**Slave Labour During the Religious Wars:**

In Europe, the bubonic plague, famines, and other epidemics created a severe shortage of agricultural workers, thus encouraging Italian merchants to buy slaves from the Balkans (area north of and including Greece) despite the threat of excommunication (this stopped when the Ottomans captured Constantinople and halted the flow of White Slaves) An increase in the demand for sugar led to an increase in the demand for sub-Saharan African slavery (Black Africans) which was further enhanced when it was discovered that American Indians died so easily in their forced conditions (a Spanish missionary, Bartolome Las Casas, encouraged Charles V to use blacks because he thought blacks would survive better).

The slave trade was taken up by Portugal, the Netherlands, England, and Spain. To the Europeans, Black Africans were seen as barbarians and heathens, an idea that was reinforced from the Arab world, which looked on these people through an attitude of physical repulsiveness, mental inferiority, and primitivism. Advocates of this view pointed out that there were no sciences or stable states to be found in sub-Saharan Africa and thus the people there were best suited to slavery.

