

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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*SURVIVORS OF SLAVERY*



## INTRODUCTION

THIS BOOK IS A COLLECTION OF modern-day slave narratives. It marks the reemergence of a narrative genre that many of us thought had died with the last of the survivors of legal slavery in the Americas. Slavery unfortunately did not end with its abolition in any country in the world. Instead, it went underground. It often operates under different and more obscure names, such as *conscriptio*n, *trafficking*, *peonage*. But the basic elements of slavery—the forced labor, the lack of pay, the inability to escape—remain the same. And the drive to tell the story of slavery remains as strong among survivors today as it did during the antebellum period.

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, increasing attention has been paid to these situations of forced labor, and we are calling it by its rightful name: *slavery*. As concerned global citizens slowly come to realize that slavery still exists and always has existed in our midst, survivors of slavery are increasingly coming forward to report and reflect on their lived experiences of enslavement. Thus, in the past decade or so, the slave narrative has been reborn.

This book is an open condemnation of the global crime that is modern slavery. It has two explicit goals. The first is to find an audience for the courageous survivors who have chosen to testify to their experiences of enslavement and provide an impetus for activists, scholars, students, and citizens to work to eradicate these contemporary forms of bondage. The second, complimentary goal is to engage the narratives from a scholarly perspective that understands these testimonies of modern slavery as the primary documents of the emerging field of modern slavery studies and the now radically