliance on penal enslavement in Moravian customary law. What is especially significant and unique about these laws when compared to their British and Irish contemporaries is that criminals are to be sold into slavery (‘da prodastь sę’, see Chapter 1, pp. 43-4). Here, we see not just a case in which the line between penal enslavement and chattel slavery was blurred – they may have been considered one and the same. The laws do not always specify what happened to the profits of the sale, though potentially these went towards compensating the victim. In the event of rape, the man’s property and the proceeds of his sale into slavery were to be given to the girl.\textsuperscript{429} In several other clauses, the proceeds of sale into slavery were to be given to the poor.\textsuperscript{430} It is also possible that the proceeds went into ducal coffers, but for many clauses involving penal enslavement and sale, the text itself does not say.\textsuperscript{431} As with Anglo-Saxon England, there is nothing to illustrate how often penal slaves were sold or to whom. However, the frequency of penal enslavement and sale within the text suggest that a criminal’s reduction in status to that of chattel slave would have been relatively common. It may have contributed significantly to the pool of tradable slaves in ninth-century Central Europe.

Colonial Africa offers a comparison to this use of penal slavery. The practice, which existed within many African societies before 1800, became exploited by rulers who sought to reap a financial reward from the European slave trade. Amongst certain West African peoples, there was a drastic increase in the number of crimes punishable by penal enslavement, specifically for this purpose.\textsuperscript{432} With this in mind, Zakon’s heavy reliance on penal enslavement could reflect a desire to supply Great Moravian trade networks with additional slaves. This would be difficult to prove, however, given the limitations of the source itself. Since Zakon is likely a collection of otherwise unwritten laws on certain subjects, and therefore only a selection of Moravian law, the appearance of penal enslavement may be disproportionate. The sale of penal slaves may have formed a

\textsuperscript{429} Zakon, §11-12, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{430} Zakon §1, p. 5; §4, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{431} Zakon §26, 28-29, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{432} S.E. Holsoe, ‘Slavery and economic response among the Vai (Liberia and Sierra Leone)’, in S. Miers and I. Kopytoff (eds.), Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives (Madison, WI, 1977), 293-5; M. Klein, ‘Servitude among the Wolof and Sereer of Senegambia’, in Ibid., 343.
significant part of a Moravian legal system, but it is equally likely that the compiler was particularly interested in legislation regarding slavery. Furthermore, it is unlikely that large-scale slave trading existed in Great Moravia, as I will argue in Chapter 4. In any event, there is no way to know just how long these laws persisted, or if they were ever enforced. The punishment of enslavement and subsequent sale almost certainly represented a long tradition, and was probably not simply invented in the ninth century. However, by the early tenth century Great Moravia had collapsed, and we cannot be certain of the extent to which these codified laws still held sway. Moravia came under the control of the Bohemian dukes by the second half of the tenth century, and no contemporary secular laws survive from Bohemia to suggest how Moravian law fit into a broader, ninth-century tradition in the Czech lands.

Later evidence in Břetislav I’s decrees, issued in 1039, hints that penal enslavement was indeed a Czech phenomenon throughout the early Middle Ages. One decree states that a man or woman who refuses to return to their marriage after a quarrel and separation should not be reduced to slavery in Bohemia, but should be taken to Hungary, from whence they cannot return, nor can they redeem themselves with money. The same was true for women who had extramarital sex and convicted domestic abusers. This decree evidences penal enslavement in Bohemia, and this legal process is described as a ‘rite of our land’ (‘secundum ritum nostrae terre’). The latter part of the decree has alternately been taken to reference slave trading with Hungary and exile. The sending of perpetrators to Hungary probably refers simply to exile, since the accused is not to be enslaved in the Bohemian custom. The mention of a redemption price could refer to manumission, but it could also be a fine paid to the duke, along the lines of wergild.

Regarding the specifics of penal enslavement, this source tells us little. It does, however, suggest that penal enslavement was far more common in Přemyslid Bohemia than in Anglo-Saxon England. That domestic disputes and issues of extramarital sex were resolved by enslavement, albeit as a last resort, indicates that enslavement was justifiable for much less in the former region than in the latter. The greater implication of Břetislav’s

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433 ‘Nolo, ut secundum ritum nostrae terre huius rei violator in servitutem redigatur, sed potius nostril inmutabilis decreti per angariam, qualiscumque sit persona, redigatur in Ungariam, et nequaquam liceat, ut precio se redimat aut in hanc terram redeat.’ CB, §II.2, p. 85.
434 For slave trading, Sutt, 111. For exile, Wolverton, Chronicle, 115.
435 Sexual misconduct was also punishable by enslavement in Lombard and Visigothic law. For example, Leges Langobardorum, ed. F. Beyerle (Witzenhausen, 1962), pp. 58-9 (Edictus Rothari §221), p. 112 (Liutprandi Leges §24.VI), pp. 146-7 (Liutprandi Leges §98.III); Lex Visigothorum, ed. C. Zeumer,
A decree is that it could serve as further proof for establishing Zakon as Moravian by demonstrating the disproportionate references to penal enslavement to be representative of a wider Czech legal context. Regarding penal enslavement as a tool for creating tradable slaves, it is difficult to draw conclusions with only one piece of evidence, not even in its original form. If this had been the case in Bohemia’s undocumented legal past, by 1039 the ruler sought to change it. It may have been that by the mid-eleventh century, the Prague market had a sufficient external supply of slaves, and there was no need to create more from the Bohemian population (i.e. from insiders). This context is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Nevertheless, these laws are important in establishing that crime justified enslavement and sale, and we must consider the possibility that such punishments were motivated by economic reasons in the Czech Lands. Early penal enslavement in Kent does not seem to have been motivated by trade, since only one law refers to the opportunity for sale. Then again, given the lack of evidence either way, what appeared in early Anglo-Saxon law may not have represented reality. Ine’s prohibition of the sale of penal slaves abroad was probably in reaction to ongoing circumstances. Penal slaves, at least in the Czech Lands and very early Anglo-Saxon England, were not completely beyond the reach of slave trading.

**SELF-SALE**

Like penal enslavement, self-sale also served as a means of creating slaves from insiders, or the people within an ethnic or cultural group. However, there is very little evidence to suggest that individuals who willingly entered into slavery were considered tradable slaves. Mention of self-sale is relatively rare throughout medieval Europe, and from the seventh through the eleventh centuries, there is no reference to it at all in the Czech source material. It seems unlikely that a practice which appears to have taken place throughout Europe would have been non-existent in regions heavily influenced by the Franks and Byzantines; and yet, the vast difference in Czech penal enslavement suggests that extrapolating from Western norms to East Central Europe would be a risky endeavour. It may even be the case that negotiated forms of unfreedom did not exist in the Czech lands, and that voluntary entry into slavery was not an option. Therefore, self-sale will be addressed here in terms of Britain and Ireland only.

Self-sale remains a somewhat unique category of enslavement because those who became slaves were not already viewed as some sort of outcast. Victims of raiding were in many cases political enemies with, once captured and re-established, no local kinship support or protection. Penal slaves largely remained within their local area, but were rejected from their social network. Individuals who willingly entered slavery may have also had ties with family cut by their reduction in status. But since enslavement was a survival tactic rather than a punishment, self-sale may not have held the same stigma as penal slavery.

Indeed, self-sale was largely seen as a symptom of wider problems, and an occasion for pity rather than judgement. It was a symbol of times so difficult that voluntary enslavement was the only way to ensure that oneself and one’s family would not starve. The practice was probably common enough throughout the early medieval period, though we can expect the number of self-sales to have spiked during times of famine. The interest in restricting the age of self-sellers in Old English penitentials of the ninth through eleventh centuries may reflect the large numbers of people whose livelihoods were devastated by Viking attacks (see Chapter 6, p. 198). While this may seem fairly straightforward, many narrative texts use self-sale as a trope which, alongside famine, related directly to God’s punishment of a people for some grievous sin. Even in the twelfth century, Gerald of Wales in his Expugnatio Hibernica partly attributed the Norman conquest of Ireland to the Irish sin of purchasing self-sellers from England. While these individuals had been made available for sale, this does not appear to have been the norm. The change in English warfare during the early Norman period would have significantly reduced the number of chattel slaves on the market, and the purchase of self-sellers may represent an effort to continue to satisfy Irish demand.

In Britain, voluntarily enslaved people may have been typically settled on estates, like penal slaves. In a tenth-century manumission from the Durham Liber Vitae, the manumittor frees all those whose ‘heads she took for their food in the evil days’. It seems

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436 After all, Ine’s law regarding kinship obligations suggests that family were not responsible for any member who became a slave, and it does not specify how the enslavement came about, Gesetze, i.122 (Ine §74.2).
440 See Introduction, pp. 7-8.
a reasonable assumption that further sale and treatment as chattel slaves was unlikely, though it is hard to be certain given the general lack of evidence. If voluntary entry into unfreedom was treated similarly in Anglo-Saxon England to how it was on the Continent, time served as a slave may have been seen as a temporary commitment. Records there indicate that the individual may have been able to strike a bargain, and eventual manumission or maintaining property were agreed upon as conditions of the enslavement. In these respects, self-sellers in Britain and Ireland were most likely separate from tradable chattel slaves. However, the example of purchasing self-sellers in Ireland demonstrates that, like penal slavery, what was supposed to happen and what actually happened may have been very different. Though it seems logical that self-sellers would have remained with the person to whom they entered into service, there is no evidence to confirm or deny the regularity of such an occurrence. Becoming a chattel slave was a possibility of self-sale, but if Continental sources are anything to go by, it was an uncommon circumstance.

RAIDING AND CAPTIVE TAKING

Even with notable exceptions, the enslavement of insiders could have only contributed partly to the pool of tradable slaves. Medieval sources suggest that the most successful and consistent means of creating such chattel slaves were through violence: raiding and warfare. These events involved the taking of captives who could either be enslaved outright by their captors or sold into slavery at the earliest opportunity. Captives were not necessarily the sole targets of raids, which also involved taking livestock and portable wealth, as well as the destruction of crops and buildings. Whether the numbers of captives taken fluctuated with the scale of the slave trade will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

As to why these outsiders were ‘more eligible’ to become chattel slaves than insiders, the answer lies in social ties. Enslaved outsiders were forcibly removed from their communities with their capture, greatly reducing the possibility that kin would be able to ransom them or present a legal challenge to any status reduction. Penal slaves and self-sellers, on the other hand, in many cases remained within reach of family and friends who

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could potentially provide the necessary compensation to free the slave. Captives, without access to these networks, effectively died a ‘social death’.

Various social, political, and economic nuances played into this, serving as part of what Joseph C. Miller has identified as the historical strategy of slaving. The capture and enslavement of enemies allowed the slavers to become less marginal by demonstrating their superiority over rival groups and enhancing their own economic potential. Socially, captives were viewed as trophies. They were living, breathing representations of their captor’s victory, a victory perfected through the shame and degradation of an enemy’s enslavement. Similarly, enslavement symbolised the utter failure of a lord or political leader to defend his or her own people and preserve their free status. Therefore, we can see the enslavement of captives not just as a symbol of victory, but also as a more calculated political move. In this respect, raiding and the subsequent enslavement of captives often appears within the context of broader conflict. Such is the case with the series of raids undertaken by the Moravians and Eastern Franks over the course of fifteen years in the late ninth century. These retaliatory raids culminated in a highly-politicised event – the blinding of the Moravian duke Rastislav while he was a prisoner of Louis the German in 870. The taking of captives functioned as a tool in a larger power struggle, which helped to undermine the authority of a political leader.

There was also an inherently economic side to raiding and enslavement. Raiding meant the removal or destruction of produce, and more importantly, the means of production. By removing labourers through killing or capture, raiding ensured the severity of an enemy’s defeat, simultaneously crippling their ability to rebuild. The impact of this strategy can be seen in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. When the Northmen destroyed houses and grain in Northampton in 1065, they also captured hundreds of men, ‘so that shire and other neighbouring shires were worse for it for many winters’. By enslaving the captives taken, the raiders also guaranteed a rise in their own economic status through the use of

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444 This is perhaps related to ideas expressed in the Irish text *De duodecim abusivis saeculi* by Pseudo-Cyprian, which pronounces an Old Testament view that the failure of a king was a sin, and could have disastrous effects on his people in the form of divine retribution, R. Meens, ‘Politics, mirrors of princes and the Bible: sins, kings and the well-being of the realm’, *Early Medieval Europe* 7:3 (1998), 345-57.

445 AF, s.a. 870, p. 72.

446 ‘swa þæt seo scir 7 þa oðra scira þæ dearnearh sindon wurdan fela wintra þe wyrsan’, ASC D, s.a. 1065, p. 78.
slaves in domestic production capabilities.\textsuperscript{447} Selling the captives would have also supplied a large amount of valuable goods or cash in exchange. Looking back on Brian Boru’s campaigns against the Dublin Vikings in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, the early twelfth-century \textit{Wars of the Gaedhil with the Gaill} praises Brian for his successful capture of foreign slaves: ‘So that there was not a winnowing sheet from Ben Edair to Tech Duin, in western Erinn that had not a foreigner in bondage on it, nor was there a quern without a foreign woman.’\textsuperscript{448} The author then goes on to note that no Irish man or woman needed to do any work, because they had so many Scandinavian slaves to do it all for them.\textsuperscript{449} While the latter example is a dramatisation of later years, at their heart, both the \textit{Wars} and the Chronicle indicate an inherent link between the act of slave raiding and economic production.

This is even before we consider that some raids were conducted specifically to procure merchandise. Bernold of Constans insisted that during Henry IV’s campaign in Swabia in 1077, the Bohemian troops specifically targeted people in their raids rather than livestock, because the people could be raped and sold.\textsuperscript{450} Bernold may have been mistaken in his assertion that the Swabians were sold to be eaten by dog-headed men (\textit{cinocephalis}), but there is no reason to doubt that the victims of raids were enslaved. The enslavement of captives was intended to both benefit the raider and further injure the raided party.

David Wyatt has taken the view that rape and sexual subjugation were necessary components of the enslavement process for captives of both sexes, and through this assertion has downplayed any economic incentive behind raiding.\textsuperscript{451} For Wyatt, slavery holds more significance as symbolic state of subjugation than as a functional social class; sexual abuse was a tool for not only making slaves, but also humiliating people to the point of being like slaves.\textsuperscript{452} Ultimately, this whole system functioned to support the warrior class and uphold ideas of ‘hyper-masculinity’, an argument supported in part by the use of graphic sexual imagery in Warner of Rouen’s eleventh-century poem \textit{Moriuht} to emphasise the titular character’s abject humiliation by his Viking captors and complete ‘emasculcation’ via rape.\textsuperscript{453} There are, however, several problems with failing to take the economic side into

\textsuperscript{447} The need for labour may have been the primary motivation for some slave raids, Bartlett, 118-20.  
\textsuperscript{449} \textit{Wars}, 115.  
\textsuperscript{450} Bernold of Constans, 414. See further discussion, p. 151.  
\textsuperscript{452} Wyatt, \textit{Slaves}, 241.  
\textsuperscript{453} Wyatt, \textit{Slaves}, 169-71, 395, for \textit{Moriuht}, 229-36 especially.
account. Rape was a fact of life for slaves, but they also played crucial roles in increasing the domestic and agricultural production of their owners. And slave status did function separately from sexual abuse; one could exist without the other. Sexual abuse is therefore neither sufficient nor necessary to define slavery. Without consideration of basic economic principles, we can only perceive part of the broader purposes behind slave raiding.

Despite the seeming ubiquity of raiding in the source material, our knowledge of just how it contributed to enslavement and the creation of chattel slaves is somewhat limited by the scope of these sources. The taking of captives appears most frequently in annals, which were largely interested in politics and high status, and the victories and defeats it represented. As a result, raiding almost exclusively occurs in the context of cross-border, political warfare. This does not mean that raiding never occurred within a polity, merely that such events remain largely invisible. After all, Alice Rio has pointed out that the number of attempts throughout Europe to legislate against the kidnapping of free people is certainly suggestive of slave raiding within borders.454

Religion played a significant role in limiting the visibility of slave trading. The concerns of Christian secular and ecclesiastical leaders regarding the sale of Christian slaves to non-Christians impose significant limitations on the visibility of Christians trading Christians. Because of this, it has been somewhat taken for granted that the same perspective also altered the focus of raiding, when really raiding between co-religionists is simply less obvious than that which occurred between, for example, Christians and pagans.455 However, this scenario depends on the time and region in which the source was written. Irish sources are very concerned with the capture of Christians by pagan Vikings in the ninth and early tenth centuries, but by the second half of the tenth century and into the eleventh, the most frequently recorded raids were those undertaken by Christian Irish kings on other Christian Irish kingdoms. And though Frankish annals record raids by the pagan Polabian Slavs across Frankish borders, they simultaneously devote a considerable amount of time to raids conducted by Christian Moravians. It would seem, therefore, that raiding by non-Christians was a concern, but not as great a one as the disregard for political borders, and the failure this represented to political leaders. It was more often when the ownership

454 Rio, Slavery, 20. See Appendix, Table 2 for examples.
455 Rio, Slavery, 20-1.
and sale of slaves came into play that religious outrage peaked, than the act of their enslavement. Even with the limitations of the textual sources, enslaved captives must have formed the bulk of tradable chattel slaves in the British Isles and the Czech lands during the early Middle Ages. Unlike penal slaves and self-sales, war captives came with no communal ties, which had been severed by the captives’ violent removal from their homes. Since they were perceived as trophies, it is unlikely that captives were able to negotiate the terms of their enslavement as were penally and voluntarily enslaved people. The lack of social ties and the trophy status held by captives meant there would have been no resistance or repercussions to their sale. The transition from captive to chattel slave was probably easy, even fluid, ensuring that captives remained the largest source of tradable slaves.

TARGETS OF ENSLAVEMENT

The eligibility of captives to become chattel slaves played a considerable role in their enslavement, but not all captives were eventually enslaved. Gender, social status, and even luck played a role in what was probably a multi-stage process beginning with capture and ending with being ransomed, kept as a slave, or sold into slavery. At the start of the process, individuals were targeted for capture by gender, though different types of sources have led to opposing conclusions amongst historians regarding just which gender was preferred by raiders. The gender of captives is usually not explicitly referenced, and the masculine plural forms of Latin words such as captivus can denote either men alone or mixed groups of men and women. Where prices are listed, women tend to be valued more highly than men. Some historians have taken this to signify that female slaves were scarcer than their male counterparts, with the implication that men were the primary targets of raiding. Such a situation is certainly plausible, but demand also explains the higher valuation of female slaves; people pay more for things which are desirable. On the other hand, we must consider that the Arab demand for eunuchs caused an increase in the proportion of men and boys who were enslaved. This could explain the price and name evidence for Mediterranean

456 For example, a female slave for sale is taxed at one tremissis, but a male slave is only taxed at one twelfth of a solidus, or one quarter of a female slave, Inquisitio, §6, p. 251. A female slave is worth 24 solidi, while a male is only worth 12, Lex Baiwariorum, ed. E. de Schwind, MGH, Leges 3 (Hannover, 1926), §XIII.9, p. 316.

sources, but only until the peak of this demand in the first half of the tenth century, and only if the demand for eunuchs indeed surpassed that for women.

John Gillingham has likewise refuted the argument of scarcity by looking at twelfth- and thirteenth-century narrative sources from northern Europe, which portray women and children as the intended targets of raiding.458 Both groups would have been deemed more suitable for domestic labour than men, and women could be sexually exploited and produce more slaves. Men, on the other hand, were killed outright.459 Gillingham has also pointed out a reluctance, especially amongst Anglo-Saxonists, to translate non-gender specific terms such as *homo* (Latin) and *manna* (Old English) as such; where these would likely signify ‘people’, they are often translated as ‘men’.460 One suggestive piece of evidence which Gillingham does not address is the use of the term *cumal*, literally meaning a female slave, as a unit of currency in Ireland. By the seventh century, this had come to mean the equivalent value of a female slave in gold or silver, but presumably it stemmed from the regular use of unfree women as payment at a distant point in history.461 The fact that *mug*, the male equivalent, does not appear to have been used in a similar context suggests that not only were slave women more valuable, but that they were more readily available than men for making such payments.

Women and children were probably targeted for capture and subsequent enslavement, but not to such an extent that men were excluded from the process. After all, Viking raids on monasteries must have created a significant number of male British and Irish slaves, though monks may have been perceived differently as non-combatants rather than warriors.462 The *Penitential of Theodore* also makes it clear that both men and women were taken as captives by setting down how long either sex must wait to remarry after their spouse is captured with no hope of ransom, and what to do if they remarry, only to have their first spouse return.463 The early tenth-century Raffelstetten customs tariff also taxed

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462 M. Valante argues that monks were the ideal candidates for castration and sale to Arab buyers, since their education and literacy would make them ideal for use in bureaucratic positions, ‘Castrating monks: Vikings, slave trade, and the value of eunuchs’, in L. Tracey (ed.), *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2013), 174-87.
463 *Poenitentiale Theodori*, 200.
male and female slaves transported down the Danube; though a higher tax was placed on women, male slaves were still taxed at the same considerable rate as a mare.\textsuperscript{464} Ultimately, enslaved women were more sought-after, but enslaved men were also important to the idea of economic superiority through the produce of slave labour.

Enslavement or sale into slavery after capture were almost certainly the most common outcomes, but ransom and execution were also conceivable. Each of these was dependent upon on the will of the captor and what message they wished to convey to the raided party. It is easy to think of captives for ransom and captives for enslavement as two distinct categories, but it is unlikely that there was much of a delineation in the early Middle Ages. Which outcome each captive faced may not have been immediately obvious. Captives were probably available for ransom should the money be forthcoming, and were enslaved when it was not. \textit{Zakon Suydnji Ljudem} suggests that this was the case in Great Moravia, stating that captives who are ransomed after purchase should be released, and that unransomed captives can labour towards a set redemption price.\textsuperscript{465} In other times and places, enslavement would likewise be the next logical step for unransomed captives. Their captors would be unlikely to simply free them or kill them outright when a more profitable option was available, and when the execution of a high-status captive would provoke immediate retaliation. Enslavement would ensure at least a minimal economic gain for the captor, either through sale or by keeping the captive for domestic production. Higher status captives would have even held value as trophies, causing no small humiliation for those who had failed to ransom them.

The Irish Fragmentary Annals indicate that, at least for a typical Viking raid, all those who were kept alive could expect to face either ransom or enslavement, regardless of status as clergy or layman.\textsuperscript{466} High-status captives, however, certainly had a greater probability of successful ransom, if only because they had the means and connections to secure the payment. It is thus unsurprising that we find Olaf Sitricson, the king of Dublin, was ransomed from the Irish in the same year as his capture, and that Muirchertach son of Niall, the king of Ailech, was even able to ransom himself.\textsuperscript{467} Such circumstances were by no means the rule, and there are indications that high-status captives could not always rely on

\textsuperscript{464} \textit{Inquisitio}, §6, p. 251.
\textsuperscript{465} \textit{Zakon}, §21, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{466} \textit{FA}, s.a. 908, pp. 155-7.
\textsuperscript{467} \textit{AU}, s.a. 1029, p. 467; The reference to Muirchertach being taken to a fleet of ships implies that the raid was a Viking one, \textit{AU}, s.a. 939, p. 390.
their connections. The abbot of Killeigh must not have been confident in eventual ransom after his capture in 937; he drowned the following year while fleeing Vikings near Dalkey Island who were probably his captors.\textsuperscript{468} Poul Holm believes that the abbot was brought there to await sale in the Dublin slave market when ransom was not forthcoming.\textsuperscript{469}

Formerly high-status female slaves do appear in sources, albeit rarely, indicating some instances of unsuccessful ransoming. Between 709 and 731, Brihtwold, Archbishop of Canterbury, attempted to secure the ransom of a girl held captive by Abbot Beorwold of Glastonbury. Brihtwold’s appeal to Forthhere, Bishop of Sherborne, was prompted by Beorwold’s continued refusal to accept the payment of 300 shillings, the highest wergild value in Kent. We do not know the outcome of Brihtwold’s petition, but until her release the girl must remain ‘in servitutis tristitia’.\textsuperscript{470} The more contentious fourteenth-century \textit{Laxdæla Saga} also tells of a high-status woman living in slavery: Melkorka, the Irish princess for sale with other slave women in Norway.\textsuperscript{471} This example could very easily be a literary trope. Melkorka is, after all, the mother of one the saga’s heroes. There is, however, corroborating genealogical evidence from the twelfth-century \textit{Landnámabók} which suggests that this story may be based on long-standing oral tradition.\textsuperscript{472} While medieval sources do not elucidate how common the enslavement of high-status captives really was, it cannot be completely ruled out.

Just as high status did not guarantee ransom, lower status did not guarantee enslavement. When Kildare was raided in 964, almost all of the clergy members were ransomed as an act of charity by one Niall ua Eruilb.\textsuperscript{473} Similarly, when the Bohemians captured a number of Henry III’s soldiers during an attack in 1040, Henry ransomed them himself the following year.\textsuperscript{474} In such instances, the ransomed captives tend to be part of a group which would have included those of both high and low status, perhaps one reason such events were recorded. Even more significant is that the ransom of these mixed-status groups only appears when it was paid for or conducted by a particularly important person.

\textsuperscript{468} AFM, s.a. 937-938, p. 639.  
\textsuperscript{469} Holm, 328.  
\textsuperscript{470} Brihtwold to Forthhere, in \textit{Councils & Ecc.}, III.284; For the wergild, \textit{Gesetze} i.9 (Hlothhere & Eadric §1).  
\textsuperscript{472} J. Kristjánsson, ‘Ireland and the Irish in Icelandic tradition’, in Clarke, et al. (eds.), \textit{Ireland and Scandinavia}, 274. See also Chapter 5, p. 158.  
\textsuperscript{473} AU s.a. 964, p. 495.  
\textsuperscript{474} Herman of Reichenau (Contractus), \textit{Chronicon}, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH, SS 5 (Hannover, 1849), 123.
Lower-status ransoming may have occurred with some regularity, but we have no way of knowing the extent thanks to the interest of the source material.

Ransom was a possibility for those of both high and low status, but both groups also contributed to the pool of tradable slaves. Captives should only be excluded from this pool when we know for certain that they were not enslaved. Most recorded ransoms were of high-status, high-profile individuals, but the handful of ransoms noted in sources, regardless of the captive’s status, are most likely only a fraction of those which took place. The ransoming procedure must have been well- engrained, since even in sixth century Ireland, the *Penitential of Finnian* punished theft of church funds under the pretence of redeeming captives.475

Ransom was not the only alternative to enslavement. Many captives probably died before they could be enslaved or sold due to the harsh conditions of their captivity, as was the case for one Étgal of Scelec who starved to death in 824 while being held by the Vikings.476 The death of captives could not have been a desirable outcome, since death meant neither ransom payments nor profit from sale, though captors may have accepted a high degree of loss amongst their captives. High-status captives also faced politically-motivated alternatives to ransom or enslavement, such as execution and maiming. The son of a king of Leinster was executed by Vikings following his capture in 980, which might be related to the Irish sack of Dublin that same year.477 Maiming served a similar political purpose; a ruler could effectively eliminate a rival by reducing that rival’s perceived physical capability to lead. In 870, when the Moravian duke Rastislav was captured, Louis the German had Rastislav blinded, which effectively removed the duke from the political scene.478 If captors wished to send a political message, some high-status captives may never have been eligible for ransom, nor at risk of enslavement.

It is worth making a brief aside here to note that the execution or disfigurement of high-status captives mirrors the fate of forfeited hostages. While an agreement was in place, hostages were high-ranking members of a society which was responsible for their wellbeing. The fate of an agreement rested on their treatment. Research on Carolingian and Anglo-Saxon hostage surety has demonstrated that there is no record of enslavement in the event

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475 *Penitentialis Vinniani*, §30, p. 84.
476 CI, s.a. 824, p. 282.
477 AU, s.a. 980, p. 417.
478 AF, s.a. 870, p. 70.
of a broken contract. This also appears to have been the case regarding the complex airtire and gíall surety systems in Ireland. Rather, execution marked the end of an agreement with unmistakable finality, and disfigurement served as a long-term reminder of one party’s capabilities. Ryan Lavelle has argued that Cnut’s command to cut off the hands, ears, and noses of his English hostages in 1014 sent a much stronger message to the English than execution would have. Both Lavelle and Adam Kosto are quick to mention that records of forfeited hostages are few and far between, but given the significance of the hostages themselves and the importance of the message conveyed by execution or disfigurement, enslavement seems unlikely.

For some captives, there may even have been a chance of rescue. Domhnall Claon, the king of Leinster, was captured by Vikings in 979, but was liberated during a sack of Dublin the following year along with Irish hostages. Thietmar of Merseburg likewise tells of how the Margrave Henry in 1017 liberated Bohemians who had been recently taken captive by the Moravians and brought them home. It is unlikely that rescue was normal by any stretch, but it did happen. Like ransom, it enabled captives to return to their own society as free people with no reduction in original status. While it is important to acknowledge that rescue was a possibility, it did not play a significant enough role to factor heavily into our consideration of who could and could not become enslaved.

The main point of this discussion has been to clearly establish that capture did not guarantee enslavement. While the victims of raiding formed the bulk of chattel slaves, captives could potentially avoid enslavement through ransom, whether they were of high or low status, and it is likely that many captives died before becoming slaves, especially during times of large-scale trading when we can expect the holding conditions of large numbers of captives to have been appalling. High-status captives were also known to fall victim to political machinations, resulting in their execution or maiming. When and why captives

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481 Lavelle, 293-4.
482 Lavelle, 292; Kosto, 64.
faced these alternative outcomes is not always clear. We can, however, attempt to outline a general procedure beginning at the point of capture and ending with enslavement.

During times of small-scale slave trading, captives would have largely been brought back with the raiders and given agricultural or domestic work as slaves. This system will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter, and it differs significantly from large-scale slave trading operations, which will be outlined here. Captives were most likely held together in large groups while more raid victims were gathered and long-distance transportation to markets was organised. In such a system, ransom could not have been an indefinite possibility. There must have been a point of no return, at which the prospect of ransom ended and sale as a slave became imminent. The window of opportunity for ransoming would have needed to be long enough for the payment to be assembled, and for someone to make the journey to the captive’s holding point. If all captives were sold at the first opportunity, the likelihood of ransom would have decreased rapidly from the date of capture. After all, prisoners would have required food and shelter, meaning that the longer a person remained in captivity, the smaller the profit for the captor. The farther that captives were taken from their homes, the less likely ransom became.

Holding locations for captives must have been well known at least by locals, since ransoms could only be successful if the captive’s kin knew where to take the payment. In the *Vita Findani*, the future saint appears to have had a destination in mind when he set out to ransom his sister. Holding sites for captives have not been identified archaeologically, but if they do emerge, they will likely be in liminal areas which have produced evidence of trade - liminal because ransom locations would have needed to be accessible to both parties, and with trading evidence because both ransom payments and slave purchases required an exchange of significant wealth.

With all this in mind, the enslavement of many captives was likely a drawn-out, multi-stage process. For those who were not immediately sold or enslaved after the raid, ransom or rescue were still means of avoiding enslavement. They could also face more tragic prospects such as death through mistreatment and, for powerful prisoners, politicised execution. If these individuals remained unclaimed, and if they survived the ordeal, sale and enslavement were the last stage of this process. It would seem that the majority of captives eventually did become slaves, though such a presumption comes from sources only

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485 *Vita Findani*, 503.
interested in high-status prisoners and in the freeing of captives as something that reflected well on high-status people.

CONCLUSIONS

Enslavement in early medieval Europe was not merely a side effect of war. Though violent raiding remains the most visible means of enslavement, it was not the only one. Penal slavery and self-sale regularly created slaves, but these slaves were probably much less likely to be sold. Penal slavery may have contributed to the pool of tradable slaves, but we have only a very narrow window into such a process, and these cases do not compare in scale to raiding, the largest and most continuous source of tradable chattel slaves. Enslavement offered a means of further denigrating the victims of raiding in a process that symbolised personal defeat and political failure, and also served practically to remove an enemy’s labour resources. Additionally, raiding severed the social ties of enslaved captives, making them eligible for sale without the possibility of ransom, unlike the majority of cases involving penal slaves and self-sales. However, by considering slave raiding alongside other means, it becomes clear that enslavement, and especially the creation of chattel slaves, was not a static process for the early medieval period in either the British Isles or the Czech lands. It is important for studies of the early medieval slave trade, then, that we truly consider the methods involved in the creation of tradable slaves, and how these methods varied regionally and chronologically.
Small-scale Slave Trading

Numbers for slaves or enslaved captives are rare in any part of Europe, and the likelihood of literary hyperbole or the unusual circumstances they describe prohibit us from accepting them completely at face value. In lieu of concrete figures, I will rely on a more impressionistic sense of ‘scale’ to approximate the extent of slave trading and its pervasiveness in medieval societies as suggested by the role of slave trading in texts, the degree to which conditions of warfare created a steady supply of slaves, and the role of trade networks and outlets in promoting their saleability. By addressing quantitative questions, even when precise answers remain elusive, we can assess how raiding and trading practices changed over time in relation to larger economic trends. None of the issues listed above is alone sufficient to measure the scope and impact of slave trading. The role of slave trading in textual sources is only helpful for times and places where significant numbers of texts survive which are of a type likely to mention slave trading, such as law codes and saints’ lives (see Chapter 1). For example, such a method would prove much more effective for late Anglo-Saxon England than for pre-Christian Bohemia. A sudden increase in records of captive taking may reflect an increased demand for slaves, probably as a result of trade, but this could also result from growing moral outrage to the process of enslavement. As for the role of trade networks and outlets, slaves were probably transported via the same merchants, markets, and trade routes as other goods, which means that large-scale, long-distance slave trading cannot have existed when no other goods were being transported in this manner. On the reverse, this does not mean that the existence of long-distance general trade is immediately indicative of large-scale slave trading, only that the infrastructure to support such slave trading existed.

By taking these three factors together, periods of small-scale and large-scale slave trading can be distinguished. In Britain and Ireland, it was exclusively small-scale up until the introduction of Scandinavian trade networks in the ninth century. In the Czech lands, large-scale trading only came with the rise of the Prague market in the mid-tenth century. Even when the Viking and Prague slave trades were characterised by large-scale networks, small-scale, opportunistic operations continued to exist. In order to examine how small-scale trading looked and operated, I will address the motivations for slave sales, the identity of the merchants and locations of the markets, and, most importantly, whether there is
evidence to suggest the regular export of slaves as a commodity. Assessment of these practices will be via a case study of early Anglo-Saxon England and Great Moravia, two regions which are commonly assumed to have participated in flourishing long-distance slave trade networks, the evidence for which deserves re-examination. It will become clear that ad hoc sales were often motivated by politics (both high and domestic), and these factors could prompt long-distance sales which were by no means indicative of large-scale trading.

**THE ROLE OF ENSLAVEMENT**

We can expect methods of enslavement to have been directly impacted by large-scale slave trading. High demand for slaves would require ways to supply it. As we have seen, raiding and penal enslavement could both contribute to the pool of tradable slaves. Examination of these processes in pre-Viking Britain and Ireland and the Czech lands before the tenth century will demonstrate that even frequent raiding could be predominantly political in nature, with slave-taking remaining secondary to the flouting of authority represented by these border-crossing expeditions.

As discussed in Chapter 3, penal slaves in England and late ninth-century Moravia could be sold, but limitations in our knowledge of how legal texts functioned mean that we cannot determine just how often these transactions occurred. They were certainly opportunistic sales, dependent on the offence and the offender’s connections. The Great Moravian *Zakon Suydnji Ljudem* is unique in its overt, regular sanctioning of the sale of penal slaves, but some issues regarding the text’s function make it difficult to firmly link the creation of penal slaves with support of a slave trade. Firstly, enslavement most likely served as an alternative to the mutilations prescribed by the *Ecloga*. The punishment remained severe and represented a sharp change in the criminal’s social standing within the community (much as would be caused by a physical scar or amputation), but the offender did not undergo the violence of losing a limb. Their sale also provided a compensation payment to the victim or to charity, depending on the offence. Furthermore, as with Wihtred’s early Kentish law, it is entirely unclear whether the Moravian laws were regularly enacted or not. The clauses comprising *Zakon* may have been promulgated as a part of Byzantine Christianisation which lasted only until a dramatic shift towards Frankish influence in 886 (see p. 137 below). We also do not know if anyone besides the author saw these laws as a viable solution to perceived problems of pre-Christian Slavic law. Penal enslavement may well have created saleable slaves in Anglo-Saxon England and Great
Moravia, but they are unidentifiable as such outside of law codes. We have no records which clearly indicate that the sale of penal slaves happened – only that it was possible –, making penal slavery not especially helpful in evaluating the scale of enslavement for sale.

Raid victims were deemed more suitable for sale due to their lack of social ties within the community that was selling them. In Britain and Ireland before the ninth century, and the Czech lands before the tenth century, raiding appears to have been politically motivated, and authors did not consider captive taking to be particularly noteworthy. Irish annals and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle record hardly any instances of captive taking, though examples of raids and battles are common enough. Other types of sources refer to captive taking and enslavement, suggesting that the absence of these processes in annals does not mean they were rare or uncommon. Annals are silent, rather, because captive taking was the anticipated outcome of raiding, and thus not particularly noteworthy. From seventh-century Ireland, the Irish Vita Columbae describes a scenario in which Columba asks the magician Broichan to free his ‘peregrinam...captivam’, who is also described as ancillula.486 The story itself is a denouncement of non-Christian ownership of Christian slaves, but the descriptors ‘captive’ and ‘slave’ both applied to the situation of one individual. The roughly contemporary Penitential of Theodore likewise indicates ongoing slave raiding in England when it outlines procedures for remarriage following a spouse’s capture.487 In the following century, the ecclesiastical legal text Cáin Domnaig insisted that violating the Law of Sunday would ensure raiding by pagan foreigners who would carry off the Irish as slaves.488 These examples all demonstrate that captive taking through warfare indeed created slaves despite limited explicit references to this process in the sources.

Even during the Viking Age in the British Isles, enslavement through capture did not always occur on a massive scale, and could happen outside of warfare. In the ninth-century Vita Findani, Findan and his followers are captured while en route to ransom Findan’s sister. Only after discussion amongst themselves do the Norsemen decide to let them go so as not to waylay those people attempting to make a ransom payment.489 Later on, Findan becomes embroiled in a conflict, resulting in his capture by Northmen hired by Findan’s enemy to get rid of him. After Findan is tricked into attending dinner, he is ambushed, carried off, and

486 Life of Columba, 140-2.
487 Poenitentiale Theodori, in Councils & Ecc., II.xiii.20, II.xiii.22, p. 200.
489 Vita Findani, 503.
thereafter sold several times to various Scandinavian owners. Neither of these situations can be described as part of large-scale enslavement practices, although they could exist alongside it, as Chapter 5 will show. These Vikings were opportunistic, picking off travellers and serving as attackers for hire.

While a greater frequency of documented raids could indicate larger-scale slaving operations, in some cases it is more likely that increased reference to captive taking is merely a reflection of the identity of the raiders. Where Irish annals and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle largely ignore captives taken as part of inter-chieftaincy conflicts, they carefully note those captured by foreigners or non-Christians. Beginning with the 793 raid on Lindisfarne, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is not shy about describing the horrors of Viking attacks, and the same is true for Irish annals from the mid-ninth century onwards. Likewise, the high visibility of Moravian raids in Frankish annals stems from Moravians’ position as foreign, not-entirely-Christian Slavs. No Moravian chronicles exist to provide an opposing perspective, and Frankish raids on Moravia are rarely mentioned in the Frankish material, probably a result of Frankish authors having no objections to such activity. The resulting picture is one in which the Franks often fell victim to frequent Slavic raids, though most discussion of raiding for this region assumes the opposite: that Slavs were overwhelmingly the victims of Frankish raids. Given the political bent of Great Moravian captive taking (see Chapter 3), it seems a reasonable assessment that the more visible raids by Moravians on Frankish territory are a symptom of the surviving source material rather than the scale of enslavement.

The same is true regarding armed conflict between Bohemians and the Franks. Battles and skirmishes appear in Frankish annals as early as 846, when the coalescing power of the Czech dukes posed a growing threat to expanding Frankish borders. The giving of Bohemian hostages to the Franks in 848 and 849 and by the Franks to the Bohemians in 849 likewise illustrates an uneasy relationship along the border long before the Bohemians became politically unified under the Přemyslids. The Annals of Xanten suggest this period of unrest, particularly an attack by Bavarians in Bohemia, was a political manoeuvre

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490 Vita Findani, 503-4.
492 AF, s.a. 846, p. 36.
493 AF, s.a. 848, p. 37; s.a. 849, p. 38.
calculated to take advantage of Louis the German’s illness.\textsuperscript{494} This situation illustrates the expressly politically motivated type of raiding described in Chapter 3, in which captives were the by-products of raiding and not the impetus for it.

In 869, the Annals of Fulda provide specific reference to slave raiding by the Bohemians, stating that they frequently crossed the Bavarian border to set fire to \textit{villae} and take women captive.\textsuperscript{495} They also appear as raiders in 880, when they, along with other Slavic groups, plundered those Slavs loyal to the Thuringians.\textsuperscript{496} What emerges from these annals is a situation similar to pre-Viking Britain and Ireland, in which raiding likely persisted in a politically fragmented society, but was taken for granted by authors. Captives were a side-effect of war. For the Bohemians, as with the Moravians, we have only the accounts by Frankish authors, so we are blind to any internal raiding or raiding along Slavic borders. If Bohemians regularly raided the Franks, they probably raided bordering Slavic groups as well.

The ninth-century Slavonic \textit{Life of Constantine} (Cyril) often appears as evidence to support what chronicles leave unclear: large-scale slave-taking in Great Moravia. The \textit{Life} is believed to have been written not long after the saint’s death by a member of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission to Moravia, perhaps by Methodius himself. In it, Rastislav and Kocel, the rulers of Moravia and Pannonia, respectively, gave Cyril nine hundred captives in lieu of gold and silver as a reward for his preaching and the creation of the Glagolitic alphabet. Cyril immediately freed the captives.\textsuperscript{497} This gift suggests a substantial slave population, one for which the figure of 900 captives was plausible. Within the \textit{Life}, however, the redemption of slaves appears to have been a device employed to demonstrate Cyril’s triumphs over non-Christian rulers. It bears striking resemblance to an earlier episode in which he requests two hundred Greek captives be given to him by the Jewish Khazar khagan in place of other gifts as a reward for Cyril’s proselytising.\textsuperscript{498} These episodes certainly demonstrate the potential for a large slave population within Great Moravia, but

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{494}‘Infirmante Ludewico rege, hostis illius Beioaria iter arripuit in Boemmanos; sed multis ex eis ibidem interfectis, valde humilitati reverse sunt in patriam.’ \textit{Annales Xantenses}, ed. B. de Simson, MGH, SS rer. Germ. 12 (Hannover, 1909), s.a. 849, p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{495}AF, s.a. 869, p. 67.
\item \textsuperscript{496}AF, s.a. 880, p. 94-5.
\item \textsuperscript{497}‘Life of Constantine’, in \textit{Medieval Slavic Lives}, §15, p. 71.
\item \textsuperscript{498}‘Life of Constantine’, in \textit{Medieval Slavic Lives}, §11, p. 63.
\end{itemize}
they do not elucidate slave trading. These captives could be penal slaves or the victims of raids, and were not necessarily linked to trade networks.

During the period of small-scale slave trading practices, captives were largely the by-products of raiding rather than the motivation for it. The goal of a raid was not to profit from selling slaves. Instead, enslaved captives were part of the loot distributed by a leader to his followers. Sale of these individuals mostly occurred when there was a surplus of captives, or when sale was more convenient than transporting them back to the captor’s home territory. When Adomnán, the abbot of Iona, made trips to Northumbria in 687 and 689 to ransom captives at the behest of the king of Brega, his mission must have operated on the assumption that at least some of the Irish captives remained with the people who had taken them. Sale away would have made the redemption of such captives nearly impossible, especially if a substantial amount of time had passed since they were taken.

Evidence for the scale of enslavement in seventh- and eighth-century Britain and Ireland and in the Czech lands before the mid-tenth century is highly suggestive of small-scale slave trading. Raiding was not conducted for the sole purpose of acquiring slaves. Rather, these slaves were the result of social and political processes which established them as symbols of victory and defeat. And though it is possible that penal slaves were created for sale, especially in Great Moravia, we have no knowledge of whether these laws were enacted on a practical level, or whether enslavement was intended as an alternative to mutilation. As I hope to demonstrate, all signs point to enslavement during these periods as a small-scale process unrelated to the profit of slave trading.

**REASONS FOR SALE**

The motivations for selling a slave could vary greatly and were not always derived from a desire for profit. Both newly-enslaved individuals and slaves by birth faced sale which was, in many cases, a direct response to problems presented by the slave themselves. These could be simple issues, such as ensuring peace within the home, or larger concerns involving ecclesiastical ideals or political conflict. As each case demonstrates, the distance at which a slave was sold or the effort expended by the slave owner to make a sale was dictated by the extent to which the slave or captive needed to be removed from their

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499 CI, s.a. 687, p. 167; s.a. 689, p. 169.
community and social ties. Long-distance sales were linked primarily to these issues and cannot be considered representative of large-scale slave trading.

The master-slave dynamic facilitated sexual relationships, and Christian authority figures perceived this as increasingly problematic. Sources only address the complications presented by male master-female slave relationships, though we can presume that at least some male slaves were exploited by either male or female owners.500 These situations must have been common and widely accepted by laypeople, who probably did not view sexual exploitation as necessitating the slave’s sale. Penitentials evidence the Church’s desire to curb such relationships, and that Christians sometimes acknowledged them as sinful. The need to remove the temptation (i.e. the slave themselves) led to varying prescriptions. The sixth-century Irish *Penitential of Finnian* intended that the slave be freed if she had borne her master children.501 However, if she had not been impregnated, she was to be sold, an idea which the seventh-century *Penitential of Cummean* restated.502 It is possible that clergymen in the Czech lands relied on Frankish penitentials, particularly given Bohemia’s political subordination to the East Frankish Empire in the later tenth and eleventh centuries. The *Penitential of Merseburg*, of eighth- or ninth-century date, draws from the *Penitential of Cummean* to stipulate sale for an impregnated female slave.503 However, the Old Church Slavonic penitential *Zapovědi světých otci* was adapted from a Latin text very similar to the *Penitential of Merseburg* for use in Great Moravia, and here the slave woman was to be manumitted rather than sold.504

In law codes throughout medieval Europe, it was generally unacceptable to have sex with another person’s slave, but there were fewer legal repercussions for having sex with one’s own. The exceptions to this in the British Isles and Czech lands, however, are both laws written by clergymen, which unsurprisingly aimed to bring secular law in line with ecclesiastical standards. Here we see pressure being put on slave owners to remove the temptation for sinful extra-marital sex by taking the slave out of the equation, in some cases through sale. Wulfstan, Archbishop of York authored Cnut’s early eleventh century laws, and in them we find II Cnut §54, which states that a man who fornicates with his own

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504 *Zapovědi světých otci*, ed. D. Bartoňková, MMFH 3 (Brno, 1967), 144.
female slave must forfeit her, undoubtedly drawing from penitential tradition.\textsuperscript{505} The forfeiture refers to manumission rather than sale, but the Zakon Suydnji Ljudem, most likely authored by a member of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission, was considerably harsher. As punishment for sex with one’s own female slave, not only was the woman to be sold out of the territory, but the man must fast for seven years and the proceeds of the sale were to be given to the poor.\textsuperscript{506} The newly-established Byzantine clergy may have sought through the severity of this law to clamp down on a practice which was widespread in Moravia, and probably held no repercussions before Christianisation.

Despite clergymen’s official stances on fornication with slaves, the penances mandated in councils and penitentials may not reflect reality. After all, concubinage (of slave or free women) appears to have been common in Britain and Ireland during the early Middle Ages, and ecclesiastical attempts to restrict or abolish the practice were not often successful, especially in earlier centuries.\textsuperscript{507} In the ninth-century Vita Prima Sancti Brigitae, when the slave woman Broisech becomes pregnant by her master, he does sell her, but not out of any remorse. In fact, after being told by a druid that Broisech is carrying a girl, Dubthach becomes all the more enamoured of his slave, since he only had sons.\textsuperscript{508} His wife continually presses him to sell Broisech; she wants the offspring out of the way, so there will be no competition with her own children.\textsuperscript{509} The ninth-century Vita Prima probably does not describe a sixth- or seventh-century context, and the early hagiographical exemplar has been lost.\textsuperscript{510} At the very least, the Vita Prima represents a later tradition in which the author does not seem at all perturbed by Dubthach’s adultery, though the ecclesiastical audience may have been much more willing to overlook the sin when it led to the birth of one of the most celebrated saints in Ireland.

Broisech is sold twice while pregnant. The first time is by Dubthach to a passing poet, with the implication that the sale was to assuage Dubthach’s wife. The poet, who takes

\textsuperscript{505} ‘Gif wiffæst wer hine forligce be his agenre wylne, pólege þære 7 bete for hine sylfnæ wið God 7 wið men’, Gesetze, i.348. For the origin of this idea in continental penitentials, see Councils & Synods I, pt. 1, 499 n.1.
\textsuperscript{506} Zakon, §4, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{509} ‘Dixit viro suo: Eiice et vende ancillam istam; ne progenies ipsius meam progeniem superet.’ Vita Prima, 118.
\textsuperscript{510} Cogitosus also drew from it, but excised any potentially relevant material for his seventh-century Vita Brigitae, Sharpe, ‘Vitae’, 106.
Broisech to his own region, does not keep her long before selling her to a visiting druid. Of the first transaction, we know little other than that the poet takes Broisech back to Úi Néill territory. The second sale provides more information, and we can presume that the transaction took place in or near the poet’s home. Both situations imply that the sale and purchase of slaves could be a relatively private affair, away from markets and separate from day-to-day exchange.

The circumstances of Broisech’s sale also suggest that opportunistic slave sales had a variety of motivations and allowed for considerable negotiation. The author of the Vita Prima explicitly mentions that Broisech’s unborn child remained Dubtach’s property. Although the druid takes her to Connacht and then to Munster, and although Brigit grows up and serves in his house, there is always the expectation that someday she will return to her father as his slave. While the penitentials and ecclesiastically-influenced laws suggest that the sale of a female slave was the final step in removing temptation and restoring household order, the Vita Prima illustrates a practical, secular approach to this situation. The sale of a pregnant slave served to assuage a jealous wife and ensure the inheritance rights of her children. The removal of temptation through the manumission or sale of slaves was certainly an ecclesiastical ideal, but this simplifies a nuanced situation. The Vita Prima makes clear that issues of inheritance and basic domestic tranquillity were at stake when a slave became pregnant by her master. Sale of these slave women was a means by which a slave owner might seek to placate his household without suffering a complete financial setback. The Vita Prima is a rare example of such a situation, and it is difficult to tell just how common these sales were, even if we assume that sexual abuse was a regular occurrence. There was very likely a disparity between the ideals of law codes and penitentials and the social reality, especially when we consider sexual abuse to have been a significant part of subjugating slaves and expressing dominance. The key point is that these sales would have been occasional, and did not require the existence of larger trade

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511 Vita Prima, 119.  
512 Vita Prima, 119. The detail about the Úi Néill may be a ninth-century detail, given that the clan was only founded around the time of Brigit’s birth in the mid-fifth century. By the ninth century, however, they had become one of the most powerful clans in Ireland.  
513 ‘Sed tame ille non vedidit par tum, quem habebat illa in utero’, Vita Prima, 119.  
514 This may be related to the importance of female slaves in providing offspring, an idea which was phased out through Christianisation, but which probably still held sway in mid-fifth-century Ireland, R.M. Karras, ‘Desire, descendants, and dominance: slavery, the exchange of women, and masculine power’, in Frantzen and Moffat (eds.), The Work of Work, 19. It may be equally significant as a political statement that Brigit lived with her slave mother in Munster, Connacht, and Úi Néill territory, but was herself never a slave to masters in those lands.  
networks. In the Irish penitentials and the Anglo-Saxon and Moravian law codes, the main goal was only to ensure that the slave became someone else’s property. As the *Vita Prima* suggests, these sales were probably carried out locally, though not necessarily to a local buyer. Such transactions would minimise expenses for the seller in a time and place where markets were not widespread or easily accessible.

Reasons for sale extended well beyond sexual exploitation, and could range from dissatisfaction with the labourer to greater socio-political issues. The Irish law tract *Gübretha Caratniad*, possibly composed before the second quarter of the eighth century, suggests that parents could sell their children into slavery when unable to feed them.\(^{516}\) Poverty and famine could thus lead to *ad hoc* enslavement. The *Vita Prima* also describes how Dubthach attempts to sell Brigit herself to the king because he views her charitable gifts to the poor as the theft of his property. He takes her to the king (presumably of Leinster, where Dubthach resides) and begs for her to be purchased, though the king declines.\(^{517}\) The king as a potential buyer may be a narrative device, but he would have been the person most likely to have the funds on hand for spontaneous slave purchases. It is also possible that Dubthach chose to sell Brigit rather than have her punished under the law because she was his own daughter, though this could also be a narrative device. These Irish examples illustrate, however, that like sexual exploitation, sale could be used on a localised, *ad hoc* basis to resolve domestic issues.

Regarding the sales of Brigit and Broisech themselves, the problems which necessitated their sales could be resolved locally, without removing the slave from the community (though Broisech was taken away by her new master anyway). Brigit and possibly her mother were born slaves. Their status was hereditary, and must have already been known, accepted, and acknowledged by their local community. They did not need to be removed from it geographically, as would captives, or legally, as did penal slaves, and so selling them to settle a domestic dispute or to be rid of a troublesome servant could take place within that local community, or at least within a political unit.

This assumes, of course, that the transfer of these slaves was legal. The tenth-century *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno* by Wulfstan of Winchester describes the story of a northern slave girl who is stolen from her master and carried south to Winchester, the royal seat of

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\(^{517}\) *Vita Prima*, 120. Dubthach as a Leinsterman, *Vita Prima*, 118.
Wessex and a substantial town. Upon reaching Winchester, the thief promptly sells the girl to an unkind woman. This same girl is later miraculously unchained at the tomb of St. Swithun (see Chapter 2, p. 62). The story probably dates from the late 960s to mid-970s, and Michael Lapidge speculates a more precise date of late 971 or early 972. The narrative implies that the man who sold the girl in Winchester had stolen her from her legal master, which means that the only way the thief could sell her successfully was to take her away from anywhere she might be recognised. Sale or transport over long distances could, therefore, indicate the motivations for sale rather than any typical patterns of slave trading.

Long-distance travel to markets in order to sell a slave was possible, but the surviving instance of this indicates that such travel was necessitated by specific circumstances rather than by any regular system of slave trading. Bede’s eighth-century *Historia Ecclesiastica* famously relates the story of Imma, the Northumbrian thegn who was sold to a Frisian as a result of Imma’s atypically high status and royal connections. After being wounded in the Battle of the Trent in 679, Imma is taken captive on the battlefield and brought to a Mercian comes. The comes assures Imma, who is disguised as a peasant, that he will not be killed. Over time, Imma’s high status becomes clear from his manner, and he ultimately confesses to it. The comes admits that because of his earlier promise, he cannot kill Imma in revenge for the kinsmen he lost in the battle. The solution then was to sell Imma, which he does in London to a Frisian. The scheme ultimately fails when Imma convinces the Frisian to accept his ransom from the king of Kent, the nephew of the Northumbrian queen Imma had previously served.

The logistics of Imma’s sale to a foreign merchant will be discussed below, and for the moment, Imma’s status remains the key issue at hand. Again, we cannot expect this situation to have been common; Bede records the tale precisely because it is so unusual. But it does highlight a situation in which sale into slavery served as a solution to a problem. Being unable to kill Imma put the comes in something of a quandary. The goal of Anglo-Saxon warfare was the slaughter of enemy combatants, especially those of high status. Given that he felt Imma needed to provide satisfaction for the feud as part of this process, the Mercian could not simply let his enemy go free. However, Imma’s status and high

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519 Wulfstan of Winchester, 217.
520 HE, IV.22, pp. 400-4.
connections meant that the best option was to sell Imma to a foreigner, ensuring that the thegn would be taken from Britain, so that to his kin he would be as good as dead.

Imma’s predicament is similar to that faced by some penal slaves. Sale abroad served to remove the law-breaking, problematic element from an immediate community as we see in Wihtred’s law or in Zakon. The major difference in these situations is that Imma’s kin had not willingly relinquished a claim on him, and through his connections he was able to secure a ransom payment. Here, a quick sale was not the highest priority: distance was. The comes wanted Imma off his hands, but given the thegn’s connections to the powerful ruling family of Northumbria, he needed Imma sent as far away as possible to achieve a social death. Likewise, Findan’s sale after his second capture by Norsemen reflects political motives rather than large-scale slave trading, indicating that the sale of slaves continued on an ad hoc basis to suit individual circumstances. He was sold repeatedly, which Findan’s hagiographer attributes to the Norsemen not intending to return home anytime soon.522 They may have taken advantage of extant trade networks, but ultimately these sales served as solutions to specific problems.

What the penitentials, law codes, and hagiography all emphasize is that slave trading in pre-Viking Britain and Ireland and the pre-tenth century Czech lands was a largely opportunistic practice. In Imma’s case, even with the involvement of a merchant and a market, sale was necessitated by a particular set of circumstances. Individual sales could take place locally, but the presence of merchants dealing in slaves does not necessarily signify large slave-trading operations. There was nothing to prevent problematic captives from being sold abroad, but local sales enabled slave owners to remove these slaves from their households without the expense of travelling to large market centres, particularly in the case of those born into slavery. Imma is the exception to this, since his status created a problem which required a drastic solution. Even so, Imma’s case was not singular in its representation of opportunistic sale. Findan also illustrates that these scenarios could occur even when large-scale trading for profit was also an option. Problematic slaves were sold ad hoc, and there is no evidence to suggest that a steady stream of problematic slaves composed a significant part of either local or long-distance trade practices in any region.

522 Vita Findani, 503.
LONG-DISTANCE AND COMMERCIAL TRADE

The motivations behind these sales suggest that opportunistic slave trading fulfilled particular functions in specific situations, each unique to the slave and slave owner. Such sales involved localised transactions driven by convenience rather than profit. At the same time, the presence of foreign slaves and references to people being sold abroad demonstrates that even opportunistic sales could become linked with more commercial activities and long-distance trade networks. By using Anglo-Saxon England in the seventh, eighth, and early ninth centuries and Great Moravia in the late ninth and early tenth centuries as case studies, I hope to demonstrate that long-distance slave trading could occur even when the sources do not indicate a large market demand for chattel slaves. Instead, context of the sale must be the first and foremost consideration. This investigation will examine the evidence for slave traders, to investigate whether these merchants dealt predominantly in slaves or whether they only appear as party to *ad hoc* sales; markets, to determine where slave trading occurred; and destinations of slaves, to glean some clues as to the frequency of long-distance slave trading, and the circumstances which led to slaves being transported or sold far afield.

Anglo-Saxon England

Study of slave trading in early Anglo-Saxon England has been limited. David Pelteret established clearly that long-distance slave trading did occur in the pre-Viking era, but stopped short of making any arguments of scale, even in relation to Viking trade networks. He depicted a system dominated by Frisian slave merchants, in which England regularly supplied slaves for Continental markets.\(^\text{523}\) Michael McCormick drew from this the idea that Anglo-Saxon slave trading was of a considerable scale dominated by Frisian merchants, but more recent studies of slavery in England have not assessed this claim.\(^\text{524}\) David Wyatt’s 2009 monograph on slavery and raiding in Britain and Ireland did not address the slave trade at all.\(^\text{525}\) This general lack of discussion persists despite continued interest in English slave trading and the role of Frisian merchants, and is probably a result of the limited source material compared to the better-documented period after 800.

There is no doubt that Frisian merchants dominated North Sea trade networks in the seventh and eighth centuries, and Continental sources would lead us to believe that some of

\(^{523}\) Pelteret, ‘Slave raiding’, 102-6. Pelteret also hypothesised the operation of Jewish slave traders, but more recent work has demonstrated that Jews were entirely unknown in Anglo-Saxon England, A.P. Scheil, *In the Footsteps of Israel: Understanding Jews in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ann Arbor, 2004).
\(^{524}\) McCormick, *Origins*, 739.
\(^{525}\) Wyatt, *Slaves*. 

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these were highly successful. There are some problems with this model, however, since only one English source refers to Frisians trading in slaves: Bede’s story of Imma in the Historia Ecclesiastica. Even then, Imma is merely sold to a Frisian, and Bede provides no further information to suggest that this man dealt chiefly in slaves, or even that he was a merchant. Furthermore, Imma’s story is a politically-inspired miracle story at its core. Imma is miraculously freed from his bonds through the intercession of his brother, a priest, and the good Northumbrian thegn manages to endure captivity at the hands of a Mercian (a mortal enemy of Northumbria), and ownership by a pagan foreigner. The sale of Christians to non-Christians was in most cases intended to be deeply shocking and disturbing, especially when captives were perceived by other Christians to have been wrongfully enslaved through warfare. Bede’s inclusion of a Frisian must be viewed in this context, and it is very likely that this non-Christian slave owner reflects a literary trope rather than reality, inspiring Bede’s Christian audience to outrage and sympathy at Imma’s situation.

Further complications arise when we consider that the term ‘Frisian’ as it appears in medieval sources could refer not only to people who were ethnically Frisian, but also to Frankish merchants operating out of Frisian territory. That said, Frisian merchants trading slaves in England is plausible. The presence of Frisian merchants and their settlement in Anglo-Saxon emporia is supported both textually and archaeologically. The Vita Liudgeri describes how Liudger, a Frisian who had come to study at York with Alcuin, was forced to flee in 773 alongside other Frisians ‘de regione Anglorum’ in order to avoid becoming victims of a feud when a high-ranking Anglo-Saxon’s son was killed by a Frisian merchant. Paul Blinkhorn has also linked the most widely distributed form of Anglo-Saxon pottery, Ipswich ware, to Frisian trade, asserting that it was produced by Frisians in Ipswich in imitation of their own native type of pottery. This pottery was then distributed to other wics/emporia, as well as royal and ecclesiastical settlements throughout the southeast

528 Bede’s lack of overt criticism regarding the Mercian is typical of his style, but this does not mean that he approved of the situation, Goffart, 254.
531 P. Blinkhorn, The Ipswich Ware Project (Dorchester, 2012), 66-8.
via internal trade. This would attest at least one Frisian trade colony outside of York, and one in which enough Frisians were settled to dictate the cultural affiliation of pottery production.

The introduction of silver coinage in the late seventh century is indicative of increased external trade, and the similarity of Anglo-Saxon and Frisian coin types gives a clue as to who the predominant trading partners were. For the seventh and eighth centuries, Anglo-Saxon sceattas have been found with some frequency in Continental areas dominated by Frisian trade, largely northern France, northwest Germany, the Rhine valley, and the Netherlands. The Frisian coins of Series E, also known as the ‘porcupine’ types, were originally minted specifically for the importation of English goods, which probably included slaves like Imma.

Direct evidence of Frisian slave trading in England may be slim, but the indirect evidence of trade and a definite Frisian presence in England are highly suggestive of their involvement. They certainly operated along trade routes accompanied by slaves, as the ninth-century Frankish text Miracula Sancti Goaris attests. It describes a Frisian merchant having his boat towed up the Rhine by slaves, though it remains unclear whether these individuals were his merchandise. Even if Bede’s Frisian buyer is a trope, the idea of a Frisian making an ad hoc slave purchase at a trade centre such as London must have seemed realistic enough to Bede’s eighth-century, albeit Northumbrian, audience. That said, even if Frisian merchants were regularly involved in slave trading, there is no evidence to suggest that any of them operated exclusively as slave traders. It is more likely that the opportunistic sales of this period led to opportunistic purchases, and that slaves were only one type of merchandise which could be loaded on a ship at any given time. We must also remember that non-Christian Frisian merchants could overshadow operations by Christians, whose purchase and ownership of Christian slaves did not place the souls of those slaves in mortal danger. The prosperity of Anglo-Saxon emporia would have attracted all types of people looking to buy and sell slaves.

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Similarly, recorded sales all appear to have occurred at locations which attracted trade more generally, such as London, an *emporium* or *wic*, and other types of royal settlements in Northumbria and Wessex. These should be identified as ‘markets’ rather than specialised ‘slave markets’. Imma’s sale in London, a prosperous *wic*, should not come as a surprise. The regular presence of Frankish and Frisian merchants would have made it a safe bet for securing a foreign buyer, sure to take Imma far away.\(^5\) It may be that London had a reputation for slave trading which was known to Bede, hundreds of miles away. However, it is equally likely that it was known simply as a large trading centre, easily recognisable to Bede’s audience, and which emphasised Imma’s plight. There is little to corroborate Bede’s story, but even as a trope, the trade of luxury goods in London by the eighth century suggests that commerce was booming enough to support at least the occasional sale and purchase of such expensive items as slaves.\(^6\) The same can be said of other *wics* such as Hamwic, York, Sandwich, and Ipswich.\(^7\) Archaeological evidence points to Frisian trade at these sites, hinting at the long-distance trade of luxury goods, including slaves.

Textual sources also suggest that other types of royal settlements served as points of slave trading well beyond the ninth century demise of *wics*. The concentration of elites in these locations may have created a high demand for domestic labour, and a larger-than-average proportion of the population could afford expensive goods such as slaves. The life of St. Aidan within Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica* may point to the regular sale of slaves at a royal settlement independent of any *wic*. While Bishop of Lindisfarne, Aidan was known for redeeming slaves often and setting them up as members of the clergy. Bede’s assertion that they were ‘unjustly sold’ (qui iniuste fuerant uenditi), as well as the mention of a redemption price (‘quos pretio dato redemerat’), makes clear that these were chattel slaves. Bede does not say where the transactions occurred, but presumably Aidan accomplished at least some of them on or around Lindisfarne. The neighbouring Northumbrian royal seat of Bamburgh would also have been an ideal spot. Aidan was no stranger to it; Bede tells us that he frequently travelled around royal estates, and that he often stayed at a church ‘non longe ab urbe’ (the *urbs* being Bamburgh itself).\(^8\)

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\(^6\) Keene, 188-9.


\(^8\) HE, III.17, p. 262. The church, about half a mile from the fortress, is where Aidan died.
Much later, the previously-mentioned, late tenth-century *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno* by Wulfstan of Winchester clearly illustrates slave trading at a royal settlement. We do not know how far the slave and the thief travelled to get to Winchester, but the girl’s sale there is entirely logical. Winchester attracted regular trade as an administrative hub, and there would have been a high demand for slaves in the households of elites and successful traders. The stolen girl would have suited this domestic demand perfectly. The transaction also would have required public witnesses, who would have been readily available in this densely-populated area. Not only is the thief able to sell the girl ‘promptissime’, she is reunited with her former master when he, too, arrives in Winchester to purchase goods. One sale is not enough evidence to argue for the presence of a slave market, but it would seem that Winchester provided an outlet for opportunistic slave sales well into an era of Viking-dominated slave trading. Even during a time of large-scale slave trading networks, small transactions continued independently.

The residences of the king and his entourage at the ‘villa regia’ in seventh-century Northumbria and at Winchester in the tenth century would both have required substantial amounts of domestic labour. During the seventh century, raiding probably fulfilled much of this demand, but given the previously-mentioned instances of problematic slaves, there would have been at least a minimal turnover rate in these domestic slaves, or the need to purchase domestic slaves in times of peace when captives would have been fewer. Viking-Age Winchester probably took advantage of large-scale slave trading networks, but as the given example demonstrates, such trading was not the only means by which one could acquire slaves. It is worth repeating the example from the *Vita Prima Sanctae Brigitae*, which lies outside the scope of this case study, but which provides a clear instance of a slave transaction at a royal residence when Dubthach attempts to sell Brigit to the king. This Irish example suggests that royal seats as locations of slave trading may have been more than just an English phenomenon.

As liminal ports of trade with connections to long-distance trade routes, slaves sold at *wics* were probably more likely to be taken out of England than those sold in other royal settlements. This idea is reflected in the sales described in the source material. Imma’s sale out of England was necessary to complete his social death, but there is no indication that the purchases made in Winchester and possibly Bamburgh were representative of anything but

539 Wulfstan of Winchester, 496.
540 HE, III.17, p. 262.
internal trade. The thief and the girl he sells in Winchester are, at most, from a different Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Aidan’s purchases are somewhat exceptional, since the slaves are then liberated. No detail is given regarding their place of origin; it is possible that their status as foreigners was taken for granted. The regular demand for labourers at royal residences would have made them a good place for selling slaves, but there must have been a saturation point. The demand for domestic slaves could not have been constant, even if it was high compared to other locations.

*Ad hoc* sales could take place locally or at large markets to long-distance traders. Surviving sources suggest that these two types, as well as the distance to which a slave was transported had a great deal to do with the nature of the sale. The Irish hagiographical tradition for Brigit provides incredibly rare testimony that troublesome slaves by birth could be sold locally. Similar Anglo-Saxon evidence does not exist, but these sales were of a type that would have been typical in any medieval slaveholding society and thus not worth recording. Newly enslaved individuals, on the other hand, posed several problems to their masters which transport or sale far away would have helped resolve. Firstly, these individuals had to be far removed from any kin or social connections who could return the enslaved to their original free status. As discussed in Chapter 3, war captives especially were at risk of running away, and the further they were taken from their homes, the less opportunity there was for escape, ransom, or rescue. Imma’s situation necessitated sale overseas due to both the *comes’*s need for Imma’s social death and Imma’s high connections. Not only was there a risk of intervention by the Northumbrian royal family, but also by their kin, as demonstrated by Imma’s eventual ransom by the king of Kent.\footnote{HE, IV.22, p. 404.} It would seem that the more difficult the situation posed by enslavement, or the more powerful the enslaved person’s connections, the more likely they would be sold over greater distances. Slaves by birth were not at risk of ransom or rescue, and so could be exchanged locally. The more problematic the situation, the more likely that long-distance slave trading would be used as a solution.

Such a situation is certainly not indicative of regular long-distance slave trading, but it appears to have been a familiar process throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. Ine §11, promulgated in the late seventh or early eighth century, prohibited the sale of anyone, slave or free, ‘*ofer sæ*’, even if they were guilty.\footnote{Gesetze, i.94.} ‘*Ofer sæ*’ may have denoted something akin to
the modern ‘overseas’ which alludes to foreign travel, or perhaps only transport by water. In either case, the law suggests that selling people, even free people and penal slaves, was common enough in early Wessex to warrant legislation against it. Wihtred’s law regarding the sale of criminals ‘ofer sæ’, however, is again suggestive of ad hoc sales decided on a case-by-case basis.\textsuperscript{543} As discussed in Chapter 3, the criminal’s fate was probably determined by the severity of the crime and the criminal’s social connections, though there is no surviving evidence of the punishment’s implementation.

There is also considerable evidence of Anglo-Saxon slaves for sale abroad during this early period. In the late sixth century, a letter from Pope Gregory to the priest Candidus instructed him to acquire Anglo-Saxon boys in Gaul for baptism and training as clergymen in advance of the Augustine mission.\textsuperscript{544} Slaves who were purchased, freed, assigned a new status, and then reinserted into their own society provides an interesting context for the mission in England. The seventh-century lives of Eligius and Amand both hint at Anglo-Saxon slaves available for purchase on the continent. Eligius’ biographer lists Britanni and Saxoni amongst those slaves Eligius ransomed out of charity, who were just as likely to be Britons and Anglo-Saxons for sale in Marseilles as Bretons and Saxons.\textsuperscript{545} The \textit{Vita Amandi} likewise describes the saint’s endeavours to ransom ‘captivi vel pueri transmarini’ in the mid-seventh century.\textsuperscript{546} That these purchases took place during missionary work around Ghent suggests that the boys from across the sea may have been the victims of Frisian trade, making England a probable origin. The early eighth-century \textit{Poenitential of Theodore} also acknowledges the complications caused when a married person returned from slavery abroad if one or both spouses had remarried in the interim.\textsuperscript{547}

Two eighth-century lives of Pope Gregory I present a similar picture regarding Anglo-Saxon slaves abroad. The first Anglo-Saxon life of Gregory by an anonymous monk of Whitby is the first evidence of Gregory’s often-cited encounter with English boys for sale in Rome. The story claims that Gregory came upon these slaves from the Northumbrian kingdom of Deira, and was inspired by their fair complexion and some clever puns (\textit{Angli-angeli}, for example) to convert their people to Christianity.\textsuperscript{548} There is no evidence for a

\textsuperscript{543} \textit{Gesetze}, i.14 (Wihtred §26).
\textsuperscript{547} \textit{Poenitential Theodori}, II.xii.24, p. 201.
\textsuperscript{548} \textit{Earliest Life of Gregory}, 90.
factual origin of this story, and Dorothy Whitelock supposed it to have been inspired by Gregory’s letter to Candidus.\textsuperscript{549} Several prominent Northumbrians made trips to Rome in the seventh and early eighth centuries, such as Benedict Biscop and Wilfrid, and they may have encountered Anglo-Saxon slaves there. The story was certainly believable to an early eighth-century audience, enough so that Bede included it in his own \textit{Historia Ecclesiastica} not long after.\textsuperscript{550} It suggests that the appearance of Anglo-Saxons slaves for sale in foreign lands was common enough so as to be an acceptable narrative.

Perhaps the most famous Anglo-Saxon slave to appear abroad is Balthild, who rose from slavery in a mayor of the palace’s household to become the wife of Clovis II. Her biographer describes her as a Saxon ‘de partibus transmarinis’, language which may hold Anglo-Saxon implications for the roughly-contemporaneous ransom of ‘pueri transmarini’ by Amand.\textsuperscript{551} Paul Fouracre and Richard Gerberding have suggested that Balthild was the victim of a politically motivated, opportunistic sale. While her hagiographer implies that her rise in status was a reward for her virtue and piety, Balthild was probably born into a very prominent East Anglian family, and thus was eligible to become the wife of a king despite her slave status.\textsuperscript{552} It was most likely due to a power shift or a raid that Balthild was enslaved and sold out of the country, with this social death probably serving as the more attractive alternative to the murder of a small child. As with Imma, this process ensured that she would not cause problems in the future, and is decidedly not representative of a regular slave trade.

In all of these examples, English slaves are available overseas, but we do not know how they got there or the identity of the merchants selling them. They could have been sold at Anglo-Saxon markets to either English or foreign merchants and then transported across


\textsuperscript{550} HE, II.1, p. 132-4; Colgrave and Mynors attribute the two variations to a Northumbrian oral tradition, HE, 133 n.2. On Bede’s oral stories as important cultural descriptors, C. Cubitt, ‘Folklore and historiography: oral stories and the writing of Anglo-Saxon history’, in E.M. Tyler and R. Balzaretti (eds.), \textit{Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West} (Turnhout, 2006), 207-11.


\textsuperscript{552} Fouracre and Gerberding, 102-4.
the channel for sale to foreign buyers. It is equally probable, however, that many of these slaves were the victims of raiding rather than long-distance slave trading. In the fifth century, Patrick himself was the victim of such raiding in Britain, and upon capture he was taken by the raiders for sale in Ireland. A similar scenario is presented in Patrick’s letter to Coroticus, a Briton who had captured recently-baptised Irish men and women and sold them to the Picts. The early Patrician examples demonstrate that long-distance raiding was nothing new in Britain and Ireland. While Patrick and Coroticus’s victims were eventually sold, these foreign slaves were acquired through raiding rather than purchase. Certainly the ‘captivi vel pueri transmarini’ redeemed by Amand hint at cross-channel raiding practices at least through the seventh century. The slave-boys in Rome, often taken as evidence of long-distance slave trading out of England, do not provide hard evidence of it. Like the other examples, trade is a possibility, but these people could also have been removed from Britain via raiding. As such, these examples cannot be used as evidence of a large-scale trade.

While there is plenty of evidence for Anglo-Saxon slaves outside of England, there is little which suggests frequent, or even regular, long-distance slave trading. In many cases these slaves could have been the victims of coastal raids, or even political machinations. Long-distance slave trading certainly existed, and appears to have been an accepted part of Anglo-Saxon society. However, there are few indications that these sales were anything more than opportunistic ones dependent on specific circumstances. Like the merchants and markets involved in Anglo-Saxon slave trading, the destinations of slaves points to small-scale operations.

**Great Moravia**

The scale of Great Moravian slave trading has been interpreted and reinterpreted with varying results. Matúš Kučera has argued that Great Moravian slaves were almost exclusively exported, and that there is no evidence that slaves contributed to local production. Building on this, Oldřich Tůma argued for slaves as a principle export of Great Moravia, forming a large-scale slave trading system facilitated by links with Venice.
Tůma’s idea was also shared by Michael McCormick, but others have not been so certain. Lumír Poláček believes that while slave trading was a part of Great Moravian exchange, archaeological evidence does not support anything of a large-scale, long-distance nature. Luděk Galuška is confident that slave trading was ongoing, but has merely sought to establish its existence via the evidence of shackles, rather than gauge its frequency. Their studies are illuminating, but these historians and archaeologists have exhibited a tendency to accept textual and archaeological evidence at face value – a matter which has already been addressed in Chapter 2 in relation to Galuška’s interpretation of shackles. The dearth of surviving sources tends to encourage this, but the results can be misleading. Zakon Suydnji Ljudem indicates that captives could be purchased from foreigners and that penal slaves could be sold out of the polity, but this does not mean that large-scale slave trading existed. I will argue through close examination of textual evidence for slave trading and markets alongside archaeological evidence of trade in Great Moravia that, like early Anglo-Saxon England, even long-distance slave trading remained opportunistic.

As in Anglo-Saxon England, non-Christian slave traders are the most visible. Jews have long been taken for granted as medieval slave traders in Europe, and the historiography of Great Moravia is no exception. This assumption draws from a handful of texts and Charles Verlinden’s monumental works on medieval slavery. Despite his focus on the later Middle Ages, Verlinden’s idea of Jewish trade being synonymous with a slave trade has been readily connected with ninth-century sources. In 1985, Tůma asserted that in the ninth century, the ‘inland slave trade was practiced above all by the Jews’. Work by Michael Toch over the past two decades, however, has pointed to ecclesiastical injunctions against the sale of slaves to Jews or non-Christians as being evidence of slave ownership, not slave trading. He has also highlighted a complete lack of slave trading mentioned in Hebrew sources, which Verlinden did not examine. Despite this, Michael McCormick has treated Jewish merchants in Great Moravia as predominantly slave merchants, indicating that their role in early medieval slave trading is still taken for granted.

558 Poláček, 510.
560 Tůma, 68.
562 Toch, ‘Was there’, 434.
563 McCormick, Origins, 691.
The key texts behind the assumption of Jewish slave merchants in Moravia are two Bulgarian saints’ lives: those of Naum and Clement. The Old Church Slavonic Life of Naum was composed in the ninth century, and the Greek Life of Clement, composed around 1100, was based upon an earlier, now-lost Old Church Slavonic text. These two saints began their ecclesiastical careers as disciples of Cyril and Methodius, and were members of the Byzantine mission to Moravia. Following Methodius’ death in 885 (Cyril having died in 869) and the accession of a new ruler, political tensions escalated, and growing Frankish influence saw a violent end to the Byzantine mission. The disciples were attacked (including Naum and Clement), and many were sold to Jewish merchants, who brought the clerics to Venice to be sold on as slaves. Older men were abandoned in the forest, probably because they were worthless on the slave market. The enslaved priests were rescued by a Byzantine bureaucrat in Venice, who upon recognising them for what they were, purchased the clergymen and brought them back to the Emperor. The restoration of their free status and ecclesiastical offices ultimately provided a happy ending to that story, and Naum and Clement eventually went on to Bulgaria as missionaries.

These hagiographical works describe only a single, heavily politicised event, and yet both McCormick and Tůma take the earlier Life of Naum as the cornerstone of their depiction of Jewish slave merchants marching caravans of slaves from Moravia directly to Venice. Regarding the hagiographical story itself, McCormick asserts,

‘The only unusual thing about this event was the slaves’ social status. This is why, of the many men and women who were driven over those mountain routes to Venice, the details of their story alone were written down.’

The victims’ religious status is certainly the reason the event was recorded; it only survives because two of them became enormously important in the Christianisation of the Bulgarian khanate. However, this does not consider the political and ecclesiastical implications of these events, which are inherently linked to the role of the Jewish merchants. The ousting of the Byzantine-led Cyrillo-Methodian mission was a turn against Eastern Christianity, and an expression of the political tensions which forced a shift in the Moravian elite’s alignment from Constantinople to Frankia. The enslavement of priests was in itself a strong statement, but their sale to Jews added insult to injury. The ready presence of Jewish merchants willing to purchase slaves may reflect ninth-century reality, but it may also represent the

564 Βίος Κλήμεντος, ed. D. Bartoňková, MMFH 2 (Brno, 1967), 227; McCormick, Origins, 766.
566 Tůma, 67.
567 McCormick, Origins, 766.
exceptional circumstances of the sale, which clearly illustrated Svatopluk’s desire to end the Byzantine missionary work.

The Jews mentioned in the Lives of Naum and Clement are not referred to as merchants, and this role has been extrapolated from their purchase and resale of the captives in Venice, combined with the lack of known Jewish settlement in Great Moravia. Jews may have been so associated with long-distance trade that merely mentioning Jews buying slaves was sufficient for a ninth-century audience to interpret their vocation and make the logical connection to Venice. If this were the case, the sale of priests to Jews may have been a targeted attempt by the Franks and Moravians to ensure that the new slaves were sold far away, beyond the hope of rescue. Had they not been recognised by the Emperor’s envoy at the last minute, they almost certainly would have spent the rest of their lives in slavery in a foreign land. Methodius’s disciples, had the benefit of connections in high places; their mission had been originally sent to Moravia by the Byzantine emperor and later sanctioned by the Pope. Much like Bede’s story of Imma, the presence of foreign traders is inherently linked to the status of the captives and the need to remove them from their social ties via long-distance trade.

Other supposed evidence for a Jewish monopoly on Great Moravian slave trading is also unconvincing. The Raffelstetten customs tariff refers to local and foreign Jews trading slaves in the first decade of the tenth century, but the only reference to Jewish merchants in the entire document states that these traders, along with other merchants, are subject to tolls on slaves as on other goods. While the phrase ‘mercatores id est Iudei et ceteri mercatores’ has commonly been interpreted as Jews holding the more prominent position as traders, Toch has argued that this wording could merely reflect the insider/outsider dichotomy between Christians (who authored the text) and non-Christians. Where Christian merchants would be distinguished in a Christian society by their vocation, Jewish merchants were primarily identified by their religion. We cannot assume, then, that religious affiliation was synonymous with prominence in trade. This clause also indicates that these merchants must pay tolls on goods other than slaves, which does not suggest specialised slave trading. Most importantly, the tariff’s clear references to Bavarian and Slavic merchants dealing in slaves are curiously underemphasised in the historiography of

568 ‘А дру́гие прода́шь жи́домь на ц̀ы́нкъ’, Žitije Nauma, 178.
569 ‘Iudei et ceteri mercatores, undeunque venerint de ista patria vel de aliis patriis, iustum theloneum solvent tam de mancipiis, quam de aliis rebus, sicut semper in prioribus temporibus regum fuit’, Inquisitio, §9, p. 252.
570 Toch, ‘Was there’, 435.
slave trading. In some instances, Slavic merchants are noted specifically from Rus and Bohemia. The customs tariff points directly to slave trading which was emphatically not the sole domain of foreign, or even Jewish, merchants.

With this in mind, the events described in the lives of Naum and Clement seem all the more like a calculated political move by the Frankish attackers to dispose of the clergymen quickly and efficiently. Jewish merchants were exploited precisely for their links to long-distance trade, not in spite of them. Contrary to historians’ assertions, these events were almost certainly not representative of everyday slave trading in Great Moravia, and Jewish merchants were not singlehandedly responsible for the sale of Moravians abroad. The evidence of Slavic and Bavarian slave traders in the customs tariff fits well with Toch’s argument that the idea of a Jewish-dominated slave trade across Europe from the fifth to eleventh centuries is wholly unsupportable.

The identification of slave markets has also relied heavily on the two lives of Naum and Clement and archaeological evidence of trade. The Bulgarian Lives are not unambiguous, only hinting that foreign merchants and links to the Mediterranean were easily found. At the very least, they do not indicate that the priests had to be taken beyond the borders before they could be sold. Archaeology certainly supports the idea of long-distance trade connections within Great Moravia. Finds of silks, glass, and Byzantine jewellery at various sites provide glimpses of trade extending in all directions. Especially far-flung objects include beads of Baltic amber and a Syrian glass lamp. More common imports were quernstones, building materials, and precious metals, which could have served as more ‘everyday’ exchange items for slaves. The skeletons of donkeys discovered at Mikulčice and Uherské Hradiště indicate trans-Alpine connections. With all of these foreign items, however, gift exchange and other non-trade related activities cannot be ruled out in favour of direct trade connections.

These textual and archaeological clues to long-distance trade have encouraged speculation as to the market locations. As discussed in Chapter 2, much consideration has been devoted to the ‘mercatum Marahorum’ – the market of the Moravians – mentioned in the Raffelstetten customs tariff, though doubts have been raised regarding a single focal point for this market. Where historiography once sought to place Mikulčice as the centre of

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571 Inquisitio, §6, 251.
573 Poláček, 508-9.
Moravian trade, current scholarship leans towards a more general interpretation of the tariff, in which the ‘market’ refers to a wide zone of trading including many urbanised and high-status sites. The locations of markets, however, tell us very little about potential slave trading there. The exchange of slaves with the Moravians is often interpreted from the Raffelstetten tariff based on clauses which tax Bavarian and Slavic merchants on goods such as slaves, horses, and salt. It seems reasonable that if these goods were being taken to markets on the Moravian border, they were probably traded within Moravia as well. Nevertheless, the tariff includes no direct reference to Moravian slaves or to slave trading in association with the market of the Moravians. Though §8 addresses merchants traveling to that market, it appears to refer predominantly to the salt merchants addressed in the preceding section.

As with the discussion of English wics, Moravian fortified settlements appear as likely candidates for slave trading locations, if only based on their archaeological evidence for trade. Given the lack of evidence for any specific market locations, a comparative perspective can at least suggest one possibility for slave trading: at or near high-status residences. The demand for domestic slaves was probably equally high at Moravian sites as at Anglo-Saxon ones. Archaeological research at the Czech site of Pohansko has demonstrated that the space within the earthworks held multiple functions as a high-status residence, as well as an urbanised emporium-like settlement. Comparisons have been drawn between Pohansko and Anglo-Saxon Hamwic in regard to construction and features. Perhaps the textual references to slave trading in Anglo-Saxon markets can provide some clues, however small, as to the type of location in which we can anticipate Moravian slave trading to have occurred. That said, in neither region do we find sources which suggest large-scale slave trading, even where there was probably a relatively high demand for slave labour. This again demonstrates that small-scale trade could still dominate during times and in locations where long-distance trade is attested.

Great Moravia does not benefit from a multitude of sources related to slaves abroad which might support arguments for regular, long-distance slave trading, as does early Anglo-Saxon England. This is partly due to the limited number of Great Moravian texts, but

574 Třeštík, ‘Trh’, 890; Poláček, 520.
575 ‘Si autem transire voluerint ad mercatum Marahorum, iuxta estimationem mercationis tunc temporis exsolvat solidum I de navi et licenter transeat; revertendo autem nihil cogantur exsolvere legittimum’, Inquisitio, 252.
577 Macháček, ‘Early medieval’, 488.
more simply, Slavic slaves abroad were typically only referred to as ‘Slavs’. Without reference to a more specific identity, it is impossible to tell the ethnic or geographical origin of Slavic slaves. There is ultimately little evidence to support assertions of the importance of slaves as an export. Slavic slaves do not appear in Bavarian charters from the late ninth or early tenth centuries, though this may be the result of renaming slaves rather than their complete absence. Though Zakon Saydnji Ljudem suggests that penal slaves were saleable, it cannot be demonstrated that the majority of these people were exported beyond the borders, though they may have been. The difficulties of this text and its use have been discussed in Chapters 1 and 3, but even if we were to make a great deal of assumptions about it, this legal source does not necessarily point to the creation of slaves for sale out of Moravia. Many clauses stipulate that the criminal is to be sold into slavery, but only one requires sale abroad, and even then, the sale is to be overseen by the ruler. This is the previously-mentioned §6, in which a female slave must be sold away if her master has had sex with her.\textsuperscript{578} However, even after this sale, the money is to be given to the poor – not exactly what we would expect of the law supporting a flourishing foreign slave trade.

The Lives of Naum and Clement are the only texts which explicitly describe Moravians being taken abroad as slaves, and even then, it appears to have been a political tactic. We cannot consider the sale of Moravians to foreign Jewish merchants to be representative of large-scale Great Moravian slave trading. Arguments to the opposite effect often rely on evidence for a flourishing slave trade in Venice supported by demand from the Arab world, but there is absolutely nothing which would compare to the evidence of Arab trade farther east. Where dirham hoards extend from the Black Sea to Scandinavia, there are none found anywhere near Moravia from the Great Moravian period. In fact, no coins indicative of trade have been found there. Nor is there an overwhelming surplus of foreign trade objects in Great Moravia pointing to the export of luxury items such as slaves, as has been previously discussed.

It is unfortunate that conclusions regarding the long-distance slave trade in Great Moravia have to be based on a general dearth of evidence, but that absence speaks volumes against arguments for a large-scale slave trade. We have seen already that the silence of medieval sources on certain aspects of slavery, such as Christian merchants or regular opportunistic sales, does not necessarily preclude the absence of those things. However,

\textsuperscript{578} Zakon, 11.
given the context for *Zakon Suydnji Ljudem* and the Raffelstetten customs tariff, as well as the questionable amount of evidence for a flourishing long-distance trade into and out of Great Moravia, it is impossible to reasonably argue that long-distance slave trading was a daily feature of society.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Close examination of opportunistic sales and slave trading through case studies make it possible to formulate some hypotheses on how small-scale slave trading might have looked in the early medieval period. Slaves were a by-product of warfare, acting as symbols of political and economic defeat rather than commodities. When sales did occur, they were indicative of problematic circumstances caused by ecclesiastical regulation, domestic discord, or political conflict. Almost the entirety of recorded slave sales from pre-Viking Britain and Ireland and from Great Moravia were in response to one or more of these conditions. Because opportunistic sales continued from the seventh through the eleventh centuries in Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands, we can also deduce that the existence of large-scale slave trading, as during the Viking period, did not preclude localised sales of troublesome slaves.

Early Anglo-Saxon England and Great Moravia have a great deal in common, in that evidence of long-distance slave trading has been taken to indicate regular, even large-scale operations. Close examination of source contexts in regard to merchants, markets, and slave destinations indicates that such a conclusion is insupportable. The examples of Frisian and Jewish merchants demonstrate that we cannot take the presence of foreign, non-Christian traders to be indicative of a foreign, non-Christian monopoly on slave trading. Nor can we assume evidence of these merchants transporting slaves along long-distance routes to be indicative of anything more than opportunistic sales. In England, such assumptions have rested on Bede’s single reference to a Frisian who purchased one slave. For Great Moravia, the belief in Jewish-dominated slave trading stems from one heavily politicised event. By ignoring the underlying circumstances of these sales, we overlook a key component of early medieval slave trading, which is the general invisibility of Christian, or ‘insider’ merchants. Frisians and Jews may indeed have traded slaves alongside other goods, but there is little evidence in either case to suggest that these groups held a monopoly, or were even the predominant slave traders for their time and region.
Most importantly, there appears to have been a disjunction between those offering slaves for sale and the merchants transporting them abroad. As will be discussed in the following chapter, this is directly at odds with what we see in large-scale systems, in which slave raiders and slave merchants were probably the same people. Unlike Vikings from the mid-ninth century onwards, and to some extent Bohemians from the tenth century, merchants in early Anglo-Saxon England and Great Moravia did not control the market supply via raiding. Frisians were reliant on Anglo-Saxon suppliers. In Moravia, it is impossible to tell whether penal enslavement helped to meet a market demand for slaves, though it may have allowed for more sales than penal enslavement in England. These small-scale systems were based on circumstances unique to each sale, and the evidence of raiding is not suggestive of endeavours designed to capture as many slaves as possible. Opportunistic sales could be linked with pre-existing long-distance trade to send slaves far afield, but sale was rarely the reason for enslavement.

By examining early Anglo-Saxon England and Great Moravia together, it becomes clear that such opportunistic sales could hardly have been indicative of a flourishing slave trade, even in situations where long-distance trade was readily accessible. For the seventh to mid-ninth century in England, and the late ninth and early tenth century in Moravia, slave trading was not directly impacted by the success of long-distance trade, or the merchants who operated within these trade systems. Furthermore, by looking closely at the sources available, it becomes clear that assumptions regarding the regularity of long-distance slave trading and the merchants who participated in it do not withstand scrutiny. Long-distance slave trading certainly existed, but overall these regions possessed small-scale slave trading networks.
Large-scale Slave Trading

The shift from small-scale to large-scale enslavement and slave trading was a gradual process that occurred over at least half a century in both the British Isles and the Czech lands. The emergence of what we can call a ‘slave trade’ – a system of regular exchange – was the result of both social and political developments over the course of generations. It will be argued that by the close of the tenth century in either region, slave trading was a significant part of the economy. Increased demand for slaves prompted a change from captives as symbols of warfare to valuable assets. In twelfth- and thirteenth-century Spain, this transformation resulted from the trafficking of Muslim slaves in order to exchange them for Christian prisoners. In the tenth-century British Isles and the Czech lands, however, changing perceptions of captives were the result of widening economic networks and growing external demand for slaves. Examining enslavement through warfare and aspects of the trade itself will demonstrate that both regions experienced similar developments in the transition from small-scale to large-scale slave trading operations. Due to significant differences in historiographical tradition and source availability, these regions will be discussed separately in detail, with comparisons in the conclusion.

THE SCALE OF ENSLAVEMENT IN THE VIKING AGE

Captive taking was an integral part of Viking raids from an early date. In his letter to Higbald following the first Viking attack on Lindisfarne in 793, Alcuin lamented the monks who were led away as prisoners. In Ireland, ‘a great number of women’ were taken from an early attack on Étar in 821. Viking raids soon fanned out to all parts of the British Isles. Over time, these raids were accompanied by settlement, beginning with the overwintering of raiding parties and eventually progressing to the creation of autonomous polities through conquest and threat of violence. These areas of settlement served to connect the British Isles with the far-flung reaches of the known world, linked by Scandinavian maritime trade.

580 Alcuin to Higbald, 57-8.
581 Cl, s.a. 821, p. 279.
582 For a detailed outline of this process, see P.H. Sawyer, Kings and Vikings (London, 1982), 78-112.
networks. Captive taking during Viking raids in the British Isles is not frequently recorded outside of Ireland, though as discussed in Chapter 1, I do not believe that this represents variation in raiding practices so much as it does differing practices of annal-writing.

When brought together, mentions of raiding and captive taking form a pattern which indicates change over time and suggests that Viking raids did not begin with slave supply in mind. Early raids were probably ‘hit-and-run’ attacks, in which ecclesiastical sites would be struck quickly, with portable wealth and some people carried off. The taking of high-status individuals in Ireland suggests that at least some of these captives were intended for ransom rather than immediate enslavement. In 831, the king of Conaille and his brother were forcibly taken to awaiting ships, which almost certainly indicates their transport farther away, perhaps to a longphort to await negotiations. In the following year, one Tuathal son of Feradach was also taken captive. His identification by Thomas Charles-Edwards as the abbot of Durrow and Rathlin whose death is recorded in 850 indicates that ransom payments were indeed successful, and may have been a significant motivation for captive taking during the early years of Viking raids in the North Sea region.

From the mid-ninth century, Irish annalistic evidence suggests a shift in method, when large numbers of captives became increasingly common. The first mention of anything which looks like a slave raid comes in 836, in which the chronicler was so overwhelmed by the number of people carried off by ‘heathens’ that he repeats the information:

‘Prima praeda gentilium o deisciurt Bregh, i.o. Telcaibh Droman 7 o Dermaigh Britonom, 7 captiuos [tam] plures portauerunt 7 mortificauerunt multis 7 captiuos plurimos apstulerunt.’

Entries for the remainder of the ninth century suggest that at least one major slave raid was carried out per decade, in various parts of Ireland by various Viking groups. This is in addition to numerous smaller raids and the continued targeting of high-status captives, presumably for ransom. It is also during this period that the construction style of houses, at least in Ulster, changed significantly, which may have been for the purpose of providing

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584 CI, s.a. 821, p. 279; s.a. 824-5, pp. 282-3.
585 CI, p. 288.
586 CI, 289 n.5. For the obituary, CI, s.a. 850, p. 306. For ransoming, see Chapter 3.
587 CI, s.a. 836, p. 294.
greater protection during slave raids. During a span of only 50 years (830-880), Irish annals suggest there were as many as 83 raids and attacks by Vikings on Irish churches, in addition to ten Irish raids and three Hiberno-Norse joint raids. Vikings were not the only ethnic group taking part in raiding and the capture of slaves. Irish raiding continued, both against other Irish kingdoms and against Scandinavian settlers. In the period between 881 and 919, there were fewer Norse attacks on churches – only twenty-seven – but six Irish ones. It would seem that there was ample opportunity for slave-taking on both sides, especially when we consider the non-Christian status of the Vikings would have ensured that these raids were more likely to be recorded than Christian-on-Christian Irish raids. That raids by co-religionists were recorded alongside those by the Norse suggests that the decline in Norse raids reflects reality, and that chroniclers did not simply lose interest in recording these attacks. It also coincides with a period in which Norse settlement and the expansion of trade may have lessened the need for the violent requisitioning of luxury items, and in which the Norse expulsion from Dublin in 902 may have temporarily disrupted raiding patterns.

Sparser evidence outside of Ireland still points to a similar scenario in which heavy Norse raiding came to involve the capture of many individuals, presumably for enslavement. The Great Army ranged throughout England in the second half of the ninth century, pillaging as it went. Raids on the Picts are recorded for 866 in the Annals of Ulster, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle notes that while the Great Army remained in the north, it frequently preyed on the Picts and Strathclyde Britons. The Welsh Brut y Tywysogyon likewise records contemporary raids by Norsemen on Angelsey and Gwynedd. These examples do not provide explicit evidence of slave raiding or captive taking, but the evidence of Ireland suggests that such practices were common. After all, even when these other sources are silent, it is the Irish annals which record the return of Olaf and Ivar to Dublin from Scotland in 871, carrying with them British, English, and Pictish captives.

In Ireland, the tenth century marked a shift in raiding practices. Not only did raiding by the Irish on the Vikings increase drastically from the mid-tenth century, but so did Irish-on-Irish attacks. Poul Holm has argued that this situation arose from the Irish adoption of

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590 Hughes, ‘Irish Church’, 638.
592 Brut y Tywysogyon, ed. and trans. T. Jones (Cardiff, 1952), s.a. 853-5, p. 4; s.a. 890-2, p. 5.
593 CI, s.a. 871, p. 322.
Viking raiding techniques, and the growth of a large-scale slave-trading system. These episodes of mass enslavement, clearly logged in the annalistic record, were thus undertaken for economic gain, rather than solely for the social and political reasons discussed in Chapter 4. Where Vikings are accused of taking 3,000 captives in 951, this compares to 1,600 captives taken from the Vikings by the Irish in 948. Nearly a century later, Aed ua Néill raided in the territory of a certain son of Eochaid, taking away 1,200 captives and 3,000 cows. Such suspiciously large numbers appear regularly throughout the eleventh century, nevertheless suggesting the deliberate creation of a slave surplus by the Irish for sale at a time when Viking raids diminished. As Scandinavian settlers established themselves and the trade prominence of Viking sites, especially Dublin, grew, it was probably these Irish raids which supplied the Hiberno-Norse with slaves for use and sale.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle suggests that the situation in England also escalated and changed in the tenth and eleventh centuries, though in different ways. The consolidation of West Saxon power may have limited the potential for warfare within Anglo-Saxon polities in the manner which we see amongst Irish kings; however, we must acknowledge that the Chronicle’s portrayal of West Saxon rule without internal conflict may be a result of annalists’ attempts to portray the rulers favourably. Even so, the expansion of Wessex probably meant that significant raiding and pillaging took place between the English and areas under Scandinavian rule, especially regarding control of the Northumbrian kingdom in the tenth century, or between the English and the Welsh or Scots. While English-Viking warfare came to a relative lull in the mid-tenth century, the reign of Æthelred the Unready saw repeated and intense Viking attacks, of which we can assume captive taking to have been a part. This continued up until 1016, when both Cnut and the ætheling Edward ravaged much of the North and Midlands.

594 Holm, especially 335-9.
595 AU, s.a. 951 p. 397; s.a. 948, p. 393.
596 AU, s.a. 951, p. 397; s.a. 1031, p. 469.
597 Holm, 338-9.
599 For example, see the ‘Mercian Register’, which indicates greater independence in Mercian rule than the West Saxon version of the Chronicle acknowledges, S. Keynes, ‘Edward, king of the Anglo-Saxons’, in N.J. Higham and D.H. Hill (eds.), Edward the Elder 899-924 (Abingdon, 2001), 42-4.
601 ASC D, s.a. 1016, pp. 60-2.
From Cnut’s reign onwards, raiding appears with much less frequency in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with only three examples for the remainder of the eleventh century. In 1054, Earl Siward captured a great deal of plunder in Scotland. In 1065, Northmen captured people in Northampton. And in 1079, Malcolm, king of Scotland, ravaged southwards towards the Tyne and likewise took many captives away with him. These examples are all isolated acts of war, and do not compare in scale to those raids of the decades and centuries before. This change probably did not extend beyond English borders, since raiding is recorded in the Brut y Tywysogyon throughout the first half of the eleventh century by both the Welsh and the Norse. John Gillingham has also argued that in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, the English also underwent a change in their perception of war and the legitimacy of capturing fellow Christians – a movement towards chivalric warfare –, and that this was not a change immediately shared by those in Wales and Scotland (see Introduction).

Annals indicate a dramatic increase in enslavement through raiding in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries. While Viking raiders are implicated in this, they were not the only groups conducting raids and creating slaves. Especially from the tenth century onwards, raiding resulted in the staggering numbers of captives mentioned above, calling into question whether the local domestic and agricultural economies could have absorbed these numbers of slaves. The frequency and scale of enslavement both point to a lucrative slave trade system which provided a reliable outlet for selling these captives, and which we will return to in detail below.

THE SCALE OF ENSLAVEMENT IN BOHEMIA

The Czech lands also exhibit an increase in raiding practices, but not to the clear extent of Ireland. Sources for raiding by and on Bohemians and Moravians during the tenth and eleventh centuries are not so straightforward, since very few of these were written by the Czechs themselves, and those that were were recorded decades or centuries after the events they describe. Despite these difficulties, Czech historians have long accepted slave raiding as part of the early medieval past, especially as regards Bohemia. As discussed in the Introduction, the favouring of Bohemia in such discussion is tied to the emergence of the

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602 ASC D, s.a. 1054, p. 74
603 ASC D, s.a. 1065, p. 78.
604 ASC E, s.a. 1079, p. 92.
605 Brut y Tywysogyon, pp. 11-14.
Czech ‘state’ under Přemyslid rule in Prague, and thus studies of slave raiding and slave trading are linked to a national origin story.

While much emphasis has been placed on the enserfment of war captives in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, this process must have occurred concurrently with the sale of others.\textsuperscript{607} The best example of this is Cosmas’s story of a Polish settlement which was relocated to Bohemia during Břetislav I’s 1039 campaign. During the Czech siege of Giecz Castle, both the castellani and villani surrendered, on the condition that everyone be transferred to land in Bohemia along with their cattle and belongings.\textsuperscript{608} Sláma sees this instance as a rare record of widespread colonisation undertaken with war captives. However, this event occurred during the same campaign in which Břetislav was chastised by the Pope for returning with captives and selling them ‘like brute animals’.\textsuperscript{609} With this in mind, it is difficult to see the Giecz incident as anything more than a surrender specifically negotiated to preserve the lives of the residents, their moveable property, and especially their free status.

As discussed in the previous chapter, raiding was certainly an accepted practice in early medieval Bohemia. Though even fewer references to Bohemian raiding or captive taking exist for the tenth century, and certainly nothing compared to contemporary Ireland, the historical precedent indicates that it we cannot assume that where sources are silent, raiding never occurred. Thanks to Thietmar of Merseburg, who was keenly interested in political relations on the East Frankish frontier, we know that the Bohemians raided a church at Zeitz around 977; this establishes some continuity in this style of warfare, but other evidence is sparse.\textsuperscript{610} This dynamic of invisible yet ongoing raiding has ramifications for the historical debate regarding supply of the Prague slave trade with war captives in the tenth century. Třeštík’s argument regarding the development of a significant slave trade in Prague at this time is largely based on Ibrāhīm ibn Ya’qūb’s account from the 960s, which states that slaves could be purchased readily in the Prague market, and the mention of a mid-tenth-century slave purchase in the \textit{Legenda Christiani}. Třeštík assumed that widespread

\textsuperscript{607} First proposed in, Sláma, ‘K některým’, 334-42. See Introduction, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{608} CB, II.2, p. 83-4.
\textsuperscript{609} ‘Captivatos ceu bruta animalia vendere’, CB, II.7, p. 92.
raiding must have supported this slave trade, despite the lack of evidence for it – prompting Ježek’s counter that sources for raiding do not exist (see Introduction, p. 14).

As in pre-Viking Britain and Ireland, raiding was probably still an ongoing, well-known method of warfare, despite the absence of explicit evidence for it. One Arab geographer, Masʿūdī, noted in 943 that ‘the king of Prague… is at war with the Byzantines, the Franks, the Bazkard [Magyars], and other nations besides; the hostilities among them are continuous’. The slaves for sale in Prague must have come from somewhere; the Legenda Christiani suggests that pagan slaves were readily available, since Wenceslas could have slave boys purchased for baptism on Easter when there were no other catechumens. Unfortunately, the non-Christian status of these slaves does not help in narrowing down where they came from beyond the exclusion of the Franks. In both the early tenth century when these events supposedly occurred and in the late tenth century when they were recorded in the Legenda Christiani, these pagan slaves could have been Polish, Polabian, Moravian, or Hungarian. The sparse legal record does not establish whether these could have been penal slaves, but foreign captives were probably far more numerous. Nevertheless, we ought not to extrapolate constant raiding by the Bohemians in order to explain whence the slaves of the Prague market came. The evidence for large-scale slave trading in tenth-century Prague will be discussed below, but for the moment it is enough to say that the scale of raiding, even when we assume much of it to remain invisible, does not support the notion of widespread enslavement.

Bohemia in the eleventh century, however, may present a different story, as texts hint at a situation much closer to that of England and Ireland during the Viking era. Thietmar depicts a tempestuous relationship between the developing duchies of Poland and Bohemia, and we know that in 1017, this relationship included the taking of Bohemian captives by the future Mieszko II. Disputes continued across Frankish borders as well, with many Frankish captives being taken in 1040 while on campaign in Bohemia, though the release of these captives was later negotiated. Cosmas of Prague, though writing up to a century after the warfare he describes, notes some major events involving captives which

611 ‘Masʿūdī on the Saqāliba 943’, in Arab Travellers, 141.
612 Some territory of the former Great Moravia underwent ‘repaganisation’ after the polity’s collapse in 906, Macháček, Risc, 452.
613 Thietmari, VII.59, p. 473.
614 Herimann Augiensis Chronicon, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH, SS 5 (Hannover, 1844), 123. For the context of this conflict, B. Krzemierńska, Boj knížete Břetislava I. o upevňení českého státu (1039-1041) (Prague, 1979).
must have loomed large in the cultural memory of the Czechs. An attack on Poland in 1021 led to the capture of ‘hundreds’ of men, destined for sale in Hungary and beyond.\textsuperscript{615} Following an even larger campaign in 1039, in which the duke Břetislav I seized control of Poland and recovered the relics of St. Adalbert, the Bohemians returned with a considerable number of captives.\textsuperscript{616} The Pope’s response to this event mostly concerned the unsanctioned recovery of St. Adalbert’s relics and the destruction of the cathedral altar in Gniezno, but his complaint against the sale of those Christian captives makes clear that enslavement was very much an ongoing aspect of warfare.\textsuperscript{617} Described by Cosmas in the early twelfth century, this warfare demonstrates that captives in the eleventh century were still targeted for sale, and were not necessarily taken as part of a colonisation program. Despite Cosmas’s chronological separation from these events, there is no reason to suppose that such key moments in Přemyslid history would be misremembered, especially when the sale of these captives held particular political symbolism for Poland’s defeat at the hands of their neighbours.

By 1077, it seems that the Bohemians had developed a reputation for selling their captives, perhaps in part as a result of the two major Polish campaigns. The Frankish emperor Henry IV encouraged the Bohemians to pillage in Swabia while on campaign for him, and an incensed Bernold of Constance insisted in his Chronicon that the captives would be sold to ‘dog-headed men’ (cinocephali) who would eat them.\textsuperscript{618} He does note that the Bohemians ‘preyed on men more eagerly than on cattle’ for the purposes of rape and sale.\textsuperscript{619} They must have been able to sell or directly enslave their captives during a time when slave raiding was disappearing from warfare in western Europe. Such an attack on Swabia would have been perceived as particularly barbaric, but like the Scottish raid on Northumbria in 1079, the event establishes that raiding practices remained a cultural norm in otherwise poorly-documented areas in the late eleventh century.

Campaigns against the Sorbs in 1087 and the Poles in 1093 clearly illustrate that plunder was a goal of warfare, even though captives are not explicitly mentioned.\textsuperscript{620} In his

\textsuperscript{615} ‘Ex quibus multos comprehensos, centenos et centenos, ordinatim catenatos vendi iussert in Ungariam et ultra’, CB, I.40, p. 75.
\textsuperscript{616} CB, II.5, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{617} ‘Magnum enim peccatum est aliena rapere, sed maius Christianos non solum spoliare, verum etiam captivare et captivatos ceu bruta animalia vendere’, CB, II.7, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{618} Bernold of Constance, 414.
\textsuperscript{619} ‘Hoinmes libentius quam pecudes praedabantur’, Bernold of Constance, 414.
\textsuperscript{620} CB, II.39, p. 142; III.1, pp. 161-2.
twelfth-century *Chronica Slavorum*, the priest Helmold alleged that the Bohemians and the Poles only went to war if pillaging was assured. This suggests not only that the Bohemians’ reputation as raiders extended well into the second half of the twelfth century, but it hints that slave taking may have remained a part of Czech warfare well beyond the demise of slavery for their western neighbours. This may be true of other Central European groups which conducted raids on the Bohemians, since around 1108, Coloman, the king of Hungary, pillaged Moravia, and Bohemia was attacked by the Poles the following year. These events also suggest that the Bohemians fell victim to raiding and captive taking themselves. The examples postdate the eleventh century, but they illustrate that the lack of recorded attacks on Bohemia before 1100 may be a result of source survival rather than wholly one-sided raiding in Central Europe.

These sources only depict Bohemian large-scale slave raiding infrequently, unlike those for Viking Age Britain and Ireland. However, this situation may be the result of individual source limitations rather than a whole and impartial description of events. Widukind of Corvey is tight-lipped regarding the mid-tenth-century wars between Otto I and Boleslav I, because his main focus was on the Empire’s internal strife. Cosmas is noticeably uninformed about conflicts which occurred while he was studying in Liège (1074-1090), and, as noted in Chapter 1, his account of the reign of Vratislav II (1061-1092) is not entirely honest; these limitations may disguise some raids. Furthermore, where Bohemian raiding and, even more rarely, captive taking are recorded in Frankish sources, it is often that which was conducted across Frankish borders. Much of the outrage which drove authors to record these events can be related to either sympathy for Frankish victims, or incredulity that Bohemians would rebel against Frankish overlordship. It is possible that their horror led to an overemphasis on the enslavement of captives, since this would have been perceived as an exceptionally barbaric practice by Frankish clergymen of the eleventh century. However, we cannot completely discount the continuity of enslavement for sale, since Frankish authors continued to rail against the practice.

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623 Bagge, 28.
624 Wihoda, 114.
As for Cosmas, he was writing decades, if not centuries after many of the events he describes. It is probable that other raids by and against the Bohemians were not recorded because they had fallen out of living memory, especially if they did not carry great political significance along the lines of Břetislav I’s campaign in Poland. That said, sources which address Bohemian raiding exemplify a long-standing practice which continued well into the eleventh century. The major limitations of any examination of Bohemian raiding lie in the lack of source material and the interests of foreign authors.

Regarding the scale of this raiding, Martin Ježek is right to point out the scarcity of source material, particularly for the tenth century. Nevertheless, by stating that the proof does not exist, he overlooks the importance of a historical precedent for raiding in the ninth century and a clear continuity of these practices even into the twelfth. On the other hand, it is impossible to determine if raiding was as widespread as Dušan Třeštík assumes. Though most instances of slave raiding were probably not written down, it would be hasty to extrapolate mass enslavement and a constant state of warfare from a silence which was most likely the result of an author’s lack of interest in the subject. The picture that emerges of raiding is also one which suggests that Franks often fell victim to the Slavs, an important consideration given McCormick’s emphasis on the dominant role of the Franks in early medieval slave raiding and trading.

Where the gaps of British evidence in the Viking era can be filled in by the relatively high volumes of Irish material, Bohemia’s differing political and social contexts mean that we cannot assume a parallel situation. However, there are certainly similarities where sources are concerned. In both the British Isles and Bohemia, we must rely on one-sided records which portray Vikings and Bohemians as frequent raiders. Raiding against these peoples was only recorded when it represented political advantage, and so the majority of cross-border raids against these groups is likely to have remained unrecorded. The result is a portrayal of raiding as a barbarous activity undertaken by heathens and foreigners, which glosses over the relative banality of raiding in warfare at the time, or, conversely, one which overemphasises the devastation of raids in areas where it was no longer practiced by the inhabitants. In either region, however, we can see that raiding was not always perpetrated by a single group. Scandinavian settlers were raided by the English and Irish regularly, and with this in mind we can assume that the Polabian Slavs, Poles, and Hungarians took captives from the Bohemians throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries. The raiding of these groups is known elsewhere, and there is no reason to think Bohemia was exempt.
What the occasionally patchy evidence does suggest is a change over time in the perception of captives, as raiding motivations moved from political to economic. Warfare was still political, but Irish evidence suggests that slaves increasingly became an incentive for raiding, and Frankish sources indicate that raiding was one particular ‘reward’ the Bohemians gained by fighting on behalf of their overlords. The increase in numbers alone, especially in the Irish material, suggests that the number of captives taken exceeded any domestic demand for slaves. As will be discussed below, this shift was the direct result of increased demand for tradable slaves, and marked an ideological change in early medieval warfare which prevailed for at least two centuries in the British Isles and the Czech lands.

SLAVE TRADING IN VIKING-AGE BRITAIN AND IRELAND

The Viking Age brought profound changes to Britain and Ireland. In terms of slave trading, the introduction of Viking trade routes opened new outlets and created a greater demand for British and Irish captives, even as old systems such as emporia declined. This gradual change from small- to large-scale slave trading is illustrated by the evidence for raiding, which also hints at a complex operation that went beyond simply Viking raiders transporting captives to Scandinavia. By examining the traders, their markets, and the destinations of slaves, it becomes evident that the slave trading of the Viking Age involved natives and newcomers at all stages, and existed as a complex facet of the early medieval economy.

Much of the source material portrays Vikings, or at least Scandinavians, as the predominant buyers. Findan again serves as the key example; once enslaved by Norsemen, he was sold on four separate occasions to different Norse buyers. Though we have established that Findan’s sales were of a casual, opportunistic type rather than examples of a systematic slave trade, his situation gives the impression of a self-contained Viking slave trade, in which Viking raids supplied the Viking trade. Nevertheless, as in previous centuries, the high visibility of foreign and sometimes non-Christian traders does not indicate that these were the only people buying and selling slaves. The Viking slave trade may have been self-contained in the ninth century, but by the eleventh it was much more diverse. From this period in both England and Ireland, much of the textual material which points to foreign and non-Christian buyers also implicates the English and Irish in the sale of their own countrymen. In Ireland, this is reflected in the sharp increase in captive taking by the Irish from the tenth century onwards discussed above. The drastic increase was
probably motivated by the profitability of selling these captives to Dublin, even if there is little to explicitly link these two phenomena. Over the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries, Dublin increasingly became a major hub of trade in northern Europe, and archaeological evidence suggests that it played a significant role in the exchange of luxury goods. If the primary destination of the numerous recorded captives was indeed the slave trade, this would indicate the movement of a substantial number of people as merchandise within Ireland, even if we assume the numbers given in the annals to be hyperbolic. That Norse raids decreased during this period of rampant Irish slave raiding suggests that the Hiberno-Norse no longer needed warfare to acquire slaves; they could simply purchase them from the Irish. Not only does this point to Scandinavian buyers, but it importantly indicates the native Irish played a key role in supplying the slave trade. Where initially Vikings had to supply their own slave trading practices, by the eleventh century this was not necessary.

A similar picture emerges in English texts authored by Wulfstan of York, despite the relative scarcity of explicit tenth- and eleventh-century evidence for substantial raiding. In his Sermo Lupi, Wulfstan of York railed against his fellow Englishmen for their sale of poor, free Christians ‘ut of þysan earde’ – out of this land – despite their innocence of any crime. Wulfstan clearly felt deep concern over this issue, since it appears several times in laws he drafted for Æthelred the Unready and Cnut. V, VI, and VII Æthelred and II Cnut all prohibit the sale of people out of the country, with all except VII Æthelred targeting sales ‘to the heathen’ or ‘into heathendom’ especially. Wulfstan’s repetition and his specificity in who was targeted and where they were sold suggests that he had in mind an ongoing practice, though his polemic may overemphasise the regularity of it.

This idea was repeated decades later in the Ten Articles of William I, a twelfth-century collection of William I’s decrees. Article 9 forbade the sale of anyone ‘extra patriam’. The concern for sale out of the country rather than Wulfstan’s ‘heathendom’

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625 For Dublin as a hub of luxury goods in Ireland, see Valante, ‘Dublin’s’, 69-83.
626 See p. 98 n.411.
627 For V Æthelred §2 and VI Æthelred §9 see p. 98 n.411. ‘Et prohibemus, ne aliquis extra uendatur. Si quis hoc presumat, sit preter benedictionem Dei et omnium sanctorum et preter omnem Christianitatem, nisi penitentiam etemendet, sicut episcopus suus edocebit.’, Gesetze, i.261 (VII Æthelred §5). For II Cnut §3, see p. 98 n.412.
628 For discussion of Wulfstan’s acceptance of other forms (and victims) of slave trading, see Jurasinski, ‘Old’, 110-2.
629 ‘Ego prohibeo, ut nullus uendat hominem extra patriam super plenam forisfacturam meam’, Gesetze, i.488.
probably reflects the Christian Irish and Hiberno-Norse trade which was still very active in the Irish Sea. The implications of these laws will be discussed further in Chapter 6, but here we must note that they suggest foreigners regularly purchased slaves in England, or at least made the export of these slaves popular and profitable. They also point to English involvement in the sale of English people to these foreigners. The Old English *Sermo Lupi* surely could not have been meant for anyone but an English audience. The law codes also would only have applied to people within England. In both England and Ireland, then, the ‘Viking’ slave trade relied upon a network of Irish and Anglo-Saxon (and probably Anglo-Norse) suppliers and sellers.

Vikings and Scandinavians remained more visible in the source material due to their status as outsiders and, for a long time, as non-Christians. Authors’ outrage against the sale of Christians to these groups is evident in the sources, and the absence of objections to Christian ownership of Christian slaves means that we are just as blind to such circumstances in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries as we are in the seventh and eighth. Mention of Irish slave traders only appears after the end of the Viking Age, by which point the Hiberno-Norse of Ireland were would have ceased to be considered by the English as a politically and ethnically distinct group. William of Malmesbury’s *Vita Wulfstani* notes that the slaves chained together in Bristol were awaiting sale to Ireland (‘in Hiberniam’).630 Gerald of Wales’s *Expugnatio Hibernica* describes a Council of Armagh unattested in any other source, in which the Irish deemed it was their purchase of English slaves ‘from merchants, robbers, and pirates’ which caused God to punish them with the Norman invasion in the twelfth century.631 There is a chance that Irish buyers were involved who were not of Scandinavian descent, but we can do no more than speculate.

Moving from a discussion of people to one of places, there are few locations which are named explicitly in reference to the medieval slave trade in the source material, as discussed in Chapter 2. The *Vita Wulfstani* would have us believe that Bristol was a major point of slave export to Ireland, emphasised by the statement that the slaves were from all over England (‘ex omni Anglia’).632 As discussed in Chapter 4 (pp. 131-2), Winchester may also have attracted slave trading, though the sales recorded in the hagiography of St. Swithun all appear to have been isolated events. These urban areas certainly would have

630 William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, 100.
631 ‘a mercatoribus quam predonibus aique piratis’, Gerald of Wales, §18, p. 70.
had the infrastructure and trade links to support large-scale slave trading operations. Though there are no explicit references, we can expect slave trading to have occurred in areas under Viking, as well as Anglo-Saxon control, such as Dublin, York, London, and Chester, but it was certainly not limited to these markets. Non-urban locations such as *longphuirt* in Ireland and border fortifications in England and the Danelaw certainly hold potential as slave-trading sites, as suggested by archaeological evidence and their function as bases for raiding in the ninth century.

From these domestic markets, there is little question that the slave trade was far-reaching, bolstered by the same long-distance trade which brought luxury items such as silk and ivory, and more everyday goods such as quernstones and wine, from Europe and beyond.\(^{633}\) The long-distance nature of sales is attested not only by British and Irish texts, but also by the appearance of British and Irish slaves in sources across northern Europe. In England, early eleventh-century laws authored by Wulfstan and the Ten Articles of William I establish that English slaves, or at least Christian slaves, were being sold out of the country. The practice must have been common enough that Wulfstan felt the need for legislative action to help rectify a grievous sin before the coming apocalypse. As to the destinations of English and Irish slaves, the nearest seem to have been other parts of the British Isles. The Bristol slave trade appears to have predominantly exported slaves to Ireland by the late eleventh century. While there is no mention of Irish slaves in Britain by this point, it is not far-fetched to assume that some Irish slaves were sold there.

Several pieces of evidence suggest that Scandinavia may have been a principal destination for British and Irish slaves. In his *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, initially completed in 1125, William of Malmesbury relates a story in which Cnut’s own sister was responsible for organising shipments of slaves, especially attractive – and as such, highly valuable - young girls to Denmark.\(^{634}\) The later date of William’s writing and his assurance that she was punished for her actions by being struck by lightning make the veracity of the tale unclear. William also appears to have thought of Cnut as a poor Christian early in his reign, which may have prompted the inclusion of this scandalous story about Cnut’s close family.\(^{635}\)

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\(^{634}\) ‘Quod dicebatur agmina mancipiorum in Anglia coempta Danemarkiam solere mittere, puellas presertim quas decus et aetas pretiosiores facerent’, *GRA* I, 362.

Even if this is a fabrication, it suggests that after only a century, slave trading was remembered as having been very common and very profitable.636

There is also the much later, thirteenth-century story of Melkorka, the Irish princess for sale with other slave women in a Norwegian market. The limitations of this story in the Laxdæla Saga have already been discussed in Chapter 3 (p. 110), but corroborating sources suggest that the background of the story is plausible. Not only does the twelfth-century Landnámabók match the saga’s genealogical information, but the ninth-century Vita Anskarii also laments the ready availability of Christian slaves in Scandinavia, even though the Life does not specify the origins of these slaves.637 However, given the frequency of raids in Britain and Ireland during the ninth century, it is safe to say that these groups would have been represented in the slaves viewed by Anskar.

While some slaves found themselves traded at markets in Scandinavia, others who were purchased in Britain and Ireland may have been taken back to Scandinavia with no intention of sale. Findan’s first owner sold him on because he had no immediate plans to return to Scandinavia. We cannot know if this was because slaves had a higher market value there, or whether foreign labourers were particularly valued (perhaps as exotic symbols of status638) on the Viking homesteads there. Melkorka herself, after being purchased in Norway, was put to work on her master’s homestead in Iceland.639

With these examples in mind, it is very possible that Scandinavia acted as a market hub for slave trading, between Dublin in the west and Rus in the east. Such a situation would help to explain how the Irish Melkorka came to be sold by a Rus merchant in Norway.640 The movement of slaves eastward to as-yet unchristianised regions would also explain the specific references to ‘heathendom’ in Cnut’s law. Alfred Smyth suggested that the Scandinavian market could not have absorbed the sheer quantity of slaves being imported from the British Isles. He proposed that slaves who were taken to Scandinavia were in fact ultimately destined for the Islamic caliphate.641 In light of Marek Jankowiak’s

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636 Pelteret, Slavery, 76.
638 This was the case in fifteenth-century Italy, I. Origo, ‘The domestic enemy: the eastern slaves in Tuscany in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries’, Speculum 30:3 (1955), 354-5.
639 Laxdæla Saga, 64-5.
641 Smyth, 163. This idea was put forward by M. Bloch in ‘Comment et pourquoi finit l’esclavage antique’, Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations 2:2 (1947), 166, but Smyth develops the argument much further.
work on dirhams in Scandinavia as evidence for slave trading, an argument for slaves moving eastward may hold considerable weight. Smyth, however, focused on Al-Andalus as the main consumer of British and Irish slave labour. Poul Holm dismissed this argument, pointing out that Smyth’s supporting evidence for connections between Dublin and Spain was limited and circumstantial. More recent assessment by Ann Christys has likewise downplayed slaving connections between Ireland and Al-Andalus. Regarding an account in the Fragmentary Annals of ‘black men’ from Mauretania brought to Ireland by the Vikings of Dublin, Christys believes this story to be fiction or a quasi-historical legend, and thus not indicative of actual Viking activity. Furthermore, the high demand for slaves in Al-Andalus was supplied in earlier centuries by border raids against the Christian kingdoms, and later by Slavic slaves – saqāliba. As noted in Chapter 2 (p. 79), dirhams in Britain and Ireland come from eastern, not western, mints. Significantly, no archaeological indications have been discovered that Vikings travelled to Iberia for trade, or even settlement. While it is impossible, and perhaps unwise, to say that slaves from Britain and Ireland were never sold to Al-Andalus, the western caliphate was supplied by other means, and was not directly responsible for the high demand of British and Irish slaves in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

A much more promising alternative lies in the colonisation of Iceland beginning in the second half of the ninth century. That a mass exportation of slaves from the British Isles coincided with the settlement of Iceland cannot be entirely coincidental. Irish influence in the development of ninth- and tenth-century Iceland has remained contentious, but individuals of British and Irish descent were certainly among the early inhabitants. Large-scale genetic sequencing of the relatively isolated Icelandic population has indicated a significant proportion of British and Irish DNA, though this could signal the presence of free wives or people of mixed Anglo- or Hiberno-Norse lineage as much as the importation of slaves. That said, British and Irish slaves may very well have played an important role as

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642 By 1988, Smyth’s ideas had become outdated, and Holm provides a refutation of Smyth’s argument in light of more recent evidence and interpretation, Holm, 324-5.
643 A. Christys, Vikings in the South: Voyages to Iberia and the Mediterranean (London, 2015), 57; FA, s.a. 867, p. 121.
644 Christys, 11.
645 Christys, 6.
646 G. Sigurðsson, The Gaelic Influence in Iceland (Reykjavik, 2000), i, regarding slaves specifically, 30 n.22. For the types of Irish people mentioned in Icelandic sources, see Kristjánsson, 262-3.
domestic servants and agricultural labourers on Icelandic homesteads. Gísli Sigurðsson has argued that the paucity of explicit, reliable evidence for Irish influence in Iceland could itself be an indicator of slave status. Irish slaves may have been assigned Scandinavian names, and we can presume that they were forced to learn and communicate in Norse. Slave status would also help to explain the dearth of Irish or Gaelic artefacts from early Iceland, since slaves themselves would have been unable to carry reminders of home (especially valuable, metallic – and therefore more easily preserved – materials) with them. It is also worth noting that Greenland was colonised by Norse settlers from 986. This may have contributed to a demand for slaves, though to a lesser degree than the closer and more heavily-settled Iceland.

The Viking-Age slave trade in Britain and Ireland was more than simply a Viking operation. Raiders from Scandinavia initiated the process of expansion towards large-scale slave trading by incorporating Britain and Ireland into wide-ranging and long-distance trade networks. The peoples of the British Isles were regularly involved in this trade, from the creation of slaves to their sale and transport. The number of references to Scandinavian merchants and raiders is misleading, since in many cases their non-Christian status obscures the presence of Christian buyers and sellers who, in the eyes of ecclesiastical authors, did not pose a threat to the welfare of Christian slaves. Organising the sale and transport of slaves within Britain and Ireland was a complex operation which involved the participation of people from a variety of ethnicities and statuses. The export of these slaves likewise relied on a range of trade networks, both within the British Isles and beyond. While it is impossible to know how many people were exported from or imported to Britain and Ireland, we can assume those numbers to have been high throughout the late ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries based on the evidence of raiding. Viking trade networks instigated a change from slave trading as a solution to problematic situations, to a situation in which slaves were goods with predominately economic, not symbolic, associations. The Vikings did not introduce slave trading to Britain and Ireland, but the changes they initiated were of enormous significance.

649 Sigurðsson, 33.
THE CURIOUS CASE OF PŘEMYSLID BOHEMIA

A study of slave trading in early medieval Bohemia is anything but straightforward, as the section title would suggest. During the rise of the Přemyslid dukes in the ninth century and their consolidation of power and territorial expansion from the tenth century onwards, Bohemia was wracked with political unrest – both secular and ecclesiastical – which served as the primary focus of the limited source material of the period. This section will explore how vacillating periods of turmoil and prosperity created an environment conducive to large-scale slave trading without providing much direct textual evidence of it. Comparison with Britain and Ireland also suggests an underlying complexity which is not immediately evident in the source material. Bohemia, too, was widely impacted by high-volume slave trading, and we should not limit our perspective to non-Christian merchants or a single trade route.

Despite a paucity of early medieval source material, the Bohemian slave trade, and specifically that of Prague, has been the subject of historiographical debate in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The model of Michael McCormick and Charles Verlinden sees the Slavs being raided and taken into captivity by Franks in the north and Byzantines in the south and west. They were then transported to buyers across Europe and into the Middle East by Christian merchants seeking to make a profit by selling pagan slaves to non-Christian masters.\textsuperscript{650} We saw this in the discussion of Great Moravia in Chapter 4, particularly with reference to the dramatic fate of Methodius’ disciples. The evidence for raiding practices examined in this chapter calls this model into question.

As outlined in the Introduction, Dušan Třeštík’s argument that slavery was integral to the development of the Czech state differed from that of pre-communist authors. Where they had argued that slave trading was widespread but changed with the development of the state, Třeštík believed that the income from slave trading in Prague allowed the Přemyslid dukes to consolidate their power and lay the foundation of the Czech state.\textsuperscript{651} Charles Verlinden’s \textit{L’Esclavage dans l’Europe Medievale} provided a model for the mass exportation of slaves from Bohemia visualised by Třeštík thirty years later: trans-continental Jewish traders operating out of the Islamic world. Třeštík imagined a scenario in which

\textsuperscript{651} This idea was first exposited by J. Žemlička, but only in brief, ‘Das “Reich” der bohmischen Boleslavs und die Krise an der Jahrtausendwende’, \textit{Archeologické Rozhledy} \textbf{47} (1995), 270-1.
constant warfare in the early tenth century prompted by territorial expansion created a steady supply of pagan captives for Jewish merchants.\textsuperscript{652} This supply attracted trade, so that by the time of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya’qūb’s visit in the 960s, Prague was a booming market town.\textsuperscript{653} It is this opinion which has dominated references to slave trading in the history of Bohemia over the past two decades, particularly those by Czech historians and archaeologists.\textsuperscript{654}

Třeštík also attempted to place a monetary value on the exchange of this prosperous market. As mentioned briefly in Chapter 2, Třeštík drew the slave price of 300 deniers from a Moravian charter of 1078 and 600 from an eleventh-century Bohemian charter. Třeštík assumed 300 deniers to be the representative price of a slave in the Prague market in the tenth century, even though this value represents the amount owed by anyone wishing to leave servitude (‘de servitute exire’).\textsuperscript{655} Such figures are unlikely to have been the same as market values, since a higher redemption price could have been implemented, for example, to prevent or delay manumission, to compensate the slave owner for loss of labour, or because there was no competition to drive the price down; a lower redemption price may have reflected any number of non-economic reasons, such as the servant’s age, personal relationships between slaves and masters, or incentive for good behaviour. However, Třeštík used this redemption price to compare market prices across Europe, calculate the total income of Boleslav I from slave sales (an estimated ten million deniers), and extrapolate from this income 30,000-35,000 slaves.\textsuperscript{656} This money was then invested by Boleslav in the support of a Přemyslid retinue, which in turn ‘kick-started the so-called mechanism of the origin of Central European states’.\textsuperscript{657} Another significant problem with this model is that it assumes slave trading to have been a state-run system, in which captives taken on raids were sold only by the duke’s administration, and that the profits of sales for newly enslaved captives were the exclusive right of the state. This situation presupposes the idea of a ‘state’ powerful enough to enforce and carry out such regulation, despite acknowledging that centralised government was in its infancy, an idea explored further in Chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{652} Třeštík, ‘Veliké’, 54.
\textsuperscript{653} Třeštík, ‘Veliké’, 54.
\textsuperscript{654} For example, Chárvat, \textit{Emergence}, 154-7; J. Macháček, ‘Češi, otroci muslimů?’, \textit{Lidové Noviny}, 4 July 2015.
\textsuperscript{655} Třeštík, ‘Veliké’, 61. These numbers were initially used as evidence of slave prices by Šusta, 80.
\textsuperscript{656} Třeštík, ‘Veliké’, 62.
\textsuperscript{657} Třeštík, ‘Veliké’, 63.
Martin Ježek not only rejects the idea of widespread raiding as lacking evidence, but also expresses concerns with the idea of a Christian trade in exclusively pagan slaves only forty years after the construction of the first church in Bohemia. Such a situation also directly contradicts testimony by Cosmas of Prague in the twelfth century, who speaks of many Christian slaves owned by Jews. Since Jews were not involved in the raids supplying captives for enslavement to Prague, they must have been able to purchase these slaves. Though he questions assumptions regarding the religion of slaves sold in Prague, Ježek does not doubt the existence of the trade itself. Nor does Marek Jankowiak, who, as already mentioned, hypothesises a large-scale slave trade through Prague which funnelled captives from great swathes of Central Europe across the Frankish empire and into Al-Andalus. Ježek does, however, suggest an internal outlet for slave trading in the form of Prague’s iron manufacturing, and Tomáš Petráček’s study of donated people does allow for the use of slaves on Bohemian estates before the eleventh century.

As in the case of Great Moravia, the key to reconciling sparse primary evidence with historiographical claims of a high-volume trade in slaves lies in the context of our sources. Where the Great Moravian sources nearly all demonstrated exceptional events, sources from Přemyslid Bohemia do just the opposite. Where slaves do appear, they are casually listed as trade goods, or described in terms and numbers which suggest regular sale. These references occur predominantly in the tenth century, though this is probably a result of the types of source material being written then: hagiographies of the first Czech saints and a travelogue by a Spanish visitor to Prague.

We know from the Raffelstetten customs tariff that in the first decade of the tenth century, Bohemians were trading slaves on the Bavarian border regularly. We can assume that these slaves were the products of the type of raiding we see in the ninth century: politically motivated warfare. This export of slaves does, however, establish that Bohemians had a history of slave trading, and that large-scale operations did not develop in a vacuum. We cannot know whether this route linked a slave market in Prague to the Frankish empire, since the supposed market hub within the Malá Strana suburb beneath Prague Castle was

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658 Ježek, 636.
659 Ježek, 637.
661 Ježek, 623-42; Petráček, Power.
only developing at this time.\textsuperscript{662} We have seen in Chapters 2 and 4 that seats of authority did attract slave trading, so it is not impossible that a regular market for slaves developed at the same pace as the town. It is unlikely though, that a large-scale slave trade could exist in Bohemia without leaving a noticeable impact on neighbouring Great Moravia.

The \textit{Legenda Christiani} does suggest that two to three decades later, during the rule of Wenceslas (921-935), slaves were regularly available for purchase. According to this late tenth-century hagiographical text, Wenceslas was known to have slave boys purchased from the market in Prague for Easter baptisms when no catechumens were readily available.\textsuperscript{663} This hints that slaves were sold regularly enough to be purchased last-minute. It also makes sense that Bohemia would begin to move into the economic void left by the collapse of Great Moravia in the early 900s. Without organised competition, Bohemian traders would have been able to increase their supply to meet continued demand, thereby taking control of the available profit. It is perhaps in these years following the collapse of Great Moravia that we can point to the origins of large-scale slave trading in Bohemia.\textsuperscript{664}

A similar casual reference appears in Ibrâhim ibn Yaʿqûb’s account from his visit to Prague in the mid-960s. Slaves are listed amongst the goods available for purchase, alongside other expensive items such as horses and gold.\textsuperscript{665} He also notes that Rus, Hungarian, and Slavic traders travelled to Prague to purchase slaves, tin, and furs, again suggesting that merchants travelling long distances could depend on slaves being available.\textsuperscript{666} The \textit{Crescente fide}, written in the second half of the tenth century, includes a miracle story in which a prisoner was sold to foreign pagans after Wenceslas’s intercession freed him from his shackles.\textsuperscript{667} While the story clearly reflects a recurring trope of Wenceslas as a freer of chains (see Chapter 2), of which the pagan buyers are a part, the text’s date may correspond closely to Ibn Yaʿqûb’s account, and it supports his testimony of


\textsuperscript{663} Kristiánova \textit{Legenda}, 66-68.


\textsuperscript{665} ‘Ibrâhim ibn Yaʿqûb’, in \textit{Arab Travellers}, 165.

\textsuperscript{666} ‘Ibrâhim ibn Yaʿqûb’, in \textit{Arab Travellers}, 164.

\textsuperscript{667} \textit{Crescente fide}, 62.
regular, long-distance slave trading.\textsuperscript{668} By the late tenth or very early eleventh century, the purchase of Christian slaves by Jewish merchants was regular enough to worry the bishop of Prague, Adalbert.\textsuperscript{669} There is also the evidence of the charter which granted ‘decimum hominum captivum’ from the Prague market to Breovnov monastery (see Chapter 1, p. 48). While the potential for ‘state’ oversight of slave trading will be discussed in Chapter 6, it is worth noting here that the number of slaves sold in Prague in the late tenth century must have generated a substantial amount of wealth – enough to make a worthy gift for the monastery.

When we compare this information to the visible raiding in tenth-century sources, it becomes clear that for Bohemia, there is no direct correlation between the recorded scale of raiding and that of slave trading. While several texts discuss tenth-century slave trading as a common phenomenon, there is little mention of the raiding necessary to supply such a practice. This may stem from the one-sided appearance of raiding in Frankish annals and chronicles. These writers would not have been immediately concerned with Bohemian raids on the Poles or Hungarians, or groups not under the hegemony of the Frankish empire. This makes sense when we consider that Wenceslas’ slave boys must have been pagan, and therefore not Frankish.

It is also possible, however, that Prague functioned as a slave-trading hub, and that captives were brought to the flourishing town from neighbouring regions. Thietmar noted raids by the Polabian Slavs on the Franks in 982-983.\textsuperscript{670} Hungarians took captives from the Saxons at least once in the first half of the tenth century according to the Annals of Corvey.\textsuperscript{671} And the Polish duke Mieszko I aided the Frankish emperor in plundering the Polabian Slavs in 986.\textsuperscript{672} There is no direct evidence that any of these captives made their way to Prague, or even to Premyslid Bohemia, but archaeological evidence, particularly numismatic evidence, indicates that goods moved between these regions, especially between Bohemia and Hungary and Bohemia and Poland (see Chapter 2).\textsuperscript{673} It is this numismatic evidence which has directed Marek Jankowiak’s argument that captives from Poland were

\textsuperscript{668} It was almost certainly written before 983, Kalhous, \textit{Anatomy}, 238-9.
\textsuperscript{669} John Canaparius, §12, p. 169; Bruno of Querfurt, §11, p. 197.
\textsuperscript{670} Thietmari, III.18-19, pp. 120-2.
\textsuperscript{671} \textit{Annales Corbeienses}, ed. G. Pertz, MGH, SS 3 (Hannover, 1839), s.a. 919, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{672} \textit{Annales Quedlinburgenses}, ed. M. Giese, MGH, SS rer. Germ. 72 (Hannover, 2004), s.a. 986, p. 476.
\textsuperscript{673} J. Machula, ‘Foreign items and outside influences in the material culture of tenth-century Bohemia’, \textit{Annual of Medieval Studies at the CEU} 8 (2002), 65-88.
funnelled through Prague to Frankish trade systems and onwards to Al-Andalus. Slave trading in Prague certainly need not have been restricted to the sale of captives taken on Bohemian raids, and ultimately the number of such raids recorded in the sources should not be taken as an absolute indicator for the scale of slave raiding. While Ježek is correct in stating that the raiding necessary to support a large-scale slave trade is undocumented, we must also consider the shortcomings of the surviving source material as well as larger Central European trade networks which may have contributed to a Prague-centred slave trade.

In the eleventh century, despite references to Bohemian raiding, there are few mentions of slave trading. Captives taken in 1021 were explicitly bound for sale into slavery, and by 1077 the Bohemians had some notoriety as slave dealers. However, there are no references to Prague trade or to slave purchases in the manner which we see in the tenth century. Without direct evidence, there is no way to know with absolute certainty that eleventh-century Bohemia participated in a large-scale slave trade, but the evidence of raiding is highly suggestive. While it is possible that some of these captives were used for early colonisation efforts, the explicit mention of sale into slavery indicates that the development of land was not the sole, or perhaps even the most important motive behind this raiding. There is nothing to indicate a collapse of long-distance trade in the late tenth or early eleventh century, so it seems likely that the prosperous slave trading visible in the tenth century continued into, if not through, the eleventh.

As for the practices of the slave trade itself, Ibrāhīm ibn Yaʾqūb listed those merchants who travelled to Prague in the 960s:

“The Rus and the Saqāliba (Slavs) go there from Cracow to trade, and so do Muslim merchants from the lands of the Turks, as well as Turks and Jews…. They carry away slaves, tin and various kinds of furs.”

The presence of Polish merchants certainly appears to be true in light of numismatic evidence. Jankowiak believes that early Bohemian coins were produced largely for export beginning in the 960s, emphasising the demand of foreign slave traders for silver. He points to Greater Poland and Silesia as the origins of these slave merchants, since these are

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675 Ibrāhīm ibn Yaʾqūb, in Arab Travellers, 164.
the locations were the earliest Bohemian coins are predominately found.677 This would fit well with Ibn Ya’qūb’s testimony that these merchants were travelling from Cracow, which was at that point a Přemyslid town bordering Polish territory.

The Turkish merchants mentioned by Ibn Ya’qūb are Hungarians, whose origins as Turkic nomads had not yet given way to a cohesive, Christian kingdom. These particular merchants are difficult to trace archaeologically for the tenth century and earlier, since coins were not minted until the early eleventh century during the reign of Stephen. The Hungarians Ibn Ya’qūb saw in Prague probably purchased their slaves with largely untraceable goods like horses and honey, or long-distance luxury items such as Byzantine silk and jewellery. The Hungarian merchants active at Kostice in the eleventh century are much more visible via their coinage than those textually attested in Prague in the mid-tenth. Both cases together demonstrate that Hungarian merchants were consistently active in Přemyslid territory. The question remains, however, as to whether Hungarians purchased slaves around the Czech lands as they were known to do in Prague, or whether they travelled to Prague because that is where slaves were most readily available.

The mention of Jewish merchants at the Prague market in the 960s has yielded the greatest amount of discussion and speculation by far. They have been interpreted in many instances as the far-ranging traders who carried Slavic eunuchs to Al-Andalus, and Třeštík went so far as to label these as Radhanites, the multilingual Jewish merchants who supposedly operated trade routes by land and sea between the Mediterranean and the Far East.678 The Radhanites are most notably described by the Arab geographer Ibn Khurrahādhibhi in the mid-ninth century, but the accuracy of his description has been debated; the degree to which he may have lumped many groups of merchants and trade routes into a single category is unknown.679 Michael McCormick links the Jewish merchants operating out of early medieval Francia with Ibn Khurrahādhibhi’s Radhanites, and believes that such long-distance trade routes would have been feasible and profitable.680 The presence of Radhanites in tenth-century Prague, however, is complicated by the fact that they are only known from eighth- and ninth-century texts. It is possible that by the time of

677 Jankowiak, ‘Two’, 144.
680 McCormick, Origins, 688-93.
Ibn Ya’qūb’s trip to Prague, Radhanite merchants no longer operated in Europe. The context of Ibn Ya’qūb’s account itself suggests that these are Jews from the Hungarian lands. Jewish communities are known to have existed there in the tenth century, since a letter from a Jew of Cordoba appears to have been sent to the kingdom of Khazaria via Hungary. The letter demonstrates the potential for regular Iberian-Hungarian connections, especially within the Jewish community, but the presence of Hungarian Jewish merchants in Prague is not immediately indicative of a slave trade with Al-Andalus.

Michael Toch’s arguments regarding Jewish involvement in slave trading have been touched on for Great Moravia, and they are certainly relevant in tenth- and eleventh-century Bohemia. Most early medieval sources used to prove a heavy Jewish involvement in slave trading have been misinterpreted or have nothing to do with Jews. While Jews continued to purchase slaves in Prague through the tenth century, it is not clear that these were always career merchants, let alone long-distance slave traders. Enough Christian slaves were purchased by Jews to cause the bishop of Prague, Adalbert, great concern in the late tenth century, though we should bear in mind that this episode exemplifies the Church’s extreme distaste for such transactions on any level. A Jewish community existed in Prague in the tenth century, meaning that the buyers of slaves could merely have been individuals seeking to acquire household servants. Adalbert’s complaint, therefore, should not be taken as proof that Jews were the predominant slave traders in Prague.

There are other groups of merchants Ibn Ya’qūb does not mention, but whom we would expect to find. The number of German coins in Bohemia reveals the presence of Christian, Frankish traders who are otherwise invisible in the source material (see pg. 84). Slaves may have been one type of good they purchased there. It is also reasonable to assume that the slave trading documented in the Raffelstetten customs tariff continued.

681 A. Nazmi, Commercial Relations between Arabs and Slavs (9th-11th Centuries) (Warsaw, 1998), 128.
684 Though that community may have been small, P. Hilsch, ‘Die Juden in Böhmen und Mähren im Mittelalter und die Ersten Privilegien’, in F. Seibt (ed.), Die Juden in den böhmischen Ländern (Munich, 1983), 15.
especially given Frankish overlordship of Bohemia and periods of Bohemian alliance with Bavaria.

There is also some difficulty over whether Ibn Ya’qūb saw Iberian Muslims in Prague. Depending on the manuscript tradition, the passage could read either, ‘Muslim merchants from the land of the Turks’, or, ‘while from the country of the Turks and of the Muslims come to them Jews and Turks’.\(^{685}\) It is much easier to assume the presence of Hungarian Muslims in Bohemia than Iberian ones, particularly when there are next to no Islamic coin finds there – from either east or west. There is always the argument that these coins would have been few (having been exchanged for Frankish coins as merchants moved eastward), and easily melted down or traded back out of Bohemia. There is also the possibility that dirhams were exchanged directly for the handkerchief currency at the Prague market, but if this were the case, there would almost certainly be more single finds of dirhams in and around Prague. Because Ibn Ya’qūb’s surviving reports do not mention Muslims from Al-Andalus in the Frankish towns he visited, it seems more likely that the Muslims in Prague were indeed from Hungary.

As for markets, despite the probable variety of locations in which slaves could regularly be purchased (see Chapter 2), Prague is the only internal location of Bohemian slave trading named in the source material. These texts depict the Prague market as substantial and of a comparable scale to Dublin, but we do not know anything about slave trading in the markets under Přemyslid oversight in other developing towns such as Brno, Znojmo, or Olomouc. Even what was clearly a significant point of trade at Kosice has only recently been discovered, and is only attested archaeologically. At various times, the Přemyslid dukes also controlled the towns of Cracow (under Boleslav I, mid-tenth century), Gniezno (under Břetislav I, briefly from 1038-9), and Poznán (also briefly from 1038-9), meaning that what we think of as a Bohemian slave trade may have experienced geographical expansion and contraction depending on the status of the territory.

As for where the slaves traded in Bohemia ended up, there are a great many possibilities and very little direct evidence. Trade existed to and from Bohemia in all

directions, Francia, the Baltic, the Balkans, and Rus. The focus of slave trading, however, has remained predominately on two destinations: Western Europe and Kiev. The westward trade of Slavic slaves has become ingrained in the historiography of the Middle Ages as a result of Charles Verlinden’s work. His model partly rests on the presence of sclavi in ninth- and tenth-century Frankish charters; these have been taken as evidence of Slavic slaves on Frankish estates, and therefore a Frankish trade in Slavic slaves. Whether or not this is true rests solely on the interpretation of sclavus as a term for status in those documents. Working backwards from the etymological perspective that modern European languages like l’esclavage derive from sclavus, Charles Verlinden believed that because sclavus was used to describe donated individuals amidst others labelled lidi and mancipia, sclavus must therefore have connoted unfree status. While this argument is generally accepted, Alice Rio has pointed out that special arrangements for free Slavs are not unheard-of in Frankish charters, and that no diplomatic use of sclavus appears to represent anything other than ethnicity. Verlinden’s support primarily comes from narrative material describing slave trading, and there is very little evidence to indicate that Slavs captured in Frankish raids became slaves in Francia. This outcome was certainly possible, as this sort of direct evidence of enslavement is rare in any part of Europe, but Slavic chattel slaves do not appear on Frankish estates in tenth-century diplomas.

We know that Al-Andalus used saqāliba slaves – especially eunuchs – extensively within its bureaucratic structures in the tenth century, engaging these individuals as high- and low-level administrators, domestic servants, and even soldiers. These saqāliba were not all Slavs, but Slavs almost certainly made up the majority of this outsider group otherwise consisting of foreigners such as Franks and Galicians. Slavic slaves were so

686 Charvát, Emergence, 144.
689 Rio, Slavery, 166-7.
prevalent in the Islamic world that, as with *sclavus*, their ethnic name (sing. *saqlabī*) became synonymous with unfree status, though the transformation of this term can did occur before the tenth century.693 Czech historians, following Verlinden, have remained confident that it was westward trade from Prague which fed the significant demand for Slavic slaves in Al-Andalus.694 Though it is unlikely that Jews were the only merchants operating along this route, there was certainly a system which allowed captives from the East Frankish frontier to become slaves in Al-Andalus.695 This sort of trade route was acknowledged by Ibn Hawqal, an Arab geographer writing in the late tenth century, when he recorded that the Andalusian raiders obtained these slaves from the northern parts of the Slavic lands.696

Archaeology is beginning to provide some insight, if not into slave trading in Prague, then at least into the trade systems of which slavery was a part. I have already discussed the possibility that merchants or raiders from other Slavic regions came to Prague to trade. Certainly the appearance of Bohemian coins most frequently in Greater Poland suggests that Polish merchants were regularly taking goods to Bohemian markets.697 It is also telling that one Old Church Slavonic penitential, *Někotoraja zapověd*, which may have been written in Bohemia in the tenth or eleventh century, punished the forceful castration of children for sale.698 The raiding of churches and monasteries, such as the one on Zeitz in 977 mentioned above, could also hint at links to the Arab world; the literate, educated boys and men who lived there were precisely the kind of slaves most highly sought after in the Islamic world, especially after castration.699

Bohemia was almost certainly involved to some degree in this long-distance trade network fuelled by the Cordoban caliphate’s desire for slaves. But it is worth playing devil’s advocate if only to highlight some of the difficulties presented by this trade network, and the dangers of taking it for granted as the primary destination of slaves sold through Bohemia. The overland route from Prague to Al-Andalus is around 1,500 miles as the crow flies. If we envision large caravans of slaves moving westwards across Europe, we must also factor in the difficulties in keeping slaves fed, healthy, and in line. Surely slave revolts

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695 Meouak, 214-5.
697 Jankowiak, ‘Two’, 144.
698 *Někotoraja zapověd*, §41 p. 45.
would have been a symptom of transporting large numbers of these people together across long distances. For the better-documented trans-Atlantic slave trade, 392 revolts aboard slave ships were recorded over a span of two hundred years. But yet for the early Middle Ages, we hear nothing. One could blame this on the authors’ lack of interest in such an event, but a revolt would have been seen as a shocking commentary on the barbarity of the slaves (were they pagan), or the grace of God (were they Christian). It would also reflect on the ruler in whose lands the revolt occurred, depending on how they handled the situation. Given the interests of medieval chroniclers and administrators, a slave revolt would have every reason to be recorded, and the absence of any such record is telling. The smaller the caravans, the more likely such a revolt could be suppressed or easily crushed, but the profits of smaller caravans would have been less likely to exceed overheads, perhaps in turn providing less motivation for such a long and arduous trip.

A much more probable scenario was that Prague fed into a trade network made up of stages. This would accommodate for the scarcity of dirhams in the Czech lands, and also the unlikelihood of far-ranging Jewish slave merchants. It would explain why slave caravans are invisible in the source material; if they did exist, shorter distances travelled would have meant merchants could make trips more frequently. Frequency would in turn translate to smaller numbers of slaves being transported at a time. Such a scenario would still give Bohemia, the rising Přemyslid power, and the Prague market places within the larger narrative of European slave trading and the relationship between Christendom and the Islamic world without taking the evidence for granted.

The other principal destination of Bohemian slaves was, according to Czech historiography, to Rus. This idea is supported by Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb, who noted Rus traders came from Cracow to purchase slaves in Prague in the mid-tenth century. The route between Prague and Kiev was opened around this time, which would have facilitated travel for those looking to purchase slaves in either location. However, the movement of slaves eastward may have been no more than a trickle, and not principally towards Kiev. Initially

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701 For safe or unsafe travel as literary toposi for either praising or criticising a ruler, see T. Reuter, ‘The insecurity of travel in the early and high Middle Ages: criminals, victims and their medieval and modern observers’, in J.L. Nelson (ed.), *Medieval Polities & Modern Mentalities* (Cambridge, 2006), 42-5.
written in the early twelfth century, the Russian Primary Chronicle recalled silver and horses coming from Bohemia to Pereyaslavelc (also Presthlavitza), a Danube town in present-day Romania. In reported speech, the ruler Svyatoslav referred to the Rus trade:

‘I do not care to remain in Kiev, but should prefer to live in Pereyaslavelc on the Danube, since that is the centre of my realm where all riches are concentrated: gold, silks, wine, and various fruits from Greece, silver and horses from Hungary and Bohemia, and from Rus furs, wax, honey, and slaves.’

If slaves were included amongst the goods moving eastward to Kiev from Prague, they were not remembered in significant numbers; apparently, Kiev’s trade in luxury goods was inferior to the riverine traffic in Pereyaslavelc. The Primary Chronicle would have us believe that this description should be placed in 969, but the prosperity he describes is more likely to reflect the situation after 1000. Nonetheless, the flow of silver and horses down the Danube echoes the Bohemian trade witnessed in the Raffelstetten customs tariff, which did include slaves. Shackles discovered in the lower Danube region have been taken as evidence for the movement of Bohemian slaves, but as discussed in Chapter 2, this would only have been one potential reason for their use, and perhaps not even the most likely. That said, the numbers of slaves being exported via the Danube could not have been significant enough to leave a lasting impression, as did silver and horses. Slave trading remained in cultural memory long after it had dwindled or ceased, as demonstrated by William of Malmesbury, Gerald of Wales, and Cosmas of Prague. It suggests that we should not write off this anecdote as unreliable, or assume that it reflects only a twelfth-century trade system.

The trade in slaves from the Czech lands may have been dwarfed by the Rus’s own high-volume traffic in Slavic slaves. We can trust Ibrāhīm ibn Ya’qūb’s account of Rus merchants purchasing slaves in Prague, but it is important that he describes them as coming from Cracow rather than directly from Kiev. As with westward trade towards Al-Andalus, Cracow may have been one stage of a trade network. From there, the Rus or Ibn Ya’qūb’s other saqāliba (Slavic) traders could have transported slaves onwards to Kiev, but it is just as

704 Charvát, Emergence, 145.
705 Inquisitio, §6, p. 251.
706 Charvát, Emergence, 145.
likely, if not more so, that these slaves were then sold off to more regional landholders and people of means in Silesia and Greater Poland.

Hungary was probably another major destination of slaves who came through Bohemia. Ibn Ya’qūb referenced Hungarians of various religions buying slaves there in the 960s. Cosmas also noted that Polish captives taken by the Bohemians in 1021 were specifically destined for sale to Hungary.\footnote{See p. 151 n.60.} The prospering trade at Kostice (see Chapter 2) also hints at the regular trade of slaves across the Bohemian-Hungarian border, giving some weight to textual assertions of slaves being sent to Hungary in the mid-eleventh century.

Discussion of external demand for Slavic slaves has remained popular in Czech historiography, in part due to the continued insistence that the feudalisation of agricultural production precluded any internal outlets. The idea that slaves and unfree tenants coexisted should not be a radical one, and yet these two categories are often taken to be mutually exclusive. The result is an oversimplification of early medieval society, as sources are stretched beyond the limits of interpretation. For Šusta and Krofta, this means that the servi settled on eleventh-century estates who payed taxes were chattel slaves. For Petráček, the servi ransomed from Jewish owners in Prague in 1124 were serfs, or at least people of indeterminate unfree status.\footnote{Petráček, 222, 327-8.} In order to fully address the impact of the slave trade, however, it is necessary to examine any potential internal outlets. It is not my goal to prove or disprove the presence of serfs on Bohemian estates in the eleventh century, but to demonstrate that there was at least some demand for slave labour within Bohemia, which would have contributed to the scale of slave trading.

A large and steady supply of slaves may have been absorbed in Prague itself and the surrounding area. Martin Ježek notes that slave trading and iron production appear to have flourished simultaneously in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and that linguistic evidence hints at the operation of iron workshops by slaves.\footnote{Unlike other locations with even less evidence of iron processing, sources for Prague record no ferrarii, fabri, or rudnici. Instead, there are plenty of references to slaves and slave trading, Ježek, 637-8.} It is possible that mortality rates, or at least the rates of debilitating injury, were high given the work involved, especially amongst newly enslaved individuals who had no experience working in mines or forges. Thus, the numbers of such slaves would have needed regular replenishing. Slavery in Prague may
have endured beyond the decline of iron production in the twelfth century, and the iron
mines and workshops were not the sole consumers of slaves. Domestic servants in many
households were probably of slave status for so long as slaves were for sale, including the
Christian servi ransomed in 1124 from the Jewish households of Prague. These slaves were
more likely to grow old and have children who inherited servile status, so the demand for
such slaves would not have been as constant as in the iron production industry, where many
slaves probably died suddenly and young. Nevertheless, together the local demand for
slaves in these two sectors must have been partly responsible for the tenth- and eleventh-
century peak in slave trading in Prague.

Monasteries may also have purchased slaves. In a 1078 donation charter of the
Moravian duke Otto and his wife to the monastery of St. Stephen near Olomouc, persons of
specific occupations are given to the monastery, with the caveat that these individuals
would need to be purchased. They include four fishermen and seven ploughmen with
ploughs, among others, and should they wish to leave servitude, they were required to
return their purchase price so that another could be bought in their stead.710 Tomáš Petráček
argues that these individuals must have been serfs rather than slaves, since they had enough
economic independence to save up the money to buy their own freedom.711 The ability to
save money is not necessarily an indication of serfdom, however, as slaves in ninth-century
Wessex and fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Tuscany were allowed to keep money they
themselves had saved.712

One copy of the alleged Kladruby foundation charter records the donation of a
gynaecemum of twelve ancillae, along with seven servi, and this charter has been used to
demonstrate the existence of slaves in Bohemia.713 Tomáš Petráček attributes this particular
part of the otherwise spurious charter to the monastery’s foundation in 1115, given the
nature of the donation. Later copies supposedly written in 1186 leave out the information
on the gynaecemum, suggesting that this system had gone defunct in the intervening 70 years
and was no longer worth recording. This possibility is further highlighted by the retention
of the information regarding the servi; the more widely-applicable male service was still

710 ‘Alii servi, alii sund precio introducendi. Quatuor piscatores, septem aratra cum aratoribus; hii
omino introducendi sund precio... si aliquando velit aliquis eorum de servitude exire, reddat
precium, quod datum est pro se, et alius ex eo precio introducatur eodem ordine’, CDB I, no. 79, p. 84.
711 Petráček, 262.
712 Gesetze, i.78 (Alfred §43); Origo, 351.
František Graus, though his Marxist perspective made him critical of a slave presence in Bohemia, accepted these *ancilla* as slaves. In Francia, however, even *ancillae* labouring in *gynaeceum* were more likely to be drawn from the unfree tenants of an estate rather than from chattel slaves.715 This charter therefore illustrates the difficulty in identifying demand for slaves within the emerging Bohemian estate system, but evidence for domestic slavery suggests that there was no clear cut-off point for slave labour in this region. While the women working in the Kladruby *gynaeceum* may have been serfs, there were almost certainly domestic slaves working for Jewish families in Prague ten years after the *gynaeceum* was donated. If we are to understand the full scope of slave trading in the Czech lands, we must take this internal demand into account, and acknowledge that the existence of forms of unfree tenancy does not automatically indicate the complete disappearance of slavery.

Historiography of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has created a view of slave trading in Bohemia which is rather straightforward: slaves moved from Prague to Al-Andalus, and also to Kiev. In reality, the situation was anything but simple. While the limited source material does point to large-scale enslavement and trading operations, these systems were almost certainly not for the sole purpose of sending slaves to Al-Andalus. The slave trade, which was centred on, but probably not limited to Prague, supplied a number of outlets including the surrounding Slavic, German, and Hungarian territories, as well as the production centres of the Czech lands themselves. This is in line with the type of situation we see in Britain and Ireland. Slaves were not absorbed exclusively by one or two markets in Scandinavia, but were sent in all directions, including to destinations within the same region. We also see that the merchants who engaged in slave transactions were not limited to one ethnicity. The source material for Bohemia which explicitly states this has often been underappreciated or overlooked in favour of linking the Bohemian slave trade with longstanding, and even outdated, historiographical tradition.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Broadly speaking, the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries in both the British Isles and the Czech lands encompassed a period of great change. Political organisation, ecclesiastical identity, and economic development formed the background for what was, in

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714 Petráček, 288.
all likelihood, the peak of slave trading in Europe for the entire early medieval period. These changes were the result of political opportunity, as in Bohemia, which capitalised on the collapse of a powerful neighbour in Moravia and the coalescence of power in and around Prague. They were also imposed by outside forces, as in Britain and Ireland, whose political and economic statuses were profoundly altered by the Viking raids of the ninth century.

In such a milieu, it is unsurprising that slave raiding and trading were likewise transformed. While the details differ, the two regions reflect wide trends in enslavement, slave trading, and even the recording of these events. Through a comparative perspective, we are able to use these trends to potentially fill in the gaps where source material does not exist or is unreliable. By understanding the complexities of enslavement and slave trading in Britain and especially Ireland, we can pose new questions to the Czech material regarding the presence of Christian slave traders and the destinations of their slaves. There are few definitive answers which emerge, but the situation in Prague and the Přemyslid territory as a whole should not be taken for granted as straightforward, nor should the limited source material be accepted at face value. The examples of Britain and Ireland demand that we ask more of what little we have been given for Přemyslid Bohemia, and question the source silences rather than avoid them.

Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands all indicate a fundamental change in the scale of slave raiding and trading beginning in the ninth century in the British Isles and the tenth century in the Přemyslid realm. While it can be argued that these processes simply became more visible as a result of attitudes and actions taken by a Christian clergy against the sale of co-religionists to non-Christians, this does not account for the changes in the way authors discuss them. Numbers of reported captives increase, particularly in Irish annals; even if these figures are embellished, they well exceed any plausible local demand. The frequency of reported raids also increases, to a point which begs the question of whether there were still items of value in repeatedly-attacked areas other than people and cattle.

In both the British Isles and the Czech lands, slaves at markets and especially the sale of slaves to foreign merchants were no longer treated as shocking and exceptional events. Ecclesiastical authors often recorded these events as a result of their moral and religious outrage, but the sales are not isolated incidents like Imma’s sale to a Frisian or Methodius’s disciples’ sale to Jewish merchants. Wenceslas was able to purchase pagan
boys in Prague at the last minute on an annual basis, and Adalbert was gravely concerned over the regularity with which Christian slaves were being sold to Jews in Prague. In Britain, perceived frequent abuses of slave trading by Wulfstan of York led to his public denouncement of the practices and his attempts to limit them in law. Eleventh-century slave trading between England and Ireland was common enough for Wulfstan of Worcester to lead a campaign to end the trade out of Bristol. According to Gerald of Wales, in the twelfth century it was looked back on by Irish ecclesiastics as an unchecked sin which brought the punishment of the Norman conquest upon them.

By the standards of Roman or trans-Atlantic slave trading, the early medieval situation hardly compares in scale and pervasiveness. But given the situation in the British Isles up to the Viking Age and in the Czech lands up until the tenth century, we cannot help but view this economic change as significant. Increased demand for slaves changed the when, where, and why of not only sales, but of how chattel slaves were provided. Slave trading played a significant part in the expansion of early medieval economies and prompted a shift in the conduct of war. What I refer to as a ‘large-scale’ process may be relative within the context of the early Middle Ages, but the impact of this shift makes the label justifiable.

The resulting picture is one of two entirely separate, yet roughly contemporary large-scale slave trading systems on opposite ends of Europe. Firstly, it attests to the enormous impact of slavery on medieval Europe as a whole. The demand for slave labour was enough to turn enslavement from a symbolic aspect of warfare into the acquisition of trade goods; slave raiding became a facet of medieval trade. Secondly, it indicates that developing polities and ecclesiastical structures had similar impacts on the slave trade in disparate locations, as well as on the way it was recorded. The resulting conclusions and source limitations Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands could be potentially be applied to other regions of Europe where textual evidence is scarce, such as Greater Poland and Pomerania. Ultimately, comparison of the British Isles and the Czech lands presents a richer, fuller picture of large-scale slave trading than could be achieved by examining each region separately.
Regulating the Slave Trade

Both secular and ecclesiastical authorities sought to define and limit who could be enslaved or sold throughout the seventh to eleventh centuries and across Europe. The rising power of ‘states’ or the influence of Christianity have often been credited with driving regulation of and restrictions on medieval slave trading. This chapter seeks to challenge this perspective by arguing that laws and canons which sought to restrict enslavement and slave trading served a largely ideological purpose, and that even when widespread enforcement was possible, it remained secondary to the act of promulgation. Close analysis of these laws and canons, as well as their impact (to the degree that it is detectable), indicates that the presence of a strong central authority and the pervasiveness of Christian thought were not crucial in bringing about the end of slave trading. Instead, the demise of this practice resulted primarily from broad social and economic change across Europe in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, including new ways of conducting war and the collapse of outlets external to the British Isles and the Czech lands. The demise of slave trading, therefore, was the result of the disappearance of chattel slavery, and not the other way around.

Discussion has long focused on ecclesiastical involvement in regulating, and ultimately ending, both slavery in its entirety and slave trading more specifically. Christianity has been given indirect credit for the end of medieval slave trading; the spread of ideas regarding equality before God made the institution of slavery untenable. Marc Bloch argued that Christianity prohibited the enslavement of fellow Christians through warfare, but allowed for the use of non-Christians as slaves. Bloch believed that as Christianity expanded in Europe and the number of pagans gradually decreased, so too did the pool of available slaves. Slavery ended because access to slaves dwindled over time. While Christianity was broadly and indirectly responsible for the demise of slavery, ecclesiastics themselves never disapproved of it, and never sought to eliminate it from society.\(^{716}\) Bloch, and later Pierre Bonnassie, argued that Christian thought and ideology humanised slaves, and therefore fundamentally altered the perception of slaves by free

\(^{716}\) Bloch, 39.
people. The free poor ceased to view slaves as chattel, and slaves themselves could justify their own humanity.\(^{717}\)

The idea that Christian theology was responsible for fundamental changes in the perception of status has greatly impacted subsequent studies of medieval slavery at both a regional and a pan-European level. David Pelteret has argued that although Wulfstan of York did not reject slavery altogether, he did internalise Christian views of equality, which led him to advocate more humane treatment of slaves and equal legal protection for them. This attitude was then reflected in the laws he drafted for Æthelred II and Cnut.\(^{718}\) In more economic terms, Jeffrey Fynn-Paul has built upon Bloch’s and Bonnassie’s ideas to delineate ‘no-slaving zones’ within early medieval Europe, areas in which the taboo against Christian enslavement of Christians entirely prevented enslavement. The rise of Islam and the caliphate’s demand for non-Muslim slaves meant that the pagan peripheries of Eastern and Northern Europe remained the primary sources of slaves.\(^{719}\) Meanwhile, the ‘no-slaving zones’ were enforced though prohibitions on the sale of Christians made by increasingly powerful states and the Church, and expanded through the conversion of pagans.\(^{720}\) While the Church’s role in ending medieval slave trading is still credited as indirect, Fynn-Paul’s assessment nonetheless attributes the process entirely to the Christianisation of Europe. He places the end of this process in the eleventh and twelfth century, when the ‘no-slaving zones’ were ‘perfected’, and the enslavement of Christians came to a halt.\(^{721}\)

Belief in significant Christian influence is not universal, however. Alice Rio has recently argued that notions of Christian equality held different meanings in a society which depended upon its Christianised, hierarchical institutions. Instead, this attitude in Western Europe was only practically applied to lords and masters in order to encourage the merciful treatment of their inferiors; it was never intended to overthrow slavery as a social institution.\(^{722}\) Hagiography denouncing the violent treatment of slaves, which we have seen in the stories associated with St. Swithun in Chapters 2 and 4, was designed to illustrate proper restraint on the part of lords and masters, thereby bolstering their legitimacy as slave

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\(^{719}\) J. Fynn-Paul, ‘Empire, monotheism and slavery in the greater Mediterranean region from antiquity to the early modern era’, *Past and Present* 205 (2009), 4-5.

\(^{720}\) Fynn-Paul, 24.

\(^{721}\) Fynn-Paul, 26.

owners.\textsuperscript{723} David Wyatt has also directly challenged David Pelteret’s arguments for Anglo-Saxon England, pointing out that the early medieval Church as an institution never called for abolition in Britain and Ireland, and that slavery was perceived as part of the natural order.\textsuperscript{724} Stefan Jurasinski’s close study of Anglo-Saxon penitentials has indicated that canons regarding enslavement became increasingly complex in the tenth century, not to stop the creation of slaves, but to protect free people from being enslaved on technicalities.\textsuperscript{725}

Chapters 4 and 5 have also demonstrated that even well after the Christianisation of societies in Britain and Ireland, the enslavement of Christians was never disavowed – only the sale of Christians to non-Christians. The Irish continued to own and enslave Christians as late as the mid twelfth century, and the English certainly had few qualms about selling their fellows in Bristol in the late eleventh century. In Bohemia, no prohibitions regarding the sale of Christians even to non-Christians were put in place until 1124. These scenarios are all covered by Fynn-Paul’s assertion that a ‘perfect no-slaving zone’ did not exist until at least the twelfth century, but if cultures such as the Irish could remain Christianised for 700 years before ending the enslavement of Christians, it seems unlikely that religious conversion alone was the driving force behind these changes.

Christian thought heavily influenced the role of secular authority, though some discussion has focused on the impact of secular power on slave trading as separate from ecclesiastical influence. Youval Rotman has emphasised that Byzantine imperial regulation of slavery and slave trading ultimately weakened the power of masters over their slaves.\textsuperscript{726} As discussed in Chapter 5, early twentieth-century Czech works placed the growth of the Prague slave trade firmly in association with the development of a centralised political authority, though discussion remained largely focused on changes in the rural economy rather than in control over the slave trade. Dušan Třeštík, however, believed that regulation of the slave trade and the development of a Czech ‘state’ were inherently interlinked. The sale of war captives at the Prague slave market provided Přemyslid dukes with the cash to expand their retinues, in turn allowing them to crush their enemies and consolidate their power.\textsuperscript{727} Works by Marek Jankowiak and Matthias Hardt similarly link Piast consolidation

\textsuperscript{723} Rio, \textit{Slavery}, 228-9
\textsuperscript{724} D. Wyatt, ‘The significance of slavery: alternative approaches to Anglo-Saxon slavery’, \textit{Anglo-Norman Studies} 23 (2001), 337.
\textsuperscript{725} Jurasinski, \textit{Old English}, 112; Jurasinski, ‘Old’, 108. See examples in Appendix, Table 3.
\textsuperscript{726} Rotman, 69-71, 178-9.
\textsuperscript{727} Třeštík, ‘Veliké’, 49-70.
of power and territorial expansion in Poland to slave trading activities. These studies of early medieval Central Europe discuss the ‘state’ as an agent which promoted and benefited directly from slave trading, at least during the tenth century.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT**

The ability of central authority to enforce conciliar or legislative rulings on the slave trade would mean that laws and canons found practical application in society. It is therefore necessary to establish, firstly, whether strong central authority existed and secondly, whether rulers had the power to enforce or enact their own restrictions on enslavement and slave trading. If they were capable of enforcing these laws and canons, was it on a wide scale or only within each lord’s immediate sphere of influence? Each region will be discussed separately, with attention to both secular and ecclesiastical power structures.

Use of the term ‘state’ in this context can be problematic. Czech historiography does not hesitate to employ the term ‘state’ in its description of Přemyslid rule from the mid-tenth century onwards, though the criteria for it are rarely defined. This word has also found common usage in discussion of Great Moravia, and it would be impossible to assess the potential for administrative enforcement in England without reference to James Campbell’s ‘maximalist’ view. Regarding the idea of a medieval state, weight has been given to factors such as the legitimate control of violence, existence of bureaucratic institutions, and systems of extraction such as taxation. These definitions, and the validity of the term ‘state’ for the medieval period have been critiqued time and again. While these definitions and discussion of them are useful for considering the means by which medieval rulers acquired,


maintained, and exerted their power, the label of ‘state’ in and of itself contributes little to our understanding of the medieval polities which fit the criteria. It does not tell us how they functioned, and the potential for statehood ultimately varies depending on how that statehood is defined.731

The term ‘state’ can serve as a recognisable shorthand for a strong central authority which had the power to not only issue legislation but to see it enacted, as well as to collect taxes and regulate market trade legitimately and effectively through bureaucratic officials. But ultimately, contention surrounding when and how that term should be used detracts attention from the medieval reality. Rather than determining whether a state existed in a particular region at a particular time, it is more fruitful to assess the role of a centralised authority, be it secular or ecclesiastical, in legitimately controlling particular legal and economic aspects of society and the extent to which it was successful in doing so.

**England**

For early Anglo-Saxon England, few would argue in favour of the existence of a strong central authority amongst its many kingdoms.732 Written law reflected a customary tradition whose codification held more impact as the symbolic representation of a king’s authority than as evidence of a top-down legal system.733 Even where we can assume that new ideas were being introduced, as with Ine’s prohibition on the sale of people overseas,734 early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms did not possess the mechanisms for widespread and consistent administrative enforcement. These only developed in the tenth century, as will be discussed below.735 As such, administrative restrictions on enslavement and slave trading were probably only regularly enforced in areas under kings’ direct oversight. This includes *emporia*, where we can expect a significant proportion of slave trading to have taken place, but outside these areas there was not much guarantee that changes to custom were accepted.

The nature and extent of royal power in later Anglo-Saxon England has been the subject of much debate. James Campbell characterised the late Anglo-Saxon state as

732 One exception being Chris Wickham, who believes eighth-century Mercia under Offa meets all his criteria for a state but one, land tenure, Wickham, *Framing*, 345.
734 For Ine’s laws as reflecting new law in the making, see Wormald, ‘Inter cetera’, 179-99.
735 The foundations for these developments were, of course, laid much earlier, B. Yorke, ‘The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms 600-900 and the beginnings of the Old English state’, in W. Pohl and V. Weiser (eds.), *Der Frühmittelalterlicher Staat: Europäische Perspektiven* (Vienna, 2009), 73-86.
possessing a strong central authority, bureaucratic institutions, and clear borders, as well as being united by a common language, Church, and sense of identity.\textsuperscript{736} While the precise dating of this shift has yet to be agreed upon, it appears to have taken place over the course of the tenth century.\textsuperscript{737} Both support and dissent for the idea of a strong central authority in England has centred around the legislative authority of the king and the extent to which his judicial authority does or does not reflect a centralised control of punishment.

In support of Campbell’s ‘maximum view’, Patrick Wormald argued that later Anglo-Saxon kings sought to restructure the system of justice so that communal enforcement was ultimately managed by royal authority.\textsuperscript{738} Feud has also served as the main test-case for arguments over the existence of a centralised legal system. Paul Hyams has insisted that feud remained the primary means of resolving legal disputes well beyond the Norman Conquest, for all that kings wished to portray themselves as law-givers.\textsuperscript{739} Tom Lambert has reconsidered this idea, identifying what he believes to be two separate jurisdictions in later Anglo-Saxon law: kings’ ideological, harshly punitive response to theft, and their regulatory, but not prohibitive, response to homicide. The gradual extension of royal protections over various locations increasingly brought homicide under the king’s authority, meaning that the role of feud was neither unchanging, nor swiftly suppressed in the tenth century.\textsuperscript{740}

Alice Taylor has also argued that law in Anglo-Saxon England, as well as in Wales and Scotland, was governed by the need for communal enforcement, and thus the presence of state structures was irrelevant in the local carriage of justice.\textsuperscript{741} If this was indeed the case, it would mean that attempts to regulate slave trading served to bolster the appearance of rulers as protectors regardless of their efficacy, and that such laws may have merely extended royal support to sentiments already present at a local level. In either case, written

law regarding enslavement and slave trading allows us to view changing perceptions over time as to how the management of status fell under a ruler’s purview.

As to why kings would wish to issue laws regardless of their control over the legal process, Patrick Wormald argued that Anglo-Saxon written law codes were promulgated primarily for their ideological value. Early medieval kings saw written law as part of a long and powerful Roman tradition of rulership which would be in the kings’ interests to emulate. Unlike the Roman tradition, however, the importance of the legislation lay not in the wide circulation of law tracts, but in the king’s act of oral promulgation, of which the written documents served as later (and partial) interpretations.742 While English law began as the ‘official’ promulgation of customary law, it soon came to include new law: the ruler’s judgements promulgated in writing. However, given that kings continued to issue these codes intermittently, with some making no law codes whatsoever, Wormald suggested that the role of written law was still very limited, and that the most important factor remained the oral assertion of a ruler’s authority.743 That no law code is cited in any of the surviving case records from Anglo-Saxon England, and that no code appears to offer comprehensive discussion of offenses and their punishments lends much weight to this argument.

If law codes were primarily inspired by ideological perceptions of kingship, this does not necessarily lessen their validity or usefulness. Wormald and Campbell believed that the growing aspirations for control expressed by law codes of the tenth century onwards indicate that power structures must have been capable of backing up those claims. Kings’ concern for safeguarding the Christian realm also demonstrates how enslavement and slave trading fit within contemporary ideas of sin and legal wrong.744 Contemporaries certainly took law codes seriously, and clauses may have seen enactment or at least inspired some form of it at a local level. Close reading of individual laws has suggested that later Anglo-Saxon law codes held importance as guides for local officials.745 Simon Keynes also believes that while the oral promulgation of law was certainly the most important step in the legal expression of royal authority, this does not preclude any practical value.746

746 Keynes, ‘Royal’, 243
The next question we must ask, then, is whether Anglo-Saxon kings were capable of regulating enslavement and slave trading at both centre and periphery via administrative apparatuses. It is possible that West Saxon expansion during the tenth and eleventh centuries saw a considerable reform and extension of royal law, coinciding with the consolidation of royal power. This power may have extended directly to the local resolution of disputes. Catherine Cubitt has argued that reeves operated as the appointed enforcers of royal law, who may very well have conducted their duties with reference to copies of law codes. As extensions of royal authority throughout the kingdom, reeves were responsible for seeing that justice, and increasingly the king’s justice, was carried out. We know from the Translatio et Miracula Sancti Swithuni that reeves had the authority to rule on cases involving slaves, though the reeve in this particular example is noted for being overzealous in issuing his punishment.

If reeves did consult ‘lawbooks’ as part of their judicial responsibilities, ideologically-inspired rulings on enslavement and slave trading may have found application at a local level. Port-reeves were also responsible for overseeing large or expensive transactions within ports, and so must have regularly been party to slave sales; their involvement would also have allowed for the collection of taxes on the sales, as well as the enforcement of any regulations. However, George Molyneaux has argued that because tenth-century kings sought to restrict trade to ports and burhs, and thus to areas within a reeve’s jurisdiction, they had ‘minimal confidence’ in the enforcement of their will on a wider geographical scope. Punishments for reeves who failed to carry out their duties were fairly common in tenth- and eleventh-century legislation, and the repetition itself suggests that kings struggled to impose their will effectively on not just their ordinary subjects, but on the officials acting in their name.

Certainly not all reeves neglected their office, but such examples highlight the difficulties of administrative oversight of a wide territory, especially outside areas such as

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747 Pratt, 331-50.
748 C. Cubitt, ‘As the lawbook teaches: reeves, lawbooks and urban life in the anonymous Old English Legend of the Seven Sleepers’, English Historical Review 124 (2009), 1044-7.
749 Lantfred, Translatio, 308-11.
751 Gesetze, i.138 (I Edward §1-1.1), 156-7 (II Æthelstan §12, 13.1); Molyneaux, 106.
752 Molyneaux, 109.
753 For examples, see S. Keynes, ‘Crime and punishment in the reign of King Æthelred the Unready’, in I. Wood and N. Lund (eds.), People and Places in Northern Europe 500-1600: Essays in Honour of Peter Hayes Sawyer (Woodbridge, 1991), 69-70.
ports and burhs where royal officials operated. Reeves may have been the points of considerable communication between the centre and the periphery in later Anglo-Saxon England, since they had to be informed of royal decisions and changes in the law, and these connections are indicated by a handful of surviving written documents. But ultimately, the enforcement of non-customary changes in law, especially specific restrictions on enslavement and slave trading, could only be enacted when and where both the subjects and the officials were willing to cooperate.

Penitentials, on the other hand, did not actively seek to prevent certain actions, only to prescribe appropriate atonement for them. That said, by declaring that certain enslavement and slave trading practices were sinful, penitentials played a role in restricting acceptable behaviour. Anglo-Saxon law and penance were closely interconnected, and bishops played a part in enforcing both. Episcopal policy factored heavily into tenth- and eleventh-century royal policy on enslavement and slave trading. Wulfstan of York is the most obvious example, since his influence extended not only to the promulgation of laws relating to this under Æthelred II and Cnut, but perhaps also to one of the Old English penitentials which deals with issues of enslavement. Half a century later, Wulfstan of Worcester and Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, spearheaded a campaign to end the slave trade out of Bristol. These examples illustrate active involvement by the upper echelons of the English clergy in defining who could be enslaved or sold and under what circumstances, but administrative enforcement at a lower level must have been more difficult. The imposition of penance would have been limited to those who confessed their sins, though perhaps it was bolstered by communal pressure on a wrongdoer to repent.

Growing central control of the periphery in tenth- and eleventh-century England can be inferred from a wide range of developments, especially in the implementation of

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754 Keynes, 'Royal', 226-57; Trousdale, 294-6.
757 GRA, III.269, p. i.496-8.
hundred and wapentake administration\textsuperscript{758}, the limitations of seigneurial justice\textsuperscript{759}, and the ability to recall coinage regularly.\textsuperscript{760} The use of shire courts certainly by Cnut’s reign indicate that disputes regarding slave trading could be settled or punishment meted out at a more local level.\textsuperscript{761} These processes demonstrate that despite difficulties in controlling royal officials and seeing law universally enforced, central authority was indeed growing. It seems reasonable to assume that the administrative ability to enforce new or repeated restrictions on slave trading grew throughout the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. It is significant that after Cnut’s reign, only one law by William the Conqueror and the 1102 Council of Westminster issued further rulings on slave trading, forbidding it completely. Given the ongoing debate regarding the enforcement of law and the formation of a ‘state’ in tenth- and eleventh-century England, there are certainly other ways to interpret the power of central authority. However, as regards the regulation of slave trading, by the end of the tenth century, ideologically inspired laws may have had a wide-spread, practical impact.

The Czech Lands

The Czech lands are often argued to have given rise to two early medieval states – the failed polity of Great Moravia in the second half of the ninth century and Přemyslid Bohemia in the second half of the tenth. Despite the social and political collapse of Great Moravia in the early tenth century, it has nonetheless been co-opted as a symbol of the sophistication of Slavic medieval society and as the origin of a common Czechoslovak identity. Perspectives have been significantly impacted by the social and political movements of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{762} Many Czech and Slovak scholars still support the

idea that this polity should be considered a state. While there has been some disagreement, both sides are supported by their selected definitions of a ‘state’. 

Assessing Great Moravia’s control over slave trading is complicated by the lack of evidence for the enforcement of law, administrative or otherwise. Even if the frequent references to penal enslavement in *Zakon* are representative of a long-standing customary legal tradition, we have no indication as to how this customary law was guaranteed. *Zakon* itself is similar to early Anglo-Saxon law, in that it appears to have been issued as an ideological statement of the ruler’s authority, and the centrality (perceived or desired) of Christianity in Great Moravian society. While some form of ecclesiastical hierarchy existed, the penitential character of *Zakon* may only have found application amongst the highest members of Great Moravian society; all Great Moravian churches discovered thus-far have been primarily associated with elite settlement and patronage. If fortified sites such as Pohansko functioned as *emporia*, Moravian rulers were probably capable of extracting taxes on slave sales in a manner similar to that illustrated by the Raffelstetten customs tariff, but there is no surviving evidence of it. In Great Moravia, the lack of support for the existence of a strong central authority means we can only presume restrictions on enslavement and slave trading were enforced sporadically at best.

In Bohemia, the growth of a strong Přemyslid ‘state’ has served to add form to an otherwise ambiguous historical record. In broad terms, the question centres on how a land reportedly governed by at least fourteen princes in 845 came to be ruled by just one at the turn of the eleventh century. The idea of an early medieval Czech state is the product of mid- and late-twentieth century historiography, pioneered by František Graus and expanded by Dušan Třeštík and Josef Žemlička, particularly. It lies at the core of what is now considered to be an ‘East Central European model’ of state-building shared by

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764 In a recent archaeological debate, Jiří Macháček proposed that Great Moravia was a chiefdom rather than a state, Macháček, ‘Great Moravian’, 10-12, 15-18; Ibid., ‘Disputes’, 248-67. Ivo Štefan believes Macháček has downplayed the complexity of the social and economic systems, ‘Mocní’, 142.


Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary, and has become so prevalent in studies of the early medieval Czech lands that the presence of a powerful state from the mid-tenth century onwards is often taken for granted.\textsuperscript{768}

Given the scarcity of surviving material which attests to bureaucratic institutions or law, Czech studies have predominantly focused on how military might allowed the Přemyslids to consolidate their power. This model establishes that throughout the early medieval period, the Přemyslids were able to enhance their authority ideologically through the promotion of Christianity. Claiming legitimate primacy over other powerful families in Bohemia, the Přemyslid dukes (Boleslav I in particular) expanded their territorial control through the construction of fortifications and the exaction of tribute.\textsuperscript{769} This system radiated outwards from a core Přemyslid territory in central Bohemia based around Prague.\textsuperscript{770} Control of the realm required an extensive military retinue, which was funded by the Prague slave trade and territorial expansion into Moravia, Silesia, and Lesser Poland. As Přemyslid influence and wealth grew, competing ducal families were eliminated or marginalised. However, this expansion could not be maintained indefinitely, and around the turn of the eleventh century, following loss of territory in Poland and dynastic crisis, the retinue-based power structures supported by tribute and war-booty collapsed. Forced to rely on new means of consolidating their control, the Přemyslids turned to bureaucratic institutions funded by taxation.

David Kalhous has put forward a critique of the idea of a strong Přemyslid state in the tenth and eleventh century, which carefully re-evaluates the primary evidence and synthesises of more recent scholarship from outside Central Europe. Kalhous argues that

\textsuperscript{768} B. Krzemieńska and D. Třeštík, ‘Hospodářské základy raně středověkého státu ve střední Evropě (Čechy, Polsko, Uhry v 10. a 11. století), Hospodářské Dějiny (Prague, 1978), 149-230.


\textsuperscript{770} J. Sláma, ‘Poznámky k problému historického významu některých raně středověkých hradů ve středních Čechách’ Archeologické rozhledy 29 (1977), 60-79; Ibid, Střední Čechy v raném středověku II. Hradiště, příspěvky k jejich dějinám a významu, Praehistorica XI (Prague, 1986); Ibid, Střední Čechy v raném středověku III. Archeologie o počátcích přemyslovců státu, Praehistorica XIV (Prague, 1988); Recent archaeological study has confirmed the expansion of fortifications in the territory surrounding Prague during Boleslav I’s rule, I. Bohačová, ‘Prague, Budeč, and Boleslav: The reflection of state formation in early medieval archaeological sources’, in Macháček and Ungerman (eds.), Frühgeschichtliche, 371-95. However, new research has also undermined Sláma’s idea of a core domain delineated by fortifications, L. Varadzín, ‘The development of Přemyslid domain strongholds in the heart of Bohemia (a contribution to the discussion)’, in Ibid., 405-10.
while Přemyslid dukes certainly had mounted retinues at their disposal, these military
groups were small, and could not have been the predominant factor behind Přemyslid
power. Instead, the Přemyslids emerged as the dominant family in Bohemia because they
were able to unite the elites with a common political and religious identity, as well as
harness the power of ecclesiastical patronage. Political unity, however, does not make a
strong state, and Kalhous rejects the idea that one existed in early medieval Bohemia.

While the traditional approach to Bohemian statehood and Kalhous’s response
appear irreconcilable, they are not necessarily so as regards the regulation of slave trading.
As discussed above, official rulings on slavery in Bohemia are much rarer than in
contemporary England. This may in part be due to the continued oral, rather than written,
promulgation of law, though the fact that Cosmas was able to preserve the memory and
contents of a century-old decree suggests that such events continued to hold weight after a
substantial amount of time had passed. It seems likely, then, that fewer regulations and
restrictions survive because fewer were issued. For those which were pronounced, namely
Břetislav I’s restrictions on penal enslavement, the attested late tenth-century tax levied on
slave trading, and the 1124 ban on Jewish ownership of Christians, some degree of local
enforcement was still necessary. The latter two would have been much easier for the duke
to directly oversee, as they refer to activities within a stone’s throw of the ducal residence in
Prague. The regulation of penal enslavement must have been much more difficult to
enforce at a local level.

As far as we know, and our knowledge is heavily dependent upon Cosmas’s
dramatic retelling, Břetislav proclaimed the law in the presence of the bishop of Prague and
many, if not all, the nobles who had accompanied him on campaign. This assembly must
have served as a guarantee of enforcement. After all, the nobles agreed to reform
immediately prior to Břetislav’s proclamation, and Bishop Severus affirmed that those who
did not abide by the new decrees would be anathema. Cosmas provides two other
examples of assemblies in the eleventh century, and certainly by the twelfth and thirteenth

Kalhous, Anatomy, 263-4.

D. Kalhous, ‘Mittelpunkte der Herrschaft und Cosmas von Prag zum Charakter der Macht des
frühmittelalterlichen Fürsten’, in Machaček and Ungerman (eds.), Frühgeschichtliche, 682; Kalhous,
Anatomy, 8.

Bohemian nobles were able to directly oversee settlements within a 10-km radius of their
strongholds, J. Mařík, ‘Hinterlands of early medieval central places in Bohemia: archaeological and

CB, II.4, pp. 85-6.
centuries dukes were obliged to abide by the consensus of nobles at regular assemblies. That is possible that Cosmas applied the standards of his own time anachronistically. That said, legal cases were dealt with almost entirely by the elites through the thirteenth century, with the duke only intervening in those which involved the nobles and clergy. Břetislav’s decrees attest the existence of lower courts under the jurisdiction of comites, but again, this may reflect Cosmas’s twelfth-century world, and it is unknown how these courts were linked to ducal authority. Rather than appointing representatives, as English kings did with reeves, Bohemian dukes and kings must have relied heavily on their nobles to enforce new law within their own domains in accordance with the decisions of assemblies.

Churchmen must also have played a part in enforcement, as they did in Anglo-Saxon England. The ecclesiastical hierarchy in Bohemia may have been dependent upon secular power structures, and secular lords could use ‘private’ churches to protect and promote their own interests. While priests and archpriests were present in Bohemian strongholds in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they were responsible to the secular steward of the settlement rather than a bishop. This suggests that penitentials could be enforced which restricted slave trading practices at a local level, but only if the canons did not negatively impact any interests of the local lords.

The later evidence of the Czech lands suggests that some mechanisms of enforcement were in place by the mid-twelfth century. However, these were at best only loosely overseen by the central, ducal authority. Restrictions on enslavement and slave trading by the duke thus can only have been administratively enforced and effective within areas under the duke’s immediate control. These consisted predominantly of Prague, the primary target of two out of the three regulations known to us, and ducal estates throughout the realm. Regardless of whether the Přemyslids achieved full control over Bohemia in the second half

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775 CB, II.14 p. 103; II.23, p. 115; Bak and Lukin believe that no real examples of assemblies exist before the thirteenth century, and they are much more skeptical of Břetislav’s decrees, Bak and Lukin, 99-100.


777 CB, II.4, pp. 86-7.


of the tenth century through military might or in the eleventh century through cultural unification, there is little evidence to suggest that the dukes were capable of seeing regulations enforced outside of areas under their direct control. This inability to make widely enforceable changes to customary law may also contribute to the fewer restrictions issued, especially the type of ideologically-inspired law we see in England.

**Ireland, Wales, and Scotland**

Ireland, Wales, and Scotland all possessed limited central authority in the early Middle Ages. The secular and ecclesiastical elites who oversaw the different kingdoms, principalities, and dioceses certainly possessed considerable influence and authority within their own immediate spheres. Unlike tenth and eleventh-century England, however, administrative apparatuses were not a part of an overarching system of control. The extent of this central authority varied by time and place, but on the whole, it remained much weaker than the royal power of eleventh-century England.

In Ireland, kings functioned as social leaders who took advantage of independent frameworks of legal enforcement and elite obligation. Kings were perceived only as one type of lord, and their legitimacy did not stand on its own; it was supported by other men of power and influence, and it could likewise be withdrawn by those men. While there were high kings and overkings, the relationships between these men and their subordinates were personal, and ultimately the overkings held no sovereignty within individual tíatha. The idea of overarching power structures came not from the administrations of these overkings, but from a pre-existing, common Irish identity, fostered by the movements of jurists and other scholars who were not constrained by political borders.

As for the relationship between Irish central authority and slave trading, there is evidence that kings were able to levy taxes during emergencies, and there is no reason to disregard the possibility that they gained revenue from more everyday taxation. We also know that they could issue edicts, but that many – if not most – of these do not survive (see Chapter 1, p. 46). There was certainly the potential to enforce legal rulings or royal taxation

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783 Binchy, 31-3. The degree of power held by the high king of Ireland was an eleventh-century ideal retroactively applied to Irish kingship in the early Middle Ages, Byrne, *Irish Kings*, 254-74.
785 Ó Corráin, ‘Nationality’, 22.
on slave trading, but we have no records which demonstrate this. Ultimately, kings were not a crucial part of the enactment and enforcement of law in Ireland. The same is true of the clergy in Ireland. Abbots are known to have issued and assisted in enforcing cána by the eighth century, holding a power similar to kings. Penitentials, in which most of our Irish evidence for restrictions survives, were largely for monastic use through the seventh century. By the ninth century, some monasteries and churches had penitent followers and parish congregations. But as everywhere, how effective the penitentials were within the larger society depended upon the willingness of people to repent, or even to view certain actions as sinful. English influence over the Irish church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, particularly the dioceses based in Hiberno-Norse trading towns, meant that by the time the Council of Armagh was held, bishops may have been able to at least minimally enforce a prohibition on the importation of English slaves by administrative means.

Rulership in Wales was likewise limited in scope, and the system of legal enforcement operated independently of kings and princes. Viking and English raids led to a strengthening of Welsh rulers’ power over territory and ideas of overrule, but until Norman concepts of rule were imposed, Wales did not possess an overarching, unified source of power and authority. The focused power of kings in Welsh legal tracts probably reflects the thirteenth-century milieu in which they were recorded than actual early medieval law. Kings exerted their power through military force, not through an administrative or bureaucratic apparatus. While taxation was certainly a possibility, there is no surviving evidence that levies were placed on slave trading. If restrictions were issued, we can presume that they were most effective, if not only effective, within the ruler’s immediate sphere of influence. Our perception of ecclesiastical influence is limited, as there is no surviving Welsh record of ecclesiastical attempts to limit or regulate slave trading.

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792 W. Davies, Wales in the Early Middle Ages (Leicester, 1982), 127.
793 Davies, Wales, 129-31.
Though texts do stress the authority of bishops and abbots, the role of churchmen in this process remains ambiguous.\textsuperscript{794} Scotland through the eleventh century offers little documentation, and this in and of itself suggests a lack of strong royal authority.\textsuperscript{795} It is, however, unique from Ireland and Wales in that from the ninth century onwards, many of individual kingdoms or ‘tribes’ gradually merged into the Pictish kingdom of Alba under a single ruler.\textsuperscript{796} A re-evaluation of the nuances of early medieval Scottish sources indicates that some degree of central authority existed through the royal kin group and its management of other lordly kin groups.\textsuperscript{797} While this central power was most effective in calling together these kin groups for mutual protection, it did not impose or enforce law.\textsuperscript{798} Certainly by the twelfth century, the kings of Scots had officials, \textit{mormair}, to ensure the carriage of justice, but how far back these officials were part of Scottish governance and what laws they may have assisted in enforcing are unknown. And even when royal laws were issued in the twelfth century, they may not have been administratively enforced.\textsuperscript{799} In any case, there appears to be no surviving record of Scottish kings attempting to regulate slave trading, though as in other regions we can presume a potential for the regulation and restriction of enslavement and slave sales in areas under direct royal oversight.

\textbf{EFFORTS AT REGULATION}

Even when secular and ecclesiastical leaders lacked the institutional infrastructure to effectively enforce restrictions and regulations on enslavement and slave trading, they nevertheless issued them. This suggests that the practical application of these restrictions was secondary to the ideological reasoning behind them, which remained broadly similar in the British Isles and the Czech lands during the early medieval period. Kings, dukes, and princes were held responsible for military defence, and were themselves expected to be

\textsuperscript{794} Davies, \textit{Wales}, 161-2.
\textsuperscript{795} C. Wickham, \textit{The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000} (London, 2009), 495.
\textsuperscript{798} Broun, 67-8.
capable warriors and military leaders. Thus it was the ruler’s prerogative to protect his people from an unjustified reduction in status, particularly enslavement through enemy raiding. Early medieval rulers were also closely associated with the oversight of trade, both through their own efforts to levy taxes on exchange and through the granting of rights and protections to merchants. Regulation of slave trading thus fell under the natural oversight of rulers. Because Anglo-Saxon kings and Czech dukes were, or wished to be seen as, upholders of social order, it makes sense that we find attempts to regulate enslavement and slave trading in secular promulgated law. The clergy were more generally responsible for the welfare of eternal souls, and it was thus their duty to protect individuals from unjustly falling into slavery. Slave status had been seen as a reflection of sin since late antiquity, and Gregory the Great had believed hierarchy of status to mirror a hierarchy of sinfulfulness.

Restrictions on Enslavement

Restrictions on enslavement from the seventh through the eleventh centuries mostly survive from Anglo-Saxon England, more likely a result of the wide chronological range of extant penitentials and law codes, rather than of differing desires to control enslavement across cultures. Penitentials and law codes were written exclusively before the ninth century in Ireland, and no relevant examples survive from Wales and Scotland. In the Czech lands, only two relevant documents survive from before the twelfth century, though Cosmas provides us with Břetislav’s eleventh-century decrees. Despite our limited perspective,
consideration of the material indicates that restrictions on enslavement were overwhelmingly concerned with who could be enslaved within a polity through the sale of either themselves or their children, through capture, or through judicial processes. These restrictions sought to establish broadly acceptable practices regarding the enslavement of insiders, in order to prevent the ‘wrong’ people from becoming tradable chattel slaves.

Restrictions on self-sale and the sale of one’s children into slavery appear exclusively in penitentials, whereas the control of capture and penal enslavement are largely aspects of secular law codes. It is possible that regulations on these voluntary sales simply did not fit within legal traditions in the British Isles and the Czech lands. By the time Anglo-Saxon law began to reflect new and contemporary judgements in the late seventh century, Archbishop Theodore had already issued canons on the subject. Further regulations in secular law may have been deemed unnecessary, especially given the early medieval perception that law and penance were closely intertwined. These canons were repeated in ninth- and tenth-century Latin penitentials on the Continent and Old English penitential compilations, which may have cemented the idea that improper sale warranted penance. Again, while penance was limited to those who confessed their sin, by labelling certain aspects of enslavement as sinful and deserving of physically and mentally taxing penance, penitentials must have influenced ideas of what was acceptable and what was not, or reflected contemporary ways of thinking about these issues. As for the control of enslavement within a polity, this must have naturally fallen under the jurisdiction of secular rulers, as the Church, at least in theory, transcended temporal, political boundaries. Despite the differences in how and when these regulations on enslavement appear, both secular and ecclesiastical rulings demonstrate that authority figures sought to protect status distinctions within a political or religious identity.

The idea of placing an age of consent on self-sale and the sale of one’s children appears to have become a matter of concern for ecclesiastical figures during England’s Christianisation, with the Penitential of Theodore establishing guidelines on the practice as early as the seventh century. Theodore stipulated that the minimum age of self-sellers should be 14, and that children over the age of 7 must give their consent to be sold by a

805 Wormald, Making, 104.
Later penitential authors repeated these canons in the late ninth-century Old English *Scrifboc* and the *Old English Canons of Theodore*, itself written sometime between the seventh and eleventh centuries. As noted in Chapter 1 (p. 36), these later penitentials were not simply translations, but conscious adaptations of earlier material to suit later contexts. That authors felt the need to repeat these canons suggests not only that the sale of children was an ongoing issue, but that there was real concern regarding unwilling participants. Relinquishing free legal status was a serious undertaking, and it would seem that English ecclesiastics wished to disavow its enactment by force or coercion. Slavery was also an inherently sinful state of being, and this is probably what led to the particular emphasis on the protection of children, who were perceived as innocents and who must have been particularly vulnerable to the will of their parents.

It may be significant that these restrictions were repeated in Old English during a period of large-scale slave trading, especially when we consider that the *Old English Penitential*, produced after the *Scrifboc*, labelled the sale of one’s children or kin as entirely sinful, at pain of excommunication; atonement was only possible if the sold person was purchased back and freed, or another was freed in their place. The repetition of restrictions on enslavement suggests that the issue was perceived by the clergy as an ongoing problem, one to which their ideological role demanded a response. That the escalation of punishment for such actions coincided with large-scale slave trading indicates that ecclesiastical figures were growing increasingly concerned over the ways and means by which slaves were being obtained. The regular occurrence of self-sales and the sale of children into slavery must have appeared as a disconcerting fluidity of status. These individuals were the victims of hunger, poverty, or a relative’s greed, and more importantly, they had committed no offenses against the community at large. If free, law-abiding people, particularly children, were at risk of enslavement, their status ought to be protected.

Changing status appears to have been a concern in the Czech lands as well. In the ninth-century penitential *Někotoraja Zapověd*, church authorities established the castration of

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808 The *Scrifboc* canon sets the age of consent at 6, ASP, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121, f.93a. (XIII.iii); *Old English Canons*, §133, p. 14.


810 ASP, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 482, f.16b (VLIV.xxi).
boys by their parents for sale as a sin.\textsuperscript{811} While the canon does not prohibit the direct sale of oneself or one’s children, it does seek to prevent certain situations, namely direct sale for a parent’s monetary gain. As discussed in Chapter 5, eunuchs were in high demand in the Islamic world; rather than simply selling a child to alleviate a family’s poverty or ensure a child was provided for, castration indicates that parents sought to obtain the highest price. The reduction in status of children for monetary gain and for their sale to non-Christians must have been particularly disturbing to Czech ecclesiastics, who turned to the threat of penance in an attempt to regulate these sales. Ecclesiastical regulations on enslavement through penitentials sought to regulate and maintain the boundaries of status within the Christian community. Penitentials were the means by which confessors could guide the good Christian behaviour of their flock, and the protection of the status of innocents appears to have been a significant priority.

Secular law codes also concerned themselves with regulating enslavement, though these documents approach the subject from the perspective of political, rather than religious, identity. These law codes sought to restrict enslavement within a polity to wrong-doers who had transgressed the rights and protections guaranteed by the ruler. It was accomplished by two separate types of regulations. The first limited the privilege of enslavement and status reduction of a third party to the ruler himself, and the second stipulated the conditions in which a ruler could legitimately enslave his subjects. Both types indicate a concern for regulating when and why changes in status could occur. As secular law codes were intended to influence only the people within a realm, we can presume that these restrictions had no impact on the enslavement of outsiders through warfare. Slaves, after all, were the spoils of war; it was only within a realm that the ruler needed to preserve peace, and thus protect the freedom of his free subjects. Regardless of how the regulations were used or the extent to which they were enforced, laws regarding enslavement helped shape and solidify the ruler’s position as law-giver, peace-maker, and the protector of his subjects.

The legislation of penal enslavement allowed rulers to assert themselves as the only person with the power to legitimately enslave others within a realm. Penal enslavement must have been a long-standing aspect of customary law, and thus enforceable by any judge or legal representative. We catch glimpses of this particularly in Czech tradition, through

\begin{footnote}{811} Někotoraja Zapověď, 45.\end{footnote}
the large-scale replacement of the Ecloga’s mutilations with enslavement in Zakon Suydnji Ljudem, or through Břetislav’s adjustment of the terms of enslavement as a ‘rite of our land’ (‘secundum ritum nostrae terre’). However, efforts to regulate that custom speak to rulers’ desires to hold a monopoly on status, particularly on the ability to reduce status. The Great Moravian and Bohemian laws are significant in that they show the active shaping and adjustment of legal tradition by a ruler for that ruler’s benefit. Zakon appears to use enslavement as a punishment indiscriminately, but that punishment is issued in a written document attributable to and identifiable with a single person. It becomes not merely an expression of customary tradition, but the law as guaranteed by the ruler, in this case probably Rastislav.

Both Czech and Anglo-Saxon law also demonstrate that rulers could harness their claim to legitimate enslavement in order to enforce religious adherence. Ine’s code threatened enslavement for any freeman caught working on a Sunday of his own volition. And while the Peace of Edward and Guthrum is an eleventh-century forgery by Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, it is telling that the legally-minded Wulfstan invoked royal authority to claim that freemen caught working on a church festival should face enslavement. Zakon does not prohibit working on holy days, though it does punish stealing from the church and graverobbing with enslavement. These laws indicate that a ruler’s control over enslavement was directly linked, at least ideologically, to the imposition of Christian doctrine.

Laws imposing enslavement could also be revoked and adjusted by rulers, which served as a further expression of their perceived authority over enslavement within a polity. Břetislav’s decrees revoked enslavement as punishment for refusing to reconcile a marital dispute, replacing it with exile. This move served to portray Břetislav as the protector of his subjects, and one who would demonstrate wise judgement and benevolence in the use of

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812 CB, II.2, p. 85.
813 The thirteenth-century Russian manuscript attributes the text to an unidentified Emperor Constantine, who may have been conflated with St. Constantine/Cyril. For the argument in favor of Rastislav, see Chapter 1, p. 43.
814 Gesetze, i.90 (Ine §3.2).
815 Gesetze, i.132 (Edward and Guthrum §7.1), though Wulfstan must have had a change of heart, since he ‘revoked’ the law in another code he authored, II Cnut §45, Gesetze, i.342-4.
817 CB, II.2, p. 85.
that power. Cnut’s laws likewise altered earlier legal traditions preventing the enslavement of infants as accessories to theft.\textsuperscript{818} Formulated by Wulfstan, this move not only protects innocents from sinful slavery, but likewise illustrates the ruler as one who does not wield the monopoly on status arbitrarily within his realm.

The legitimation of enslavement as a punishment went hand in hand with its prohibition outside a legal context. For Great Moravia, \textit{Zakon} prescribes enslavement for any kidnapper who enslaves or sells an otherwise free person.\textsuperscript{819} Kidnapping appears regularly in early English law, though there are no similarly explicit links between it and enslavement. Æthelberht’s early seventh-century code prohibits the ‘binding’ of a free man, a charge which must have included kidnapping and imprisonment, but which also would have applied to enslavement.\textsuperscript{820} In the late seventh century, the Kentish laws of Hlothhere and Eadric elaborated on this position, outlining the number of witnesses necessary should a stolen man return to lay charges on his kidnapper.\textsuperscript{821} This clause could also relate to kidnapping with no reduction of legal status involved, but as the status of the victim is not specified, there is certainly room to consider the theft of a slave or even kidnapping for enslavement or sale. These early written injunctions against kidnapping must have been considered sufficient in Kentish tradition, as Wihtred’s code does not address the subject. Nothing similar regarding enslavement appears in the earliest West Saxon code by Ine, and it would appear that in reissuing Ine’s code in the mid-ninth century, Alfred viewed this as an oversight. In his own laws, which he explicitly designed as a correction and expansion of the earlier code, Alfred issued punishments for whoever ‘binds an unsinning ceorl’.\textsuperscript{822} Alongside this law are six additional compensation payments owed for physical injury and humiliation caused, and these illustrate a situation more akin to kidnapping as part of a dispute. That said, scourging and the cutting of hair, punishable by payments of 20 and 10 shillings, respectively, were both potentially linked to slave status.\textsuperscript{823}

Laws against kidnapping and potential enslavement do not appear in Anglo-Saxon tradition after Alfred’s code. There may be both symbolic and practical reasons for this. The

\textsuperscript{818} \textit{Gesetze}, i.364 (II Cnut §76.2-3).

\textsuperscript{819} \textit{Zakon}, §31, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{820} ‘Gif man fringe man gebindeþ, XX scill gebete’, \textit{Gesetze}, i.4 (Æthelberht §24).

\textsuperscript{821} ‘Gif frigman mannan forstele, gif he eft cuma stermelda, sece an andweardne; gecenne hine, gif he mæge: hæbbe þære freora rim æwdamanna 7 ærne mid in æp, æghwilc man æt þam tune þe he tohyre; gif he laet ne mæge, gelde swa he gono hage’, \textit{Gesetze}, i.9-10 (Hlothhere & Eadric §5).

\textsuperscript{822} ‘Gif mon cierliscne mon gemicde unsynnigne, gebete mid X scill’, \textit{Gesetze}, i.68 (Alfred §35).

\textsuperscript{823} On physical punishment for slaves, Pelteret, \textit{Slavery}, 87. Long hair appears to have been connected to free status in early Anglo-Saxon law, \textit{Gesetze}, i.7 (Æthelberht §73).
first is that Alfred’s detailed clauses may have been considered sufficient in their treatment of kidnapping; later laws were deemed unnecessary. It is also possible that the kings who succeeded Alfred in the tenth and eleventh centuries were successful in establishing a monopoly over the enslavement of people within a kingdom as part of the centralisation of Anglo-Saxon government. This could have been via the enforcement of written law, or simply a change in attitude towards kingship, but it meant that kings in late Anglo-Saxon England were accepted as ideal protectors of their subjects.

The importance of a ruler’s control over enslavement within a polity, at least with reference to slave trading, lies in the restriction of access to chattel slaves. Penal enslavement allowed for the creation of slaves, but as discussed in Chapter 3, these individuals were probably not often sold outside of the Czech lands. Also by placing the power of penal enslavement under the ruler’s authority, this restricted the how and why of that enslavement to a limited number of offenses. At least in theory, the law whose authority and legitimacy derived from the ruler could not justify indiscriminate enslavement. Laws against kidnapping extended further control over the enslavement of a people within a realm, which probably included the enslavement of otherwise free people. These regulations, which served to establish rulers as protectors, also delegitimised the extra-legal enslavement of one’s own people. While self-sale and the sale of one’s children were still acceptable, the circumstances of such actions became increasingly specific, and some clergy sought to prevent the practice altogether. These regulations sought to uphold the ideological roles of both secular and ecclesiastical leaders by emphasising that enslavement within political borders had limitations, which in turn may have served to further differentiate penal slaves from chattel slaves.

**Restrictions on Slave Trading**

Like the restrictions placed on enslavement, regulation of slave trading broadly sought to protect people within a political or religious identity. From within the Christian community, this meant keeping Christian slaves out of non-Christian hands, lest exposure to heathen ways place the slaves’ eternal souls at risk. Though much rarer, some secular law also attempted to protect people from sale beyond political or cultural, rather than religious, borders. Surviving evidence of the regulation of slave trading is heavily skewed towards Anglo-Saxon England. Welsh and Scottish law, both ecclesiastical and secular, survives only in much later forms. Irish law, while early, gives the appearance of being static, so we cannot view the reactions of authority figures to contemporary slavery-related problems as
we can in English and Czech texts. We must also consider that decisions made in ecclesiastical councils in other areas, such as Francia, could have been communicated to and adopted by clergymen in the British Isles and the Czech lands without leaving overt traces.

The sale of Christians to non-Christians was a significant issue for both ecclesiastical leaders and secular rulers, since kings were tasked with the spiritual, as well as physical protection of their people. This issue had long been a concern for Christian rulers, but in British, Irish, and Czech documents, it only becomes visible during periods of large-scale slave trading. It is certainly possible that earlier records do not survive, but the evidence does suggest a correlation between concern for regulating the sale of Christians and an increase in the demand for slaves by non-Christians.

In England, the earliest restrictions on slave trading in secular law sought to restrict sale beyond political borders as much as prevent the ownership of Christian slaves by non-Christians. Ine’s law code prohibits the sale of any man, free or unfree, guilty or not guilty, ‘ofer sæ’. As discussed in Chapter 3, this may be associated with Wihtred’s contemporary law which allows for penal slaves to be sold away at the king’s discretion; Ine may have wished to disavow the sale of penal slaves in his own kingdom. As much as governing the types of people who could be sold away, it is just as likely to have restricted the types of buyers. It may have targeted the Irish, who were Christian but culturally and linguistically distinct. It is also worth recalling the activity of Frisian merchants in early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, and their potential roles as slave buyers (see Chapter 4). As Frisian Christianisation did not begin until the end of the seventh century, Ine may also have sought to protect his Christian subjects from falling into the hands of pagan merchants. Quite possibly, this blanket prohibition sought to cover all of these issues simultaneously.

A similar issue arises in the Prologue to Alfred’s law code. Clause 12 sought to prevent the sale to foreigners (‘on eðeodig folc’) of women who had been initially sold into slavery by their fathers. The clause, which translates and adapts Exodus 21:7-11 for an English audience, does not attempt to provide an early medieval identity for these foreigners. As such, Alfred could have intended them as pagan Danes or as any foreign

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825 See p. 97 n.40.
826 Đeah hwa gebyçgge his dohtor on þeowenne, ne sie hio ealles swa ðeowu swa oðru mennenu: nage he hie ut on eðeodig folc to bebyçganne.’, Gesetze, i.30. For discussion of the changes made to the Biblical material, Pelteret, Slavery, 83.
Christians. Alfred’s Prologue was also more selective than Ine §11 in outlining who could be sold. The clause specifies that women sold by their fathers are to be treated differently from other enslaved and servile women, implying that these other slaves were still eligible for sale to these ambiguous foreigners.

However, we know from Wulfstan of York’s involvement in writing the laws of Æthelred the Unready and Cnut, as well as his own Sermo Lupi that by the early eleventh century, neither Ine’s nor Alfred’s restrictions on sale were being enforced. Wulfstan helped to promulgate legislation in 1008, during Æthelred’s reign, which attempted to prohibit the sale of innocent Christians out of the country. His attitude towards the sale of penal slaves, people who were not innocent, has been discussed in Chapter 3. V Æthelred §2 is much more descriptive than Ine’s law:

‘And the decree of our lord and his witan is that no one sell Christian and innocent people out of this land, especially not to heathen people, but carefully protect them, so that no one destroy the souls which Christ bought with his own life.’

V Æthelred §2 was reissued soon after as VI Æthelred §9, in a code which served largely as a modified version of V Æthelred. Over a decade later, in 1020 or 1021, Wulfstan broadened the law to include all Christians as II Cnut §3:

‘We command that no one sell Christian men out of the country most of all, and certainly not carry them into heathendom, but carefully protect them, so that no one destroy the souls which Christ bought with his own life.’

Given the circumstances of eleventh-century slave trading in England, ‘heathendom’ was likely any area of unchristianised Scandinavian settlement. Comparison with the Sermo Lupi, however, indicates that Wulfstan was just as concerned with the sale of English people to ‘enemies’ and ‘foreigners’ as with their sale to heathens. Wulfstan may have conflated these labels, despite the fact that some Scandinavians were already Christian by the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. It also seems probable, given his objections to the practice in the Sermo Lupi, that Wulfstan was targeting the sale of captured, otherwise free people out

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827 ‘7 ures hlaforde geraednes 7 his witenas is, þæt man Cristene men 7 unforworhte of earde ne sylle, ne huru on heaðene leod, ac beorge man georne, þæt man þa sawla ne forfare, þe Crist mid his agenum life gebohte’, Gesetze, i.238 (V Æthelred §2). For comparison to Sermo Lupi, see p. 98 n.411.
828 ‘7 witenas geraednes is, þæt man Christene men 7 unforworhte of earde ne sylle, ne huru on heaðene þeod; ac beorge man georne, þæt man þa sawla ne forfare, þe Crist mid his agenum life gebohte’, Gesetze, i.250 (VI Æthelred §9).
829 See p. 98 n.412.
830 ‘7 syd̄dan þid þeord̄e syllað of lande feondum’, ‘þæt fæder ʒesealde bearn þid þeorþe… fremdum to ʒepelde’, Sermo Lupi, 58.
of the country, and thus away from any hope of redemption, rather than the sale of every
enslaved person. A revised version of VII Æthelred from sometime after 1009 specifies that
no one is to be sold out of the country, but this code was not officially promulgated; the
version which was, VIIa Æthelred, does not include this clause. As with restrictions on
enslavement, Wulfstan’s royally promulgated legal work reinforces the idea of the king as a
protector. Within the country, status could be defined and upheld with late Anglo-Saxon
mechanisms of enforcement. When slave trading linked insiders with outsiders,
countrymen with foreigners, social and legal statuses could warp and shift, turning free
people into slaves and, to Wulfstan’s particular horror, slaves into vengeful free people.\textsuperscript{831}

We can infer that V Æthelred §2 and II Cnut §3 were issued in reaction to real events,
but despite the enforcement capabilities of Anglo-Saxon government by the early eleventh
century, a similar law was promulgated by William I. It survives as Article 9 of the Ten
Articles of William I, a twelfth-century compilation of decrees and rulings issued by
William.\textsuperscript{832} Article 9, which prohibits the sale of individuals out of the country, may
represent William’s response to Wulfstan of Worcester’s, and Lanfranc, Archbishop of
Canterbury’s calls to end the slave trade out of Bristol in the late eleventh century.\textsuperscript{833} Article
9 does not refer to heathens or heathendom, which probably reflects the Christian Irish (or
Hiberno-Norse) demand which still fuelled slave trading across the Irish Sea. As in the case
of the laws issued by William’s Anglo-Saxon predecessors, this restriction held ideological
value, regardless of whether or not it was enforced. It situated William as a protector of his
subjects and their legal status. The fact that a further prohibition on slave trading was
issued in 1102 by the Council of Westminster (more on this below) suggests William also felt
the promulgation of the law was more important than its enforcement.

In the Czech lands, such a tradition of legal protection is more difficult to discern
given the sparse documentary record for both secular and ecclesiastical law. \textit{Zakon Suydnji
Ljudem} gives no indication as to whether those in power considered the sale of Moravians to
foreigners or non-Christians a problem. Control of status was still intimately connected
with the Great Moravian judicial process, given the number of laws which prescribe penal
enslavement. \textit{Zakon}, as a code issued in an institutional milieu with limited powers of
enforcement, sought to link the legitimacy of penal enslavement to a ruler. We can therefore

\textsuperscript{831} \textit{Sermo Lupi}, 58-60.
\textsuperscript{832} Wormald, \textit{Making}, 402-3.
\textsuperscript{833} See p. 155, n.615.
infer the ideological importance of this code in supporting the ruler as a protector, even if explicit protections for Christians are absent.

From Přemyslid Bohemia, we have not only evidence of ecclesiastical disapproval for the sale of Christians to non-Christians, but also the attempt to prevent castration for sale in the Někotoraja Zapověd, which likely targeted Muslim demand for Slavic slaves. This penitential, composed sometime between the ninth and eleventh centuries, does not impose any direct restrictions on slave trading itself, only on the treatment of children by those who wished to sell them directly into slavery. It does, however, indirectly limit the sale of insiders to outsiders. Middlemen trading with the Arab caliphate wanted eunuchs. By attempting to prevent forcible castration of children, the Bohemian clergy would have lessened the prospect of those children being purchased for direct transport to Muslim buyers. This method certainly would have had a limited effect; merchants could easily have castrated the boys themselves outside of the Czech lands, and penance was restricted to those who accepted their behaviour as sinful and confessed.

The oddly specific canon of the Někotoraja Zapověd is in keeping with a general lack of interest by Bohemian secular elites in restricting the slave trade, despite the regular participation of Muslims and Jews. In the late tenth century, Adalbert, the Bishop of Prague, was unable to convince the Bohemians, presumably also the duke, that Christians should not be sold to Jews. We know from Břetislav I’s decree on penal enslavement that eleventh-century dukes were capable of promulgating laws to support their role as protectors. But despite the development of a centralised government by the twelfth century, the earliest surviving restriction on the slave trade dates to 1124, when Vladislav outlawed the sale of Christians to Jews. Attempts by Přemyslid dukes to express their rule ideologically through control of the slave trade may be missing from the historical record simply because no measures were taken before the twelfth century.

Evidence for restrictions placed on enslavement and slave trading largely stem from Anglo-Saxon and Přemyslid contexts. While this prevents conclusions regarding the role of ideology on a wider scale, it does allow for some case study regarding how early medieval secular and ecclesiastical authority figures reacted to the social changes caused by slave trading. Their foremost concern was the protection of their people, be it the preservation

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834 Někotoraja Zapověd, 45.
835 John Canaparius, §12, p. 169; Bruno of Querfurt, §11, p. 197.
and legitimisation of their status, or the defence of their souls against sin and heathenism. Even when rulers lacked the political infrastructure to effectively enforce laws and canons, such as in early Anglo-Saxon England and Great Moravia, laws and canons guarding status were still issued, though the surviving evidence gives the impression that Anglo-Saxon kings were more ambitious in their assertions than others. This situation demonstrates the ideological impetus behind these rulings, and the importance of the *perception* that rulers, especially English rulers, were protectors, even if they could not enforce their claims.

**Taxation**

Not all attempts to regulate enslavement and slave trading were ideologically based, and taxation goes a long way in explaining why laws restricting enslavement and slave trading do not appear to have been enforced, even when a central authority existed which was capable of doing so. There are indications that taxes levied on slave trading could constitute significant sources of income for rulers, though references to this income are understated. Where ideological concerns regarding enslavement and slave trading were publicly promulgated, it would appear that financial gain from the sale of people was considered far more mundane. The taxation of slave trading could at least partly explain why nearly all regulations on enslavement and slave trading sought to restrict these practices rather than eliminate them entirely.

Only two examples of direct taxation on the slave trade survive from both the British Isles and the Czech lands. From Bohemia, we have the charter which grants a tenth of the fees from the Prague market, along with ‘decimum hominum captivum’ to Břevnov monastery from Boleslav II.\(^{836}\) Thanks to the Raffelstetten customs tariff, we also know that Bohemian, Moravian, and Rus merchants were taxed for transporting slaves as trade goods along the Danube. There is also evidence that slave sales were taxed in eleventh-century England. According to William of Malmesbury, Wulfstan of Worcester and Lanfranc had difficulty convincing William the Conqueror to stop the slave trade out of Bristol because he was partial to the taxes he collected from it.\(^ {837}\) An entry for Lewes, Sussex in the Domesday book suggests this was as much as eight pence: four from the seller and four from the

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\(^{836}\) CDB I, no. 375, p. 348. See discussion, Chapter 1, pp. 48-9.

\(^{837}\) ‘Ipsi etiam impulsu ambitum nebulous fregerat qui consueto more mancipia sua Hiberniam uendidabant; cuius facti preconium cui potius imputem, Lanfranco an Wlstano Wigorniae antistiti, pro uero non discerno, qui regem pro commodo uenalitatis quod sibi pensitabatur renitentem uix ad hoc coegerint nisi quod Lanfrancus laudauerit Wlstanus preceperit’, GRA I, III.269, pp. 496-8.
The appearance of this amount in two manumission documents of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, respectively, has led David Pelteret to suggest the Domesday entry is representative of a kingdom-wide tax on ‘manumissions and quittances’. From a coastal market town such as Bristol, where Irish demand drove regular slave trading, the income from taxes must have been considerable.

Even when authority figures possessed the power and ability to enforce restrictions on slave trading, it was not necessarily in their economic interest to do so. As a direct link between rulers and slave trading, taxation may have been far more influential than ideological regulations. The income could not have been negligible for William I if he was reluctant to relinquish it. Přemyslid profits from slave trading must have constituted enough to be a worthy donation to a new ecclesiastical institution. Not only that, but if the taxes from a slave-dealing market directly supported the foundation and maintenance of a monastery, it could provide clues as to why there is a relative silence regarding restrictions on the types of slaves which could legitimately be sold through the Prague market. If neighbouring ecclesiastical institutions were directly dependent, at least in part, on the profits of slave trading, the clergy would have been more likely to turn a blind eye to the sale of Christians to non-Christians. This could explain why Adalbert appears to have received so little support for his campaign to stop the sale of Christians to Jews in Prague. Unlike ideologically-inspired restrictions, taxation provided immediate, earthly rewards for rulers. Heavenly reward for protecting fellow Christians and one’s own people must have been sufficiently important in the medieval ruler’s mind to issue legal protections, but such protection was issued regardless of whether or not strong, centralised authority existed. Far more important was the image these regulations presented of kings and dukes as protectors of their people.

REGULATION BEYOND THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

Despite the ideological intent of restrictions on enslavement and slave trading, the latest examples, which all occur within the twelfth century, are generally accepted as the laws or canons which officially ended slave trading in their respective polities or dioceses. Rather than attributing the end of medieval slave trading to the pervasiveness of Christian

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839 Pelteret, Slavery, 156. The manumissions are dated by Pelteret and appear in Thorpe, Diplomatarium, 627 (Bodmin Gospels, c. 1075), 646 (Exeter Book, c. 1133).
ideals or the power of the ‘state’, responsibility for the demise of this economic phenomenon should instead be placed with larger, external changes. These final prohibitions and restrictions on slave trading came when such exchanges were already greatly reduced as a result of various factors, including political upheaval, changing styles of warfare, and the increasing reliance on variant forms of unfree labour. Long-distance slave trading therefore ended when diminishing demand met with dwindling supply.

Throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries, references to raiding and slave trading diminish and disappear from source genres where it had otherwise been common, which suggests an end to these practices. In England, raiding appears only once or twice a decade in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle after 1016, and after 1066, it only appears as perpetrated by the Scots. By the twelfth century, even dramatised and hyperbolic descriptions of Scottish attacks no longer include the taking of captives as slaves. English narrative sources of the twelfth century which describe slave trading make clear that it was considered an abhorrent and defunct practice in the author’s lifetime. Hagiographers no longer counted the redemption of slaves amongst their subjects’ accomplishments, and Wulfstan of Worcester appears as the last English saint with a concern for the welfare of slaves. In the Czech lands, where records of slave-taking and slave trading had already been sparse, they likewise disappear after 1124. This is partly because most examples only survive in Cosmas’s work, which ended with his death in 1124, but his twelfth-century continuators do not mention enslavement or slave trading. These practices also fail to appear in the biographical traditions of holy men after Adalbert, such as Procopius. In Ireland, raiding appears regularly in the annals up until the Norman conquest, but examples of captive taking become increasingly rare after 1115. Only a few entries indicate anything on a scale comparable to the tenth and eleventh centuries, though the taking of cattle did continue. In both the British Isles and the Czech lands during the twelfth century, slavetaaking and slave trading disappear from the sources where we would most expect to find them. This seems to indicate that fundamental changes were taking place in the creation and sale of slaves.

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840 Strickland, War, 294-304.
841 For an overview of twelfth-century raids, Holm, 337.
842 Large numbers of captives are mentioned in AU s.a. 1130, p. 579 and AFM s.a. 1149, p. 1081. Compare to large numbers of cattle taken in AU s.a. 1122, p. 567; s.a. 1126, p. 571; s.a. 1165, p. 147; s.a. 1181, p. 199; s.a. 1201, p. 237. Similarly, AFM s.a. 1144, p. 1075; s.a. 1145, p. 1077; s.a. 1150, p. 1095; s.a. 1151, p. 1101.
The disappearance of slaving, of course, does not equate to the disappearance of slavery. Local transactions, which are largely invisible throughout the early Middle Ages (as discussed in Chapter 4), may have continued for a time, and slave populations could still theoretically be replenished via inherited status. That said, saleability is a fundamental aspect of chattel slave status, and we must consider that when enslavement and the sale of slaves appear to have ceased, significant changes must have been underway. This section will not seek to answer why slavery itself disappeared in the British Isles and the Czech lands, but why the slave trade, particularly the more visible long-distance slave trading, ended.

Up until the point at which the last known legal injunctions against slave trading were issued in the twelfth century, there is little to suggest that previous ideologically-based rules and regulations on slave trading were particularly effective, and therefore the major force behind the disappearance of slaving. In Anglo-Saxon England, laws and canons relating to enslavement and slave trading were reissued or revised throughout the seventh through eleventh centuries, suggesting that kings felt a keen interest in attempting to control these practices, and that few of the laws were responsible for long-term change. Laws against kidnapping were also promulgated repeatedly, especially during the early Anglo-Saxon period, indicating that kings had to repeatedly speak out against the practice. V Æthelred §2 and II Cnut §3, both of which prohibited the sale of Christians abroad and into heathendom, were almost certainly issued because Ine §11, prohibiting the sale of any man ‘ofer sæ’, was not being enforced. While it is more likely that the later laws were effectively enforced with the development of strong, centralised, administrative structures, there were still limitations on the types of people and trade the laws sought to restrict. That British and Irish injunctions against the sale of Christians to non-Christians do not appear any later than the first half of the eleventh century could have as much to do with the Christianisation of Scandinavia, and therefore the change of a pagan market into a Christian one, as it does the successful enforcement of these prohibitions. Even regarding Anglo-Saxon penitentials, only in one instance did an author see fit to punish direct sale of a third party into slavery under any circumstances. As discussed above, the majority of these texts only condemned the practice when specific conditions were not met.

843 For example, in the United States, the importation of slaves was made illegal in 1807, but slavery itself did not end for another 56 years, until the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.
In the Czech lands, what little evidence survives suggests a similar picture. The Bishop of Prague, the highest-ranking member of the Czech clergy and himself a member of a powerful Bohemian noble family, failed to secure the protection of Christians against sale to Jews from the Přemyslid duke. Despite the commonality of such legal injunctions against the sale of Christians to non-Christians throughout Europe, Adalbert was unable to guarantee that such a provision would be enforced in Prague, in a market located only meters away from the primary ducal residence. Even when enforcement of restrictions on slave trading was possible, it was not necessarily successful, or even attempted.

Twelfth-century rulings against slave trading in Bohemia and Ireland do not appear to be any different in content from earlier, ideologically-inspired laws and canons. In Bohemia, Cosmas tells us that in 1124, near the end of Cosmas’s own lifetime, Duke Vladislav purchased the Christian slaves owned by Jews and forbade any future Jewish ownership of Christian slaves. In Ireland, Gerald of Wales’s account of a Council of Armagh in 1170 describes an attempt to prevent further Norman interference in Ireland by freeing all English slaves on the island and forbidding the purchase of any more. The English example is the exception, since this canon issued in 1102 at the Council of Westminster completely forbade the sale of people ‘like brute animals’ without exception (‘velut bruta animalia’).

There are several problems with assigning these measures a causal role in the end of slave trading, particularly long-distance slave trading, either via the power of the ‘state’ or the Church. The first is that ending the slave trade was not in the economic interest of rulers. Wulfstan’s success in ending the Bristol slave trade may have signalled the beginning of the end for English slave trading more generally, but their campaign certainly met with more resistance than one would expect if, to return to the arguments of Bonnassie and Fynn-Paul, Christian ideology had promoted ‘no-slaving zones’ all along. The most important resistance came from the very top, from William the Conqueror himself, who profited from the taxes levied on slave trading. Wulfstan, therefore, did not initially receive support from a king who did not practice enslavement as part of warfare and whose own native society no longer used slaves. The same is true in the Bohemian duchy, where no

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844 CB, III.57, p. 232.
845 Gerald of Wales, §18, pp. 68-70.
rulings were introduced to restrict slave trading until 1124. We know that the Přemyslid dukes and at least one monastery profited directly from slave trading, and it was therefore not in the economic interest of both secular and ecclesiastical institutions to limit or end the practice. As such, it may be significant that Vladislav’s decree only prohibited the sale of Christians to Jews; it did not forbid slave ownership or sale altogether. Cosmas believed Vladislav’s decree to have ended Jewish ownership of Christians completely, but Cosmas died the same year, so we are left without any information regarding the long-term effectiveness of the ruling.

Vladislav’s decree also highlights the problems of assigning a primary role to Church endeavours in the end of slave trading. His restriction only targeted Jewish ownership of Christians, rather than slave trading and slave ownership at large. In Ireland, it is significant that the Council of Armagh’s prohibition on slave trading was not motivated by Christian ideology, but rather by the political climate. The ruling was specifically designed to stave off the growing Norman control over the Irish by freeing English slaves. There is no indication that the Irish clergy felt slave trading was ‘wrong’ prior to Norman interference, or that the sin of slave trading and slave ownership extended to the unfree Irish.

Instead, these twelfth-century laws and canons were perhaps the last of their kind because of the broader social and economic changes which were already taking place. Enslavement and slave trading were already in decline, though for different reasons in each region. As discussed in Chapter 5, raiding within England appears to have become greatly reduced during Cnut’s reign, which in turn must have reduced the scale of enslavement. Even a gradual decline in the creation of saleable slaves must have become a steep one when changes in the style of warfare following the Norman conquest meant that war captives were no longer enslaved. Any void in long-distance slave trading created by this sharp change may have been filled for a time by the purchase of slaves from Ireland or self-sellers from areas most devastated by the Danish and then Norman armies, but this could not have been an extended practice. Forms of unfreedom other than chattel slavery were becoming increasingly prevalent before 1066, and it is probable that a dramatic reduction in slave supply may have accelerated this process. If long-distance slave trading was still ongoing by 1102, it must have been of a considerably smaller scale than 50 years previously. The

848 Strickland, ‘Slaughter’, 41-59.
849 Pelteret, Slavery, 251-4. There were still a significant number of slaves recorded in Domesday, though, J.S. Moore, ‘Domesday Slavery’, Anglo-Norman Studies XI (1988), 191-220.
Council of Westminster’s canon gives the appearance of an official clerical position regarding a process which was already well underway, if not largely complete.

Even so, it appears to have been impossible for both William I and the English Church to enforce a blanket ban on slave trading across the country, since the Council of Armagh indicates that English slaves and captives were still being brought to Ireland as late as 1170. According to Gerald of Wales, the Irish purchased English people ‘as much from merchants as from thieves and pirates’. There is, of course, the possibility that this Irish council never happened, or that Gerald employed creative license; his is the only record of this council which supposedly involved the clergy of all Ireland. That said, we have no reason to disbelieve him; it seems probable that the victims of coastal raids were enslaved in Ireland. But by the second half of the twelfth-century, the flow of English slaves into Ireland could have been no more than a trickle, if it could be considered a flow at all. Gerald strongly implies that willing involvement in slave trading by the English had ended by this point, their ways having been corrected by rightful subjection to Norman rule.

Bohemia likewise experienced social and economic changes which must have significantly, if indirectly, reduced the role of slave trading. Other forms of agrarian unfreedom in western Europe had gradually become prevalent over the course of the ninth through eleventh centuries, possibly as a result of increasing seigneurial powers; this would have diminished, if not eradicated the demand for chattel slaves there. A similar transition also appears to have begun within the Czech lands before 1124. A recent assessment of charters from this region suggests that serfs, or rather unfree tenants who were not chattel slaves, were operating on Czech estates as early as the eleventh century, and that by 1124 they were well-established. The internal demand for chattel slaves must have waned as a consequence of these changes, though by that point, external demand from the neighbouring Frankish world may have disappeared altogether.

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850 ‘tam a mercatoribus quam predonibus atque piratis emere’, Gerald of Wales, §18, p. 70.
851 ‘convocato apud Archmaciam totius Hibernie clero’, Gerald of Wales, §18, p. 68.
852 ‘Anglorum namque populos, adhuc integro eorundem regno, communi gentis vicio liberos suos venales exponere, et priusquam inopiam ullam aut inediam sustinerent, filios proprios et cognatos in Hiberniam vendere consueverant. Unde et probabiliter credi potest, sicut venditores olim ita et emptores tam enormi delicto iuga servitutis iam meruisse’, Gerald of Wales, §18, p. 70.
854 Petráček, 104-6.
We can also look to the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate in the first quarter of the eleventh century with regards to the decline of long-distance slave trading out of Prague. The Cordoban caliphate had probably been the largest outlet for slaves traded through the Czech lands in the ninth and tenth centuries. However, civil wars and increasingly weak caliphs ultimately led to the deposing of the last Umayyad caliph in 1031. The decline in the prosperity of the Umayyads in their final decades would indicate that there was less money for importing slaves for use in as soldiers or servants than there had been in the previous century. With the caliphate’s collapse, the market for expensive saqāliba imported over vast distances may have completely dried up. This alone would have severely diminished long-distance slave trading out of the Czech lands.

Long-distance slave trading was still underway in Ireland up until the Norman conquest, and it therefore may have been the least impacted by wider social and economic shifts. However, as in England and the Czech lands, external markets gradually dried up over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. New settlement in Iceland and Greenland had slowed greatly from the ninth and tenth centuries, which meant that there could not have been as high a demand for new slaves in those areas, assuming that the slave population, once established, was maintained largely through procreation. If Irish slaves had been exported to the Continent, this would no longer have been necessary as unfree tenancy became the favoured scheme for agricultural labour as early as the tenth century. Not long after, the Norman conquests of England and Wales would also have signalled changing demand for slaves in those regions. Thus, while local slave trading must have persisted within Ireland, the export of Irish slaves may have diminished considerably.

In the British Isles and the Czech lands, it would seem that the twelfth-century rulings against slave trading were issued at a point when this practice, especially the export of slaves, was already seriously reduced, and the profitability for rulers and ecclesiastical institutions was a fraction of what it had been a century previously. The imported slaves addressed at the Council of Armagh indicate there was still a degree of intra-regional slave trading in the British Isles in the twelfth century, and this perhaps speaks to other areas not

855 Collins, 195-204.
856 H. Kennedy, Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of Al-Andalus (Harlow, 1996), 132-3.
857 Kennedy, 140.
under Norman control, such as Scotland. However, this trade must have been drastically reduced from centuries previously, and it may have once again existed as a largely local practice which occasionally tapped into long-distance trade routes. For the Czech lands, as demand for slaves dropped off in surrounding markets and trade routes shifted, the wealthy residents of Czech towns may have been one of the primary outlets for slaves.

What this situation indicates is that strong central authority – secular or ecclesiastical – played a secondary role in ending the slave trade. First and foremost were the social and economic changes of the eleventh and twelfth centuries which reduced the general demand for chattel slave labour across Europe. Even as ‘states’ and their administrative structures coalesced, giving rulers and ecclesiastical leaders a greater ability to enforce their will, most of the laws and canons assumed to mark the end of slave trading were just as selective as those issued during the height of early medieval slave trading. Vladislav only prohibited the ownership of Christians by Jews. The Council of Armagh only freed and prevented further purchase of English slaves. And William I’s law only prohibited the sale of people out of the country. The Council of Westminster’s canon was unique in entirely forbidding the sale of people, but the circumstances surrounding the Council of Armagh indicate that the canon was ineffective, at least in the long-term.

The greatest impact of central authority on slave trading may have been in England, where William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta Regum Anglorum* indicates that William I was successful in enforcing the prohibition on slave trading, at least in Bristol. However, William of Malmesbury was writing four or five decades after the events he recorded, and we do not know how many of those intervening years it took for slave trading to completely disappear. Again, the Council of Armagh would indicate that even in William’s lifetime, long-distance slave trading was still a reality, if perhaps on a very small and even illicit scale. In Ireland and the Czech lands, where strong central authority was either non-existent or still developing, slave trading operated on a limited scale. It is quite possible that the increasing reliance on unfree tenants would have dramatically decreased the profitability of slave trading within these regions, as the disappearance of external markets eliminated long-distance slave trading. In Ireland and Scotland, no formal prohibitions of slave trading, or even on slave ownership appear to have been issued under Norman rule or influence, respectively, and the social norms of the Norman elite may have gradually phased out slavery and slave trading without administrative enforcement. Given the demonstrable inability or lack of interest in enforcing slave trading restrictions by secular, and in the case
of Bohemia, ecclesiastical authority, centralised power structures were not the primary factor in the end of slave trading in either the British Isles or the Czech lands.

CONCLUSIONS

The only slave trading restrictions or regulations which appear to have been effectively enforced in either of these regions are those involving taxation. The continued promulgation of laws or canons regarding slave trading to ‘outsiders’ speaks instead to the relationship between rulers and ideological ideas of protection, either of co-religionists or people within a polity. Such protection was issued throughout the early medieval period, from the seventh through the eleventh centuries, regardless of whether or not strong, centralised authority existed. And though our perspective is hampered by the quantity of surviving evidence, there appears to be no correlation between the development of strong central authority, be it secular or ecclesiastical, and an increase in attempts to regulate enslavement and slave trading.

Ultimately, in these regions of early medieval Europe, it was the ideology of protection which prompted the promulgation of these laws and canons, and their practical enforcement appears to have been only a secondary concern. It is certainly possible that the development of strong, central authority in eleventh century England and perhaps late eleventh- and early twelfth-century Bohemia enabled rulers and bishops to ensure that prohibitions and restrictions were being followed, but these rulings were still conditional and, in some cases, ineffective. This is most likely because even when authority figures possessed the power and ability to enforce the rulings, it was not necessarily in their economic interest to do so. English kings, Bohemian dukes, and at least one Bohemian monastery all financially benefited from taxes levied on the slave trade. Even when leading ecclesiastical figures actively sought to impose restrictions on slave trading, they were ultimately dependent on the assistance of secular rulers, who were hesitant or unwilling to curb their income. These bishops were influential in seeing that laws and canons were promulgated, but only one of these restrictive measures sought to outlaw slave trading entirely. Far more important was the image these regulations presented of kings, dukes, and bishops as protectors of their people.

Instead, the responsibility for the end of slave trading lies with a variety of social and economic factors which were broadly similar for the British Isles and the Czech lands, but which differed in detail. These amounted to the disappearance of external markets and the
general decline in the use of slave labour throughout Europe, both of which sharply decreased demand, as well as changes in the style of warfare which reduced the availability of slaves, particularly in Britain. Such causes explain why long-distance slave trading ended roughly around the same time in both regions, especially considering the wide variation in the centralisation of secular authority and episcopal attitudes towards slave trading. Regulation of slave trading provides insight into the ideology of rulership, but it was not wholly, or even predominantly responsible for the end of slave trading in medieval Europe.
Conclusion

Comparative study of the British Isles and the Czech lands provides a deeper understanding of how slave trading functioned in the early Middle Ages, and how that process impacted the societies in which it operated. Most importantly, it allows us to pose questions when the source material for any one area is too scarce or too vague to be of much use on its own. Textual sources present the greatest variation between regions, a result of both document survival and authorial intentions. Here, the comparative perspective has proven most useful by allowing us to infer, for example, that where Viking slave raiding in England is not explicitly reported, it was not necessarily absent, based on the proliferation of Irish annals which record these events. The appearance of penal enslavement in both Anglo-Saxon and Great Moravian law codes allow us to discern what may have been a Slavic practice which considered penal slaves to be tradable as chattel. And for the chroniclers we depend upon so heavily for information about the early Middle Ages, enslavement and slave trading could serve as narrative devices to either promote or denigrate various personalities. The comparative perspective allows us to broaden our understanding of the roles slave trading played not just in medieval society, but in the records it produced.

Equally, comparative study demonstrates the limitations of our sources for slave trading, and nowhere is that clearer than with archaeological material. Not only do shackles, fortified settlements, currency, and deviant burial fail to illuminate slave trading across wide areas, but local interpretations have been impacted by variant scholarly traditions. This is most notably the case with deviant burials; in Britain and Scandinavia, explanations tend towards slave sacrifice. In the Czech lands, emphasis has been placed on so-called anti-vampiric rituals. Rather than providing us with specific information on the treatment of chattel slaves or their numbers, archaeology best serves to educate us on the exchange networks of which slave trading was a part. By understanding the movement of material culture, we can better interpret how the slaves present in textual sources fit into this context of early medieval trade.

What emerges from close study of the source material from these disparate regions is a pattern of slave trading practice. In other words, comparative study of Britain, Ireland, and the Czech lands indicates that we can construct a model for early medieval slave trading in territories beyond the core of the former western Roman empire. Chattel slaves were
predominantly created through warfare. Raiding targeted women and children, who could be carried off and enslaved directly by their captors or sold for profit. Both outcomes fulfilled symbolic and economic purposes. The raid itself destroyed the production capabilities of an enemy by razing crops and buildings and killing or capturing the labourers. Enslaving those people not only gave their captors greater production capabilities, but it also increased the captors’ status as warriors. Slaves were visible symbols of military victory and prowess, and of an enemy leader’s failure to protect his own people. Selling a captive rather than enslaving them directly could also increase the captor’s economic standing by turning a prisoner of war into cash or goods.

Capture, however, did not necessarily lead to enslavement. Captives could be ransomed, and those of higher social and economic standing were more likely to be freed, since they had the resources to make a payment. Others of lower status could be ransomed through charitable acts, though this was probably an infrequent event. Ultimately the fate of captives depended on the will of their captor. They could be ransomed, starved, executed, enslaved directly, or sold far away for profit. The fate of captives was probably not sealed for some time after they were first taken.

Raiding was not the only means of creating chattel slaves. In either region, it was acceptable to sell one’s children into slavery, though this must have created far fewer slaves than raiding. At certain times and places, those enslaved as punishment for legal transgressions were considered eligible for sale. This was namely Kent in at least the late seventh century and Great Moravia in the mid- to late ninth century. We cannot know how often these people were sold away, or if the laws which allowed it were ever enforced at all, but Zakon Suydndjji Ljudem does suggest that penal enslavement was a significant part of Moravian customary law, and that penal slaves may have been just as eligible for sale as war captives, a situation unique from much of western Europe. While self-sale was certainly a possibility in Britain and Ireland, these individuals who sought to escape hardship were commonly treated differently from chattel slaves, and may have been able to negotiate the terms of their service.

Before the ninth century in Britain and Ireland and before the tenth century in the Czech lands, slave trading remained exclusively small scale. The creation of slaves was a consequence of warfare, and it was not undertaken solely for the purpose of selling slaves for profit. Slave sales did occur, but they were generally opportunistic in nature, and did not necessarily happen at markets. Textual sources indicate that slaves were commonly sold
in this manner when they posed problems for their owners. Opportunistic slave trading, therefore, served as a means of negotiating domestic politics as much as turning a profit. This type of small-scale slave trading was not limited to this early period, however. Opportunistic sales continued for as long as slavery existed, serving as a convenient and flexible means for dealing with problems as they arose, from removing a pregnant slave from a jealous wife’s sight, to getting rid of slaves when owners found caring for them to be impractical.

Case studies of early Anglo-Saxon England and Great Moravia highlight the limited nature of long-distance slave trading before the ninth and tenth centuries. Where vignettes from either region, the story of Imma in Bede and the sale of Methodius’s disciples in the Lives of Naum and Clement, have been claimed as exemplars of substantial long-distance slave trading, close re-evaluation indicates that both are exceptional cases. Non-Christian, foreign merchants were singled out for their association with long-distance trade in order to facilitate the removal of politically problematic individuals. What these stories do show is that long-distance trade links existed which could transport slaves far away, but we should not rush to interpret this possibility as evidence for a constant movement of slaves or exclusively slave trading networks.

From the ninth century in Britain and Ireland, and from the tenth century in the Czech lands, slave trading changed fundamentally. The expansion of Viking trade networks and the sharp increase in the Arab demand for slaves both turned slave trading from ad hoc transactions of convenience into an economically-driven system. Viking raids initially focused on destruction and taking captives for ransom, but soon became at least partly motivated by the capture of people for sale. In both the British Isles and the Czech lands, enslavement was no longer a consequence of warfare; warfare was driven by enslavement. In the British Isles at least, raiders and long-distance merchants were the same people.

In the source material, the most visible slave traders remained non-Christian foreigners: Scandinavians in the British Isles, Jews in the Czech lands. Both of these groups were important players in early medieval trade networks, but we cannot assume that either held a monopoly on slave trading in their own region. Clerical authors sought to shock their audiences with stories of Christians sold into heathen hands, and so we remain blind to the presence of Christian merchants and, with a few exceptions, pagan slaves.
Urban centres such as Prague, London, and Dublin probably served as a backdrop for the majority of slave sales during this period, since this is where long-distance merchants arrived to trade. Liminal fortified settlements may also have played a significant role in funnelling captives from the countryside into these markets. From there, slaves were transported across Europe and beyond. A considerable number of slaves appear to have been moved within the British Isles and outwards to Scandinavia, whence many of their captors originated. It also cannot be coincidence that the slave trade flourished while Iceland and Greenland were being settled, a process which would have necessitated agricultural labourers. In the Czech lands, slaves could be traded internally to aid in the economic and territorial expansion of the tenth and eleventh centuries, and Prague appears to have served as a gateway through which Frankish and Slavic slaves moved towards Hungary, the Rus, Spain, and the Middle East.

Whether or not the expansion of slave trading drove the explosion of overall trade in these regions in the tenth century is difficult to tell with the evidence available. What we can discern is that slave trading became inherently linked with medieval economic systems, and it formed a significant part of the movement of luxury goods throughout Europe and beyond. It is a stretch to say that slave trading was the single most important fundraiser for state building, but it was a significant aspect of trade more generally, and rulers certainly profited from taxation on expensive items which included slaves.

This taxation may have been the real control which rulers extended over slave trading within their territory. Attempts to restrict or regulate enslavement and sale were otherwise predominantly ideological, portraying these high-ranking men as protectors of Christian souls. Rulers and clergymen may have genuinely wished to place limitations on these practices, but their ability to enforce these rules varied greatly, and was in many cases contained within their own direct sphere of influence. Even when strong central authority existed, there is little evidence that restrictions on slave trading were enforced, an issue which likely stemmed from the profitability of taxation on that activity. This situation meant that early medieval slavery did not decline because the sale of Christians was prohibited. Rather, slave trading declined and disappeared because social and economic changes occurred throughout Europe which lessened, and ultimately ceased, the demand for slaves.

What emerges from this study of slave trading is a practice which was diverse and flexible. It could function as a means of making profit or of simply removing a person
whose presence caused domestic or political tension. Slaves could be traded as and when necessary, and their sale was never limited to a specific location or to merchants of a particular ethnic identity. As we would expect, the details and contexts of slave trading in the British Isles and the Czech lands differ over the course of the seventh through the eleventh centuries. However, an early medieval model of slave trading does emerge. The ninth and tenth centuries appear to have been a period of change in both regions. Before this, slave trading did not have an enormous impact on society or on economic systems. Long-distance slave trading was possible, but it was not a goal of slave-taking. After this ninth- and tenth-century shift, which may have occurred over decades, if not a generation, slave trading became an enormously profitable enterprise which shaped the way raiding and warfare were undertaken. Trade became the primary reason for enslavement, and rulers only nominally sought to limit the transactions which were so profitable to them. For centuries, slave trading was a pervasive aspect of early medieval society which both shaped and was shaped by long-distance trade.
Appendix:

Tables of Select Source Types
Table 1: Published Medieval Shackles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owenbristy, Co. Galway</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Late 6th- mid 7th c.</td>
<td>Neck collar, discovered on a skeleton</td>
<td>Lehane, et al., 149.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagore, Co. Meath</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Late 7th c.</td>
<td>Complete decorated neck collar and chain, excavations also revealed one Iron Age-type neck collar with partial chain and one potential medieval collar fragment</td>
<td>Scott, 213-30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coolure Demesne, Co. Westmeath</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>8th-9th c.</td>
<td>Leg fetters, each side requiring a padlock</td>
<td>O’Sullivan, Coolure, 35, 101.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chotěbuz-Podobor</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Mid 8th-Last quarter of the 9th c.</td>
<td>Neck collar without chain</td>
<td>Kouril, 156; Galuška, ‘O otrocích’, 80.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staré Město-Uherské Hradiště</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>9th c.</td>
<td>Complete fetters found in a grave</td>
<td>Henning and Ruttkay, 283; Galuška, ‘O otrocích’, 82-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitra, Párovské Háje</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>9th c.</td>
<td>Fetter without chain or lock</td>
<td>Henning and Ruttkay, 283; Pieta and Ruttkay, ‘Výskum’, 191-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bojná</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>9th c.</td>
<td>Neck collar with chain</td>
<td>Henning and Ruttkay, 283; Pieta and Ruttkay, Bojná, 31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brno-Lišen</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Late 9th-10th c.</td>
<td>Neck collar without chain or lock</td>
<td>Staňa, 111.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Late 10th-Late 11th c.</td>
<td>Three sets of shackles with barrel padlocks from the Old Minster</td>
<td>Goodall, 1011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>11th c.</td>
<td>Shackle with barrel padlock from BS House IX/X</td>
<td>Goodall, 1011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Late 12th-13th c.</td>
<td>Manacle with locking mechanism, discovered around the right leg of an inhumation at St. Nicholas Priory cemetery</td>
<td>Barber and Sibun, 98-9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetherdon, Suffolk</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>13th-14th c.</td>
<td>Single manacle with locking mechanism</td>
<td>Thompson, 163.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Late 14th-15th c.</td>
<td>Broken padlock shackle from Courtyard 34, Surface 11</td>
<td>Goodall, 1011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Edition</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ardakillen, Co. Roscommon</td>
<td>Undated, probably medieval</td>
<td>Neck collar, discovered in association with a skull near a crannog with medieval artifacts</td>
<td>Wood-Martin, 237.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutterworth, Leicestershire</td>
<td>Undated, possibly medieval</td>
<td>Padlock shackle with partial chain</td>
<td>Thompson, 163.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire</td>
<td>Undated, possibly medieval</td>
<td>Padlock shackle</td>
<td>Thompson, 163.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coagh, Co. Sligo</td>
<td>Undated, possibly medieval</td>
<td>Manacles with locking mechanism</td>
<td>Thompson, 164.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Corcreevy, Co. Tyrone</td>
<td>Undated, possibly medieval</td>
<td>Padlock shackle</td>
<td>Thompson, 164.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Slavery in Secular Law Tracts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Edition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Æthelberht</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>ca. 600</td>
<td>§11: Penalty for extramarital sex with a king’s grinding slave (grindende þeowu)</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.3-8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>§24: Penalty for binding (gebindeþ) a freeman</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>§88: Penalty for binding (gebindeþ) another man’s servant (esne)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>§89: Penalty for robbing a slave (deowæs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>§90: Penalty for theft by a slave (þeo)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bretha Æitgid</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>7th-8th c.</td>
<td>p. 175-9: A slave is not responsible for accidental injury or death caused by his labour</td>
<td>AL III.83-547.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 179-81: Penalties due by slaves who injure a person, a cow, or a horse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>p. 273-5: A slave is exempt from fine if someone is injured by the axe the slave is using in the course of his labour (chopping wood)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosach Bescnai</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>7th-8th c.</td>
<td>p. 55: Surety cannot be enforced by a slave against his lord</td>
<td>AL IV.33-65.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di Astud Chirt 7 Dligid</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>7th-8th c.</td>
<td>p. 451: Freeing slaves results in the destruction of milk and produce</td>
<td>AL V.427-93.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 457: The son of a slave cannot become a chieftain, because his vices are like his mother’s (he is also of slave status)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 481: A slave woman and her lord cannot bring cases against each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Heptads** | Ireland | 7th-8th c. | **p. 149:** Any man captured during a battle has a full ransom price, after the battle a half-ransom price  
**p. 199:** A man who secretly impregnates a female slave is alone responsible for raising the child  
**p. 203:** A woman who secretly bears the child of a slave is alone responsible for raising it  
**p. 223:** Male and female slaves are impossible to give as stock  
**p. 225:** Security for a slave who runs away does not deserve repayment  
**p. 229:** There is neither safety nor profit for a hostage for a runaway slave  
**p. 291:** A runaway slave should not be protected from the law | AL V.119-351. |
| **Bretha in Fuillenu Cell** | Ireland | 7th-8th c. | **p. 395:** The estimation of a slave does not extend to a pledge of gold, silver, or copper | AL V.377-423. |
| **Di Chetharslicht Athgabála** | Ireland | 7th-8th c. | **I p. 51:** The contract of a slave without consent of his lord is invalid  
**I p. 105-7:** Slaves are imprisoned rather than distraint in cases regarding their debts  
**I p. 163:** Distraint of three days for carrying off someone’s male or female slave  
**I p. 233:** A slave owner is responsible for crimes committed by his slave, and can receive compensation for crimes committed against his slave | AL I.65-305; II.3-119. |
| **Córus Bésgnai** | Ireland | 660-680 | **§64:** You should not purchase things from male or female slaves | Breathnach, 26-47. |
| **Hlothhere & Eadric** | Kent | 679 x 685 | **§5:** Legal procedure regarding the theft of a free man should that man return to make an accusation | Gesetze, i.9-11. |
| **Ine** | Wessex | 688 x 726 | **§3:** A slave (eowmon) working on a Sunday at his lord’s command is to be freed  
**§3.1:** A slave working on a Sunday of his own volition is to be whipped or fined  
**§3.2:** A freeman working on a Sunday of his own volition is to be enslaved (dolic his freotes)  
**§7.1:** If a thief steals with the knowledge of his household, all should be enslaved (gonen hie ealle on deowet)  
**§11:** Penalty for selling a fellow countryman, slave or free (dowowe oðde fringe), overseas  
**§24:** Punishment for a runaway penal slave (witeðeow)  
**§47:** A slave (eowum) cannot serve as warranty for stolen goods  
**§48:** Rights of accuser to punish a thief who has been penally enslaved | Gesetze, i.89-123. |
| §50 | Rights of a noble to the fines collected from his free and slave dependents after they have committed crimes |
| §53 | Procedure for the discovery of a stolen man (forstolenne man) when the man who sold the stolen slave has since died |
| §54.1 | A person may be used to pay wergild for a homicide |
| §54.2 | Oaths required for English and Welsh penal slaves (witeðeowne) to be beaten |
| §74 | Punishment for a Welsh slave (ðeowwealh) who kills an Englishman |
| §74.1 | Slave must be manumitted if the lord will not pay the wergild |
| §74.2 | Free people are not tied to any enslaved kin |

| Wihtred | Kent | 695 |
| Berrad Airechta | Ireland | ca. 700 |
| Di Astud Chor | Ireland | 8th c. |
| Gúbretha Caratniad | Ireland | Before the second quarter of the 8th c. |
| Zakon Sudnyj Ljudem | Moravia | Second half 9th c.-Early 10th c. |

| §8 | Rights of emancipator following the manumission of his/her slave |
| §13 | Penalty for a slave conducting pagan rituals (þeuw) |
| §14 | Penalty owed by a man for giving meat to his household, slave (þeowne) or free, during a fast |
| §15 | Penalty for slave (þeow) eating meat during a fast of his own volition |
| §23 | Procedure for when someone brings an accusation against the servant (þeowe esne) of a group |
| §26 | Penalties for a freeman caught in the act of stealing – death, sale overseas, or ransom |
| §27 | Penalty for theft by a slave (þeow) |

| §37 | Contracts with slaves are invalid |
| §59 | Slaves are not legitimate witnesses |

| §53 | Contracts by slaves without their lord are dissoluble even with surety |
| §54 | Contracts by slaves are not secured by enforcing or paying surety |

| §1 | Lords who make pagan sacrifices will be sold, price given to the poor |
| §2 | Witnesses will be sold into slavery or condemned to the same punishment as the convicted criminal if they lie |
| §4 | If a man commits adultery with his female slave, the slave will be taken to the ruler and sold in another land, and the money given to the poor |
| §6 | If a man fornicates with another’s female slave, he owes 30 solidi to her master and must fast for 7 years; Poor men may pay with property to avoid sale into slavery |

Breathnach, 124-97.  
Thurneysen, 302-70.  
Gesetze, i.12-4.
| Treaty of Alfred & Guthrum | Wessex | 871 x 890 | §4: Warrantor required for the purchase of people  
§5: Procedure for English slaves or free men to have dealings with the Danes and vice versa |
|--------------------------|--------|----------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Alfred                   | Wessex | ca. 893 x 899 | Prologue §11: Instructions for Christian slaves who do not wish to leave their lords’ service after 6 years (from Exodus 21:2-6)  
Prologue §12: If a man sells his daughter into slavery (þeowenne), she should not be like slaves (þeowe) and other servile women (oðru mennennu); she cannot be sold to foreigners and if mistreated should be free to go to a foreign people (from Exodus 21:7-11)  
Prologue §17: Punishment for the death of male or female enslaved servants (þeowe esne; mennen) at their lord’s hand (from Exodus 21:20-1)  
Prologue §20: Manumission for slaves whose lords cause them to lose an eye (from Exodus 21:26)  
§18.1: A person cannot be given as compensation for a betrothed woman who fornicates  
Gesetze, i.126-8.  
Gesetze, i.16-89. |
| §25-25.1: Penalties for the rape of a slave |
| §35-35.6: Penalties for the binding (gebinde), and physical abuse of an unsinning ceorl |
| §43: Days in which slaves are permitted to sell their own goods |

| II Edward | Wessex | 899 x 924 | §6: Procedure for penal enslavement for theft |
| The Laws of Women (Llyfr Iorweth) | Wales | Possibly before the 10th c. | Gesetze, i.141-5. |
| Three Columns of Law (Iorwerth E and B) | Wales | Possibly 10th c. | Owen, 238-57. |

**The Laws of Women (Llyfr Iorweth)**
- p. 56-7: If a man impregnates another’s slave, he must provide another slave to take her place until the birth. The father is responsible for rearing the child, and the slave must return to her lord. The value of the slave woman is owed if she dies in childbirth.

**Three Columns of Law (Cyfnerth X)**
- §10.1: The galanas of a slave is one and a half pounds
- §10.2: One pound if he is maimed, too old, too young, or comes from across the sea
- §10.3: A native slave is also one pound, as he reduced his status willingly
- §10.4: Penalty for a freeman who strikes a male slave
- §10.5: Penalty for a slave who strikes a freeman
- §10.6: Penalty for anyone who fornicates with a female slave without her lord’s consent
- §10.7: If she becomes pregnant, another slave is owed to take her place until the birth. The father is responsible for rearing the child, and the slave must return to her lord.
- §10.8: The value of the slave woman is owed if she dies in childbirth

**Three Columns of Law (Iorwerth E and B)**
- §110.10: The worth of a native slave is one pound, a slave from overseas is 120 pence and one pound
- §110.11: The sarhaed of a slave is 12 pence
- §110.12: A slave who insults a freeman will have his hand cut off, unless his lord ransoms it
- §110.13: A slave’s hand is worth as much as a king’s hand

**Three Columns of Law (Additional variations)**
- p. 155-6: (Llyfr Colan) The sarhaed of a female slave is 24 pence if she does not work at the spade or quern
- p. 166-7: (Llyfr y Damweiniau) Ransom values for the life of a slave after their first, second, and third thefts; ransom value of a native slave is one pound, from overseas, 120 pence and one pound; Procedure for denying the theft or killing of a slave
- p. 167: (Llyfr Iorweth) A slave ransomed by his lord should not be executed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dunæte</td>
<td>England (Archenfield)</td>
<td>10th-11th c.</td>
<td>§7: The fine for a stolen man is one pound&lt;br&gt;§1: Tolls levied on ships from the east which are transporting slaves&lt;br&gt;§3: Punishment for slaves who do not pay tolls while trading&lt;br&gt;§4: Regarding Bavarians or Slavs trading in slaves, horses, cattle, or other goods&lt;br&gt;§6: Tolls levied on slaves being transported by Slavs, namely those who come from Bohemia or Rus&lt;br&gt;§9: Regarding tolls levied on slaves and other goods transported by Jews and certain merchants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raffelstetten Customs Tariff</td>
<td>East Francia (Raffelstetten)</td>
<td>903 x 906</td>
<td>Inquisitio, 249-52.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Æthelstan</td>
<td>Wessex</td>
<td>924 x 939</td>
<td>§3.1: Penalties for lord who is accessory to theft by his slave, including loss of the slave&lt;br&gt;§19: Penalties for a slave who is found guilty of theft by ordeal&lt;br&gt;§24: Cattle which must be vouched for should be returned to the seller, slave or free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Æthelstan</td>
<td>Wessex</td>
<td>924 x 939</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.150-66.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Æthelstan</td>
<td>Wessex</td>
<td>924 x 939</td>
<td>§6.5-7: Manners of execution for male and female slaves, penalties owed by fellow slaves to the owner of the executed slave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Edmund</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>939 x 946</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.171-2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectitudines Singularum Personarum</td>
<td>England (near Bath)</td>
<td>Possibly mid-10th c.-Early 11th c.</td>
<td>§7: What is due from a lord to his bound swineherds (æhteswane), along with all other rights due to slaves (deowan men)&lt;br&gt;§8: What provisions are due to servile men (esne)&lt;br&gt;§9-9.1: What provisions are due to slave women (deowan wifmen) and bound people (æhtemannum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forfang</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Possibly second half of the 10th c.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.444-53.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>ca. 997</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.374-9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>ca. 994</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.216-20.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The reward for retrieving a stolen man is fifteen pence.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treaty of Edward and Guthrum</th>
<th>England (Possibly York)</th>
<th>1002 x 1004</th>
<th>§7.1-2: Penalties for slaves who work on church festival days; a freeman who works on a church festival day should be enslaved. §8: Penalty for a slave who breaks a lawfully-appointed fast.</th>
<th>Gesetze, i.128-35.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>V Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>ca. 1008</td>
<td>§2: Innocent Christians are not to be sold out of the country, especially not to the heathen.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.236-46.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>After 1008, before 1021</td>
<td>§9: Innocent Christians are not to be sold out of the country, especially not to the heathen.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.236-59.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIIa Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1009</td>
<td>§2.4: Punishment for slaves who do not attend church on three days of mandatory penance and fasting. §5.1: All slaves are exempt from work on those three days.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.262.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>After 1009</td>
<td>§2.3: All slaves are exempt from work on three days of mandatory penance and fasting. §2.4: Punishment for slaves breaking the fast. §5: No one is to be sold out of the country.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.260-1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Æthelred</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>§6: One third of tithes to be paid to paupers and miserable slaves.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.263-8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Cnut</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1020 x 1021</td>
<td>§3: Christians are not to be sold out of the country, especially not to the heathen. §32: Punishment for slave found guilty by ordeal. §45.2: Penalty for a slave who works on a church festival day of his own volition. §45.3: Slaves compelled to work on festival days by their owners will be freed. §46.3: Penalty for a slave who breaks a lawfully-appointed fast. §54: Punishment for a man who commits adultery with his slave.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.308-71.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Břetislav’s Decrees</td>
<td>Bohemia</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>II.4: If a husband and wife should quarrel and separate, the one unwilling to mend the marriage should not be enslaved, but instead exiled into Hungary, without the possibility to redeem themselves or return. The same punishment to virgins and widows who fornicate and adulteresses.</td>
<td>CB, 85-90.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Articles of William I</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1066 x 1087</td>
<td>§9: No person is to be sold out of the country.</td>
<td>Gesetze, i.486-8.</td>
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<td>Table 3: Slaves in Canon Law and Penitentials</td>
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<td><strong>Edition</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Penitential of Finniann</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>6th c.</td>
<td>§22: A male or female slave should be freed, or the value of a slave given to the poor in partial penance for a broken oath §30: Penance for someone who takes money from monasteries under the guise of collecting money for the ransom of captives §32: Contributing money for the ransom of captives is to be encouraged §39: A man who has sex with his slave is to sell the slave and do penance §40: If a man has children by his slave they are to be separated and the slave cannot be sold</td>
<td>Bieler, 75-95.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penitential of Cummean</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>7th c.</td>
<td>II.26: A man who fornicates with his female slave must sell her and do penance II.27: If a man has a son by his slave she must be freed IX.14: Penance for someone who takes money from monasteries under the guise of collecting money for the ransom of captives</td>
<td>Bieler, 108-135.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penitential of Theodore</td>
<td>England (Kent)</td>
<td>690-Early 8th c.</td>
<td>I.xiv.12: If a man fornicates with his slave, he should free her I.ii.5: A bishop and an abbot are allowed to have a criminal slave (<em>scleratum servum</em>) if the slave does not have a redemption price I.viii.3: Greeks and Romans give their slaves clothes and the slaves do not rest on the Lord’s day I.viii.4: Greek monks do not have slaves; Romans do I.xii.20: If a woman is captured and unable to be ransomed, a man can accept another wife after a year I.xii.21: Likewise, if a woman is captured, a man should wait for her for five years, and vice versa I.xii.22: If the first wife returns from captivity, the second must be sent away, and the same for husbands I.xii.24: If a wife returns to her husband from slavery across the sea, her husband need not accept her if he is remarried I.xiii.1: A father is permitted to sell his child into slavery if they are under the age of 7; if older, their consent is required I.xiii.2: A person must be 14 or older in order to sell themselves into slavery</td>
<td>Councils &amp; Ecc., III.173-204.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Text</th>
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<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II.xiii.3: It is not permitted to take away money from a slave which he has acquired by his own labour.</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>§45: A woman who commits murder, arson, or breaks into a church is to be set adrift as a <em>muirchrech</em>.</td>
<td>Meyer, 2-33.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.xiii.4: If a lord joins male and female slaves in matrimony, and later the man or woman is freed, if it is not possible to redeem the one who remains in slavery, it is permitted that they marry a free person.</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>§11: Transgressing the Law of Sunday will cause raids by pagan foreigners who will carry the Irish off as slaves.</td>
<td>Hull, ‘Cáin Domnaig’, 160-71.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.xiii.5: If a free man marries a slave, he does not have to set her free, if they were joined with the prior agreement of both.</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>1.11: Any man who marries a slave cannot be a clergyman.</td>
<td>Die Irische Kanonen-sammlung, ed. H. Wasserschleben (Leipzig, 1874).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.xiii.7: If a pregnant slave is freed, the child will remain enslaved.</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>§6: If a slave works of his own free will on a Sunday, he is to be flogged.</td>
<td>Old English Canons, 3-18.</td>
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<td>§20: If an army seizes a man’s wife and he cannot retrieve her, he may take another wife.</td>
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<td>§24: A man may not take property from a slave without consent if it was acquired properly.</td>
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<td>§110: If a man fornicates with his female slave (<em>mennen</em>), he must fast and free her.</td>
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<td>§133: A father is permitted to sell his child into slavery if they are under the age of 7; if older, their consent is required.</td>
<td>Vašica, ‘Církevněslo- vanský’, 45</td>
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<td>§134: A person must be 14 or older in order to sell themselves into slavery.</td>
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<td>§41: Regarding castration by force or by parents for sale.</td>
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<td>X: All those enslaved during a bishop’s lifetime should be freed upon his death.</td>
<td>Councils &amp; Ecc., 579-86.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Schriftboc</em></td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Late 9th-10th c.</td>
<td>If a man fornicates with his female slave he is to fast; if she has a child he must free it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Old English Penitential</em></td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Late 9th-10th c. (after <em>Schriftboc</em> but before <em>Handbook</em>)</td>
<td>If a betrothed woman is taken by force and later returns, the betrothed couple may remain together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Old English Handbook</em></td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Late 9th-10th c. (After OE <em>Penitential</em>)</td>
<td>If a betrothed woman is captured and returns, the betrothed couple may remain together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Episcopus</em></td>
<td>York</td>
<td>1002 x 1008</td>
<td>§10: Priests are to assist all members of their parish, even those judicially enslaved (<em>nydþeowan</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Griô</em></td>
<td>York</td>
<td>1006 x 1008</td>
<td>§16: A condemned man who avoids execution by claiming sanctuary is to be ransomed for his wergild, perpetually enslaved (<em>ece þeowet</em>), or imprisoned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Institutes of Polity</em></td>
<td>York</td>
<td>1020 x 1023</td>
<td>§127: Tithes and dues should be put towards the ransoming of captives</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Northumbrian Priests’ Law</td>
<td>Possibly York</td>
<td>Possibly 1028 x 1060</td>
<td>§56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council of Westminster</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1102</td>
<td>§28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council of Armagh</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>§18</td>
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