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Maria Lydia Child and the Abolitionist Cause

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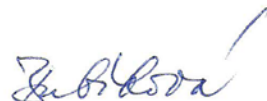
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Abstract

This bachelor paper is concerned with Maria Lydia Child, an American writer of the 19th century. The aim of the paper is to analyze her attitude to the issues of slavery and the abolitionist cause. At the beginning of the paper, the life of Maria Lydia Child and the development of slavery in the United States are briefly described. The body of the paper focuses on Child's opinions concerning the bad treatment of slaves such as slaves' whipping or separating their families. It also deals with slave trade and the economic effect of slavery. One chapter is devoted to Child's correspondence with Governor Wise and Mrs. Mason, of Virginia. The paper is based on Child's works *An Appeal in Favor Of That Class Of Americans Called Africans; Anti-Slavery Catechism; The Evils of Slavery and the Cure of Slavery; Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* and the relevant secondary sources.

Key words:

slavery; abolition; Child, Lydia Maria; anti-slavery

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá Marií Lydií Childovou, americkou spisovatelkou devatenáctého století. Cílem práce je analyzovat její postoj k otázce otroctví a proti-otrokářskému hnutí. Na začátku práce je stručně popsán život Childové a vývoj otroctví ve Spojených státech amerických. Jádrem práce se zabývá jejími názory na špatné zacházení s otroky, jako bylo například bičování otroků nebo rozdělování jejich rodin. Dále se práce zabývá obchodem s otroky a ekonomickým dopadem otroctví. Jedna kapitola je věnována korespondenci Childové s guvernérem státu Virginia, Henry A. Wisem. Práce je založena především na dílech *An Appeal in Favor Of That Class Of Americans Called Africans; Anti-Slavery Catechism; The Evils of Slavery and the Cure of Slavery; Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* a příslušné sekundární literatuře.

Klíčová slova:

otroctví; zrušení otroctví; Child, Lydia Maria; proti-otrokářský

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1. INTRODUCTION

This bachelor paper is concerned with Maria Lydia Child and the abolitionist movement in the United States. Its aim is to analyze her work and activities in terms of slavery and its abolition. The main goal of the paper is to describe Child's opinions as she expressed them in her books and show her contribution to the abolitionist cause. The paper contains four main chapters. First of them deals with the issue of slavery in the United States and the following chapters are concerned with Maria Lydia Child and her work.

The first chapter describes what slavery and abolitionism mean. These basic terms are explained according to their definitions. This chapter also contains a brief history of slavery in the United States of America. Furthermore, the life of Maria Lydia Child is described there.

The second chapter focuses on Child's opinions related to various aspects of slavery. This chapter is based on her anti-slavery works and passages from them. It deals with issues related to slavery such as The Middle Passage, separating families, education, discrimination of slaves or whipping.

The following chapter examines the economic effect of slavery. It is concerned with slave trade and the prices of slaves. Furthermore, there are free and unfree labour compared. This chapter contains Child's opinions regarding slave trade, unfree labor, slaveholding states or work-gang system.

The fourth chapter is devoted to Child's correspondence with Governor Henry A. Wise and Mrs. Mason, of Virginia. After that, there is a conclusion, which summarizes the most important points of the paper.

This bachelor paper is mainly based on Child's anti-slavery works. As a primary source *An Appeal In Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* was used. Moreover, the paper is based on *Anti-Slavery Catechism; The Evils of Slavery and The Cure of Slavery; Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* and the relevant secondary sources. Furthermore, the paper benefits from *The Duty of Disobedience of the Fugitive Slave Act* and Child's correspondence with Governor Wise and Mrs. Mason, of Virginia.

2. SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE LIFE OF MARIA LYDIA CHILD

2.1 Slavery

„Slavery is a system under which people are treated as property and are forced to work“, says Brace in her *Slaveries and Property: Freedom and Belonging*. A slave belongs to his or her owner, which can be called a master or mistress. The slave works without compensation, and is not allowed to refuse to work or to leave. The owner provides him with food, clothes and shelter. A slave can be held against his will from the time of his capture, purchase or birth. Children of a slave mother automatically become slaves too. (Britannica, 2010) Furthermore, a system of slavery is concisely described in Channing's *Slavery*:

The slave-holder claims the slave as his property. The very idea of a slave is, that he belongs to another, that he is bound to live and labor for another, to be another's instrument, and to make another's will his habitual law, however averse to his own. Another owns him, and of course has a right to his time and strength, a right to the fruits of his labor, a right to task him without his consent, and to determine the kind and duration of his toil, a right to confine him to any bounds, a right to extort the required work by stripes, a right in a word, to use him as a tool, without contract, against his will, and in denial of his rights to dispose of himself or to use his power for his own good. (Channing, 1839, p. 24)

Slavery has existed in many cultures and its evidence predates written records. Slavery developed after the invention of agriculture about 11,000 years ago and is rare among hunter-gatherer populations, because it is a system of social stratification. That is why its system requires a high population density to be viable. Historically, slaves were often those of different ethnicity, nationality, religion or race. (Britannica, 2010)

Slavery can exist in various forms, like debt-slavery, child abandonment, punishment for crime, sexual abuse or the enslavement of prisoners. However defined, slavery has existed around the world, on every continent except Antarctica. (Britannica, 2010) Most of the slave societies were concentrated in Western (including Greece and Rome) and Islamic civilizations. (Hellie, 2011) There were even cultures, in which it was legal for owners to kill their slaves. (Britannica, 2010)

Slavery expanded when commerce and industry increased. For example, in ancient

times slavery was common in Greece and the Roman Empire where slaves were used not only for labour, but also for amusement (gladiators). During the Middle Ages slavery declined, but then, in the 16th century, expanded again as a result of the colonization of the New World. About 200 years later, slavery declined again, thanks to changing moral attitudes. To conclude, today, slavery and forced labour are illegal in almost all countries. However, they still exist in parts of Africa, Asia and South America. (Hornsby, 2008)

2.2 Abolitionism

“The word abolitionist in its true meaning comprehends every man who feels himself bound to exert his influence for removing slavery”, says Channing in his *Slavery*. (1839, p. 130) Therefore, abolitionism is a movement to end slavery. (Britannica, 2010) As slavery has existed through the whole of recorded human history, there have been, in various periods, movements to free large groups of slaves. Concerning American and Western Europe history, abolitionism was a movement to end the slave trade and set slaves free. In *The Struggle for Equality*, a historian James M. McPherson defines an abolitionist "as one who before the Civil War in the United States had agitated for the immediate, unconditional, and total abolition of slavery in the United States." (1964, p. 3)

American abolitionism laboured under the handicap that it threatened the harmony of North and South in the Union, and it also ran counter to the United States Constitution, which left the question of slavery to the individual states. Consequently, the Northern public remained unwilling to adopt abolitionist policy and was distrustful of abolitionist extremism. (Britannica, 2010)

In spite of the fact that in the 18th century rationalist thinkers criticized slavery for violating human rights, these anti-slavery sentiments had only little effect on the main centres of slavery, like West Indies and the Southern United States. However, the Somersett’s case in 1772 which emancipated slaves in England, launched the movement to abolish slavery. The importation of African slaves in British colonies was banned in 1807. The United States followed year after. Britain abolished slavery throughout the

situation in the United States was more complex because slavery was a domestic rather than a colonial phenomenon, being the social and economic base of the plantations of 11 Southern states.”(Britannica, 2010) Due to this fact, slavery in the United States was finally abolished as late as in 1865, after the Civil War, with the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. (Kelly, 2011)

2.3 A brief history of slavery in the United States of America

Firstly, there is a statement concerning slavery in the United States. This statement was made by Thomas Jefferson and it discusses the moral impact of slavery on people living in the United States:

There must, doubtless, be an unhappy influence on the manners of the people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this and learn to imitate it, for man is an imitative animal. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in a circle of smaller slave, gives loose to the worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy, who can retain his morals and manners undepraved in such circumstances. (Thomas Jefferson as quoted in Child, 1833, p. 19)

As Hornsby says, during the 14th century Portuguese sailors started to explore the coast of West Africa and to ship Africans to Europe as slaves. When Europeans established colonies in the New World, it caused an expansion of slavery. The Spaniards created sugar plantations in Cuba and on other Caribbean islands which became known as the West Indies. Apart from sugar plantations, they needed a lot of labourers to mine gold and other metals. Then, Europeans enslaved thousands of Indians, but most of them died from European diseases and bad treatment. As a result, Europeans began to import African slaves.

In the 16th century France, England and the Netherlands established colonies in the West Indies and increased slave trade a lot. Soon after, Europeans enslaved only blacks. There were coffee, cotton and tobacco plantations, but sugar became the main export. The rising demand for sugar caused the competition for slaves and for new sugar colonies. From the 15th century to the 18th century 12 million of black slaves were

shipped from Africa. Nearly 2 million of them died on the way, which was called the Middle Passage. About 65 percent of the slaves lived in Brazil, Cuba, Jamaica, Saint Dominique (now Haiti) and other sugar colonies. (Horsnby, 2008)

The first blacks in the American Colonies were indentured servants, who arrived in Jamestown, in the colony of Virginia, in 1619. Most of them had a contract to work without wages for a master for four to seven years, after which they became free. However, owing to racial prejudices they were forced to remain in the lowest level of the society. The slave population increased rapidly during the 17th century, because there was a great demand for slaves in the South. As long as slavery expanded, it remained profitable and was unlikely to disappear. By 1750, there were 200,000 slaves and slavery was legal in all 13 American colonies. (Horsnby, 2008)

The majority of slaves lived in the South, where the warm climate and fertile soil made it possible to grow rice, tobacco, sugar cane and later cotton. Most slaves worked on plantations whereas others were craft-workers, servants and messengers. Sometimes slaves could hire themselves to work for whites on farms or in city jobs. These arrangements brought income to both the slaves and the masters. In the North, there was cooler climate and rocky soil, which made it difficult to earn large profits. That is why slaves worked as labourers in factories, homes, or on fishing and trading ships here. (Hornsby, 2008)

During the 17th century, the colonies started to pass laws called slave codes, which prohibited slaves from owning weapons, receiving an education, moving without the permission, meeting each other or testifying white people in court. By the early 1800's there were more than 700,000 slaves living in the South. It was about a third of the region's population.

Slavery increased rapidly when Eli Whitney of Massachusetts invented his cotton gin in 1793. "This machine removed the seeds from cotton as fast as 50 people by hand and probably contributed more to the growth of slavery than any other development", says Hornsby. Whitney's gin made it possible for farmers to meet the rising demand for cotton. Therefore, southern cotton industry expanded and planters needed more and more slaves. Moreover, sugar cane plantations also used a lot of slaves. As a result, by 1860, about 4 million slaves lived in the South.

Attitudes towards slavery changed after The Revolutionary War, especially in the North. Northern states adopted laws for the immediate or gradual end of slavery. (Horsnby, 2008) Most of the northern colonies adapted a process of gradual emancipation, requiring the children of slave mothers to remain in slavery for a set period, typically 28 years. (Wahl, 2011)

As a result, there were free blacks, including those who had been freed by their masters, who had bought freedom and those who had been born to free parents. After the War, many of them worked in factories, on ships and later in railroad construction. Despite these changes, blacks were still treated as inferiors. For instance, free blacks were not allowed to entry many restaurants, hotels, theatres and other public places. Their children had to attend separate schools. Both in the North and the South, churches either banned blacks or did not allow them to sit with white people. As a result, blacks set up their own churches.

Increasing number of free blacks led to the founding of the American Colonization Society in 1816, which was sponsored by well-known supporters of slavery. Their plan was to transport free blacks back to Africa. In 1822, the society established the colony of Liberia. Despite the fact that free blacks suffered from discrimination, they considered the United States as their home. Therefore, only 12,000 of them wanted to settle in Liberia. In 1847, Liberia became the first self-governing black republic in Africa. (Horsnby, 2008)

In 1860, there were about 490,000 free blacks and most of them faced severe discrimination. On the other hand, many Americans felt that slavery did not correspond with the ideals of democratic government. However, plantation owners and supporters of slavery considered it as natural to the Southern way of life. They believed that they introduced the slaves to Christianity and civilized them. Southern farmers also insisted on the fact they could not make money without slave labour.

The Southern States hoped to expand slavery among new states admitted to the Union. On the other hand, Northern States feared they would lose power in Congress after that. Consequently, the North and the South started to be inconsistent with each other in terms of slavery. The separation of free North and enslaved South launched a geographic, cultural and economic struggle which culminated in the outbreak of the

American Civil War, also known as the War Between the States. (Horsnby, 2008)

American Civil War (1861 – 1865) led to the end of slavery in America. Firstly, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863 promised freedom for slaves in the Confederacy as soon as the Union armies reached them, and authorized the enlistment of African Americans in the Union Army. Secondly, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, abolishing slavery, was passed by the Senate in April 1864, and by the House of Representatives in January 1865, by a vote of 119 to 56. (Horsnby, 2008)

2.4 The life of Maria Lydia Child

As Lewis says, Maria Lydia Francis Child (February 11, 1802 - October 20, 1880) was an American anti-slavery writer, novelist, short-story writer, children's writer, political and social reformer and journalist (her photograph may be found in the appendix). (Lewis, 2011) She was born in Medford, Massachusetts as the youngest of six children. Her father, Convers Francis, was a popular baker. Her mother, Susannah Rand Francis, died when Maria was twelve. Maria was educated in the village school, and for a few years she lived with an older married sister. In spite of that, Maria was especially close to her brother Convers, a Harvard College graduate, a Unitarian minister and later a professor at Harvard Divinity School.

After teaching at a private school for some time, Maria went to live with his brother and his wife. In 1824 she published her first book called *Hobomok*, which she finished in 6 weeks. *Hobomok* is based on Maria's own experience, portraying a harsh, unsympathetic father, who feels threatened by his daughter's intellect. (Lewis, 2011) Its publication helped Maria into New England and Boston literary circles. In 1826 she founded the *Juvenile Miscellany*, the first monthly magazine for children in America.

In 1828, she married David Lee Child, a lawyer and a member of the Massachusetts legislature. He involved her into his political interest and they both became abolitionists. She began to write for his newspaper, the *Massachusetts Journal*. Then, Maria published a book dealing with the issue of Native Americans, *The First Settlers*. In 1829, she published an advice book, called *The Frugal Housewife*. The book

was very popular, as it was intended for lower-income American wives. Consequently, Maria published more advice books with economy tips and even games. (Lewis, 2011)

David's political circle, including William Lloyd Garrison, drew her into the subject of slavery. In 1833, after several years of study of this topic, Maria published a book very different from her previous novels and children's stories. *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* was the first anti-slavery book in the United States. In this book, she described the history of slavery in America and proposed the immediate end of slavery. The *Appeal* was very popular with abolitionists and William Ellery Channing even walked from Boston to Roxbury to thank Mrs. Child for the book. However, it also led to the end of the *Juvenile Miscellany* and reduced sales of her other books, because Child's opinions were extremely controversial at the time. She published more anti-slavery books, including the *Anti-Slavery Catechism* and *The Evils of Slavery and the Cure of Slavery*. It is said, that her books inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. By contrast, in her *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* Child says about the book: "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* is an eloquent outburst of moral indignation, whose echoes wakened the world to look upon their shame" (1860a, p. 10)

During Child's life, she later published *Philothea*, *Letters from New York*, *Flowers for children*, *Autumnal Leaves* and many others. From 1841 to 1844 Child edited the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*. In 1853, she published the biography of an abolitionist Isaac T. Hopper. Apart from that, she corresponded with the Governor Wise, of Virginia and with Mrs. Mason, wife of the author of the Fugitive Slave Law. In terms of their correspondence, Child wrote to her for example: "Here at the North, after we have helped the mothers, *we do not sell the babies.*" Moreover, in 1861, Maria edited the autobiography of an ex-slave woman, Harriet Jacobs, published as *Incidents in the Life of a Slave-Girl*.

After the Civil War, Maria published at her own expense *The Freedmen's book*. She also wrote *Romance of the Republic*, *An Appeal for the Indians* and *Aspirations of the World*. She died in 1880 at Wayland, Massachusetts. (Lewis, 2011)

Child is considered as a pioneer in both literature and politics. She spent most of her life campaigning for the abolition of slavery, as well as for the rights of free blacks,

Native Americans and women. She wrote books of great diversity and her activities extended to many different fields. The important feature of her work is that her novels are written in a direct style and are very didactic as she wrote with logic, clarity and force. (Kunitz, 1938, pp. 146-7) One of the leading scholars on Child's work, Carolyn Karcher, wrote about her:

Child founded both a female counter-tradition of American literature and an alternative vision of race and gender relations in one of (America's) earliest fictional genres, the American historical novel. In the 1820s the women writers who helped shape the American historical novel began to imagine alternatives to race war, genocide, and white supremacy as modes of resolving the contradictions that riddled their society. Child's career illustrates how closely the two phenomena are connected. (Karcher as quoted in O'Reilly, 2001)

Today, Child is usually remembered for her *Appeal*. Ironically, her poem "A Boy's Thanksgiving Day", published in the *Flowers for Children*, is better known than her other work. Moreover, few people know she was "one of the first American women to earn a living income from her writing." (Lewis, 2011)

3. CHILD'S ATTITUDE TO SOME ASPECTS OF SLAVERY

Maria Lydia Child wrote several books concerning the issue of slavery. The most famous and most significant is *An Appeal in Favor Of that Class Of Americans Called Africans*, published in 1833. It is an extraordinary literary work. In the *Appeal* Child deals with a wide range of issues related to slavery. Before publishing the book she had spent three years studying historical, moral, legal, economic, political and racial aspects of slavery. She analyzed facts and arguments from a variety of sources. As a result, the *Appeal* is “organized with remarkable clarity and written in a precisely modulated documentary voice.”(Heaman, 1999)

This groundbreaking study of slavery and racial prejudice in the United States provides an invaluable text for students of American history and literature, African American studies, women's studies, and the history of political reform movements. (Heaman, 1999)

In the *Appeal* Child described the effect of slavery on the moral, political and economic situation of the United States. She supported her opinions and beliefs by using factual evidence. As Taylor says, “Maria possessed a strong streak of didacticism, which accounted for her liking to use example in her work whenever possible. She had, in addition, a tremendous interest in people.” (Taylor, 1961, p. 211)

Child's analysis of the slavery question is remarkable for its depth and comprehensive treatment. By examining American slavery in historical and contemporary contexts, by documenting the inherent contradictions and inconsistencies the system created between federal and state laws, and by demonstrating the far-reaching social consequences of slavery on Americans of all regions and races Child, whose previous literary reputation had rested on her authorship of novels, children's literature, and books of domestic advice, provided a central document of the abolitionist movement. (Heaman, 1999, p. 175)

Child insisted on the end of slavery, not through the return of slaves to Africa, but by the manumission and integration of slaves into the American society. As she says in the *Appeal*, “men who *think* upon this subject, are fast coming to the conclusion that slavery can never be much ameliorated, while it is allowed to exist.” (1833, p.88) “I am fully aware of the unpopularity of the task I have undertaken, but though I expect ridicule and censure, it is not in my nature to fear them”, Child wrote in the introduction of the *Appeal*. As she says, “The only true courage is that which impels us to do right

without regard to consequences.”(1833, p. 121)

Child’s attitude towards slavery was radical and frank. In her *Appeal* she speaks about slavery in a clear, direct language. Child says it is no excuse to blame England for introducing slavery in the United States. “The wickedness of beginning such a work unquestionably belongs to her, the sin of continuing it is certainly our own”, says Child. “Let us no longer act upon the narrow-minded idea that we must always continue to do wrong, because we have so long been in the habit of doing it.” (Child, 1833, p.124)

Regarding slave trade, she says:

Every man, who buys a slave, promotes this traffic, by raising the value of the article, every man who owns a slave, indirectly countenances it, every man who allows that slavery is a lamentable *necessity*, contributes his share to support it, and he who votes for admitting a slave-holding State into the Union, fearfully augments the amount of this crime. (Child, 1833, p.27)

As Child states in her *Appeal*, the human nature played a significant role in tolerating the institution of slavery. She says, “long-continued habit is very powerful, and in the habit of slavery are concentrated the strongest evils of human nature – vanity, pride, love of power, licentiousness and indolence.” (1833, p. 63) Moreover, in the *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* Child says, that the evil of slavery originates in a fixed habit of not regarding coloured people as brethren and sisters of the human family. (1835, p. 6) She believed that everyone could contribute to the abolition of slavery somehow and that all people could do something. As she says, “We can speak kindly and respectfully of colored people upon all occasions, we can repeat to our children such traits as are honorable in their character and history, we can avoid making odious caricatures of negroes.” (1833, p. 125) Child was convinced that “the cause of anti-slavery is rapidly gaining ground. Wise heads as well as warm hearts, are joining in its support.” (1833, p. 88)

The public takes it for granted, that slavery is a “lamentable *necessity*”. Nevertheless there *is* a way to effect its cure, if we all join sincerely, earnestly, and kindly in the work, but if we expend our energies in palliating the evil, or mourning over its hopelessness, or quarrelling about who is the most to blame for it, the vessel, crew, passengers, and all, will go down together. (Child, 1833, p. 78)

3.1 The Middle Passage

One of the first horrible things, which Child points out in the *Appeal* is the voyage from Africa to America, in order to import slaves, called the Middle Passage. When a ship was full of slaves, the Middle Passage began. It took a few weeks up to several months. During the Middle Passage some of the slaves “jumped overboard because they feared that the transatlantic voyage was taking them to be eaten by witches or barbarians, a fate that seemed worse than drowning. “ (Hellie, 2011) As Child says about the voyage, “the poor wretches are stowed by hundreds, like bales of goods, between the low decks, where filth and putrid air produce disease, madness and suicide.”(1833, p.15)

Child also notes that slaves were stowed so close to each other, that there was no possibility of lying down, or changing their position during the voyage. Because they were shipped on account of different owners, they were branded like sheep, with the owner’s marks which had been burnt in their skin with red-hot iron. (1833, p. 15) During the Middle Passage slaves greatly suffered from the absence of water. Furthermore, when some of the slaves were sick, ruthless slave traders got rid of them. Child gives an example:

A slave trader selected one hundred and thirty-two of his sick slaves and threw them into the sea, tied together in pairs, so they could not escape by swimming. According to him “negroes cannot be considered in any other light than as beasts of burden, and to lighten a vessel it is permitted to throw overboard its least valuable effects!”(1833, p.18)

The annual mortality during the Middle Passage was forty-three in a hundred. (Child, 1833, p. 18) Death rates were directly proportional to the length of the voyage. (Hellie, 2011) When the slaves finally arrived to the United States, they were advertised together with cattle, chained in droves and sold in auction. (Child, 1833, p.16) Naturally, slaves tried to avoid it by all means. “They have stabbed themselves for freedom, jumped into the waves for freedom, starved for freedom, fought like very tigers for freedom.”(Child, 1833, p.102)

Slave auctions were elaborate markets in which the prices of slaves were determined. The auctions showed the captains and their superiors what kind of “cargo”

was in demand, usually adult males. (Hellie, 2011) After the auction the slave was delivered to the new owner, to work there. At that time, the period of “seasoning” began. It was a period of about a year when the slave either died due to diseases of the New World or survived it. Slaves from Africa had somewhat of a natural immunity to yellow fever and malaria, but they were often underfed and overworked, so many of them died. (Hellie, 2011)

As Child studied the history of slavery, in the *Appeal* she compares the system of slavery in the United States to its previous forms in various times and countries, especially the ancient one.

Between ancient and modern slavery, there is this remarkable distinction – the former originated in motives of humanity, the latter is dictated solely by avarice. The ancients made slaves of captives taken in war, as an amelioration of the original custom of indiscriminate slaughter, the modern attack defenseless people, without any provocation, and steal them, for the express purpose of making them slaves. There are, no doubt, thousands of slaves, now living in the United States, who are actually stolen from Africa (1833, p.28)

Concerning this comparison of ancient and modern slavery, Heaman writes about it in her article called “An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans”, published in *Melus*:

Child’s comparative analysis of ancient and modern slavery argues that modern slavery is more “odious” because “the condition of slaves has always been worse just in proportion to the freedom enjoyed by their masters”, while England and America are “conspicuous for enlightened views of freedom, and bold vindication of the equal rights of man” slave laws and customs in these nations are more oppressive than those “Pagan, iron-hearted Rome.” (Heaman, 1999, pp. 176-7)

3.2 Slaves as a property

As it was said, slaves were deprived of personal liberty and belonged to their masters. In her *Appeal* Child emphasizes the fact that the personal liberty of one man can never be the property of another. According to her, all ideas of property are based on the mutual agreement of human beings and regulated by laws for the general good. In slavery the mutual agreement does not exist because the slave has no voice in the matter. The beginning of such a relationship is “the triumph of power over weakness, its continuation is the tyranny of knowledge over ignorance.” Moreover, Child believes

that personal freedom is the “birthright of every human being”. (1833, p.62) In one of her anti-slavery books, called *Anti-Slavery Catechism* Child concisely describes the characteristics of such a relationship:

You would not like to place yourself completely in the power even of the best man you know, you would be afraid to have it depend entirely on his will how much work you should do in a day, what food you should eat, and what clothes you should wear, and how and when you should be punished. It is not considered entirely sage for an aged parent to relinquish all his property, and trust entirely to the generosity of his own children, what then do you suppose the poor slave has to expect, when he becomes too old and infirm to be profitable to his master? (1836, p. 8)

In slave States, the law did not recognize slave’s rights, because he was the property of the master. All that a slave possessed, belonged to his master since slaves were incapable of inheriting or transmitting property. As Child says in her *Anti-slavery Catechism*, “Any note of hand, or written contract with a slave is worth no more than a promissory note to a dog, because no slave can bring an action at law.” As she emphasizes in her *Appeal*, “The abolitionists are told that they must wait till the slaves are more fit for freedom. But if this system is pursued, when are they to be more fit for freedom? Never, never, to the end of time.”(Child, 1833, p. 84)

Another thing, which drew Child’s attention, was the sexual abuse of female slaves. Such slaves were legal property of their owners and completely in the power of their masters, his sons, his overseers, friends and his drivers. The law did not allow them to resist a white man, under any circumstances. Slaveholders had no legal obligation to respect a slave’s marriage and therefore slave women had no protection against them. Consequently, they were often sexually harassed or raped. As a result of this, mixed-race children were born and some of them looked completely white. These children took the status of their mothers, unless freed by the slaveholder. (1836, p.15)

3.3 Separating families

In relation to the idea of owning people, there was another problem – separating families. According to the law, marriages between slaves were illegal. “It is sometimes alleged that slavery and marriage were totally incompatible, for recognition of the

husband-wife bond would have limited intolerably the slave owner's authority and his right to dispose of his property" (Hellie, 2011) However, slaves had their "wives" and children, which they loved. As Child stresses, "A man has at least as good a right to choose his wife, as he has to choose his religion. His taste may not suit his neighbors, but they have no right to interfere with his concerns." (Child, 1833, p. 116)

Slaves born to already enslaved parents were usually treated better than those who were purchased or captured from other groups. (Wahl, 2011) Nevertheless, the master could sell or hire any member of the family to a remote plantation. For example, hired slaves frequently worked in manufacturing, construction, mining and domestic service. (Wahl, 2011) As Child says, "The poor negro is considered as having no right in his wife and children. They may be suddenly torn from him to be sold in a distant market, but he cannot prevent the wrong. When there is no hope, the heart becomes paralyzed."(1833, pp.111-112)

In her story called "Charity Bowery", published in 1839 by the anti-slavery newspaper the *Liberty Bell*, Child writes about an old slave woman, whose children were sold. The old woman told Child about her experience:

Sixteen children I have had, first and last, and twelve I have nursed for my mistress. From the time my first baby was born, I always set my heart upon buying freedom for some of my children. I thought it was of more consequence to them than to me, for I was old, and used to being a slave. But mistress McKinley would not let me have my children. One after another—one after another—she sold them from me. Oh, how *many* times that woman has broken my heart! (quoted in Child, 1839)

Moreover, Child adds that the power to separate mothers and children, husbands and wives, was exercised only in the British West Indies and the United States. "Thus wife, or husband, is sometimes sold, and sent thousands of miles from each other, and from their little ones, without the slightest hope of ever meeting again." (Child, 1836, p.15) By contrast, she mentions the Spanish, Portuguese and French colonies, where plantation slaves were considered real estate, attached to the soil they cultivated. She emphasizes that according to the *Code Noir*, of Louis the Fourteenth, husband and wives, parents and children, are not allowed to be sold separately.(1833, p. 32)

Child believed that the relationships of slaves were even stronger than those of free people, because these family ties were the only pleasure they were allowed to have.

“Hundreds of instances might be told, where they have preferred death to separation”, she says in her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*. Moreover, in the *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* Child shows a real story:

Near Palmyra, in Marion county, Missouri, two boys were sold to a slave-trader, who did not intend to leave the place until morning. During the night, the mother was kept chained in an out-house, that she might not make any effort to prevent the departure of her children. She managed to get loose from her fetters, seized an axe, cut off the heads of her sleeping boys, and then ended her own life by the same instrument.The planter and the slave-trader went to law about the *prices* of the poor slaves. (1835, p.17)

3.4 Education

Slaves were not allowed to be educated, because if they would be, it would be hard to keep them in slavery. Therefore, supporters of slavery tried all means to avoid it. As Child says, such people say that blacks are so ignorant that they must be slaves, while they insist upon keeping them ignorant to spoil them for slaves. “It should be remembered that is very rare for any colored person at the South to know how to read or write.”(Child, 1833, p.87) She continues in her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*:

The masters know very well that their vassals will be servile just in proportion as they are brutally ignorant, hence all their legislation tends to keep them so. It is a disgraceful fact, that in half of these United States the working men are expressly forbidden to learn to read or write. The law ordains that twenty lashes shall be inflicted upon every slave found in an assembly met together for the purpose of “mental instruction” every white person who teach a slave to read or write, or gives or sells him any book (even the Bible) is fined two hundred dollars, any colored person who commits the same crime, is punished with thirty-nine lashes, or with imprisonment. (1836, p.17)

According to the advocates of slavery it was the best for the slaves to keep them in slavery, because “without a master to guide him and take care of him, he is a wretched being...freedom is the greatest curse that can be bestowed upon him.”(Child, 1833, p.84) However, Child disagrees and expresses her ideas in the *Appeal*:

We first debase the nature of man by making him a slave, and then very coolly tell him that he must always remain a slave because he does not know how to use freedom. We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling them forever, because they are prostrate. Truly, human selfishness never invented a rule, which worked so charmingly both ways. (1833, p. 101)

Furthermore, in her *Appeal*, Child gives an example of a law, passed in Georgia, illustrating the situation in terms of slave's education:

Any person that teaches a person of color, slave or free, to read or write, or causes such persons to be so taught, is subjected to a fine of thirty dollars for each offence, and every person of color who shall teach reading or writing, is subject to a fine of thirty dollars, or to be imprisoned ten days and whipped thirty-nine lashes (1833, p.40)

Slaves were usually considered as stupid and simple. "The opinion that negroes are naturally inferior in intellect is almost universal among white men."(Child, 1833, p.106) A similar opinion is expressed by Hellie, who says: "Throughout history slaves have often been considered to be stupid, uneducable, childlike, lazy, untruthful, untrustworthy, prone to drunkenness, idle, boorish, lascivious, licentious and cowardly."

Then let the slaveholder no longer apologize for himself by urging the stupidity and sensuality of negroes. It is upon the system, which transforms men into beasts that the reproach rests in all its strength and bitterness. And even in the negroes were, beyond all doubt, our inferiors in intellect, this would form no excuse for oppression or contempt. The use of law and public opinion is to protect the weak against the strong, and the government, which perverts these blessings into means of tyranny, resembles the priest, who administered poison with the Holy Sacrament. (Child, 1833, p.105)

Child believes that the fault is in an unnatural situation of slaves, because tyranny "dwarfs the intellect". (1833, p. 102) She says, "If colored people are well treated and have same inducements to industry as other people, they work and behave as well as them." (1836, p.24) In her *Appeal* she gives real evidence of the fact. There are examples of spirit, courage and talent among slaves described. Moreover, Child considers the slaves as sociable, humane and hospitable. She claims that human nature is everywhere the same, but developed differently, influenced by the conditions under which we live, which are different in their character. (1833, p.24) In the *Anti-Slavery Catechism* Child mentions the statement of Lieutenant Hall, who, in his *Travels in the United States*, agrees with her theory:

Cut off hope for the future, and freedom for the present, superadd a due pressure of bodily suffering, and personal degradation, and you have a slave, who (of whatever zone, nation or complexion) will be what the poor African is, torpid, debased, and lowered beneath the standard of humanity. (quoted in Child, 1836, p.102)

In brief, Child insisted on changing the legislation, because “of all monopolies, a monopoly of *knowledge* is the worst. Let it be as active as the ocean, as free as the wind, as universal as the sunbeams.”(1833, p. 80) She underlined the fact that under every form of government there are distinct classes of society, which have only occasional communication with each other. Coloured people, whether educated or not, definitely form one of these classes and if they would be given information, they would feel better members of society. (1833, p.81) Furthermore, Child stressed that even the already free blacks were not treated equally to other members of society:

The state of public feeling not only makes it difficult for the Africans to obtain information, but it prevents them from making profitable of what knowledge they have. A colored man, however intelligent, is not allowed to pursue any business more lucrative than that of a barber, a shoe-black, or a waiter. These, and all other employments, are truly respectable, whenever the duties connected with them are faithfully performed, but it is unjust that a man should, on account of his complexion, be prevented from performing more elevated uses in society. Every citizen ought to have a fair chance to try his fortune in any line of business, which he thinks he has ability to transact....Prejudices of all kinds have their strongest holds in the minds of the vulgar and the ignorant. In a community so enlightened as our own, they must gradually melt away under the influence of public discussion. (Child, 1833, p.121)

3.5 Discrimination of slaves

“The negro’s crimes are repeated, but his sufferings are never told”, says Child in her *Appeal*. (1833, p.123) Slaves were discriminated in various aspects of their lives. According to the law, slaves were objects of the law, not its subjects. That was the main difference between masters and slaves. Masters were distinguished from the slaves by the fact they were subjects of the law and had some rights, whereas slaves were the objects of the law and had significantly fewer rights. (Hellie, 2011)

Slaves were considered legal non-persons except if they committed crimes. An Alabama court asserted that slaves "are rational beings, they are capable of committing crimes; and in reference to acts which are crimes, are regarded as persons. Because they are slaves, they are incapable of performing civil acts, and, in reference to all such, they are things, not persons.” (Catterall, 1926, p. 247)

The basis protection for the institution of slavery was the Tenth Amendment of 1791, which left the issue of slavery and related matters to the states. (Hellie, 2011) “To construct slave law, lawmakers borrowed from law concerning personal property and

animals, as well as from rules regarding servant, employees, and free persons. The outcome was a set of doctrines that supported the Southern way of life.” (Wahl, 2011) These laws intensified particularly after Nat Turner’s revolt in 1831. To draw attention to this topic, Child describes especially slave codes, which established slave’s rights and duties. In the *Appeal* there are a few of them, for example:

○ Any person whose maternal ancestor, even in the remotest degree of distance, can be shown to have been a negro, Indian, or mulatto, not free at the time this law was introduced, although the paternal ancestor at each successive generation may have been a white free man, is declared to be the subject of perpetual slavery.

○ The condition of a slave being merely a passive one, his subordination to his master, and to all who represent him, is not susceptible of any modification, or restriction in such manner, that he owes to his master, and to all his family, a respect without bounds, and an absolute obedience, and he is consequently to execute all the orders, which he receives from his said master, or from them.

○ Free people of color ought never to insult or strike white people, nor presume to conceive themselves equal to the whites, but on the contrary, they ought to yield to them on every occasion, and never speak or answer them but with respect, under the penalty of imprisonment, according to the nature of the offence.(1833, chapter II.)

As Child involved these slave codes into the *Appeal* she showed factual evidence of bad treatment of slaves. As she emphasizes, due to his ignorance a slave does not even know the existence of half the laws by which he suffers. (1833, p.42) Southern state law dealt with slave status, master’s treatment of slaves, interaction between slaveholders, rights and duties toward slaves, and slave crimes. These crimes included for example violating curfew, attending religious meeting, running away, or leaving the plantation without permission. There were numerous punishments for slave crimes, including prison terms, banishment, whipping, castration, or execution. (Wahl, 2011) In *The Duty of Disobedience to the Fugitive Slave Act*, Child wrote:

If you read Southern Laws, you will need very small knowledge of human nature to be convinced that the practical results must inevitably be utter barbarism. In view of those *laws*, I have always wondered how sensible people could be so slow in believing the actual state of things in slaveholding communities. (Child, 1860b, p.6)

Another fact, which Child notes in her work is that in slave states a coloured man or mulatto, either bond or free, was never allowed to give evidence against a white man,

under any circumstances (1836, p.5) “No slave can be a witness for himself, or for his fellow-slaves, and should a white man happen to know the fact, there are ninety-nine chances out of a hundred, that he will deem it prudent to be silent. (Child, 1833, p.31)

In the *Anti-Slavery Catechism* Child observes a factual impact of the law. “If a hundred blacks or mulattos, either bond or free, should see a slave murdered, it avails nothing against the murderer, because the laws of slave States do not allow a colored person to testify against a white man.” (1836, p.5) Moreover, the slave was completely in the power of his master, because the same man, who accused him, was often also the judge and executioner. (Child, 1836, p.7)

So long as this rule is acted upon, it is very plain, that all regulations made for the protection of the slave are perfectly useless, however grievous his wrongs, they cannot be proved. The master is merely obliged to take the precaution not to starve, or mangle, or murder his negroes, in the presence of a white man. No matter if five hundred colored people be present, they cannot testify to the fact. (Child, 1833, p. 34)

As Wahl says, “prosecuting masters was extremely difficult, because often the only witnesses were slaves or wives, neither of whom could testify against male heads of household.” (Wahl, 2011)

Another example of discrimination was that every coloured person was presumed to be a slave unless he could prove the contrary (Certificate of freedom). As Wahl says, “Southern law largely identified skin colour with status. Those who appeared African were generally presumed to be slaves.” (Wahl, 2011) Skin colour was the most distinctive feature of Africans. Because they looked different from their masters, it was easy to monitor them. “The common law supposes a man to be innocent unless he is proved guilty, but slave law turns this upside down”, says Child in her *Appeal* (1833, p. 42)

As the law supposes every colored person to be a slave unless he can prove himself free, and as no person of his own complexion is allowed to be evidence for him, the kidnappers have an easy time of it. (Child, 1836, p. 14)

Child noticed that slaves were also treated unjustly when committing crimes. In the most states, the criminal law for slaves was harsher than for free whites. Particularly harsh punishment applied to slaves who killed their masters or caused rebellion.

“Southerners considered these acts of treason and resorted to immolation, drawing, quartering and hanging.” (Wahl, 2011) As Child says in her *Appeal*, “There are seventy-one crimes in the slave States, for which negroes are punished with death, and for each and every one of these crimes the white man suffers nothing worse than imprisonment in the penitentiary.” (1833, p. 40)

Apart from that, slaves were also discriminated as they were not allowed to own anything. While the master owned the slave and the means of production, the slave owned nothing, often not even the clothes on his back. “The fundamental principle was that the slave could not own property because the master owned not only his slave’s body but everything that body might accumulate.”(Hellie, 2011) Therefore, slaves had no rights in their children. Any child of an enslaved mother followed her status and automatically became a slave, no matter who was his father.

As Child states in the *Appeal*, slaves were generally considered as ignorant savages, who are treacherous, dishonest and cunning. However, she resolutely disagrees with such arguments:

I do not believe that any class of people subject to the same influences, would commit fewer crimes...we hear a great deal of the negroes’ crimes, while we hear very little of their provocations...if they murder their masters, newspapers and almanacs blazon it all over the country, but if their masters murder them, a trifling fine is paid, and nobody thinks of mentioning the matter....I believe there are twenty negroes killed by white men where there is one white man killed by a black. (1833, p.113)

As Child stresses, slaves were rarely imprisoned for their crimes, because prisoners were not obliged to work more than ten hours a day and they had more food. Therefore, it was an extraordinary thing for a slave to be sent to the state prison. Instead of punishment, it would be the amelioration of his life. (1836, p.4) In her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*, Child supposes the most problems with discrimination of slaves were caused by the legislation of the slave states. “Whoever has read southern law books, will become convinced that slaves have no real efficient protection from the laws”, she says. (Child, 1835, p. 5)

Where even the *laws* consider human beings as animals, it is not a matter of surprise that they are generally treated no better than self-interest leads men to

treat animals. You will likewise perceive that when the slave becomes old, or diseased, or in any way unfit for labor, it is not for the interest of his master to prolong his existence by rendering it comfortable. (1836, p.10)

3.6 Whipping

Slaves living on the plantations were frequently punished by plantation owner or master, his wife, children and the most often by overseers or drivers. Slaves were punished with variety of objects and instruments including knives or guns, but the most common was whipping. They could be punished for many reasons, for example working too slow, breaking a law, leaving the plantation without permission or not following orders. Punishment took place in front of other slaves to make an example. If the slave woman was pregnant, workers might dig a hole for her to rest her belly while being whipped. In addition, the overseer sometimes sprinkled the slave with red pepper. (Hellie, 2011)

As Hellie says, a nearly universal stereotype of the slave was of a lying, lazy, dull brute, who had to be kicked or whipped. In *The Peculiar Institution*, Stamp mentions one overseer who said: “Now, I speak what I know, when I say it is like ‘casting pearls before swine’ to try to persuade a negro to work. He must be made to work, and should always be given to understand that if he fails to perform his duty he will be punished for it.” (1956, p. 171) Child openly criticized this aspect of slavery. “The superiority of power produces nothing but a superiority of brutality and barbarism.” (1833, p. 96) In her *Appeal* she describes various types of slave’s “sins” and their punishment by the master. Sometimes, the master was so cruel and ruthless that he killed or almost killed the slave. “I forbear to describe how much more shocking slave-whipping is than anything we are accustomed to see bestowed upon cattle” (1833, p.85)

As Child says, the laws did consider the killing of a slave as a murder, but no white man had ever been executed for it. Slaves died of “*moderate* punishment.”(1836, p.5) Concerning this, slaves were most often whipped by their overseers, who forced them to work. Child believed that if overseers would have a stated salary, without regard to the amount of produce, it would not be important whether much or little work had been done. Therefore, there would be no reason for whipping. Moreover, she especially emphasizes violence committed on children.

In the *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery*, Child asks the reader:

What do you think of a *system*, which places children in the power of brutal overseers? If the father and mother of that little murdered slave *knew* their child was killed by violence-nay, if they *witnessed* it with their own eyes-they could not bring an action against the murderer, or even be allowed to testify to what they saw. What do you think of laws like these in a free republic? (1835, p. 6)

In *The Evils of Slavery* Child mentions Mr. Wirt, of Virginia, who joined her in the criticism of whipping and made the following statement: “Last and lowest beings called overseers, the most abject, degraded, unprincipled race, always whip in hand to the dons who employ them, and furnishing materials for their pride, insolence, and love of dominion.”(quoted in Child, 1839, p.9)

3.7 American Colonization Society

As Child insisted on the integration of slaves into the American society, she criticized American Colonization Society, which shipped free slaves back to Africa, namely to Liberia. She considered it as hypocrisy and exclusion of slaves from the society.

There will, in all human probability, never be any decrease in the black population of the United States. Here they are, and here they must remain, in very large numbers, do what we will. We may at once agree to live together in mutual goodwill, and perform a mutual use to each other, or we may go on, increasing tyranny on one side, and jealousy and revenge on the other, until the fearful elements complete their work of the destruction, and something better than this sinful republic rises on the ruins. Oh, how earnestly do I wish that we may choose the holier and safer path! (Child, 1833, p. 79)

Child emphasized the fact that slave States were willing to pay for the transportation of slaves because they wanted to get rid of coloured population. According to Child, neither the planters nor the Colonization Society had a right to remove people from the places, where they had a home, however miserable, and where their relatives lived. “Africa is no more their native country that England is ours”, says Child in her *Appeal*. (1833, p. 79)

4. THE ECONOMIC EFFECT OF SLAVERY

4.1 An economic phenomenon

There were two basic types of slavery through history. The most common was called a household, patriarchal or domestic slavery. The other type was a productive slavery used to produce marketable commodities in mines or on plantations. The presence of such crops and their profitability were among the main determinants whether a society became a slave society. In such a society, slavery replaced free labour, when it became cheaper. (Hellie, 2011)

Slavery is fundamentally an economic phenomenon. Throughout history, slavery has existed where it has been economically worthwhile to those in power. The principal example in modern times is the United States South. (Wahl, 2011)

Child criticized not only the treatment of slaves, but also the economic impact of slavery. She compared free labour to slave labour and insisted on ending slave trade. According to her, slavery was mainly a profitable branch of commerce. “The present economy of the slave system is to get all you can from the slave, and give in return as little as will barely support him in a working condition”, she wrote in her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*. (1836, p. 3) A slave could be fed and clothed at an expense about 20 dollars a year. (Wahl, 2011)

Concerning this, Child asks in her *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery*: “Will money or care be expended on the worn out human *machine*, when it can no longer be kept in such repair as to prove profitable to the owners?”(1835, p. 3) She continues, “The condition of the slave depends on the character of the master and that is entirely a matter of accident.” (1836, p. 25) In her *Anti-Slavery Catechism* Child also talks about slave trade:

The only way to stop the trade, is to shut up the market and this can be done only by the entire abolition of the system of slavery. When nobody will buy a man, nobody will be tempted to steal a man. Slavery never exists without having more or less of the slave-trade involved in it. (1836, p.12)

4.2 Work-gang system

Whereas people enslaved in the North usually worked as house servants or craftsmen, slaves in the South worked primarily in agriculture, on farms and plantations. (Wahl, 2011) These plantation slaves usually worked in gangs because he use of the gang system in agriculture contributed to profits. In the gang system, groups of slaves worked like machinery and performed simple tasks. They were supervised by a cruel overseer, as Child emphasizes in her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*:

He does not care how much the soil is exhausted, nor how much the negroes are broken down. If a slave says he is very ill, the overseer is unwilling to believe the story, because he is reluctant to lose a day's labor. If the poor creature droops under his allotted task, he must be stimulated by the whip, because the overseer cannot spare an hour of his exertions. (1836, p.10)

As Wahl says, the behaviour of former slaves after abolition clearly revealed how they valued their non-work time. Even the most benevolent former masters in the South found it impossible to entice their former slaves back into gang work, even with large wage premiums. (Wahl, 2011)

4.3 Slave trade

As Wahl says, slaves were often sold for profit. The prices of the slaves were determined by two economic factors, the characteristics of the slave and the condition of the market. Among the important individual features belonged age, sex, physical condition, temperament, skill level and childbearing capacity (for women). Fertile women were more expensive, because masters profited from reproduction as well as production. (Wahl, 2011) Beside these features, seasonal factors and demand were important. Prices of male and female slaves followed similar life-cycle patterns. The price rose through puberty, when productivity and experience increased. Girls cost more than boys up to their mid-teens, after that the genders switched places. After the peak age, prices declined slowly, and plummeted when the productivity decreased. In comparison with men, women cost 80-90 percent as much. (Wahl, 2011)

Skill, mental capabilities, physical traits and other qualities also determined a

slave's price. Skilled workers were sold for premiums of 40-55 percent whereas crippled or chronically ill slaves were sold for discounts. Slaves, who were troublesome, as runaways, thieves or drunks, were also sold for lower prices. Taller slaves cost more than the short ones. Light-skinned slave women were more popular as concubines and therefore were sold for a premium. (Wahl, 2011)

As Wahl says, prices fluctuated with market conditions. They climbed when the international slave trade was banned. Among those who supported closing of the trans-Atlantic slave trade were several Southern slaveholders, because the reduction in supply increased the prices of slaves already living in the United States, and therefore their wealth. (Wahl, 2011) In terms of this situation, Child openly criticized it in her *Appeal*:

I shall perhaps be asked why I have said so much about the slave-trade, since it was long ago abolished in this country? There are several good reasons for it. In the first place, it is a part of the system, for if there were no slaves, there could be no slave-trade, and while there are slaves, the slave-trade *will* continue. In the next place, the trade is still briskly carried on in Africa, and slaves are smuggled into these States through the Spanish colonies. In the third place, a very extensive internal slave-trade is carried on in this country. The breeding of negro-cattle for the foreign markets (of Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, and Missouri), is a very lucrative branch of business. Whole coffles of them, chained and manacled, are driven through our Capital on their way to auction. Foreigners, particularly those who come here with enthusiastic ideas of American freedom, are amazed and disgusted at the sight. (1833, p. 25)

As Wahl says, besides the factors already mentioned, slave prices were also determined by the demand for the commodities and services that slaves provided. Changes in slave occupations and goods produced by them created movements in slave prices. When slaves replaced expensive indentured servants, their prices increased. In period from 1748 to 1775, slave prices rose nearly by 30 percent. But, when cotton prices fell in the 1840s, slave prices fell too. However, the demand for cotton and tobacco grew about 1850 and slaves prices increased again. (Wahl, 2011)

About two-thirds of all slaves shipped from Africa ended up in sugar colonies. Sugar plantations belonged among world's largest and most profitable enterprises, paying about 10 percent of invested capital. (Wahl, 2011) In terms of growing sugar cane, Child says in her *Appeal*:

When there is a sudden rise in the prices of sugar, a certain amount of labor in a given time is of more consequence to the owner of a plantation than the price of

several slaves, he can well *afford* to waste a few lives. This is no idle hypothesis--such calculations are gravely and openly made by planters. Hence, it is the slave's prayer that sugar may be cheap. (1833, p. 24)

Supporters of slavery considered it profitable and stressed the fact that slave market and slave trade were similar to any other market or trade. On the other hand, many abolitionists argued that slavery was unprofitable and inefficient. As Wahl says:

This battle has largely been won by those who claim that New World slavery was profitable. Much like other businessmen, New World slaveholders responded to market signals -- adjusting crop mixes, reallocating slaves to more profitable tasks, hiring out idle slaves, and selling slaves for profit. (Wahl, 2011)

In terms of slave trade, investment in slaves offered a rate of return that was comparable to returns on other assets – about 10 percent. However, slaveholders were not the only ones to profit. “So did cotton consumers who enjoyed low prices and Northern businessmen who helped to finance plantation operations.” (Wahl, 2011) In connection with that, Child wrote in her *Appeal*:

The difficulty of subduing slavery, on account of the great number of interests which become united in it, and the prodigious strength of the selfish passions enlisted in its support, is by no means its least alarming feature. This Hydra has ten thousand heads, every one of which will bite or growl, when the broad daylight of truth lays open the secrets of its hideous den. (1833, p. 25)

Not only Child criticized this fact in her work. In his *Slavery* Channing says, “Good of the individual is more important than the outward prosperity of the state.” (1839, p.44) Furthermore, he continues, “As men, as Christians, as citizens, we have duties to the slave, as well as to every other member of the community...On this point we have no liberty.” (1839, p. 6)

4.4 Slave labour versus free labour

“They gain nothing more by working ten hours that they would by working one hour”, says Child about slaves in her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*. Child believed that slavery was unprofitable and ineffective. “Southerners often declare that it takes six slaves to do what is easily performed by half the number of free labourers”, she says in her *Anti-Slavery Catechism*. (1836, p.19) and supports her opinion by showing the

irrefutable facts and differences between slave labour and free labour in the *Appeal*:

The slave is bought, sometimes at a very high price; in free labor there is no such investment of capital. When the slave is ill, a physician must be paid by the owner; the free laborer defrays his own expenses. The children of the slave must be supported by his master; the free man maintains his own. The slave is to be taken care of in his old age, which his previous habits render peculiarly helpless; the free laborer is hired when he is wanted, and then returns to his home. The slave does not care how slowly or carelessly he works; it is the free man's interest to do his business well and quickly. The slave is indifferent how many tools he spoils; the free man has a motive to be careful. The slave's clothing is indeed very cheap, but it is of no consequence to him how fast it is destroyed--his master *must* keep him covered, and that is all he is likely to do; the hired laborer pays more for his garments, but makes them last three times as long. The free man will be honest for reputation's sake; but reputation will make the slave none the richer, nor invest him with any of the privileges of a human being--while his poverty and sense of wrong both urge him to steal from his master. A salary must be paid to an overseer to compel the slave to work; the free man is impelled by the desire of increasing the comforts of himself and his family. Two hired laborers will perform as much work as three slaves; by some it is supposed to be a more correct estimate that slaves perform only *half* as much labor as the same number of free laborers. Finally, *where* slaves are employed, manual industry is a degradation of white people, and indolence becomes the prevailing characteristic. (1833, p.50)

Child believed that the best labour is that, in which the labourer knows he can make profit, depending upon his diligence and can exchange his employer when treated badly for one who will estimate his service. "Whatever he earns is *his*, to be used as he wishes, for his wife and children or him. Then, he feels as a free agent, with his rights and privileges." (Child, 1833, p. 51) Moreover, she says: "Cash is more powerful incentive to labor than the Lash, and far saver also."(1860a, p. 26) Concerning free and unfree labour, Child mentions the speech made by Mr. Appleton in the winter 1832. According to her, this speech is "distinguished for its good temper and practical sense".

The experience of all ages and nations proves that high wages are the most powerful stimulus to exertion, and the best means of attaching the people to the institutions under which they live. It is apparent that this political effect upon the character of society cannot have any action upon slaves. Having no choice or volition, there is nothing for stimulus to act upon, they are in fact no part of society. So that, in the language of political economy, they are like machinery, merely capital, and the productions of their labor consists wholly of profits of capital. What is the *occupation* of the white population of the planting States? I am at a loss to know how this population is employed. We hear of no products of these States, but those produced by slave labor. (quoted in Child, 1833, p. 51)

“Wherever the option exists to employ, at an equal hire, free or slave labour, the former will be decidedly preferred...it is more capable, more diligent, more faithful, and in every aspect more worthy of confidence”, says Child in the *Appeal*.(1833, p. 51) As an example, Child talks about slaves in Jamaica. “As soon as the planters offered them *wages* for working extra hours, more work was offered than the planters were willing to pay for. Even a penny an hour operated like magic upon them, and inspired them to diligence”, she says in *The Evils of Slavery*. (1839, p.17) Moreover, in the *Appeal* Child explicitly specifies how the system of free labour could work:

Cattle are fixed capital, and so are slaves. But slaves differ from cattle on the one hand, in yielding a less return for their maintenance, and from free laborers on the other hand, in not being acted upon by the inducements which stimulate production as an effort of mind as well as body. In all three cases the labor is purchased. In free laborers and cattle, all the faculties work together, and to advantage, in the slave they are opposed, and therefore he is, so far as the amount of labor is concerned, the least valuable of the three...Our true policy would be to divide the work of the slave between the ox and the hired laborer, we should get more out of the sinews of the one and the soul of the other, than the produce of double the number of slaves. (1833, pp. 53-54)

Another fact is that according to Child, slavery was especially inconsistent with the moral principles of the Union. Whenever free labour and slave labour exist under the same government, there must be “a perpetual clashing of interests.” As Child says, “the legislation required for one, is, in its spirit and maxims, diametrically opposed to that required for the other.” She believed that the force of laws was weakened by the nature of this “unholy relation” because where the knowledge and freedom are of one side, and ignorance and servitude on the other, subterfuges are frequent. (1833, p. 47)

But so long as the South insist that slavery is *unavoidable*, and say they will not tolerate any schemes *tending* to its abolition, and so long as the North take the *necessity* of slavery for an unalterable truth, and puts down any discussions, however mild and candid, which tend to show that it *may* be done away with safety, so long as we thus strengthen each other’s hands in evil, what remote hope is there of emancipation?...to enlighten public opinion is the best way that has yet been discovered for the removal of national evils, and slavery is certainly a *national* evil. (1833, p. 77)

Supporters of slavery often claimed that white men could not work in the sultry climate of most southern States and therefore slaves were needed. But Child comments on this argument, “This is a good reason for not sending the slaves out of the country,

but no argument for making them free. No doubt we do need their labor, but we ought to pay for it.” (1833, p. 62) To support her opinion, in *The evils of slavery*, Child mentions Mr. Faulkner’s Speech in the Legislature of Virginia, 1832:

Slavery, it is admitted, is an evil. It is an institution which presses heavily against the best interests of the state. It banishes free white labor-it exterminates the mechanic-the artisan-the manufacturer. It converts the energy of a community into indolence-its power into imbecility-its efficiency into weakness. Being thus injurious, have we not a right to demand its extermination? Shall society suffer that the slaveholder may continue to gather his *vigintial crop* of human flesh? What is his mere pecuniary claim, compared with the great interests of the common weal? Must the country languish and die that the slave-holder may flourish? Shall all interests be subservient to one? Have not the middle classes their rights-rights incompatible with the existence of slavery? (quoted in Child, 1839, p. 8)

5. CHILD'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH GOVERNOR WISE AND MRS. MASON, OF VIRGINIA

5.1 Governor Henry A. Wise

As it was mentioned before, Child corresponded with the governor of Virginia, Henry A. Wise. Their correspondence was concerned with John Brown, a radical abolitionist, who was jailed after the Raid on Harpers Ferry and sentenced to death. While he was staying in the jail, Child wrote several letters to governor Wise. In the letter of October 26, 1859 she asks governor if she could visit John Brown in the jail. As she says, "He needs a mother or sister to dress his wounds, and speak soothingly to him. Will you allow me to perform that mission of humanity?" (Child, 1860a, p. 3) Consequently, in the letter of October 29, 1859 Governor Wise replied:

By this, of course, you mean to be allowed to visit him in his cell, and to minister him in the offices of humanity. Why should you not be so allowed, Madam? Virginia and Massachusetts are involved in no civil war, and the Constitution which unites them in one confederacy guarantees to you privileges and immunities of a citizen of the United States in the State of Virginia. That Constitution I am sworn to support, and am, therefore, bound to protect your privileges and immunities as a citizen of Massachusetts coming into Virginia for any lawful and peaceful purpose. (1860a, pp. 4-5)

In the reply to his letter, Child notices the very formal tone of Wise's letter. Moreover, in this letter she criticizes slave states, including Virginia. According to her, these states, in their desperate efforts to sustain a bad and dangerous institution of slavery, encroached more and more in the liberty of free states. As she says, "Our inherent love of law and order, and our superstitious attachment to the Union, you have mistaken for cowardice, and rarely you let slip any opportunity to add insult to aggression." She continued in her criticism: "Slavery is, in fact, infringement of all law, and adheres to no law, save for its own purposes of oppression." (1860a, pp. 7-9) In addition to that, she wrote to Governor:

Slave States had always managed to hold in their hands the political power of the Union, and that while they constituted only one-third of the white population of these States, they held more than two-thirds of all the lucrative, and once honorable offices; an indignity to which none but a subjugated people had ever before submitted. (1860a, p. 10)

As Child wanted to visit John Brown in the jail, she wrote a letter to him and enclosed it to the letter for Governor Wise. In the letter, Child emphasizes the fact that she cannot sympathize with Brown's methods, but she admires his moral and physical courage. In terms of Bleeding Kansas, she says, "Circumstances made that territory the battle-ground between the antagonistic principles of slavery and freedom." (1860a, p. 14) In the reply to her letter, Brown expressed anxiety about her visit in his jail. "I should certainly be greatly pleased to become personally acquainted with one so gifted and so kind, but I cannot avoid seeing some objections to it, under present circumstances", he wrote. (1860a, p. 15)

5.2 Mrs. Mason

As a reaction to these letters, Child obtained the letter from Mrs. Mason, a wife of the author of the Fugitive Slave Law. In this letter from November 11, 1859, Mason criticizes Child's attitude towards John Brown. Moreover, according to her, Child's anti-slavery opinions are too enthusiastic and unrealistic. At the end of her letter Mrs. Mason wrote:

In conclusion, no Southerner ought, after your letter to Governor Wise and to Brown, to read a line of your composition, or to touch a magazine which bears your name in its lists of contributors, and in this we hope for the "sympathy", at least of those at the North who deserve the name of woman. (1860a, pp. 17-18)

After receiving the letter, Child immediately answered: "Men however great they may be, are of small consequence in comparison with principles, and the principle for which John Brown died it the question at issue between us." (1860a, p. 18) Furthermore, Child also comments on Mason's criticism:

The abolitionists are not such an ignorant set of fanatics as you suppose. They *know* whereof they affirm. They are familiar with the laws of the Slave States, which are alone sufficient to inspire abhorrence in any humane heart or reflecting mind not perverted by the prejudices of education and custom. (1860a, p. 19)

As an example, she talks about the rule by which "the child follows the condition of its *mother*". She noticed that among slaves there were many mixed-race children, who were yellow or brown. As she says, "this could not be unless their fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers had been white men". By saying this, she pointed

out sexual abuse of slave women. “The sale of one’s own children, brothers, or sisters, has an ugly aspect to those who are accustomed to it, and obviously, it cannot have a good moral influence, that law and custom should render licentiousness a *profitable* vice.”(1860a, p. 20)

Beside this, Child mentions that slaves were not allowed to witness against white men under any circumstances. In her letter, she stressed the actual impact of this law. “Any drunken master, overseer, or patrol, may go into the negro cabins, and commit what outrages he pleases, with perfect impunity, if no white person is present who chooses to witness against him.”(1860a, p. 20) In addition, she continues by criticizing other laws used in slave states:

Your laws uniformly declare that “a slave shall be deemed a chattel personal in the hands of his owner, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever.” This, of course, involves the rights to sell his children, as if they were pigs; also, to take his wife from him “for any intent or purpose whatsoever.” Your laws also make it death for him to resist a white man, however brutally he may be treated, or however much his family may be outraged before his eyes. If he attempts to run away, your laws allow any man to shoot him. By your laws all a slave’s earnings belong to his master. He can neither receive donations nor transmit property. If his master allows him some hours to work for himself, and by great energy and perseverance he earns enough to buy his own bones and sinews, his master may make him pay two or three times over, and he has no redress. Three such cases have come within my own knowledge. Even a written promise from his master has no legal value, because a slave can make no contracts. (1860a, p. 21)

“It cannot be said that the anti-slavery agitation produced such laws”, says Child in her letter. “They are the *necessities* of the system, which can be sustained only by perpetual outrages”. As the examples she uses advertisements concerning runaway slaves published in southern newspapers. When describing slave’s appearance, their masters used terms such as “a good many teeth missing, and the letter A branded on her cheek and forehead”; “his left eye cut out, scars from a dirk on his left arm, and much scarred with the whip”; “ears cut off”; “jaws broken”; “scarred by rifle-balls” etc. (1860a, p. 22) As Child says, “cruelty is the rule, and kindness is the exception”. She also stresses the fact, that planters usually avoid punishing their slaves in front of strangers. “Kind masters and mistresses among you are merely lucky accidents. If any one *chooses* to be a brutal despot, your laws and customs give him complete power to do so.”(1860a, pp. 26-7) Last, but not least, Child comments on Mason’s criticism of her writings:

Twenty years ago, I published a book called “An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans”. It influenced the minds of several young men, afterward conspicuous in public life, through whose agency the cause was better served than it could have been by me. From that time to this, I have labored too earnestly for the slave to be agreeable to slaveholders. Literary popularity was never a paramount object with me, even in my youth, and, now that I am old, I am utterly indifferent to it. (1860a, p. 27)

6. CONCLUSION

The object of the research was Maria Lydia Child and her anti-slavery opinions expressed in her work and activities. In the first chapter the history of slavery in the United States of America was described briefly. There were also the definitions of slavery and abolitionism mentioned. Moreover, Maria Lydia Child was introduced and her life briefly talked about.

The second chapter illustrated Child's attitude to various aspects of slavery as she expressed them in her work. In her writings she criticized the system of slavery which deprived slaves of their personal liberty, their rights, family or education. She also emphasized the effect of slave codes and laws applied in the South. Moreover, she stressed the moral impact of slavery on people living in the United States.

The third chapter dealt with the economic effect of slavery. Work-gang system was described there and slave trade and factors determining slave's price were demonstrated. Besides these, this chapter contained Child's opinions concerning the relationship between the North and the South of the United States and the difficulty of keeping them together. Moreover, slave labour and free labour with their characteristics were described and the differences between them stressed.

The fourth chapter was devoted to Child's correspondence with Henry A. Wise, the Governor of Virginia; John Brown and also with Mrs. Mason, of Virginia. In these letters, Child expressed her anti-slavery feelings and emphasized the impact of southern laws, which greatly discriminated slaves.

To conclude, Maria Lydia Child knew how to use powerful words in right time. She was not afraid to speak concretely and to show real events and facts when describing the horrors of slavery. She made a comprehensive research in this topic and was well informed in terms of legislation of slaveholding states. Therefore, she showed the real, horrible effect of such laws on the lives of slaves.

She emphasized discrimination of slaves in various aspects of their lives and proposed the change of legislation in slave states as well as the change in people's minds. Child considered black people as equal and insisted on removing the old prejudices towards them. She argued that slaves should be manumitted and accepted as

full members of the society. Furthermore, she suggested paying slaves for their labour. Last, but not least, Child criticized the moral impact of slavery on the people involved in it. In addition, she stressed the fact that slavery was incompatible with democratic ideals of the United States of America.

For most of her life Child made her best to abolish slavery and make slaves free. Thanks to her anti-slavery writings and the constant struggle for human rights she undoubtedly contributed to the abolitionist cause. Concerning her anti-slavery feelings, she made this impressive statement: “The sun of knowledge and liberty is already high in the heavens—it is peeping into every dark nook and corner of the earth—and the African cannot be always excluded from its beams.”(1833, p. 65)

RESUMÉ

Tato bakalářská práce zpracovává postoj Marie Lydie Childové k otázce otroctví ve Spojených státech amerických. Zabývá se především jejími proti-otrokářskými názory, které vyjadřovala jak ve svých literárních dílech, tak i svými společenskými aktivitami. Práce je založena především na dílech *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*; *Anti-Slavery Catechism*; *The evils of slavery and the cure of slavery*; *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery* a příslušné sekundární literatuře.

Maria Lydia Francis Childová (1802-1880), americká spisovatelka a novinářka, se narodila ve městě Medford amerického státu Massachussets, jako nejmladší ze šesti dětí oblíbeného místního pekaře. Když jí bylo dvanáct let, její matka zemřela. Po této události žila několik let u své starší vdané sestry. Jejím skutečným vzorem byl však její bratr Convers, absolvent Harvardu, unitářský ministr a později i vysokoškolský profesor. Maria se nastěhovala do bratrova domu, k němu a jeho manželce. Byl to právě on, kdo ji přivedl k psaní.

Svoji první knihu nazvanou *Hobomok* napsala Maria během šesti týdnů. Tato kniha se zabývala v té době odvážným tématem, vztahem bělošské ženy s Indiánem. V následujících letech vydala několik knih, například příručku *The Frugal Housewife*, určenou obyčejným ženám v domácnosti, které nemají služebnictvo a o domácnost pečují samy. V této příručce byly různé ekonomické tipy a rady. Mezi její další knihy patřily historické romány, biografie významných ženských osobností, knihy o Indiánech a dětská literatura. Prostřednictvím svých knih Maria hájila práva žen, Indiánů a otroků. Všechny tyto skupiny považovala za utlačované zbytkem společnosti. Mimoto v roce 1826 založila první časopis pro děti ve Spojených Státech, jménem *Juvenile Miscellany*, který vedla osm let.

V roce 1828 se Maria provdala za právníka Davida Lee Childa. Tento absolvent Harvardu, editor a vydavatel novin *Massachussets Journal*, byl velmi politicky aktivní. Maria začala psát pro jeho noviny, a zajímat se o problematiku otroctví. Stejně jako její manžel se zapojila do proti-otrokářského hnutí. V roce 1833 vydala knihu *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, ve které otevřeně kritizovala otroctví a požadovala jeho zrušení. Byla to vůbec první kniha tohoto druhu v Americe. Vzbudila

intenzivní reakci společnosti, která bohužel vedla ke krachu dětského časopisu *Juvenile Miscellany*. Později Maria vydala další proti-otrokářská díla a psala také pro proti-otrokářské noviny *Liberty Bell* a *National Anti-Slavery Standard*. Stala se rovněž členkou organizace „American Anti-Slavery Society“, která bojovala proti otroctví. Po většinu svého života se Maria snažila o zrušení tohoto systému. Z tohoto důvodu si také korespondovala s významnými osobnostmi, například guvernérem státu Virginia nebo Johnem Brownem. V roce 1861 pomohla bývalé otrokyni Harriet Jacobs vydat autobiografii s názvem *Incidents in the Life of a Slave-Girl* pod pseudonymem „Linda Brent“. Maria Lydia Childová zemřela v roce 1880, ve městě Wayland, státu Massachusetts. Během svého života vytvořila mnoho různorodých děl, od dětské literatury po díla politická.

Tato práce se věnuje zejména jejím proti-otrokářským dílům. První kapitola této práce popisuje, co je to otroctví a proti-otrokářské hnutí. Dále se věnuje vývoji otroctví v Americe a rovněž životu Childové. Otroctví v Americe začalo roku 1619, kdy byli přivezeni první otroci do města Jamestown, ve Virginii. Tento systém trval až do roku 1865, kdy byl zrušen prostřednictvím dodatku k ústavě Spojených států amerických.

Ve druhé kapitole práce jsou analyzována zásadní proti-otrokářská díla Marie Lydie Childové. Jedná se o díla *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, dále *Anti-Slavery Catechism; The evils of slavery and the cure of slavery* a *Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery*. V nich se Childová věnuje různým aspektům života otroků a rovněž ekonomickému systému otroctví. Otroci byli dováženi na lodích z Afriky. Childová poukazuje na hrůzy dlouhé cesty z Afriky do Ameriky, nazvané *The Middle Passage*. Tato plavba trvala několik týdnů až měsíců. S otroky bylo zacházeno jako se zbožím. Během plavby trpěli velkou žízní a nedostatkem prostoru. Protože jich v podpalubí byly stovky, nemohli se téměř vůbec hýbat nebo změnit svou polohu. Protože otroci na lodi patřili různým majitelům, k jejich rozlišení sloužila značka, jež jim byla vypálena do kůže. Když konečně dorazili do Ameriky, byli prodáváni na aukcích společně s dobyt看em. Jejich nový majitel si je odvezl do svého domu a pro otroky začalo období adaptace na nové podmínky. Někteří z nich podlehl nemocem Nového Světa, jiní přežili a stali se tak efektivními pracovníky. Otroci byli bráni jako majetek a neměli téměř žádná práva. Nemohli uzavírat žádné smlouvy, nebo vlastnit

majetek. Vše, co jim patřilo, připadlo otrokáři a to včetně jejich dětí. Pokud se otrokyni narodilo dítě, získalo stejné postavení jako ona, bez ohledu na to, kdo byl jeho otec. Otrokyňe byly často sexuálně zneužívány samotnými otrokáři, nebo jinými bělochy. Následkem toho se rodily děti se smíšenou pletí. Otrokáři své potomky zpravidla neuznávali a snažili se je prodat co nejdříve. Manželství otroků nebylo právoplatné, a proto mohl být kterýkoli člen rodiny kdykoliv prodán jinému majiteli, nebo zapůjčen na vzdálenou plantáž a podobně.

Dalším důležitým faktorem v životě otroků byl zákaz jejich vzdělávání. Účelem tohoto zákazu bylo podpořit systém otroctví. Fakt, že otroci byli negramotní, dával jejich majitelům významnou převahu. Pokud se otrok pokusil naučit číst nebo psát, byl za to krutě potrestán. To samé platilo i pro osobu, která mu v tom pomáhala. Otroci byli všeobecně považováni za hloupé, nesamostatné osoby, plně závislé na svém majiteli. Jak říká Childová, bylo to tak především proto, že sami otrokáři tuto představu vědomě vytvářeli a podporovali.

Od otroků byla vyžadována absolutní poslušnost jejich majiteli i celé jeho rodině. Pokud neuposlechli, byli krutě potrestáni. Otroci byli trestáni různými metodami a předměty, včetně zbraní a nožů. Nejčastější ale bylo bičování. V některých případech byl trest natolik tvrdý, že otrok jeho následkem zemřel. Dozorci, kteří dohlíželi na práci otroků, byli zpravidla nelítostní a suroví. Nejenom, že otroky bičovali, ale občas jim také do otevřených ran sypali pepř. Proti takovému zacházení se otroci nemohli nijak bránit, protože zákon jim neumožňoval svědčit proti bělochovi za žádných okolností. Jak správně Childová podotýká, i v případě, že by stovka otroků viděla týrání nebo vraždu jednoho z nich, nemohli to vůbec nijak dokázat. Díky tomuto zákonu otrokářům a dozorcům jejich nelidské chování bez problémů procházelo.

Dalším příkladem diskriminace bylo, že každý černocho byl automaticky považován za otroka, pokud neprokázal opak. Někteří černoši byli propuštěni svým majitelem na svobodu nebo se dokázali z otroctví vykoupit. Nicméně, pokud tuto skutečnost neprokázali příslušným dokumentem, kterým byl „Certifikát svobody“, mohli být znovu zotročeni. Jak již bylo řečeno, žádný otrok nemohl svědčit proti bělochovi a tudíž dosvědčit tuto skutečnost.

Třetí kapitola práce se věnuje především ekonomickému významu otroctví. Otroci pracovali buď jako sluhové v domácnostech, nebo na plantážích, kde pěstovali prodejné zboží, jako byla bavlna, rýže, cukrová třtina, tabák apod.. Na velkých plantážích amerického Jihu se půda obdělávala pomocí systému pracovních skupin. Skupinka otroků sehraně prováděla jednoduché úkoly pod vedením dozorce. Jak již bylo řečeno, ten býval často krutý a otroky mrskal bičem, aby udržel pracovní tempo.

Kromě výnosů z prodeje vypěstovaného zboží otrokáři vydělávali i na samotném obchodu s otroky. Jejich ceny se odvíjely od stavu trhu a charakteristiky otroka. Mezi důležité prvky patřil věk, pohlaví, fyzická kondice, temperament, šikovnost, apod. Důležitým faktorem u žen byla schopnost porodit děti, plodné ženy byly dražší. Otroci mající nějaké specifické dovednosti byli rovněž za příplatek. Ceny otroků se odvíjely i od ročního období.

Cena otroka se během jeho života vyvíjela a měnila. Zvýšila se v pubertě, a vrcholu dosáhla okolo 20 let života. Po dosažení maxima postupně klesala, a prudce se snížila, když otrok zestárl a snížila se jeho schopnost pracovat. V porovnání s muži byly ženy o 10-20 procent levnější. Zdraví a zruční jedinci byli dražší, kdežto nemocní nebo postižení se prodávali se slevou. Otroci, kteří byli problémoví, měli sklony k alkoholismu, kriminalitě nebo útekům, byli taktéž levnější. Také barva pleti byla důležitá. Zejména dívky se světlejší pletí byly oblíbené jako konkubíny.

Ačkoli transatlantický obchod s otroky byl ve Spojených Státech zakázán v roce 1808, i nadále probíhal velmi živý vnitrostátní obchod. Tuto skutečnost Childová ve svém díle zdůrazňovala a otevřeně kritizovala. Byla si vědoma, že na tomto obchodu mělo zájem mnoho lidí, včetně politiků. Jakožto křesťanka poukazovala na špatné vlastnosti obchodníků s otroky, jako byly sobeckost, hamižnost a bezohlednost. Ty považovala za neslučitelné nejen s křesťanstvím, ale i demokratickými a morálními principy Spojených států amerických.

Childová dále věřila, že otroctví brzdí a ohrožuje ekonomiku otrokářských států. Považovala jej za neefektivní systém, který potřebuje dvakrát tolik otroků na práci, která by mohla být provedena polovičním počtem placených pracovníků. Dle jejího názoru neměli otroci žádnou motivaci udělat svou práci dobře, protože jim to nepřinášelo žádný zisk, ani zlepšení jejich nesvobodného postavení. V případě

svobodného, placeného pracovníka bylo v jeho zájmu, aby odvedl dobrý výkon, protože byl motivován možným ziskem. Na tuto skutečnost ve svém díle často upozorňovala. Požadovala okamžité zrušení otroctví a navrhovala, aby plantážníci černochoům za práci platili. V této souvislosti si všímala rozdílů mezi svobodným Severem a otrokářským Jihem. Systém otroctví podle ní ohrožoval stabilitu Spojených Států, kvůli zcela rozdílným zájmům Severu a Jihu. Tato skutečnost se později potvrdila vypuknutím Občanské války (1861-1865).

Čtvrtá kapitola práce je věnována korespondenci Childové, kterou vedla s guvernérem státu Virginia, Henry A. Wisem. Dále se kapitola věnuje její korespondenci s Johnem Brownem a rovněž s paní Masonovou, manželkou autora zákona „Fugitive Slave Act“. V těchto dopisech Childová kritizuje otrokářské státy, jejich zákony a otroctví celkově.

Názory Marie Lydie Childové byly bezesporu na svou dobu velmi odvážné, ale také pravdivé. Své postoje a názory dokázala velmi dobře doložit faktickými údaji, což činí její dílo důvěryhodným. Svým upřímným bojem proti tomuto zvrácenému systému a neutuchající vírou ve svobodu nepochybně velmi přispěla k proti-otrokářskému hnutí a zrušení otroctví.

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APPENDIX

The photograph of Maria Lydia Child



Source: http://afflictor.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Lydia_Maria_Child-18701.jpg

