

Reçu le : 01-10-2024	Accepté le : 21-10-2024	Publié le : 30- 12 - 2024
----------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------

European female captives in Algiers, 1700-1809

Femmes européennes captives à Alger, 1700-1809

KERBACH Belkacem 

University of Oum El Bouaghi , Algeria
kerbach.Belkacem@univ-oeb.dz

GHEZALI Mohammed 

University of Oum El Bouaghi , Algeria
mohammed.Ghezali@univ-oeb.dzm

Abstract

This study aims to shed light on a topic that few studies have addressed in Algeria, particularly since most studies have addressed the issue of captives in a general manner. Many focused on male captives due to material availability on the subject. The personal memoirs of male captives were sufficient to cover the topic, unlike those of female captives, which were very few compared to those left by men. "between 1577 and 1704, historians counted 23 English captives who wrote about their captivity in North Africa," while only eight memoirs of female captives in North Africa were written in English during the Ottoman era, some of which were translated from other European languages. We believe that the topic of female captives has not received sufficient attention in Arab university curricula. Even studies in foreign languages have yet to significantly focus on the situation of Christian female captives in North Africa. Exceptions include a study by a Tunisian researcher published in French on "the condition of European female captives in Tunisia at the End of the 18th Century" and a study by Moroccan researcher Khalid El-Bekkoui titled "Female captives in North Africa..." in English. Research in this field still needs to be explored and requires further exploration

Key words: Algiers; Women; European; Captivity

Résumé

Cette étude vise à mettre en lumière un sujet peu exploré en Algérie d'autant plus que la plupart des études ont abordé la question des captifs de manière générale. Beaucoup se sont concentrées sur les captifs masculins en raison de la disponibilité des documents sur le sujet. Les mémoires personnelles des captifs masculins suffisaient à couvrir le sujet, contrairement à celles des captives, qui sont très peu nombreuses par rapport à celles laissées par les hommes. "Entre 1577 et 1704, les historiens ont compté 23 captifs anglais qui ont écrit sur leur captivité en Afrique du Nord," tandis que seulement huit mémoires de captives en Afrique du Nord ont été rédigées en anglais pendant l'ère ottomane, dont certaines ont été traduites d'autres langues européennes. Nous croyons que le sujet des captives féminines n'a pas reçu une attention suffisante dans les programmes universitaires arabes. Même les études en langues étrangères n'ont pas encore mis l'accent de manière significative sur la situation des captives chrétiennes en Afrique du Nord. Les exceptions incluent une étude d'un chercheur tunisien publiée en français sur "la condition des captives européennes en Tunisie à la Fin du XVIIIe Siècle" et une étude du chercheur marocain Khalid El-Bekkoui intitulée "captives féminines en Afrique du Nord..." en anglais. La recherche dans ce domaine reste encore à explorer et nécessite davantage d'exploration.

Mots clés: Alger; Femmes; Féminin; Captivité

E-mail de correspondance: kerbechb@gmail.com

Introduction

The phenomenon of captivity in North Africa during the Ottoman era has predominantly been examined through the lens of male experiences, overshadowing the narratives of female captives. This study, "European female captives in Algiers, 1700-1809," seeks to illuminate the often-neglected stories of women who found themselves ensnared in the complex socio-political dynamics of the time. While numerous accounts exist detailing the experiences of male captives, the memoirs of women are markedly scarce, with only eight documented narratives in English from the Ottoman period, many of which were translations from other European languages. This disparity in available literature reflects a broader trend in historical scholarship, where women's voices have been marginalized or rendered invisible.

The limited attention given to female captives in academic discourse is particularly pronounced in Arab university curricula, where the subject remains underexplored. This oversight not only diminishes the understanding of women's roles and experiences in captivity but also perpetuates a one-dimensional view of the historical narrative surrounding European captives in North Africa. By examining the conditions, experiences, and societal implications of European female captives in Algiers, this study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of captivity and its gendered dimensions.

Furthermore, the research highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to studying captivity that includes the perspectives of both male and female captives. It underscores the importance of integrating these narratives into broader discussions of colonialism, gender, and cultural exchange, thereby enriching the Ottoman Empire's historical discourse and its interactions with Europe. Through this exploration, we hope to pave the way for future research that acknowledges and amplifies women's voices in historical contexts, ultimately fostering a more inclusive understanding of the past.

The topic gives rise to a set of research questions: What was the situation of European female captives in Algiers from 1700 to 1809? Did these women experience any harsh treatment? and how many were there in Algiers?

As for previous studies that addressed the topic of women in general, they have been limited in number and took a general form, as follows:

- Khalid Bekkaoui's *White Women Captives in North Africa. Narratives of Enslavement, 1735-1830* examines the experiences of European female captives during the early modern period in North Africa, challenging the narrative that portrays them solely as victims. The study highlights personal accounts and historical documents to reveal their complex realities, including instances of kindness, autonomy, and social integration within their captors' households.
- John C Appleby's *Women and English Piracy 1540-1720: Partner and Victims of Crime* explores the multifaceted roles of women in the context of English piracy during the early modern period. The study investigates how women were not only victims of piracy but also active participants in these maritime crimes. Appleby examines various historical accounts and documents that illustrate women's involvement, ranging from being partners and supporters of pirates to experiencing the consequences of piracy as captives and victims.
- Leslie P. Peirce's *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* delves into the intricate roles of women within the ottoman harem and their influence on political power and sovereignty. Peirce challenges the conventional portrayal of the harem as a mere space of confinement, instead illustrating it as a dynamic institution where women wield significant influence over the sultan and state affairs.

1. The captive woman on the ship

Voltaire claimed that "all captured European women are raped." (Voltaire, 1888: 35) However, Miss. de Burk's account presents a different story According to her, the captain offered her a choice: she could board his ship or remain on her vessel, where she would have greater freedom and tranquility. He advised her to stay on her vessel if she felt unsafe among the two hundred Algerians on board, and she chose to remain on her ship. (Acba., 1823: 13-23)

The memoirs of female captives do not support the western notion that rape was pervasive during captivity. These memoirs can be categorized into two types: narrated by women captives and those recounted by other captives about females, such as the memoirs of Vibra, Jones, and Miss Ana Maria Fernandez, which mention harassment or forced marriage and often seem closer to fiction in their narrative construction. In contrast, memoirs like those of Maria Martin and Elizabeth Marsh, written by themselves, offer more reliable accounts.

Memoirs typically describe captives being assigned household duties. For instance, Elizabeth Marsh was reportedly never raped, despite the Moroccan king's attempts to force her into marriage. Also, "Maria Ter Melten spoke respectfully of a Moroccan ship captain who treated her kindly, provided for her needs, and entertained her with music". (Meetelen, 1748) Similarly, Valnet recorded that after their capture, Tripolitarians provided the captives with new clothes and kept them on the ship's deck, feeding them bread and water without any mention of assault or rape. (Velnet, 1806: 06)

Overall, previous testimonies prove that the fictional novel represented in stories and plays did not correspond to reality. Authentic memoirs confirm that prisoners were treated appropriately during their captivity in Algeria, compared to the violent scenarios reported in fictional literature. Except for forced marriages within a legal framework, female captives were not subjected to violence, rape, or harassment.

2. Shipwrecks on the coast: Another face of captivity

The memoirs of three Christian women captured along the Algerian coast due to shipwrecks offer insights into the complexities of captivity during this era. While being captured was not uncommon, the circumstances varied, often leading to captivity in areas distant from major Maghreb capitals. Despite the rarity of prolonged captivity for women from European nations at peace with Algeria, remote locations could delay their release due to limited communication with official authorities. Bad weather was a primary factor leading to shipwrecks along the coast. For instance, "in September 1829, adverse weather conditions caused the ship of Valeta from Napoli to drift towards the shores of Oran". (Valetta, 1830: 06) Similarly, Maria Martin's ship was wrecked on the shores of the town of Ténés.

Regarding the captive Madame de burk, she was captured by Algerian sailors but remained on her ship, which was tethered to an Algerian warship. However, on October 28, 1719, the harsh weather caused the rope connecting the two ships to break. According to the account, "the Algerians were ignorant of navigation techniques as they did not possess any compasses, leaving them at the mercy of the winds which drove them towards "Koukou." As the boat neared the coast, the Algerian captain ordered the Algerians to swim ashore and inform the locals of their location." Initially, the locals thought the ship belonged to Christian pirates who were coming to raid them. Still, they changed their minds when the two Algerians sent by the Algerian captain informed them that it was a Christian prize carrying a French princess. (Rowe, 2008: 19)

The Algerian captain decided to depart due to the area's reputation for rebellion against the Turks. However, as the vessel attempted to move away from the coastline, a sudden shift in wind direction pushed it back, causing it to collide with the rocky shoreline and break apart. Tragically, as the stern of the ship sank into the water, Madam de burk, along with her son and maids, succumbed to the sea.

Meanwhile, at the ship's bow, the crew, including Abbot de burk, a steward, a servant, a maid, and Arthur the Irishman, witnessed Miss de burk struggling in the water. Acting swiftly, Arthur leaped into the sea and managed to pass her to the steward before disappearing. Eventually, locals arrived and bravely plunged into the water, enabling the steward to transfer Miss de burk into their care.

Miss de burk told the steward that "she was not afraid of being killed but feared being persuaded to change her religion. She was ready to die rather than break her promise to God." (Acba., 1823: 17-18) The servant and the maid threw themselves into the water and were taken barefoot to the mountains by the Algerians, remaining captives among the locals. These narratives illustrate the Western literary effort to portray the Christian captive's suffering and heroism, highlighting their steadfastness in their Christian faith and fear of losing it.

Maria Martin was taken from the coast to the town of Ténès to become a captive of a Russian owner. In contrast, Valeta and Miss de burk were captured by locals. Maria Martin was taken to Tenes, governed by the Ottomans. A captive outside Algiers was subject to the will of their captor rather than the state system. Although Algeria was at peace with England, Martin's ship crew was taken as captives and presented to the locals as Portuguese prisoners, then sold in the market. (Martin, 1809: 51)

However, when the authorities in the capital discovered this, they intervened and freed her. Captivity with locals differed; Miss de burk was taken to the mountains of Koukou and was fortunate that her message reached the French consul. After an intervention by a religious figure sent by the Dey, her captor, fearing spiritual repercussions, released her. Similarly, Vleta was sold to the French upon their arrival following an agreement between the captive and her captors.

The distribution of captives varied; official authorities would sell them in the market, as in Martin's case, where she was auctioned and bought by a Russian who registered her as his property. Valeta recounted how they were divided among their captors, separated, and handed over to the Arabs who initially captured them. This division often led to the permanent separation of families, as seen in Vleta's emotional account of being torn from her brother with little hope of reunion.

3. Captive women in Algiers

In 1780, the wife of a Spanish naval officer was captured along with her 14-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter and taken to Algiers. They were confined in a cell with other prisoners. One day, a wealthy man from the city requested a maid from the prison warden, who selected the woman for the job and allowed her daughter to accompany her.

However, the family rejected them, and they returned to their cell. Eventually, the woman and her daughter were accepted as servants in another household while the son remained imprisoned. The new owner treated them kindly, even bringing the son to live with them and treating him as one of his own. The Spanish family stayed for three years until war broke out between Algiers and Spain, and the son was called upon to help rebuild fortifications destroyed by Spanish attacks. They were ransomed after peace was established in 1784. (Anecdotes, 1820: 94-95)

The relationship between captors and captives depicted in this story is intricate, showcasing social connections that defy the harsh portrayals often seen in Western literature. According to José Torres, "In the owner's house, a married captive woman would sleep with her son while men slept in prisons." (Matínez, 2005: 77) When it comes to treatment and abuse, personal memoirs do not mention instances of women being subjected to forced sexual assaults, unlike what is portrayed in fictional works. The account of María Fernández, a 16-year-old Spanish prisoner captured by the Dey, illustrates that Despite Dey's efforts to entice her with marriage and a life of luxury, offering to release her sister and mother without demanding a ransom, she steadfastly declined and did not come to any harm, eventually gaining her freedom.

Regarding sexual abuse against children and women, American author Friedman argues that this "perception was exaggerated by religious writings of churchmen involved in ransom activities in Spain, France, and Italy. They aimed to portray Muslims as cruel to garner support from authorities and the public, especially during Spain's Golden Age. (Friedman, 1980: 618)

While the mistreatment of captives, particularly those under private ownership, did occur, it was more a matter of individual behavior rather than a systemic issue. The church's portrayal of widespread abuse among all captives in the Islamic world oversimplifies and generalizes the matter. Such accusations shift the critique from individual actions to condemning an entire race. By contrast, historical comparisons show that "while captives in the Ottoman territories often gained their freedom, about 80% of white captives transported to the southern colonies of the New World by British authorities died from hard labor and disease". (Hiffman, 1993: 92) Reverend Ólafur "highlights significant differences among owners, with some captives having benevolent and noble masters while others faced harsh and continuous mistreatment". (Ólafur, 2016: 114)

D'Aranda emphasizes Mustafa's kind treatment towards him in his narrative, saying, "Emanuel, refrain from deepening your despondency. Instead, imagine yourself as my superior while I am your subordinate." This relationship is further exemplified through shared meals and moments of levity. Dining with the same dish and following the Algerian seating tradition symbolized equality and camaraderie between master and servant. This practice highlighted mutual respect and fostered a bond that transcended their formal roles. (Emanuel, 1666: 169-171) Modern Western resources often take fragments of texts out of context, leading to conclusions that depict Ottomans as barbaric. However, a comprehensive historical approach reveals more balanced results. For example, "while Spain burned those who did not adhere to Catholicism alive, including Protestants and Orthodox Christians, the Ottomans allowed for a more tolerant religious environment. The Ottoman Sultan permitted various religious practices and even included representatives of different faiths in his court". (Goffman, 2004: 111)

In narratives detailing experiences of captivity, exaggerated depictions of women's circumstances frequently emerged, serving as instruments to further religious and political agendas. These accounts, marked by recurring themes and historical contexts, were repeatedly reiterated. Elizabeth Bradley, for instance, recounted an episode wherein Arabs compelled a camel to kneel, meticulously collecting its blood for sustenance amid dire hunger. Interestingly, Valeta offered a strikingly similar narrative, albeit with minor alterations. Religious motivations largely propelled the dissemination of misunderstandings concerning Muslims and their treatment of captives. For instance, Foss asserts that the Quran promises paradise to Muslims who die in battle against Christians, along with their horses, while María Martín's misquotation, substituting "houses" for "horses," highlights these narratives' intricate complexities and distortions.

Overall, the accumulated reports served religious purposes, blending truth with exaggerated accounts, making it challenging to separate fact from fiction in the vast amount of transferred information. Maria Martin continued to transcribe information from the memoirs of former

captives. She recounted her experiences of torture: "We were repeatedly forced to strip naked for minor infractions, then made to stand for several minutes in a blazing fire. At other times, [indicating here that the torturer was a woman] she would throw embers and coal onto our chests. She witnessed her take the life of a poor girl by scattering boiled rice over her naked body." (Martin, 1809: 86) This statement by Maria Martin is absent in the 1818 edition of her narrative because twelve editions were published between 1809 and 1818.

James Lewis considers that "the implications of rice on her naked body need no explanation." (Miranda, 2012: 50). However, it appears that Martin's account was plagiarized almost verbatim from Valnet's 1806 narrative, published three years before Martin's: "We were repeatedly forced to strip naked for minor mistakes, then made to stand in a blazing fire until our bodies were almost entirely blistered. At times, we were made to stand on embers. In one instance, a poor French girl's life was ended by stripping her naked and then throwing boiled rice on her body."

Contrary to the distortions in the narratives, a female captive could inherit her master's estate. "The Algerian National Archives are filled with cases where captives inherited from their masters. In 1636, Admiral Mohammed bin Abdullah bequeathed his estate to his captives (at least six men and one Christian woman), who freely took possession of a large house with six rooms near the vegetable market." (Hershenzon, 2011) Moreover, the act of forcibly making a Christian woman a concubine was considered a serious offense punishable by the owner's execution. In one instance, Malcolm, who had spent eight years as a captive and had become an interpreter for his owner, played a crucial role in mediating between Maria Martin, another captive, and her Russian owner in Tenes. Malcolm conveyed to Maria that if she agreed to become his concubine, she would be granted full freedom, akin to that enjoyed by his other wives and concubines. He reassured her that declining this offer would not result in any repercussions, "as the law protected her from coercion. According to Algerian laws, any attempt by the owner to force Maria into concubinage against her will would lead to his execution". (Martin, 1809: 87) Maria Martin herself stated that she refused the Turk's proposal and did not report any instances of rape by her owner against her will.

However, Molière claims that "a woman, even after years of captivity in North Africa, could still be deemed suitable for marriage within an upper-class bourgeois family". It was not difficult for a young woman to conclude that marriage in Algeria might not drastically differ from marriage in Europe. Indeed, such a marriage was likely better than a lifetime of servitude as a maid in a household. Additionally, one witness recounts that Murād Reis's campaign against Iceland in 1627 resulted in many women being captured by the Algerians. "One of these women married one of the converted captives and lived like a queen, dressed in silk and purple." (Helgason, 1997: 283)

Christian women were always treated with respect. Governors in North Africa allowed captives to marry and reside in separate quarters from single captives without forcing them to work. Captives with children were granted plots of land for cultivation or tasked with jobs such as managing a tavern or shop to support their families. Sultan Moulay Ismail of Morocco stated, "Slaves with families have many problems to bear, so they should not be sent to work, as it hinders them from caring for their families." An English woman with two children and her Italian husband, Chevalier Rossi, was taken to the English consul's house.

A scholar notes that "Christian women were always treated with respect. Governors in North Africa allowed captives to marry and reside in separate quarters from single captives without forcing them to work. Captives with children were granted plots of land for cultivation or tasked with jobs such as managing a tavern or shop to support their families. Sultan Moulay Ismail of Morocco stated, "Slaves with families have many problems to bear, so they should not be sent to work, as it hinders them from caring for their families." (Bekkaoui, 2010: 21) An English woman

with two children and her Italian husband, Chevalier Rossi, was taken to the English consul's house. (Pananti, 1818: 67)

Additionally, John Randle managed to retain his wife and son by agreeing to pay a specified tax to his owner. He worked in a small shop, specializing in selling linen fabrics. (Okeley, 1684: 45) Meanwhile, Walter Crocker, during his visit to the Spanish hospital in 1815, observed the presence of several Sicilian women. Among them was a woman who revealed to him that she was a mother of eight children. She extended an invitation to Crocker to meet six of her children who had remained with her as captives for thirteen years. (Crocker, 1816: 7)

Such acknowledgment was rare amidst the plethora of narratives that depicted women as victims of political and ecclesiastical interests. The truth is that these works contributed to a generation of literature that would intellectually justify European colonization of North Africa, as they led European societies to accept the idea of Western imperialism.

Women's narratives generally tried to portray suffering as a virtue and express the desire of many to demonstrate their ability to compete with men in sacrificing for God, homeland, and freedom. María Martín clearly articulates this in her memoirs: "I have suffered more than any man before me." (Martin, 1809, p. 86)

Drawing from the liberation movements led by women in Europe, the "harem" emerged as a place that could express women's suffering. However, reality somewhat proved the opposite. In the story of Helen from Scotland, she "proved that she lived as a fourth empress to the Moroccan Sultan Sidi Muhammad." Moreover, "the new sultana was able to receive visits from her family and, more importantly, she enabled her brother John Robert to establish a strong trade with Morocco." (**The biographical dictionary of Scottish women, 2004**)

Thus, the Christian woman within the harem was not merely powerless, as depicted by Western writings and European theater. Christian women often lived in luxury in North Africa and could influence the region's political forces.

4. Counting female captives in Algiers

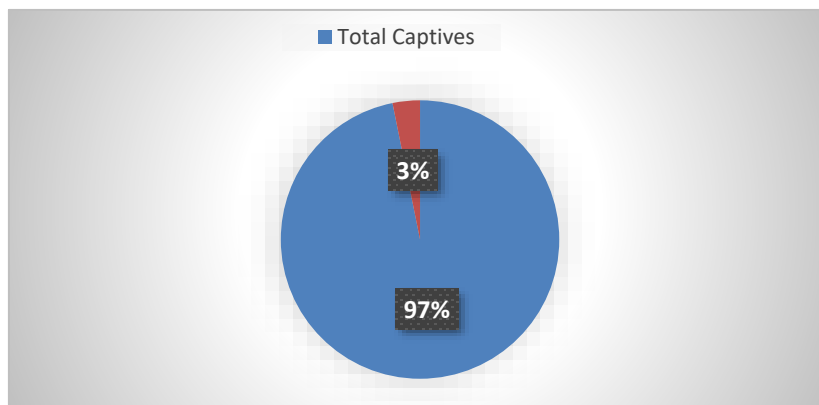
Counting the number of women remains challenging in light of the comprehensiveness provided to us by the statistics of captives and official authorities, "in a list of British ships captured between the years 1677-1680, it is clear that there were between 1770-1850 captives without indicating the number of women". (Unkown, 1682) Robert Davis suggests that women comprised 10% of the total captives brought to Algeria. However, the raw data of these statistics remain variable and unreliable. Father Dan, in the early 17th century, mentioned 25,000 captives, including 1200 women. (Lambert, 1840: 53) Similarly, in 1725, there were reportedly 100 women among 14,000 to 15,000 European captives. (Lambert, 1840: 314)

Furthermore, the records of redemption during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also provide us with information confirming "the domination of men over women in the lists of redemption," whether those lists included captives redeemed from North Africa or Livorno, and "statistics indicated that between 3-10% of the redeemed were women. (**Robert, 2009: 249**)" A redemption list for the "Holy Trinity order made for France between 1666 and 1667 show no women." (**Trinité, 1668**) In another redemption of the Mercy Organization for France in 1662, "Also, no woman's name mentioned. However, an English redemption list dated August 10, 1670, included one woman named "Abra Mason". (The list of redemption captives, 03-07 April 1673)

The scattered data offers brief glimpses into the ordeals of women taken in maritime raids. For example, in the early part of 1724, Algerians captured 24 individuals, with several being women. Likewise, in 1774, 18 Spaniards were seized, among them four women and three children. In 1717, Algerians took a French vessel carrying 120 soldiers, including twelve women and nine children. Furthermore, a list from 1768 detailing redemptions recorded 30 women and 14 children. More recently, Jewish activist Malākī recounts a redemption journey where 19 captives, including five women and four children, were set free. (Hershenson, 2011: 173)

The following pie charts illustrate the limited number of women compared to the number of men brought to Algeria during the period from 1625 to 1725.

Chart n° 1: The number of captive women in Algiers (1625-1725).

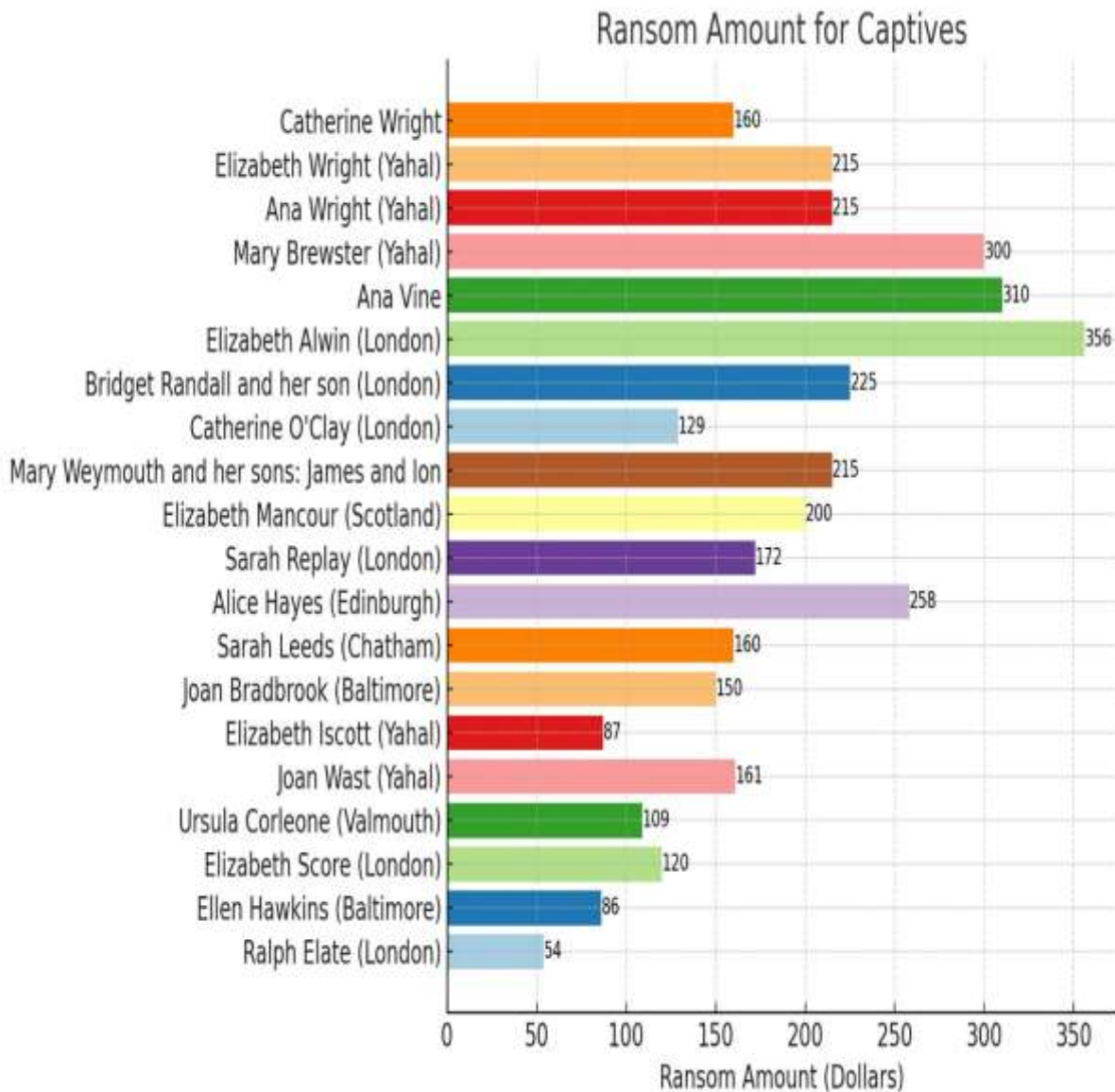


The provided data illustrates significant fluctuations in the numbers of total captives and women over the specified years, shedding light on the complexities surrounding the documentation of captives taken during maritime raids in North Africa. Overall, the data suggests that women constituted a relatively small percentage of total captives throughout this period, reflecting broader historical narratives that often marginalize women's experiences. These fluctuations emphasize the need for a more nuanced understanding of the socio-political changes and maritime practices influencing captivity during this era and the specific roles women played in these historical contexts.

Most raids targeting Christian women during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries occurred along the coastal regions of Europe. "In 1617, over 1200 captives, including women and children, were taken. Ten years later, Murād Reis attacked Icelandic coasts, capturing 400, mostly women. In 1637, a joint Algerian-Tunisian naval expedition seized 120 women in Cagliari, Italy. The same year, Algerians attacked Calvi, capturing 315, mostly women and children." (Bekkaoui, 2010: 2) Algerians reached the British Isles, raiding Youghal, Ireland, on June 20, 1631, capturing 89 women. In 1645, they attacked Cornwall, capturing around 200 women. In 1682, 178 English captives, including nine women. (ATN, ADM 106/361/259.)

In 1646, Casson was sent by the British government to free 244 English captives found in Algiers. At the end of his work titled "A relation of the whole proceedings concerning the redemption of the captives in Argier ..." published in 1647, he included a list of liberated captives and their prices in dollars and double dollars. The list comprised the names of 21 women, which we have included in the following table: (EDMOND, 1647: 18-24)

Chart n° 2: A list of female prisoners released by Cason in 1645.



The chart illustrates considerable disparities in ransom amounts among captives, highlighting significant differences based on their origin and familial connections. Captives from London generally faced higher ransom demands, likely due to perceptions of their more incredible wealth and value. Family units were assessed collectively, increasing ransom amounts that leveraged their combined value. The case of Elizabeth Alwin underscores the exceptionally high ransom demands that could be imposed on specific individuals. These patterns reveal the economic considerations and strategic practices that shaped the historical phenomenon of captivity and ransom of women in Algiers.

The *al-Tashrīfāt* (Book of honors) and *Sijill al-Ghanā'im al-Baḥriyya* (The maritime spoils register) represent two crucial official documents of Algeria, offering precise insights into maritime revenues. Acting as “the official registry of the Algerian government in Ottoman Algeria, the " *al-Tashrīfāt* " meticulously documented taxes, *al-Zakāt* (charitable contributions), levies, and maritime revenues.” (Fagnan, 1995: 458-459) Its recording fell under the responsibility of the Chief Clerk, initiated during the reign of Dey Sha‘bān in 1692 and persisting until Algeria’s fall in 1830. On the other hand, the "maritime register" served as an additional official archive where Algerian

authorities meticulously “recorded all maritime revenues and activities associated with Algerian maritime affairs”. (Devoulx, 1872)

These two officials’ books hold considerable significance as formal documentation devoid of personal sentiments. These documents serve as rigid statistical records tailored to meet the administrative needs of the State of Algiers. These books differ from Western accounts provided by captives and travelers, often serving religious and promotional purposes. In contrast, we have endeavored to delve into Algerian source materials, providing an emotional perspective on Algerian women's status among Christians. These materials primarily consisted of general statistics and lacked specific numerical values.

In Algerian sources, unlike their European counterparts, references to Algerian captives were generally metaphorical rather than numerical, conveying symbolic meanings. For example, following the Spanish expansion after the occupation of Oran in 1509, Muḥammad bn Yūsuf al-Zayyānī (Al-Zayyānī, 2013: 189) noted that “the Spanish, during their campaigns, killed, captured, and enslaved both men and women.” In Addition, the scholar Ben Abd Al-Mou'men, a scholar from Algeria, attempted to persuade the ruler Hassan Pasha to invade Oran through poetic verse : (Al-Zayyānī, 2013: 63)

How many captives around it cannot be redeemed?

How many poor have settled in its abode?

And how many women with their children have been taken captive

"The book of honours" provides excerpts about female captives, albeit primarily focusing on comprehensive figures covering both men and women. On occasion, however, the register provided partial statistics for some women captured by Algerians. (Devoulx, 1853: 84-96)

- In 1786, Ḥasan Rā' is captured a woman and two children.

- Maria Teresa was captured in 1796.

- In 1797, Maria Rodrigo, the wife of the Spanish captain Manialo Rodrigo, was captured.

- In 1798, Francesca Kazani, Francesca Romania, and Akouriali Mishella, all from Malta, were captured.

- Six women were captured following the siege of Muḥammad Bakdāsh on Oran in 1704 and the fall of the Santa Cruz Tower."

Similarly, "The maritime register" provided information about women in a partial format within the overall context. It did not differ from the Book of Honors in this regard, as it indicated captive women as part of the cargo, albeit not annually, in scattered references, not exceeding two cases. (Devoulx, 1853: 69-96)

- The ship of al-Ḥājj Ya'qūb contained 22 captives, including more than two Christian women.

- Al-Rā' is 'Alī al-Tātārī captured 14 individuals aboard the Bailleck ship, including three Christian women.

Conclusion:

The examination of women's captivity narratives reveals a multifaceted and intricate reality that challenges the dominant stereotypes perpetuated in Western literature. Voltaire's assertion that all captured European women were subjected to sexual violence is contested by accounts such as that of Miss. Burk, which illustrate a range of experiences, including instances where captives were able to exercise a degree of autonomy and maintain their personal safety. These first-hand memoirs provide a more credible and accurate depiction, often highlighting that many female captives were assigned domestic roles and treated with consideration rather than subjected to violence.

Moreover, accounts of shipwrecks and subsequent captivity underscore the unpredictable and often chaotic nature of such events, where the fate of captives was contingent upon the actions of their captors and the broader socio-political context. The treatment of captives varied significantly, with some captives receiving humane and respectful treatment while others endured more difficult circumstances.

The available evidence suggests that while instances of abuse did occur, they were neither systemic nor universal. The relationships between captors and captives were frequently more nuanced than the reductive and violent depictions in fictional accounts. The historical record has often been distorted by misinterpretations and exaggerations, leading to an oversimplified understanding of captivity in the Islamic world. In contrast, a more comprehensive approach reveals numerous instances of kindness and respectful treatment. This more nuanced perspective calls for a reassessment of the prevailing narratives surrounding female captivity, acknowledging the diversity of experiences and the contextual factors that influenced them.

Bibliography :

-The archives:

ATN, ADM 106/361/259. (s.d.), The National Archives, England.

-The sources:

- 1- ACBA., B. (1823). - Remarkable shipwrecks or a collection of interesting accounts of naval disasters, with many particulars of the extraordinary adventures and sufferings of the crews of vessels wrecked at Sea, and of their treatment on distant shores. Andrus and Starr: Hartford.
- 2- ANECDOTES, T. P. (1820). Original and Select [by] Sholto And Reuben Percy, Brothers Of The Benedictine Monastery. London : Mont Benger.
- 3- ARANDA, EMANUEL d'. (1666). The History of Algiers, and its Slavery; with an account of that City, and many remarkable particularities of Africk:, sometime a Slave there, Tr J. Davies. London.
- 4- CROCKER, W. (1816). The Cruelties of The Algerine Pirates shewing The present dreadful State of The English Slaves, and other Europeans, at Algiers and Tunis; with the horrid Barbarities inflicted on Christian Mariners shipwrecked on the North Western coast. London: Printed by W.Hone.
- 5- DEVOULX, A. (1853). *al-Tashrīfāt* (Tachrifat recueil de notes historiques sur l'administration de l'ancienne régence d'Alger). Paris: Impr. du gouvernement.
- 6- DEVOULX, A. (1872). *Le registre des prises martines traduction d'un document authentique et inédit concernant le partage des captures amenées par les corsaires Algériens*. Alger : Jourdan.
- 7- EDMOND, C. (1647). A RELATION Of the whole proceedings concerning the Redemption of the CAPTIVES in ARGIER and TUNIS. LONDON: Printed by F. L. for Laurence Blaikelock.
- 8- MARTIN, M. (1809). A History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Miss. Maria Martin Who was Six Years a Slave in Algiers. Philadelphia : Rakestraw. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al
- 9- Al-Zayyānī Muḥammad bn Yūsuf (tran). (2013). *Dalīl al-ḥayrān wa-anīs al-sahrān fī akhbār madīnat Wahrān, taḥqīq al-Mahdī al-Bū'abdallī*. (Guide and Companion of the confused in the News of the City of Oran). Algiers: Algeria Knowledge World.

- The studies (Books and articles):

- 1- BEKKAOUI, K. (2010). *White Women Captives in North Africa, Narratives of Enslavement, 1735-1830*. algrave Macmillan : UK .
 - 2- DAVIS, R. (2006). *Esclaves Chrétiens, Maitres Musulmans, L'esclave Blanc en Méditerranée 1600-1800*, Tr. Manuel Tricoteau. Paris: Ed. Jacqueline Chambon.
 - 3- FAGNAN, E. (1995). *Catalogue générale des manuscrits de la bibliothèque nationale d'Alger première tranche du 1n au n 1987*. Alger : BNF.
 - 4- GOFFMAN, D. (2004). *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press,.
 - 5- HERSHENZON, D. B. (2011). *Early Modern Spain and the Creation of the Mediterranean: Captivity, Commerce, and Knowledge*. Michigan: University of Michigan.
 - 6- HIFFMAN, M. (1993). *They are White and they were Slaves, the Untold History, of the Enslavement of Whites in Early America*, *Independent History*,, 92. *Independent History*.
 - 7- MEETELLEN, M. t. (1748). *Miraculous and Remarkable Events of Twelve Years Slavery, of a Woman, Called Maria ter Meetellen, Resident of Medemblik*. Hoorn: Jacob Duyn's widow.
 - 8- MIRANDA, P. (2012). *Captive in Barbary: The Stereotyping of Arabs, Turks, and Islam in Early American Society, 1785-1850*. Delaware : University of Delaware.
 - 9- OKELEY, W. (1684). *EBEN-EZER: OR, A SMALL MONUMENT OF GREAT MERCY, APPEARING IN THE Miraculous Deliverance OF William Okeley, Williams Adams, John Anthony, John Jeph, John—Carpenter, From the Miserable Slavery of ALGIERS....* London: Printed for Nath. Ponder.
 - 10- ÓLAFUR, E. (2016). *The Travels of Reverend Olafur Egilsson*. Washington, D.C : CUA Press.
 - 11- PANANTI, S. (1818). *Narrative of a Residence in Algiers; Containing a Geographical and Historical Account of the Regency; Biographical Sketchs of the Dey and his Ministers....*, Noted by Edward Blaquiére. London: Printed for Henry Colbur.
 - 12- R.LAMBERT, P. (1840). *Scourage of Christendom, Annals of British Relations with Algiers Prior to the French Conquest*. London: Smith Elder & Co.
 - 13- ROBERT, D. (2009). *Holy War and Human Bondage: Tales of Christian-Muslim Slavery in the Early*. Oxford: ABC-CLIO.
 - 14- ROWE, S. E. (2008). *Women of the Sea*. Applewood Books.
 - 15- *The List of redemption captives . (03-07 April 1673)*. *The London Gazette*.
 - 16- TRINITE, L. d.-S. (1668). *Le tableau de piété envers les captifs, ou Abrégé contenant, avec plusieurs remarques, deux Relations de trois Redemptions de Captifs faites en Afrique, aux Villes et Royaumes de Tunis et d'Alger en Barbarie, ès années 1666 et 1667, par les Religieux...*
 - 17- Unkown. (1682). *A list of ships taken since July, 1677 from his Majesties subjects, by the corsairs of Algier. With their names, masters names, and places to which they belong'd, and time of taking*. London: Printed for Richard Janeway.
 - 18- VALETTA, L. (1830.). *Valetta Neapolitan captive, interesting narrative of the captivity and sufferings of Miss Viletta Laranda*. New York: C.C. Henderson.
 - 19- VELNET, M. (1806). *An Affecting History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Miss. Mary Velnet an Italian Lady, Who Was Seven Years a Slave in Tripoli, Three of which She Was Confined in a Dungeon*. Boston : William Crane.
 - 20- VOLTAIRE. (1888). *Candide or The Optimist*. London .
- Press:**
- 1- FRIEDMAN, E. G. (1980). *Cristian Captives at "Hard Labor" in Algiers, 16th-18th Centuries*. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 13, 616-632.
 - 2- HELGASON, T. (1997). *Historical narrative as Collective Therapy: the Case of the Turkish Raid in Iceland Scandinavian*. *Journal of History*, 22, 275-289.
 - 3- MATINEZ, T. J. (2005). *Europa y el rescate de cautivos en el Mediterráneo durante la temprana Edad Moderna*. *Espacio Tiempo y Forma. Historia Moderna*, 19-18, 71-85.