

Transatlantic Slavery and the Underdevelopment of Africa

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Introduction

"In everlasting memory of the anguish of our ancestors. May those who died rest in peace. May those who return find their roots. May humanity never perpetuate such injustice against humanity. We, the living, vow to uphold this."

(Plaque at the Cape Coast Castle)

In 1452, when Pope Nicholas V issued the papal bull (special letters or chapters issued by the pope) *Dum diversas*, which gave the king of Portugal the right to reduce any "Saracens, pagans and any other unbelievers" to perpetual slavery, the fate of Africans was sealed. This document, *Dum diversas*, provided the legal and divine legitimacy for the enslavement and the colonization of Africans. In 1455, *Romanus Pontifex*, another papal bull was issued, which reaffirmed the domination of the world by Europe. These documents and the actions that followed provided the pretext for the conquest, colonization, and the genesis of the peculiar institution called slavery. The European expansionist adventures in Africa completely altered the course of Africa's evolutionary processes through the destruction of indigenous knowledge systems and robbed the continent of the manpower resources needed for its development.

The dawn of European modernity was, in fact, the beginning of Africa's destruction. Europe, in the early fifteenth century, was recovering from the Middle Ages and the Crusades, so with improved maritime technological advancements, Europeans embarked on expeditions in search of food and conquest of new lands (John Henrik Clarke, 1998). As Europe was experiencing a period of Enlightenment, otherwise known as the Age of Reason (1685–1815), Africa was under the carnage of the European savagery of slavery. As a result, unlike the other continents, Africa underwent an unexpected period of stagnation in population growth and advancement. The decimation of Africa's population interrupted its growth and the capacity to advance its political, social, and economic institutions, leading to underdevelopment.

This chapter explores the destructive encounter between Africa and Europe through the often-called "peculiar institution" of slavery and how that led to the underdevelopment of the continent of Africa. For over 400 years, starting from the fifteenth century, millions of Africans were forcibly uprooted from their communities, shackled and shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas under some of the most unimaginable inhuman conditions. African civilizations were destroyed in the process, and Europeans imposed their Christendom cosmology and epistemologies. This disruption of Africa's natural evolutionary process through enslavement caused, in the words of known historian Walter Rodney "These people [Africans] to tame and harness nature—a battle which is at the basis of development." Africa was not a blank slate as Europeans have long claimed. Dr. J. B. Danquah in his book, *United West Africa (Africa) at the Bar of the Family of Nations*, wrote:

By the time Alexander the Great was sweeping the civilized world with conquest after conquest from Chaerona to Gaza from Babylon to Cabul: by the time this first of the Aryan conquerors was learning the rudiments of war and government at the feet of philosophic Aristotle; and by the time the first Athens was laying down the foundations of modern European civilization, the earliest and the greatest Ethiopian culture had already flourished and dominated the civilized world for over four centuries and a half. Imperial Ethiopia had conquered Egypt and founded the XXV Dynasty, and for a century and half the central seat of civilization in the known world was held by the ancestors of the modern negro, maintaining and defending it against the Assyrian and Persian Empires of the East ... Rome was nowhere to be seen on the map, and sixteen centuries were to pass before Charlemagne would rule in Europe.

Europeans discounted the rich civilizations and cultures of Africa, and pursued an expansionist ideology, which was founded on racial superiority, designed to dominate and destroy its pristine culture through the slave trade and colonization. As Adu Boahen wrote in 1971:

On the balance then, politically, economically, and socially, the European presence and activities in Africa during the second period were virtually unmitigated disaster for the Africans. By 1700 all the great hopes that had been conjured up during the earlier phase of exploration had turned sour. ... By 1700 Europe had leaped forward technologically and socially but Africa and its Black people had become paralyzed and impoverished, a tragedy from which they still have not recovered.

While the literature and the commentary about the slave trade abounds, its lingering effects often get marred in historical revisionism. This chapter discusses some of the historical underpinnings of the slave trade and explores the effect that still reverberates in Africa and its peoples. Specifically, the chapter is divided into three segments: (1) the underlying factors of the transatlantic slave trade; (2) the nature of the transatlantic slave trade; and (3) the effects of the transatlantic slave trade on the development of Africa.

Major terms and concepts: slave trade, transatlantic, Middle Passage, triangle slave trade, underdevelopment, epistemology, New World, Amerindians, Indentured servants, epistemicide, internal slavery.

Underlying Actors of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

The Portuguese were the first to traverse the Atlantic coast of Africa in search of new trading routes and goods. Armed with the divine mandate of the papal bulls, *Dum diversas* and *Romanus Pontifex*, for a long time the Portuguese dominated the West African coastline. By 1460, the Portuguese had reached Sierra Leone, and the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana) by 1471. They named the place Gold Coast because of the abundance of gold in the area. By 1472, Portuguese sailors and adventurers working for the monarchy had landed on the islands of Fernando Po and Sao Tome. However, only in 1475 did they achieve a major maritime milestone when they crossed the Equator. By 1488, Bartolomeu Dias had sailed to the southern tip of Africa, naming it the Cape of Good Hope. Subsequently, in 1498, Portuguese sailor Vasco da Gama was the first to sail through the Cape of Good Hope, and with the help of some Africans, reached the shores of Calicut in southwestern India. This was significant in two ways. First, Europe now had unlimited access to the mineral-rich African societies, and second, had broken the Arabs' monopoly on the trans-Saharan trade, which granted Europeans access to goods from the Far East. This was particularly critical because Europeans wanted to avoid the payment of import duties and other levies to Arab middlemen. Additionally, Europe's land access to the Far East was limited when the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople, which brought an end to the Byzantine Empire in 1453.

On the other side of the global divide were the Spaniards, who embarked on a similar mission to find an alternate route to the Far East. Their argument was that, if the world was indeed round, then they could sail westward to India. Christopher Columbus, an Italian sailor, who had failed to convince King John II of Portugal to fund his voyage, turned to the Spanish monarchy, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who agreed to finance his expedition. Thus, on August 3, 1492, Columbus and his crew embarked on an epic voyage from Palos, Spain, with three ships, *Santa Maria*, *Pinta* and *Nina*. A month later, Columbus and his crew arrived at the Bahamas and thought they had reached mainland China. In December 1492, they disembarked in Cuba and Hispaniola (Haiti) and mistakenly identified the islands as Japan.

Columbus was followed by Amerigo Vespucci, another Italian explorer, who was believed to have reached parts of South America. The "New World" was named America in honor of Vespucci. As adventurous as these colonists were, none of their expeditions landed them in the Far East. In 1513, Vasco Núñez de Balboa was the first European explorer to cross the Isthmus of Panama and reach the Pacific Ocean. In his expedition were 30 Africans who helped clear the roads across the isthmus (John Henrik Clarke, 1998). These new expeditionary findings challenged Columbus' as-

sertions that he had reached part of India, but indeed, the so-called "New World" was a part of a different continent.

It is also important to point out here that Europeans were not the first and certainly not the only people to have sent expeditions across the Atlantic Ocean to the "New World." In his book, *They Came Before Columbus*, Guyanese scholar Ivan van Sertima maintains that Africans had been traversing the Atlantic Ocean long before Columbus. He postulated that:

They were from 'warm countries.' They were 'those who return.' They were often extremely black men who used to trade numerous objects. This was how the Indians used to describe the Mandingos whose one trader caste luxuriously dressed ended up becoming the supplier to the south and Central America's markets 80 years before Christopher Columbus arrived. Those traders contributed to build temples in America, married native women, brought a contribution to the rise of the Aztec civilization. They enriched the Native American spirituality, which roots are essentially of African, and introduced by the first black inhabitants of America.

According to John Henrik Clarke, the first Africans who made it to the New World were not enslaved, they were free people. Furthermore, Clarke maintains that Africans participated in expeditions with the Spanish. These early Africans to the New World brought with them skills such as iron smithing, leather work knowledge and production, and carpentry.

The discovery of new lands meant new opportunities for commerce and industry. Sugar by now had become an important commodity. With the restricted access to goods, including sugar, as a result of the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire, finding alternative trading opportunities had become imperative. Thus, by the latter part of the fifteenth century, Europeans had commandeered lands in the Caribbean and the Americas. The Portuguese had occupied Brazil and the Spaniards Hispaniola. The new lands provided the Europeans the perfect conditions for setting up sugarcane plantations, the raw material for the production of sugar, and other crops including cotton and tobacco. Soon, however, they realized that the plantations required massive amounts of labor. Immediately available at the time were the Amerindians and indentured servants from Europe.

Unfortunately for the conquistadores and the traders in slaves, the Amerindians were not a very consistent labor source due to the high levels of mortality resulting from the harsh working conditions and diseases that may have been brought to the area by the Europeans. The diseases included yellow fever, smallpox, influenza, bubonic plague, pneumonic plague, and malaria. These newly introduced diseases, coupled with conflicts with the Europeans, drastically reduced the Amerindian populations. Indeed, some scholars have characterized the causes and effects of the decimation of the Amerindian population as genocide. Equally challenging were the conditions faced by the European indentured servants. Due to their unfamiliarity with the weather conditions of the tropical environment, they were also plagued with

high mortality rates. Thus, replacing the Amerindians with the indentured servants from Europe was not a prudent economic option.

The success of a European economic enterprise in the New World was predicated on access to cheap labor, and since the Amerindians and the indentured servants had proven to be unreliable labor sources, the newcomers had to devise alternate sources. With the critical demand for labor, Africa became the choice for filling the labor needs. From their experience from the enslavement of a few Africans in the Canary Islands, Madeira, and Sao Tome, the Portuguese perceived the Africans as being stronger, more adaptable to the tropical weather conditions, and less susceptible to the debilitating diseases that had decimated the Amerindian population. The decision to use Africans to fulfill the labor needs of European plantations in the New World proved to be the fatal transformation that changed the development trajectory of Africa, as shown below.

By 1441, the first African captives, numbering 235, were taken directly to Portugal. The first known slave market, *Mercado de Escravos*, was established in Lagos, on the Algarve, Portugal's southernmost province. The enslaved Africans arrived to an audience that included Henry the Navigator, who believed that he and the Portuguese monarchy were saving their souls. As a result, by 1450, the Portuguese were well established in the importation of Africans and had secured licenses from the Spanish authorities to supply African captives to the Spanish colonies. Around 1520, they shipped about 250 Africans directly from Lagos, Algarve, Portugal, to Santo Domingo in the New World. This experimentation with African captives as labor replacement worked. This new development, coupled with advances in maritime technology, gave the Portuguese an advantage in the shipment of Africans to be enslaved, and set the stage for what John Henrik Clarke refers to as the "African Holocaust." The Portuguese held on to this monopoly of trading in Africans till about the 1600s, when other Europeans joined in. The initial numbers of Africans sold and enslaved by the Portuguese were small. For instance, between 1450 and 1500, the number of Africans imported by the Portuguese ranged between 500 and 1,000 a year. However, the numbers grew exponentially when other Europeans, including the Dutch, the English, the French, the Spanish, the Danes, and the Swedes, started dealing in Africans as commodities. They built castles and forts all along the African coast, which served as enclaves for protecting themselves from each other and for holding African captives.

Slavery and the Dynamics of Internal African "Slavery"

Slavery is the condition in which a human being owns another human being, considered property, and stripped of all rights as other free peoples. As property, slaves were considered to be chattel, which meant they could be bought and sold at will. For over four centuries, the relationship between Africans and Europeans was built on the foundation of total subjugation of Africans by the Europeans. However,

Africans were not slaves until they were shipped to other parts of the world controlled by Europeans. According to Walter Rodney (1972), all shipments of Africans were to markets controlled by Europeans for the benefit of European capitalism. Since Africans were not born slaves, but free people, we will refer to captive Africans as enslaved and not slaves. With respect to Africans enslaved by Europeans, slavery made them mere objects deprived of their humanity and subjected to some of the most despicable and inhuman treatment ever recorded in human history.

The concept of slavery is as old as the history of humankind. Some form of slavery had always existed in most modern human societies. One of the earliest references to slavery can be found in the Laws of Hammurabi, which codified Babylonian life c. 1750 BC. With three classifications of social statuses, the enslaved were the third category. An enslaved person in Babylon could own property and even marry. Indeed, in the case where an enslaved male married a free woman, the child born to the union was free.

Greek city states, such as Sparta and Athens, also depended largely on forced labor. The helots, for instance, were state owned serfs. They came under the rule of Sparta when their land was conquered. As such, they were confined to servitude, enjoying only limited rights: They could neither be freed nor be sold. They simply worked for their Spartan masters. However, helots could own some limited property. Athens also practiced slavery, and most of the enslaved persons worked in the mines under very tedious conditions and had no rights.

Some form of slavery was also practiced in Africa. In North Africa, for instance, slavery was common along the Sahara Desert and in the Sahel, or the fringes of the desert. Similarly, slavery was practiced around Western Sahara, Algeria, and Morocco, as well as among the Berbers. The Tuaregs, who inhabited south of the Sahara, also engaged in slavery. The Egyptians, the Ethiopians, the Somali, and the Sudanese in the North Eastern region of Africa also practiced some form of slavery, and so was the case among many West African societies. For example, the Asante of present-day Ghana, the Wolof of Senegal, the Mende and Temne of Sierra Leone, and the Vai of Liberia all owned slaves. In Central Africa, the Duala of Cameroon, the Bapende Luba and Lunda of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Lozi of Zambia also allowed some variation of a system of slavery. The Buganda state, the Nyamwezi, and the Chagga peoples in East Africa are also known to have been engaged in enslaving others. In Southern Africa, the Chokwe of Angola, the Sena of Mozambique, and the Ngoni of Mozambique and Malawi all seem to have had practiced one form or another of slavery.

The reasons for internal African slavery were varied, and yet not unique from what they were in other parts of the world. Slave labor was needed for agriculture and trade industries, as well as administrators and conscripts for the military. Others were used as domestics, while some served as personal assistants to wealthy merchants and royals. An important feature of internal African slavery was the type of relationship that existed between the enslaved and their owners. Since African societies are built on kinships, which are the foundation of the social structure, many allowed the integration of the enslaved into the kinship system through consanguinity, adoption,

and marriage. For instance, among the Asante, irrespective of the status of the parents, no child was born a slave. In North Africa, the Tuaregs and the Berbers integrated their enslaved into their kinship system and regarded them as family (Derrick, 1975). It is also clear from studies conducted over the decades that integration of the enslaved into families was widely spread among many African ethnic groups.

How were the "enslaved" treated in African societies? No doubt, any form of enslavement cannot be rationalized. The very idea that a human being was owned by another human being will also have a sobering effect. However, like in Sparta and Athens, the enslaved in pre-colonial Africa were accorded some rights, including the right to be housed, fed, and clothed. In Zanzibar, for example, the enslaved were allowed to marry, bear children, and own land, and were given time to work on them. The Asante of Ghana used the term *Akoa*, which referred to a wide variety of servitude roles. The *Akoa* was not to be maltreated, and punishments were meted out to those who maltreated them, especially when this resulted in death. The Asante saying, *Akoa a onim som di ne wura ade* (A slave or a servant who serves well inherits the property of his/her owner), encapsulated the relationship between the master and the *Akoa*. It is important to note, as well, that in many African societies, slavery was not an eternal condemnation. The concept of an enslaved person in pre-colonial Africa as chattel or property was alien and not an acceptable and widespread practice. The enslaved had some legal rights, and owners, except the chief or king, did not have absolute control over them. This meant that the enslaved had opportunities for social mobility. For instance, the Sena of Mozambique, the Kerebe of Tanzania, the Mende of Sierra Leone, and the Kongo of Central Africa made provision for the enfranchisement or redemption of their enslaved (Miers and Kopytoff, 1979). The Asante of Ghana are also known for according the reasonable enfranchisement of the enslaved. Security at the Asantehene's (King of the Asante) palace was provided by enslaved people. Indeed, the Asante have another saying—*Obi nkyere obi ase* (one does not disclose the origins of another person)—that is, disclosing a person's origins could result in the possibility of uncovering slavery as part of the lineage.

There were also opportunities for political mobility for the enslaved. In some communities, the mobility was dependent on the status of the owner. For example, among the Mende of Sierra Leone, an enslaved person could hold political office, and in some instances, even become a chief. Similarly, the enslaved in New Calabar, Nigeria, could become heads of households. In fact, many customary practices required that the enslaved persons be treated humanely. As such, an enslaved person always had the opportunity to run away in situations of maltreatment at the hands of the owner. Interestingly, among the Asante, an enslaved person could appeal to a deity to intervene on his/her behalf to avert harsh treatment from the owner. They could also swear an oath on a person, who would be obliged to answer the case of the oath, often time accompanied by a fine. Thus, the various avenues of redress at the disposal of the enslaved persons allowed for their humane treatment.

It is also important to note that slavery had a power dynamic to it. The ability to enslave another human being derives its power from multiple sources, principal

among them being class, race, and gender. It is plausible to say that the dynamics of African slavery were a class-based system. Here, class could also be equated with ethnicities. For example, the Asante people rarely held other Asante as slaves. In other words, a person who shared the same language and other cultural traits, including religion and customary practices, would be difficult to control and be classified as a slave. In addition, a person with a lower social status within the same ethnic group could be a servant, but that hardly qualified him/her as a slave. Consequently, it was always easier to enslave an outsider. Indeed, the main sources of supply of enslaved people for the Asante were other ethnic groups, usually defeated at war. Acquisition of the enslaved through warfare was a common method in most pre-colonial Africa. It was widely understood that the conclusion of a war meant the prisoners of the vanquished were taken as slaves by the victors. Stronger states also entered into tributary agreement with weaker states, which included supplying slaves to the stronger rivals.

The relationship between pre-colonial African slavery and economics is also worth exploring. Slavery in pre-colonial Africa existed in two forms, either as a minor feature of the society or as an institution well integrated into the social fabric. In cases where slavery was minor, most of the enslaved individuals were owned by the very wealthy and limited to performing domestic chores. Contextually, enslaved women could even marry free men, which changed their status within the family and the society. However, with slavery as an institution, the varied functions of the society depended on slave labor. For instance, in societies with well-established centralized political systems, slave labor was needed in the agricultural and mining sectors. This was the case among the Asante, who needed slave labor for their gold mines. Whenever the family farm holdings became too large to handle, slave labor was often required.

There is no doubt that internal African slavery altered some of the social dynamics in some societies, but that pales in comparison to the devastating effect of the transatlantic slave trade on Africa and Africans. Conversely, the kind of slavery Europeans introduced in Africa was nothing compared to the African system of indentured servitude.

Nature of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

The beginning of a conversation on transatlantic slavery always starts with two discourses: the number of Africans involved in the obnoxious trade and the extent of African involvement in the trade. While these are legitimate points, often lost in the discussion is the extent of destructiveness of the trade and its lingering effects on Africans both in the continent and the diaspora. Walter Rodney (1982: 96) maintains that:

In order to whitewash the European slave trade, they find it convenient to start by minimizing the numbers concerned. The truth is that any figure of Africans imported into the Americas which is narrowly based on the surviving records is bound to be low, and because there were so many people at the

time who had a vested interest in smuggling slaves (and withholding data). Nevertheless, if the low figure of ten million was accepted as basis for evaluating the impact of slaving on Africa as a whole, the conclusions that could legitimately be drawn would confound those who attempt to make light of the experience of the rape of Africans from 1445 to 1870.

While the numbers debate may be intriguing to some, more attention should be focused on the actual experiences of the Africans who were subjected to cruelties of the transatlantic slave trade.

Before we launch deep into the discussions of the experiences of Africans and the nature of the transatlantic slave trade, we need to highlight this very important point: Besides the brutality associated with the human trade, there was the dehumanization of the African people, who, reduced to the status of non-humans, chattel, and property, maintained a commercial value. This dehumanization paved the way for the cruel types of treatment, which had characterized medieval Europe, to be repackaged for Africans as captives. So, why were Africans and not the Arabs or the Berbers enslaved? There may be two reasons: One was the geographical proximity and the European need for labor in the Americas. After an unsuccessful experimentation with the Amerindians and indentured European servants, as mentioned earlier, West Africa proved to be the closest source of labor. The second reason had to do with race and racism. Scholars put out that the epistemological foundation of Europe's interactions with Africa was built upon racial superiority. Europeans had no value for Africa's knowledge systems and, for them, difference meant inferiority. Since Europeans perceived themselves White and Africans Black, the distance between the White slaver and the Black enslaved was justification enough to warrant the dehumanization of the African. It was against this backdrop that the transatlantic slave trade began.

The transatlantic slave trade started in the fifteenth century and lasted through 1870. The majority of Africans forcibly transported across the Atlantic Ocean were destined for plantations in North America, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. The largest number of African captives was shipped to the Portuguese territory of Brazil. To date, as a result, Brazil has the highest number of people of African descent outside the continent of Africa. The unprecedented human trade involved four continents. Europe was the source of financing the slave trade, and the market base for raw materials. Africa was the labor source, and North and South America provided the land for the plantations. Crops produced were cotton, sugarcane, indigo, tobacco, and rice. After the Portuguese successful experiment with the plantation system in their West African territories of São Tomé and Príncipe and Madeira, the Americas became the new frontier for expansion.

The initial mode of acquisition of African slaves was forced capture. For instance, Gil Eanes, trained by Henry the Navigator, was the first European to forcibly capture Africans to be enslaved. In 1444, an expedition led by Gil Eanes Lançarote had attacked a village of Berber fishing people. At the end of the raid, several Africans were killed and others captured to be enslaved. This incidence was captured by De Zurara (1899: 66, 1960: 99, 1981), who wrote:

And at last our Lord God, who giveth a reward for every good deed, willed that for the toil that they had undergone in his service, they should that day obtain victory over their enemies, as well as a guerdon and a payment for all their labour and expense; for they took captive of those Moors, what with men, women, and children, 165, besides those that perished and were killed (pp. 120–121).

Similarly, in 1562, Englishman John Hawkins sailed from England and took about 300 African captives to the West Indies. However, because the forced capture of people was expensive, unreliable and dangerous, other strategies were employed, including raiding and kidnapping. Slave raiders armed with guns and other advanced weaponry laid ambush close to farms and river bodies and kidnapped mostly women and children. The captives were held together at the neck with sticks and chains to prevent them from escaping. Depending on where they were captured, which was mostly the hinterland, they trekked by foot, which took from a few days to sometimes months to get to the “castles” located along the coast, to be held for their eventual shipment to the Americas.

The success of the slave enterprise was largely as a result of two factors. One consisted of European slavers finding African collaborators who would play the role of middlemen. Initial European acquisition of African captives was restricted to raiding the inhabitants of the coastal areas. Others were through deceit and theft. European sailors would invite naive Africans on board their ships and, unbeknownst to the Africans, sail them away. However, with time, coastal inhabitants became savvy and started organizing defense forces against European raids. With force no longer being a viable option, Europeans resorted to economic inducements, such as offering manufactured goods in exchange for captives. African middlemen often embarked on raids into the hinterland, usually with weapons supplied by the Europeans. The second factor was inter-ethnic conflicts, which the Europeans exploited by supporting one group over the other, thus heightening the enmity between rival groups. The viciousness of the conflict determined the numbers of captive prisoners who were then sold to the Europeans. This is not to say that rivalries and hatred among different ethnic groups were nonexistent. The point is that, while conflicts have always been a part of all human societies, the exploitation of differences was exacerbated by the incentivization coming from the Europeans.

Thus, conflicts were waged not only for necessity, but also as an economic incentive. While the role of Africans in the obnoxious trade, especially in well-established states, should not be minimized, it should not be overemphasized either to diminish the role played by the Europeans. As Walter Rodney again states:

Many guilty consciences have been created by the slave trade. Europeans know that they carried on the slave trade, and Africans are aware that the trade would have been impossible if certain Africans did not cooperate with slave ships. To ease their guilty consciences, Europeans try to throw the major responsibility for the slave trade on to the Africans. One major author on the slave trade (appropriately titled *Sins of Our Fathers*) explained how many white people urged him to state that the trade was the responsibility of African

chiefs, and that Europeans merely turned up to buy captives—as though without European demand there would have been captives sitting on the beach by the millions! Issues such as those are not the principal concern of this study, but they can be correctly approached only after understanding that Europe became the center of a world-wide system and that it was European capitalism which set slavery and the Atlantic slave trade in motion (p. 82).

Therefore, on one hand one may ask if it was, indeed, a trade, where were the benefits to the Africans? On the other hand, there is no question as to the benefits the slave trade accrued to Europeans. As a result of the slave trade, the population of Africa, together with its culture and history, suffered immensely. While Europe was gaining from the productivity of African captives, slave traders were replacing them with cheap alcohol and consumable goods of no value.

Following capture, Africans were kept in the slave dungeons at the various castles along the West African coast. In Ghana alone, about 28 such castles existed along the coast. Further along the West African coastline, one off the coast of Senegal in Goree Island and another along the Gambia River in Gambia had been built. Similar sites existed in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Benin and Togo. Cape Coast Castle in Ghana was an important *entrepot*, which epitomized the gross indignity suffered by African captives at the hands of the Europeans. The site was constructed as a trade lodge by the Portuguese in 1555. In 1563, the Swedish captured Cape Coast and rebuilt it with wooden structures. Subsequently, around 1663, the Danes seized power from the Swedish and reinforced the old edifice with stones. While the Dutch also occupied the castle for some time, the British took control over it in 1664, and by 1700, it had been transformed into a full British fortress, which also housed the British governor.

When captives arrived at the castles, they were branded with hot irons with initials of the “owners” or the company that had acquired them and separated by gender. Whereas the male dungeon in the Cape Coast castle could hold about 1,000 captives at a time, the female section had a capacity of about 500. The dungeons were poorly ventilated, and the captives were shackled and cramped, with no space to lie, and fed just enough to keep them alive. Captivity in the dungeons lasted up to three months, with no provision of water and sanitation, forcing the captives to stay in their waste till they were ready to be shipped. As a result, diseases were rampant and the mortality rates high. Women and girls were subjected to rape. Any of the European slavers could select a female captive, cleaned her up, and then proceed to rape her with no impunity. Thereafter, she was returned to the dungeon to await her fate on the middle passage. Women who resisted were physically punished and confined in small cells that had no windows, resulting, for some, in death by suffocation, the same fate being experienced by mutineers, who were confined to similar windowless cells.

As expected, the dehumanizing conditions continued on the slave ships. This league of the odious journey across the Atlantic Ocean was known as the Middle Passage, where the captives were lined up, shackled, and led to the waiting ships. The conditions on the ships were no different from those in the dungeons. To maximize

space, captives were packed tightly still in shackles. The ships that carried them were referred to as "Guineamen," identifying the origins of their human cargo, with such names as *Fortune*, *Rio*, and *Mayflower Antigua*, just to name a few. The duration of the voyage took anywhere from four weeks to three months depending on the origin and destination. For instance, British and Dutch voyages took anywhere between two to three months to sail from the coast of West Africa to the Caribbean.

The crew on each voyage included the sailors, physicians, merchants, and the captives. The sailors were in charge of ensuring a successful voyage. The physicians were at hand to mitigate losses of the human cargo and the crew of the ship. The merchants were burdened by the responsibility of ensuring that their investments were protected. Due to the poor conditions under which the captives were kept, many succumbed to diseases. There are accounts of sharks following slave ships in anticipation of the remains of the dead captives that were summarily tossed overboard or those who committed suicide by jumping off into the ocean to their deaths. Some captured Africans believed that they would be cannibalized by the Europeans, a belief given credence as none of the previous captives ever returned.

Others were just resolute and decided that they were not going to allow their enslavement and would therefore mutiny on the ship. About 485 of such acts of resistance by Africans against the slave ships' conditions and the crews have been recorded and include 93 instances of attacks from the shore by apparently "free" Africans against ships or longboats and 392 cases of shipboard revolts by slaves (Richardson, 2001). The captives were fed two and sometimes three times a day in their holds through the hatches. Alive and healthy captives meant better profits for the merchants, so the crew did all it could to ensure the precious "cargo" would arrive in conditions that could maximize the profit. In instances where captives went on hunger strike, the ship crews had a device known as *spectrum oris*, which was used to forcibly open the mouths of the captives to be fed a diet that included rice, cornmeal, and boiled types of millet. As a result, the conditions on the ships have been described atrocious. Olaudah Equiano, a freed enslaved person, thus described the conditions in the ship:

The stench of the hold, while we were on the coast, was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for anytime, and so some of us had been permitted to stay on deck for fresh air, but now the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place and the heat of the climate, added to number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocating us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respirations from the variety of the loathsome smells, and brought on sickness among the slaves, of which many died, thus falling victims to the provident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. The deplorable condition was aggravated by the galling of the chains, now became insupportable; and the filth of necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of women and the groans of the dying, rendered it a scene of horror almost inconceivable (quoted from Gate, 1987: 35).

The Middle Passage not only physically destroyed the captive Africans, but it also completely negated their humanity and reduced them to a subhuman status only worth an economic price. One may have to ask: What was the economic prize for such human callousness? Indeed, the economic incentive was ample justification for such cruel treatment of a human being at the hands of another human being. In fact, that was the essence of the triangular trade.

The so-called Triangular Trade, which started in the early seventeenth century and lasted till the latter part of the eighteenth century, was a link between three geographical areas, Europe, Africa and the Americas. This extensive trade involved the movement of finished goods from Europe to Africa, which were then exchanged for African captives, and was referred to as the Outward Passage. The African captives were then transported to the Americas, the second league of the trip, which was properly called the Middle Passage. Here, the captives cultivated the lands to obtain raw materials, which were then shipped to Europe and manufactured into finished products. This last phase of the trade journey was referred to as the Inward Passage. The Triangular Trade was so lucrative that it has been considered to have been the engine of Europe's industrial growth. Obviously, the major beneficiaries of the Triangular Trade were Portugal, Spain, England, The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany. To name a few, the destinations for most of the African captives in Europe were Lisbon and Lagos in Portugal, Bristol in England, and Nantes and La Rochelle in France.

Once in North America, captives were carried to North and South Carolina, Chesapeake Bay, Virginia, coastal Georgia, Mississippi, and other places, from where some were sent to the Dutch West Indies and Dutch Guyana. While the British sent most of their captives to Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, St. Kitts, Grenada, Dominica, British Guyana, Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Vincent, the French held theirs at St. Domingue, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guyana. In contrast, the Spanish carried their captives to the colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and all of what is now known as Latin America, and the Portuguese shipped theirs mainly to Brazil. In terms of numbers, whereas the destination with the largest proportion of captives, about 46 percent, was the Portuguese colony of Brazil, the British territories received about 22 percent and the Spanish about 12 percent of the human cargo. The Dutch Caribbean accounted for about 4 percent, while North America received about 3.7 percent of the total number of the African captives. Less than 1 percent of African captives were sent to Europe. As a result, while Europe was rapidly growing, a different story of utter devastation was emerging on the African continent. So, how did slavery underdevelop Africa?

The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Africa's Underdevelopment

The impact of the peculiar institution of slavery on the underdevelopment of Africa should be contrasted with that of Europe and North America. It was stated

earlier in the chapter that, if the slave trade was indeed a trade, then there must be evidence of some mutual benefits on both sides of the traders. Unfortunately, this apparently was not the case, as slavery disrupted Africa's demographics and destroyed the continent's potential for advancement. Simply put, Africa was grossly underdeveloped by the trade in humans. According to many scholars, particularly Rodney, underdevelopment is not a result of lack of development. Rodney states that:

underdevelopment is not absence of development, because every people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent. Underdevelopment makes sense only as a means of comparing levels of development. It is very much tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven and from a strictly economic view-point some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming wealthier.

The disparities in wealth accumulation between Africa and Europe resulted from the latter's exploitation of the African continent, which lost a substantial amount of its labor force through the trade. The preference for younger able-bodied slaves, including women and children, was adversely consequential in the reproductive processes of the continent. To quote Walter Rodney once again, although it is challenging to accurately account for the total population lost due to the slave trade, he points nevertheless to the fact that, from the fifteenth century on, global population "showed constant and sometimes spectacular natural increase; while it is striking that the same did not apply to Africa." Rodney further claims that the slave trade had a direct causal effect on Africa's population stagnation during the period of natural global population growth. That being the case, the issue of Africa's population stagnation had an adverse effect on its development. Healthy, able bodies, knowledgeable Africans, who would have contributed significantly to the socio-economic growth of the continent, were permanently lost to the slave trade. Since the manpower needed for the development was lacking, the result was the collapse of many cottage industries. While ethnic conflicts incentivized by the slave trade meant that more energy was dedicated to making war than towards socio-economic advancement, the resulting instability meant that many lands had to be abandoned, thus disrupting farming patterns. As a result, many parts of Africa could not undergo an agrarian revolution, which would have most likely led to an industrial revolution as experienced in Europe. The late Africanist historian Basil Davidson wrote:

As African production for exports became a monoculture in human beings ... for Africa itself [it] was strictly non-productive; for African slave dealers, it was the sale of consumer goods for the raw material of slave labor. ... There was no creative marriage of cultures, no passage of ideas, no sharing of wealth or achievement. To Europe the trade with Africa was always an enrichment and this enrichment could and did lead Europe into new and more productive forms of society and government.

Furthermore, one must point out, the negative impact was not only economic but also political. Due to slave raids and inter-ethnic conflicts, political institutions remained fragmented and systems of governance evolved around the trade in humans

rather than around systems that harnessed cohesion and the development of institutions for stability. Nunn (2008) finds that the slave trade had a negative long-term effect on Africa's economic performance. His preliminary evidence suggests that the legacy of the slave trade operated through increased ethnic diversity and underdeveloped political structures. Other studies on contemporary African political and economic systems support the claim that ethnic diversity and underdeveloped states have contributed to Africa's poor economic conditions. Though ethnic diversity should not be perceived necessarily as bad, yet, in the case of the discussed pre-colonial conditions, the natural societal evolutionary process of assimilation could not occur due to the slave trade, which notoriously thrived on ethnic fragmentation.

One of the most insidious effect of the slave trade was the destruction of Africa's epistemological foundations. The demographic disruptions also meant the destruction of knowledge systems, which proved to be even more consequential. Indeed, by the time the European imperialist machinery was repackaged and deployed as colonialism, Africans had neither response nor common or relevant strategy of resistance. In such a context, one might say that the slave trade decimated the anchor of African societies, namely, its systems of knowledge. Thus, the slave trade was not only genocidal, but also epistemicidal. Africa's story indeed does not start with slavery. Before the Europeans, there was Ethiopia and Egypt, which Chancellor Williams (1974), called "Ethiopia's older daughter," in reference to the influence of Ethiopia on Egypt. As shown in chapter 3 of this volume, the Africans had also established great empires, which included Ghana, Mali and Songhai, the Timbuktu metropolis becoming the intellectual center of the latter's empire. As a result, the first university, established in Sankore around the fifteenth century, became an intellectual hub that attracted scholars from many parts of the world.

This is the story of Africa that is often told in obscurity to fit a Eurocentric narrative of the continent as a blank slate and a people with no contributions to world civilizations. The slave trade and the subsequent colonial intervention by Europeans caused a cataclysmic decline in African intellectual foundations and set up an asymmetric and exploitative relationship between Africa and Europe.

The destruction of the existing indigenous knowledge systems has been identified by Grosfoguel to have happened four times in the course of world history, which he called the "Four Genocides/Epistemicides of the Long 16th Century": (1) the conquest of Al-Andalus, which was the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Europe; (2) the conquest of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas started by the Spanish and continued by the French and the English; (3) the creation of the slave trade that resulted in millions killed in Africa and at sea and the further dehumanization of the enslaved in the Americas (considered by many as a third genocidal knowledge conquest); and (4) the killing of millions of Indo-European women mostly through burning at the stake as witches because of the knowledge practices that were not controlled by men (Grosfoguel 2013). These historical episodes continue to reverberate in many indigenous and non-Western societies, including Africa, where their development still operates within the shadows of European imperialist domination.

Summary

A full grasp on slavery must start with the conceptualization of it as an institution. Slavery, in some form or another, has always been part of our human history. However, enslavement of Africans by Europeans started when they began expanding to other parts of the world. European imperialist expansion during the fifteenth century, which was sanctioned by Pope Nicholas V, was the genesis of an epic encounter between Europeans and Africans that transformed the continent and its peoples and altered the course of world history. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to explore the coastline of West Africa. The capture of Ceuta in 1415 cemented Portugal's claim to Africa and paved the way for other European conquests and control of Africa and Africans. Europeans were in search of new routes to Asia after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans, who restricted their access to Asia, especially through heavy taxation. While the Portuguese expeditions along the west coast of Africa opened up a new frontier and a maritime route to Asia, they opened up, as well, new trading opportunities, most critically, in gold and other goods. Tragically, the legitimate trade in goods eventually ended in the trading of Africans.

For over 400 years, Africans were captured and sold to Europeans to be shipped to plantations in the New World. Although there was internal slavery in many African societies, important differences existed between the European and the African forms of slavery. The treatment of the enslaved in pre-colonial Africa varied and depended on the slave master and the relationship between him and his slave. In contrast, the characterization of Africans as living commodities dehumanized them, and justified the brutality associated with the slave trade. As shown here, African captives were considered to be property and were completely stripped of all their humanity. After capture, enslaved Africans were branded and held in deplorable conditions in the coastal dungeons before they were shipped to their various destinations in the New World through the Middle Passage. The Middle Passage, infamous for its dehumanizing conditions under which African captives were shipped to the New World, has been characterized as the most tragic and barbaric forced migration in the history of humanity.

The Triangular Trade, which started in the early part of the seventeenth century and lasted till the late eighteenth century, was a link between three geographical areas, Europe, Africa and the Americas, and remained both exploitative and destructive. According to Clarke and many other scholars, the Catholic Church initiated a genocidal process through Spanish and Portuguese adventurism, which was taken over by the Protestant Dutch and English, who vastly expanded the institution of slavery. This fed the so-called industrial revolution, ushering Africa into an exploitative relationship with Europe. Most scholars are convinced that Africa's underdevelopment is directly linked with the transatlantic slave trade because it disrupted the continent's socio-cultural, political and economic evolution. With an estimated, some say, 50 million Africans forcefully uprooted and shipped to the New World, Africa experienced debilitating demographic stagnation, precipitating in a short time its overall decline.

This chapter also argued that, closely associated with the genocidal process of Africa was the process of epistemicide, or the annihilation of the existing indigenous African knowledge systems. Since Africans were considered inferior and people without civilization, the systems of knowledge that had evolved from the beginning of our humanity were all destroyed. African knowledge systems such as those developed in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kush, Ghana, Mali, and Zimbabwe, and such cities as Timbuktu and Djene, were no match for the destructive and arrogant European epistemologies.

Finally, it must be said, the history and consequences of the transatlantic slave trade are as relevant today as they were when the European slave trading on the continent of Africa came into being. To forget about this vital part of our history, which continues to shape our world today, is to negate the gallantry of those brave souls who perished and the strengths of those that survived the unprecedented brutal trade in humans. One must remember, however, that the slave trade does not define Africa and Africans, either at home or abroad, and it is not the beginning of Africa's history. Yet, it must serve as a reminder of the collective responsibility we have to uphold our human values. The underlying reasons for slavery, which include capitalism, an inordinate love for material goods, and an uncontrolled search for profit at all cost, still hold true for the estimated 27 million people who, according to the United Nations, are currently enduring some form of enslavement in Africa, in Asia, and other parts of the world. This is the reason why we should learn to not repeat the mistakes of the past. In sum, knowing what and why the transatlantic slave trade happened is even more imperative today.

Study Questions and Activities

1. Discuss the underlying factors for European expansionism in the New World.
2. Describe the Middle Passage and how it related to the dehumanization of Africans.
3. Internal African slavery was different from European African slavery. How so?
4. Discuss how Africa was underdeveloped by slavery.
5. What do you think was the role of the Church in the early European expansion and the beginnings of the Triangle Slave Trade?

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5

Diaspora Africans and Slavery

Raymond Gavins &
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Introduction

Pioneer scholar W. E. B. Du Bois gives us a compelling description of the modern black diaspora. "Raphael painted, Luther preached, Corneille wrote, and Milton sung; and through it all, for four hundred years, the dark captives wound to the sea amid the bleaching bones of the dead," he stated in *The Negro* (1915), "for four hundred years the sharks followed the scurrying ships; for four hundred years America was strewn with the living and dying millions of a transplanted race; for four hundred years Ethiopia stretched forth her hands unto God." This essay will focus primarily on the several centuries of the slave trade that transported millions of Indigenous Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to the lands often called the "New World" by European explorers. In fact, the so-called "New World" was inhabited by Indigenous peoples of color who lived in the Caribbean and the Americas for millennia prior to contact with European explorers. Enslavement of Africans did not begin with the Atlantic slave trade, as a larger and longer in duration slave trade of captured Africans into the Mediterranean world existed and constituted African enslavement in the Mediterranean world of Islam in Muslim societies (see John Hunwick and Eve Troutt Powell).

While this article explores *what* happened that created an African diaspora which provided the labor power to fuel the Atlantic economy's emergent capitalism, the question we will begin with is *why* was there a sustained European intrusion into Indigenous peoples' lands and a subsequent devastating impact on Indigenous peoples and their plant, mineral, and metallurgy knowledge systems? Why were Indigenous Africans, Amerindians, and First Nation peoples of the Americas pulled

1. This revised chapter was done by Dr. Marsha Darling in view of the passing of our colleague Dr. Raymond Gavins in 2016.

into a centuries-long and downwardly spiraling vortex of conquest, genocide caused by gross violations of their human persons, population decimation caused by diseases, enslavement, and expropriation of the very land on which they had lived for centuries? And, why do so many of the descendants of Indigenous peoples remain marginalized and oppressed in the predominantly white settler societies in which they live today?

People have encountered each other for centuries, usually peacefully, through trading activities, and violently, through warfare. As people have interacted one with another, those engagements have been often influenced by powerful ideas that have provoked deeply transformative social changes. Living within a settler society like the United States, it is easy to overlook that the very land that we stand on and all of North, Central, and South America, the Caribbean in the Western Hemisphere, and Australia and New Zealand have been taken from other peoples in the name of "discovery." We speak easily, and sometimes proudly, of Columbus' discovery of the New World because the language of "discovery" and the greatness it suggests in creating something for us to learn about in classrooms leaves little room for alternative understanding. But, "discovery" has served as erasure or belittlement of Indigenous peoples and much of their knowledge systems. Indigenous peoples, including the enslaved Africans, were slaves, "units of production," chattel who produced the commodities that made Europeans and Americans invested in slavery wealthy and powerful.

The Age of Discovery that we have inherited was created by a pervasive physical domination of Indigenous peoples. Ideas and doctrines dating to the past five centuries have necessitated and normalized expropriation and ownership of everything belonging to Indigenous peoples—including their very persons. The *Doctrine of Discovery* was created by a series of papal bulls and by Western European monarchies seeking to explore and lay claim to the territories occupied by others, and to capture and subdue their persons and confiscate their possessions. The doctrine, by force of longevity, is now rooted in international law, and the actions it has shielded have been responsible for establishing the religious, legal, and physical authority for the transatlantic slave trade, the assault on and decimation of Indigenous peoples, and the expropriation of their lands, labor, plants, metals, religious beliefs, and knowledge production. *The Doctrine of Discovery* is firmly rooted in the legal systems of white settler societies, including the American secular legal system.

What is the *Doctrine of Discovery*? In the fifteenth century, as European explorers sailed to unfamiliar lands, a series of papal bulls issued by Catholic popes provided sanction and opened the way for white Christian explorers financed by Western European rulers to explore, conquer, and subdue, reduce to slavery, and even vanquish all non-Christians they encountered as they journeyed to unfamiliar places in search of profitable trade routes and new sources of wealth. Consequently, the charters that provided authority in a world ruled by religions, the subsequent body of laws in secularized white settler nations that furthered and currently maintain continued domination of Indigenous peoples, and the actual behaviors and social practices of subordination and enforced dependency of Indigenous peoples have come to be

known in their impact in our world as the *Doctrine of Discovery* (see Miller, Ruru, Behrendt, and Lindberg; Maaka and Andersen).

The Doctrine of Discovery was formulated first by the Roman Catholic Church and the monarchs of Portugal and Spain; the monarchs of England, the Netherlands, France, and others asserted their interests subsequently. The doctrine was used as the basis of laws governing contacts between Europeans and non-Europeans, and Christians and non-Christians. The doctrine's embrace of a mandate to spread European laws, religion, and culture that served as the foundation for the *Doctrine of Discovery* dates to the Medieval Period. Pope Urban II issued the papal bull *Terra Nullius*, which translated refers to "empty land." The Catholic Church in its power as the supreme moral authority in Europe in an age when it ruled by asserting itself as the representative of God on Earth gave *Terra Nullius* to Europe's Christian kings. The edict asserted the right of Christian monarchies to undertake "discovery" and ownership of non-Christian lands and everything therein of wealth building value. As non-Christian peoples dwelled on what the papacy and Christian kings and princes deemed "empty land," they too were to be "discovered" and brought under the authority of the monarchies and the Catholic Church (see Miller, LeSage, and Escarcena).

The Doctrine of Discovery received renewed papal attention once Portugal and later when Spain sailed westward into the Atlantic Ocean, landed, and claimed for themselves the lands that are today called the Canary Islands, the Azores, Cape Verde, and Madeira. The *Doctrine of Discovery* and its relevancy for forcing an Indigenous people to labor for Christian overlords seeking wealth outside of their home boundaries was foremost when Portugal established sovereignty over the land and the peoples of the Canary Islands. By the early fifteenth century, Portugal oversaw the rise of profitable sugar cultivation on the islands. Continuing the search for riches and trade routes to the East in the 1430s, the Portuguese arrived off the coast of West Africa to begin a trading center. Having defeated the Moors at Centa in North Africa, the Portuguese began a quest for "discovery" and conquest along the West African coast, having reached Senegal in 1435, Cape Bojador in 1443, Sierra Leone in 1446, Guinea in 1455, and the Congo in 1481 (see Williams). Arguably, in 1441, the Atlantic slave trade began when Portuguese explorer Antao Goncalvez kidnapped 12 Africans from a market on the Guinea Coast and presented them as a gift to Prince Henry the "Navigator" in Portugal, noting that there were many more where those Africans came from. Pope Alexander VI's Bull of January 1455, *Romanus Pontifex*, had granted Portugal "exclusive rights" in West Africa, when in fact the Portuguese had already been planting their flags along the West African coast for some years prior to receiving the papal bull (see Russell-Wood).

On January 8, 1455, after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans, Pope Nicholas V issued another papal bull *Romanus Pontifex* that authorized Portuguese King Afonso V to "invade, search out, capture, vanquish and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever . . . to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery"; and further, to seize all of their property (see Davenport). In 1472, the Portuguese, who by then had been in the islands off the West African coast and in places along the African mainland for

decades, began slave trading African peoples in Benin. Anticipating the interests of rival European rulers, by 1481 the Portuguese built the first of the "slave factories" in Elmina on the Guinea Coast and through aggressively pursuing a greedy trade in African human flesh jump-started the formation of what became known as the Atlantic World Economy (see Russell-Wood).

Following Portugal's lead into the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the Spanish, Dutch, English, French, and for a time the Swedish, Danish, and the German Kingdom of Brandenburg captured and traded African peoples into the Transatlantic Slave Trade, thereby establishing sites of "discovery" that suppressed millions of Indigenous peoples. Columbus sailed to the Caribbean, was greeted by Indigenous peoples and in short order asserted a claim of discovery and sovereignty over them, claiming the Caribbean islands already inhabited by Indigenous peoples the lawful possession of the Crown of Spain. Spain then quickly requested papal approval of Columbus' "discoveries," and any future discoveries, and on May 3, 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued the papal bull *Inter caetera I*, which accorded to Spain exclusive rights to the lands Columbus had laid claim to in the New World (see Williams; Gibson).

According to scholars of the period, the population of Hispaniola fell from 250,000 persons to 50,000 within the initial 20 years of Spanish colonization; the decimation was caused by gross violations of the Indians' persons, and by their lack of immunity to diseases carried by the European conquerors. We should understand what many scholars have provided hard evidence for, namely that in the New World the decimation of the Tainos, and other Caribbean, Central American, and South American Indians, and other Indigenous peoples constitutes a holocaust (see Miller, Lesage and Escarcena, 836-37; Gibson; Williams; Dunbar-Ortiz; Maaka and Andersen).

The Atlantic Triangular Trade created vast fortunes for those European monarchs who held slave-trading monopolies, and for those involved financially in the slave trade, and plantation production of profit-making agriculture-based commodities (sugar, tobacco, cotton, coffee, indigo, and to a lesser extent rice). The slave trade furnished Europe with the capital that fueled capitalism's growth and wealth generation for white peoples in the West and in Asia and Australia in the East, the formation of financial institutions to fund the slave trade, the creation of European colonial empires, and eventually even the Industrial Revolution. Therefore, in the Atlantic Ocean Economy in the West, and in the Asian Lands Economy in the East, the European *Doctrine of Discovery* amassed a momentum that was unstoppable after the fifteenth century (see Kupperman; Williams; Lindsay; Wesseling).

The series of edicts codifying Christian European rights over all non-Christian peoples, the *Doctrine of Discovery*, its intentions, and the spirit and letter of its edicts constitutes an ideological tour de force that has undergirded the legal relationships between many nation states and Indigenous peoples all over the world for at least the past five centuries. At its root the *Doctrine of Discovery* created the Atlantic world economy with its racial slavery and the expropriation of the metal, mineral, and plant wealth and knowledge production of Indigenous and Peoples of Color. The *Doctrine of Discovery* functioned as Christian religious imperialism in that the doctrine applied

only when Christian nations came into contact with non-Christian peoples; Indigenous peoples could not travel to areas inhabited by white Christians and claim their lands for themselves. In sanctioning European discovery and legal ownership of all lands not owned by other European nations, an assumption prevailed that Indigenous peoples could not own the land or their persons because they were not Christians (see Ojibwa).

Elsewhere, the "discovery," conquest, and subjugation of Indigenous peoples in the North Atlantic, and the kidnapping, enslavement, and transporting of Indigenous Africans to the British North Atlantic colonies created empire building after England. The Netherlands, France, and Spain sent explorers and then settlers to what was taken from Indigenous peoples and became the United States and Canada. By that time the *Doctrine of Discovery* presented a sustained momentum of its own without relying on religious authorization; even Russia pressed a discovery and conquest agenda. It is also important to note that the Protestant Reformation emboldened European Protestant rulers whose embrace of Protestant Christianity in their actions did not necessitate the approval of the Catholic Church. In defying the pope's edicts and the wishes of neighboring European monarchs, Protestant Christian monarchs launched themselves into the Age of Discovery and embraced the *Doctrine of Discovery* as their own mandate. To confiscate Indigenous lands and either massacre or drive Indigenous peoples onto reservations, the assault on North Atlantic world Indigenous peoples by European colonial leaders and later American settlers was grotesque and sustained (see Pagden, 63-80).

When Thomas Jefferson served as Secretary of State in 1792 he asserted that the *Doctrine of Discovery* extended to the new federal republic from its origins in Great Britain's "discovery" and sovereignty to the United States. Decades later, several years before pursuing Manifest Destiny by declaring war against Mexico, the political and judicial leaders of the United States of America wrote the *Doctrine of Discovery* into American law in order to deny land rights to Indigenous peoples. In *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823) a landmark, precedent-setting Supreme Court decision that is still used against Indigenous litigants, Chief Justice John Marshall writing for a unanimous Court insisted that the United States should not recognize any land titles obtained from Indigenous peoples prior to the nation's independence. The *Doctrine of Discovery* remains firmly anchored in American secular law at this moment (see Newcomb; Dunbar-Ortiz; Miller, Ruru, Behrendt, and Lindberg; Maaka and Andersen; and see, *City of Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of New York* (2005)).

It is important to note that white skinned Europeans began in their exploration of the lands beyond their borders to meet and assert dominion over brown, black, and beige peoples in the name of discovery, sovereignty, and conversion to Catholicism. Prior to the Atlantic slave trade, the concept of "race" in European intellectual circles embraced an ideal including all of humanity (despite Europe's long internal history with religious intolerance towards the Jews, Roma, and Animists who lived within their own borders). The idea of "race" took on decidedly different interpretations as barbarous physical subjugation either drove some Indigenous peoples to

extinction in the Caribbean or created a body of slave law that used "race" to distinguish the characteristics of the enslaved African peoples who were pushed into intergenerational (perpetual) enslavement in the New World (see Augstein; Fredrickson; Mills).

Still later, when Protestant Christians entered the slave trade they initially did so with no regard for religious conversion of the Africans or the Indigenous peoples they dominated. For instance, where the Catholic Church posited that the slave had a soul that with baptism belonged to the Catholic Church, the Protestants who became the dominant slavers in North America argued that the slave was chattel like an animal and had no soul; consequently, baptism was irrelevant. It was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that Protestant slaveholders in the North Atlantic British colonies were coerced by anti-slavery advocates into petitioning the English king to allow the baptism of enslaved Africans. The king responded allowing the baptism of the enslaved, while asserting that such acts would not alter their chattel status. Hence, at exactly the same time as Europeans began claiming greater freedoms for themselves in their home countries, they instituted exploitative forced work systems for the Africans they "discovered," even when they baptized those persons as Christians (Bernasconi and Lott; Higginbotham).

Major terms and concepts: African diaspora, Doctrine of Discovery, Amerindians, indenture, "Slave Laws," "Black Codes," Maroon colony, "salt water" slaves, "Seasoning," Manumission, "money crops," proslavery clauses, slave resistance, Haitian Revolution, Cotton Kingdom, "task system," "Black Belt," "peculiar institution," First Emancipation, slave compensation, extended family, Africanisms, "invisible institution," Abolitionist Movement, Underground Railroad, general emancipation.

The New World Slave System

In 1492, a half-century after the Portuguese began trading enslaved Africans into nations of the Mediterranean basin, Christopher Columbus claimed "discovery" of the Caribbean for Spain. In 1500, Pedro Alvares Cabral claimed Brazil for Portugal. Spanish explorer Juan de Ponce de León landed on the coast of North America in 1513, while Vasco Núñez de Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and reached the Pacific Ocean. By 1519, Hernán Cortés had disembarked in Mexico with an army that through arms and the spread of diseases unfamiliar to the indigenous population overran the Aztec Empire.

These events linked Africa, Europe, and the New World; areas of the Caribbean; and North and South America, with the approximately 12.5 million captive Africans taken from Africa, 10.8 million of whom escaped death and survived the Middle Passage from 1441 to 1888. Death claimed many lives during the Middle Passage. Death rates were astronomical on slave ships until 1750, owing to malaria, yellow fever, measles, smallpox, hookworm, scurvy, and dysentery; at least one-third of all Africans

taken from west coast of Africa perished during the Middle Passage (see Sowande M. Mustakeem). Captive Africans were taken from eight regions today identified as Senegambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Republic of Benin, southwestern Nigeria, southeastern Nigeria, Cameroon, West Central Africa, and Southeast Africa.

The destinations of African captives: 43% were taken to Brazil, another 44% of the enslaved were taken to the English, French, and Spanish colonies in the Caribbean to cultivate sugar and coffee, 7% of captives were taken to the mainland South American colonies, only 4% lived their lives in the British North Atlantic colonies, and 2% of captives remained in Africa. Further numerical data reveals the following specific data on the destinations of enslaved Africans: British North America—500,000; Spanish Caribbean, North and South America—2,500,000; British Caribbean—2,000,000; French Caribbean—1,600,000; Dutch Caribbean—500,000; Danish Caribbean—28,000; Portuguese Brazil—4,000,000; and Old World (Europe)—200,000 (see Lisa A. Lindsay).

The monarchs of many Western European nations participated in the slave trade, specifically Portugal, Spain, England, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany. Royal families recruited other elites and established "chartered" companies (early corporations) that promised a monopoly of profits related to the company's slave trading activities. The stock issuing financial ventures established to dominate the slave trade by Western nations were named The Royal African Company; The Royal French Guinea Company; Company of Royal Adventurers Trading to Africa; The Dutch West Indies Company; The Danish West Indies Company; The French West Indies Company; The Senegal Company; The Swedish African Company; The Havana Company; The Virginia Company; The Hudson Bay Company; The Guinea Company; Casa dos Escravos (Lisbon); The German Kingdom of Brandenburg; and The South Seas Company.

Building on Africans' forced migration and bondage in the Western Hemisphere, this chapter discusses the evolution, nature, and destruction of slavery in the North Atlantic colonies that became the United States.

Racial slavery spread with the white conquest of the New World, where mining and labor-intensive cash crop agriculture required a massive exploitation of laborers. The biggest portion of exploited labor came from the conquered Aztecs, Incas, and other Indigenous Peoples (Amerindians) who fell to European firearms. During the first century of white-red contact, Indigenous peoples were also decimated (from a population of 100,000,000 to 10,000,000) by white-borne diseases like malaria, measles, and smallpox. They slaved in the gold and silver mines of South America, while often attacking their captors and escaping in familiar terrain. As the Amerindians perished in lowland and coastal areas, the conquerors brought white "indentured servants" and black slaves to replace them. Servants earned their transportation by a contract of indenture to labor for a term of several years, routinely seven. By 1650, some 849,000 whites (Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, and Dutch), compared to 384,000 captive blacks, inhabited the Americas. Better wages in England and

Europe, however, reduced supplies of cheap servant workers so white colonists imported more and more captives from Africa, swelling the enslaved population.

Colonists emphasized the advantages of doing so. For example, blacks could be held in perpetuity. Runaways, because of their black skin, would be recognizable among whites. Blacks were considered cannibals and "pagans" (worshippers of ancestors or tribal gods). The rules of Christian conduct did not include such "heathens." Presumed mentally inferior but physically superior, Africans could be disciplined harshly, and the brutal treatment meted out to Amerindians and enslaved Africans went largely unreported on back in European social circles. Furthermore, white colonists began to invent myths and stereotypes about the captive Africans in their midst; African populations were believed to be immune to tropical diseases, tolerant of inclement weather, and inexhaustible. When African death rates soared in the Caribbean, whites ignored the reality that many Africans were being worked to death by the demands placed on their life force; this was particularly the case in areas where whites drove the enslaved hard to maximize profits from sugar cultivation (see Williams).

Slavery anchored merchant capitalism; its labor intensive manpower fueled the colonies' economies. Sugar cane was the major crop of the Portuguese in Brazil. Regions of Bahia and Pernambuco in the north and Rio de Janeiro in the south produced the bulk of it. By the 1580s, Brazil was the chief sugar producer and in turn made the 1600s "the century of sugar." Tobacco and sugar cane were cultivated in the British Caribbean (Barbados, Jamaica), as were coffee and cotton. Such crops necessitated strong backs and hands and Atlantic slavers supplied them, preferring to capture African males more so than females. The enslaved were abused and severely overworked. The historian Basil Davidson quotes a British eyewitness in the Dutch West Indian colony of Suriname whose comment applied to other places as well. "Plantation mortality was so high, he found, that the whole race of healthy slaves, consisting of 50,000, are totally extinct once every twenty years." Few slave owners cared as long as they made money. Profit had become their *sine qua non*. The slave trade escalated and the physical deprivations that the enslaved endured intensified as the European appetite for sugar and tobacco exploded and commodity prices for those items soared.

Even as it framed cultural exchanges between Europeans, Indians, and Africans, slavery was dehumanizing. Interracial sexual contacts generated groups of mestizos (European-Indian), mulattoes (European-African), and mustees (African-Indian) in all areas of the hemisphere. In the Spanish and Portuguese domains, the Catholic Church sought "to mitigate the evils of slavery" by teaching the humanity of the slave. But slaves faced harsh conditions—frequent flogging, unhealthy clothing, poor diet, and insufficient housing. Bondwomen were exposed to rape and, despite the hardships of childbirth and mothering, labored with men in the fields. In many colonies the blacks outnumbered whites. "Black Codes," such as the French Code Noir of 1685, were intended to restrict slaves' mobility (by requiring passes), to crush rebelliousness (by hanging insurgents), establish intergenerational slavery (a black or mulatto child born to an enslaved woman followed the status of its mother regardless of whether the father was also enslaved or a white man), and to enforce white supremacy (by

forbidding assaulting, disobeying whites) (see Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg). Indeed, as time passed, by the nineteenth century white colonists established an internal slave trade in a number of countries in the Americas (see Johnson, 2004).

Many of those enslaved accommodated under threat of physical violence or food deprivation, but records show that many resisted. White laws revealed persistent angst about rebellious slaves, usually males (females were unwilling to leave their children behind) who ran away intermittently. Some instigated bloody insurrections that took white lives and instilled fear. In 1620, Santo Domingo fugitives created a Maroon colony (refuge for enslaved rebels) and started three uprisings. When the British captured Jamaica from the Spanish in 1655, numerous enslaved blacks fled to the mountains. Once there, they repeatedly attacked or robbed plantations and retreated to their mountain refuges. Also, we have evidence that there were 493 known slave revolts on Atlantic slave ships destined for the New World—contrary to the carefully crafted myth of the docile slave invented by whites who supported slavery (see Eltis).

Resistance and Rebellion: A Recurring Response to Oppression

Major Caribbean Slave Revolts:

1700–75; 1795–96	Maroon Wars, Jamaica
1735–36	Tacky's revolt, Antigua & Barbuda
1760	Tacky's revolt, Jamaica
1791–1804	St. Domingue/Haiti Revolution and wars (the enslaved destroyed the invading armies of France, Spain, and Britain)
1795–97	Fedon's rebellion, Grenada
1816	Bussa's rebellion, Barbados
1823	Demerara revolt, Demerara
1831–32	Baptist war, Jamaica

Major North American Slave Revolts:

1626	Bacon's Rebellion, Virginia
1712	Slave plot, New York City
1739	Stono Rebellion, South Carolina
1795/1811	Pointe Coupee slave rebellions
1800	Gabriel Prosser's revolt, Virginia
1822	Denmark Vesey's insurrection plot, South Carolina
1831	Nat Turner's revolt, Virginia

Slavery's development in the Caribbean islands greatly shaped North American slavery. Both systems fed raw materials, commodities, and capital into Britain's man-

ufactures. The bulk of the enslaved transported to the thirteen seaboard colonies controlled by the king of England originated in the Caribbean, which provided the first ports of call for slave ships and received a third of North America's agricultural produce until 1815. On island plantations the new or "saltwater" enslaved underwent "Seasoning," which happened in two ways: by placing newcomers with enslaved veterans to learn work routines, and by a "breaking in" regimen. "Breaking in" involved overwork, torture, and sometimes death. Bondsmen and women succumbed to whipping and disease as well. Many were killed fleeing their tormentors and the white patrollers who were hired by slaveholders to scour the countryside looking for runaway captives.

Slavery in the United States

Black bondage in the British colonies that became the United States spanned two and a half centuries, far more than the 153 years since the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution decreed freedom from slavery. Slavery evolved in the colonial period, continued during the American Revolution, expanded throughout the South following the invention of the cotton gin, and became the single largest contributor to the nation's Gross National Product (GNP) between 1830 and 1860. More than any other activity yielding profit, by the first third of the nineteenth century, the enslaved and the commodities they produced—especially cotton—were the most valuable contributors to wealth building in the nation (see Johnson 2013). In *The Half Has Never Been Told*, Edward E. Baptist argues that slavery created a veritable empire in America: "From the 1790s to the 1860s, enslavers moved 1 million people from the old slave states to the new. They went from making no cotton to speak of in 1790 to making almost 2 billion pounds of it in 1860. Enslaved African Americans built the modern United States, and indeed the entire modern world, in ways both obvious and hidden" (p. xxiii).

Long before the British settled at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, Africans came to North America. In 1526, about 400 Spaniards with 100 slaves arrived on the coast of the Cape Fear River. But their settlement failed due to famine, internal strife, and a slave uprising. Survivors decamped for Santo Domingo, even as the rebel slaves fled among the Amerindians. Enslaved Africans serviced subsequent Spanish expeditions, helping to settle St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565. In 1584, the British planted a colony at Roanoke Island, but in 1591 rescuers found the site deserted. Sir Francis Drake's fleet, carrying 300 Amerindian and 200 African prisoners, rescued settlers around 1588, but during that rescue the Amerindians and Africans escaped.

Succeeding generations of Africans would not escape as readily. In 1619, two white Virginians, Governor George Yeardley and Abraham Pierson, a merchant, purchased all twenty captive Africans held onboard the *White Lion*, a ship that docked in Jamestown in exchange for corn and supplies. According to records, once among the

white colonists, the Africans (seventeen men and three women) worked as servants on the large plantations that both men owned. At that time Jamestown was one of the few colonies that had not legalized slavery, as the plantation owners worked the blacks like servants. Indentured whites customarily got freedom dues (clothes, and a few acres of land) after completing their work terms. White servants were also able to assimilate and prosper, but this pattern began to elude the "black indentured servants." Deemed different in ways that suggest the emergence of racist thinking, beginning in 1639 blacks were forbidden to possess firearms.

Virginia's pioneer Africans and their posterity thus had a bleak future. There were only 23 of them among 2,000 whites in 1623, as June Purcell Guild explains. The black population grew not only by births, but also by the importation of captured Africans, totaling 300 in 1649. Before the middle of the seventeenth century racism emerged; black servants in Virginia were considered subhuman, and they met with harsher discipline and served longer indentures. White prejudice targeted them, as was the case in 1640 when a judge rendered a decision regarding John Punch. John Punch, a black man, ran away with two white men from their indentured service on a plantation in Virginia. The trio were captured and returned to stand before a judge who ordered all three men flogged. Further punishment by the judge required the two white men to serve some additional time, but they were to be released once their work obligations were fulfilled. But, when the judge directed his attention to the additional punishment for John Punch, he ordered him to serve the plantation owner for the remainder of his "natural life," with no opportunity ever for freedom. Clearly, by 1640 John Punch's "race" determined the legal treatment he received. Scholars note this point as evidence of the different and unequal treatment—the emergence of racism and the condition of lifelong servitude for blacks in Virginia (see Higginbotham).

Statuses of "negroe" and "slave" soon overlapped, even while Anglicans had begun to evangelize blacks. In 1641, Boston colony authorized slavery in the *Bill of Liberties*. But, white plantation slaveholders who appointed themselves as the Virginia House of Burgess led the way by creating a body of "slave law" that served as the template for other colonies. In a matter of a few decades, colonial slave law established several important objectives: the enslaved were to be branded as the chattel property; the children of enslaved women were never to be free, regardless of paternity; slavery was to be intergenerational as the status of slave passed through one's mother; slaveholders were to exercise "absolute authority"—the power to maim or kill without penalty or prosecution; baptism was never to alter the status of "slave"; and, slave codes and runaway slave laws were to be strictly enforced (see Higginbotham).

In *The Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process*, federal judge and legal scholar A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. located the legislative statutes by which colonial slaveholders crafted a "racial" slave society. In 1662, Virginia ruled "that all children borne in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother." Freedom was denied to Christianized blacks in 1667: "It is enacted and declared by this grand assembly, and the authority thereof, that the conferring of

baptism doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom." Blacks comprised 2,000 taxables or five percent of inhabitants in 1671. Both in 1670 and 1682, the legislature authorized that "all persons of non-Christian nationalities thereafter coming into the colony, whether they came by sea or land and whether or not they had been converted to Christianity after capture ... were slaves for life." Maryland passed a similar statute in 1663.

North America was a closed society. Some revisionist historians argue, as does Gary B. Nash, "that slavery in Spanish and Portuguese America was never as harsh as in Anglo-America nor were the doors to eventual freedom so tightly closed." Revisionists contend that Africans had religious protections and frequently commingled with whites in Brazil and Cuba. The enslaved could achieve manumission (liberation from slavery) in Venezuela, form autonomous enclaves, and become valued members of the larger society. The enslaved in British America, by contrast, "lost all of their rights" and were "treated as mere chattel property." Britons disdained slave manumissions, enacted anti-miscegenation statutes, insisted on intergenerational enslavement through black women's wombs, and despised the free black caste, so argues Ibram X. Kendi in his magnificent volume *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas*.

The number of blacks in North America increased steadily in the 1600s. Slavery advanced through Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, and Georgia, into New York, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New England—covering a broad landscape. By the century's end, there were nearly 25,000 enslaved Africans and Creole American-born blacks, largely male and perhaps a tenth of all colonists. Southern regions domiciled the largest proportion of the enslaved. Large plantations dotted the Chesapeake, Tidewater, and Low Country. Producing "money crops," the enslaved worked on satellite farms or quarters in squads (tobacco) and by assigned tasks (rice, indigo). Owing to a warmer climate and willful neglect, masters' maintenance expenses were minimal. Fewer of the enslaved were used in the middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Their farms were usually small, except in plantation locations along the Hudson and Delaware Rivers. Northerners utilized comparatively few of the enslaved in their region's business and commerce. Enslaved blacks were least numerous in New England, where family farming prevailed. In 1700, New Englanders held fewer than 1,000 enslaved blacks, many of them in households of well-to-do merchants.

The black presence grew steadily in the eighteenth century. The greatest numbers of Africans arrived between 1721 and 1780, when a decreasing male-female imbalance permitted them to build families and become self-reproducing. In 1708, Virginia counted 12,000 black slaves and added over 1,000 a year thereafter. In 1743, the colony recorded 42,000 captive blacks; by 1756 it reported 120,000. The population was almost evenly divided between blacks and whites in 1775. South Carolina's white and black races were numerically even in 1708. Yet, by 1765, South Carolina tabulated 40,000 whites and 90,000 blacks. The black majority endured brutal repression.

Bondage fueled the Atlantic slave trade still further. Between 1715 and 1750, some 2,500 enslaved Africans were imported annually. The annual importation of captives averaged 7,500 in the 1760s. Economic expansion was clearly wedded to this trafficking, as the profits generated by unpaid slave labor served to create a slaveholding aristocracy whose wealth rivaled that of European elites. The trafficking in African flesh persisted in spite of the Declaration of Independence, which, capturing the spirit of the Enlightenment Movement, defined liberty as an "inalienable" human borderlands by the late 1780s (see Allen). As a matter of fact, the 1787 United States Constitution supported black enslavement in five sections of the document: Article I, Section 2; Article I, Section 8; Article I, Section 9; Article IV, Section 2; and, Article IV, Section 4. Among the pro-slavery issues that the noted paragraphs addressed were: that the new republic's Constitution shielded the slave trade from intrusion until 1808, sheltered black enslavement via the three-fifths compromise (affirmative action for the master class) that used black men bodies to establish white political representation in Congress, provided for apprehending slave runaways, and collected slave importation taxes to provide funding for the federal government's role in suppressing slave insurrections (see Wiecek; Goldstone).

The engine fueling slavery in the United States was the Industrial Revolution, especially its cotton market, which created the Empire of Cotton (see Johnson). Demand by overseas and New England textile industries, plus the invention of the cotton gin in 1792, made the South cotton's leading supplier. This quickened slavery, despite soil exhaustion in parts of Maryland and Virginia, as it crisscrossed the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 and ushered in the Cotton Kingdom. It spurred the removal of probably 1.5 million enslaved blacks from the Upper South to the Lower South by 1850. Consequently, despite the 1808 federal ban on the foreign slave trade, illegal importing and domestic trading of slaves escalated. Even though most northern states outlawed slavery or chose to gradually emancipate enslaved blacks, many northern merchants, banks, insurance companies, and mill owners were deeply immersed and complicit in American slavery (see Farrow, Lang, and Frank).

Domestic traders clustered in Maryland and Virginia (sites of a slave surplus). After 1815, firms in Baltimore, Alexandria, and Richmond sold the enslaved at prices ranging from \$350 in Virginia to over \$500 in Louisiana. Prices averaged \$1,000 in Virginia and \$1,500 in Louisiana by 1860. Local newspapers advertised slave auctions, escapes, and arrests. Auction blocks, jails, pens, and coffles were universal sights. Some traffickers profited by hiring out or renting blacks. Others specialized in transport by coffer, flatboat, or wagon. Belying the stereotype of their docility, many of the enslaved wore neck, hand, or foot irons lest they should abscond. Chastised and flogged for disobedience, they were sometimes maimed for resisting separation especially from kin.

Planters abetted "slave breeding." Some Virginians did so to offset losses from exhausted soil and falling prices. Thomas R. Dew, professor of moral philosophy at William and Mary College, described Virginia in 1832 as "a negro raising state." Between 1830 and 1860, it sold "nearly three hundred thousand [slaves]—almost the

whole of her natural increase" (see Kenneth M. Stamp). One planter told northern visitor Frederick Law Olmsted that his bondwomen were "uncommonly good breeders," their babies being "worth two hundred dollars" the moment they "drew breath." Coaxed by rewards like extra rations and habitually raped, many enslaved black females "became mothers at thirteen and fourteen years of age," and many birthed more than ten children. Every infant a black woman birthed was enslaved and saved the slaveholder the expense of purchasing another black person. Enslaved women worked as reproducers and field workers, a double duty labor requirement, that often took a toll on their health and nursing ability; infant mortality in the slave quarters was very high.

The enslaved shouldered the Southern economy, making Southern slaveholders among the fifth richest group of men in the world. The enslaved population increased from about 700,000 in 1790 to 3.2 million in 1850 and reached 4 million by 1860. In 1850, approximately 500,000 of the enslaved resided in towns and cities. Over 2 million were cotton cultivators. Others of the enslaved cultivated corn, tobacco, rice, and sugar cane. Usually, whip-wielding white overseers and black drivers watched cotton and sugar cane cultivation worker "gangs." The average slave toiled from day-break until dark, typically on a farm. Rice producers adhered to a "task system." It set the slave's daily work (so many rows to hoe or drain) and rewarded its completion. To wit, an enslaved man or woman could finish their task by midday, then leave the field to tend their garden plot or pursue other self-help activities that did not violate the slaveholders' rules. Besides shouldering the burdens of fieldwork, the enslaved did a plethora of manual jobs and services. They worked in heavy industries—timber and construction; gold, coal, salt, iron, and lead mines; iron furnaces and tobacco factories; cotton presses and sawmills; road, railroad, and shipbuilding. Enslaved men also performed skilled crafts like blacksmithing and carpentry, and some black women made quilts.

A white minority dominated slaveholding, traditionally in the South's "Black Belt." Known for its black soil, cotton, and black-majority counties, this vast region swept through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas. One tenth of the region's white families owned enslaved blacks. Of all slave-owning whites, some 10,000 owned 50 or more slaves per family; 3,000 possessed 100 or more slaves per family. About three-fourths of whites had no familial or ownership ties to slavery. The "typical" white Southerner was a yeoman farmer and a non-slaveholder, but white skin accorded him significant social and psychic benefits. He may have been poor, barely better off materially than the members of the small free black caste that lived in his state, but he was white.

Slavery functioned principally: (1) to maintain a forced labor arrangement, using coercion and terror; (2) to perpetuate a caste structure of masters, non-slaveholders, slaves, and free blacks; and (3) to regulate race and class relations, using racist ideology to justify black subordination and white deference. Free blacks were allowed to own slaves and many did so to ransom or protect kinfolk. However, some elite free blacks (a minuscule number) did so for profit (see Kende).

White masters routinely maltreated slaves. For example, by isolating the house slave from the field hand, the master attempted to weaken slaves' solidarity. While the master's informant against field hands normally was a loyal domestic slave, they did not give scores of plots away, even as they were surely aware of the conspiracies. The enslaved suffered extreme privation, yet they shared resources to subsist. They also invented strategies to mask their feelings, survive, and fight back. Their quarters consisted of a single or double row of cabins near the overseer's house. Ordinarily, a slave cabin was drafty, unfurnished, and overcrowded. Field hands regularly went barefooted and ragged, even in the winter. The enslaved received weekly rations of hominy and cornmeal, sometimes with fatback bacon or salt pork. So they hunted, fished, and tended small gardens to provide supplemental food.

Legally, the slave was a chattel. The enslaved could not be parties in lawsuits, except indirectly when a free person sued on their behalf. They could offer testimony in court only against other blacks. The enslaved were forbidden to enter agreements for exchanging goods and services. Nor could they own property by law. Their marriages had no legal standing. But laws safeguarded the master's interests. For instance, states assessed severe penalties for theft or arson by the enslaved. When a slave was executed for a capital crime, states ordinarily paid the owner a slave compensation amount from tax revenues. Owners decided if and when to hire out or sell the enslaved. Used as collateral for loans, the enslaved could be taken by creditors instead of cash payments. Slave families often would be severed and sold to liquidate a master's estate.

Southern planters dreaded the idea of black freedom. During the First Emancipation in the North (1780–1846), they decided to outlaw manumission. Lower South states such as Alabama and Georgia outlawed it in the early 1800s, declaring freedmen to be a menace to those who were enslaved. The border state of Maryland avoided such a declaration but insisted that manumitted blacks must not become public charges when they were old or sick. In the Upper South, both Virginia and North Carolina mandated that manumitted blacks leave these states or be re-enslaved. Owners could still manumit slaves and relocate them to a free state by will, but this code was repealed in the 1840s and 1850s. Violators risked prosecution and expulsion.

The enslaved comprised an oppressed lot. They were imprisoned on plantations, unless given permission to leave. Any white person could arrest a slave, particularly one traveling without a pass or "freedom papers." Forging papers and possessing a firearm were felonies. Nor could the enslaved visit whites and free blacks or receive them as visitors. It was unlawful to teach the enslaved to read and write. They were never to strike whites, an offense punished by lashing or worse. Humane masters let the enslaved worship on their own, travel, trade, hunt with guns, or hire out. Some even allowed the enslaved to learn and to live autonomously. These benevolent acts were limited and overwhelmed by rampant inhumanity.

Armed force and slavery reigned side by side. Every county maintained a patrol to prevent the enslaved from congregating, arming, or revolting. All adult white males had to serve. The patrols as a rule depended on the poorer whites, which re-

sented wealthy masters and their slaves. States did not regulate plantations or convict masters for abusing slaves, who were, said the Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court in 1857, "so far inferior that they had no rights that the white man was bound to respect" (see Henry Steele Commager).

The Response to Slavery

Culturally, enslaved blacks bridged two worlds. Torn from their motherland, called by the poet Countee Cullen "women from whose loins I sprang when the birds of Eden sang," they became strangers in America. Cullen saw himself as "one three centuries removed from the scenes his fathers loved." The enslaved were mainly of West African origin in the Gold Coast, Bight of Biafra, and Congo-Angola subregions. Yoruba, Akan, and Bokongo were among the largest of their many tribes or ethnic groups. Africans and Creoles (American-born slaves) invented ways to communicate, cooperate, and resist. They braved oppression by methods that varied from accommodation and conformity to defiance and insurgence. Their resilience under adversity is hard to imagine today.

Slaves were complex, "a troublesome property." Supposedly childlike and obedient, they resorted to running away, malingering, sabotage, theft, poisoning, arson, and fighting. They endured and opposed domination, indirectly and directly. Facing brutal subjugation, the mass of bondmen and women took "the middle ground, in which conformity is often a self-conscious strategy and resistance is a carefully hedged affair that avoids all-or-nothing confrontations" (see James C. Scott). Many masters insisted that slaves were contented. But we must ask: why was slave society an armed camp? Why codes and compensations? Why overreact to rumors of insurrection? Why suppress freedom of thought? What an ex-slave termed "yearnings to be free" frightened and provoked slaveholders.

Africans so yearned for freedom during their captivity. In Africa, mostly the war prisoners of better-armed tribes, they were traded to European traders. Captives chanted songs expressing their sadness and suffering. They also committed suicide, fought openly, or otherwise rebelled. Their blood streaked the caravan routes from the interior to the coast. Rebellions broke out in holding pens or barracoons, in the dungeons of slave forts, at loading docks, and aboard ships on the Gambia River and Atlantic Ocean. Their transatlantic "middle passage" lasted three to four months, with 25–40% of slaves dying from illnesses, mutinies, and suicides. Survivors clung to native customs or Africanisms, like naming children by the days of the week to remember time and place. Affirming themselves, the enslaved rebelled in Columbia (1550) and Brazil (1630).

The enslaved in North America drew on that African heritage for affirmation. African "feasts and burials" were common. After watching a slave funeral in colonial Virginia, one Briton observed: "They sing and dance and drink to the dead his new

home, which some believe to be in old Guinea" (see June Purcell Guild). At this solemn ritual they could share memories of home, plan to flee and hide among the Amerindians, or conspire to revolt. In any case, black gatherings troubled whites. As early as 1644, the Virginia assembly passed a resolution "concerning the riotous and rebellious conduct ... of Negroes." It resolved in 1680 "the frequent meeting of considerable numbers of negro slaves under pretense of feasts and burials is judged of dangerous consequence."

Freed blacks, meantime, aspired to get ahead. On Virginia's Eastern Shore, some prospered as artisans, buying tracts of farmland and servants of both races. They were parties in contracts and lawsuits. Anthony Johnson owned 250 acres and therewith was qualified to vote. Manumitted around 1635, Johnson then acquired land and livestock in Northampton County. As his herds multiplied, he bought a dozen black and white laborers. His home and plantation burned in 1653, but he petitioned the court for tax relief. Granting it, the justices excused Johnson's wife and two daughters "from paying 'Taxes and Charges in Northampton County' ... for 'their natural lives'" (see T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes). Other free black landowners included Benjamin Doyle, 300 acres in Surry County; John Harris, 50 acres in New Kent County; and Phillip Morgan, 20 acres in York County.

Bondpeople persevered. They forged an Afro-American "slave culture" grounded in an extended family. Parents, children, grandparents, other blood relatives, and fictive kinpeople formed help and nurturing networks (see Herbert G. Gutman). They hid their aspirations from whites. In candle-lit cabins Africans and Creoles agreed, disagreed, negotiated, and conspired to be free. They partnered in the fields, creating pidgin languages not understood by slaveholders. Slave communities gave them sanctuary from auctions and toil, a space in which to socialize. They chose leaders, practiced mutual aid, and taught job skills and coping strategies to their children. Through oral traditions (African trickster tales), folklore narratives, and work songs, they instilled values of pride, sharing, and solidarity (see Lawrence W. Levine).

Christianity was a vital source of black aspiration and inspiration. Hundreds of the enslaved converted during the southern sweep of the "Second Great Awakening," a massive revival begun in the 1790s. Methodists and Baptists, who welcomed poor folk, attracted large numbers of slave converts. Enslaved blacks made Christian faith and worship their "invisible institution." They worshiped at "hush harbors," secluded clearings in gullies, ravines, or woods. In towns they congregated in church houses. Revivals and Sunday services were "occasions for socializing, news gathering, and picnicking as well as for prayer" (see Albert J. Raboteau). Black exhorters and preachers told the faithful about the gospel of liberty. Worship featured testifying, ring shouts, and spirituals. The spiritual "O Canaan, sweet Canaan, I am bound for the land of Canaan" meant not only deliverance in heaven but also freedom on Earth.

Learning, too, was a stepping stone to liberation. The bondman and woman who could read and write were shining lights in the community. His master's wife taught the young Maryland slave Frederick Douglass. "The argument which he so warmly

urged, against my learning to read, only served to inspire me with a desire and determination to learn," Douglass recalled later. "In learning to read, I owe almost as much to the bitter opposition of my master, as to the kindly aid of my mistress. I acknowledge the benefit of both" (see Michael Meyer). Masters impeded attempts to educate blacks but knew that training could make them more profitable. Scores of bondmen were trained in skilled crafts and industries, including metallurgy and woodworking that their forebears brought from Africa. Such skills diversified slaves' labor (many were hired out) and nurtured their autonomy.

Christian missions promoted slave literacy and salvation. In 1620, the English clergy pledged to ameliorate the plight of those "in bondage beyond the seas." This ministry was intact a century later when Thomas Bray founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. An arm of the Anglican Church, the society raised funds, trained teachers, and opened schools for Amerindians, the enslaved, and free blacks in Charleston, Savannah, and parts of Georgia. Quakers embraced and energized this cause. Between 1764 and 1785, they launched a Virginia mission school and trusteeship to train blacks for manumission. Presbyterians took similar steps. They sponsored John Chavis, a free black Revolutionary War veteran, at Princeton Seminary in the 1790s. Chavis rose to be a prominent minister and schoolmaster to whites and free blacks in North Carolina until 1831, when the state's slave code silenced black preachers.

Literacy and slavery were incompatible, of course. Education was denied to enslaved Africans and Creoles because it could inspire freedom. The educated slave contradicted masters' caricatures of a dissembling "Sambo" or "Mammy." Harriet Ann Jacobs, an enslaved literate North Carolina woman, personified the contradiction. Taught to read and sew by her mistress, she defied a licentious master by hiding from him for seven years before fleeing to the North. Her narrative, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (1861), showed black ideals of dignity and self-determination. Still, authorities suppressed dissident slaves, for whom there was no mercy. Rape and murder of whites, arson, and conspiracy were punished by execution. From 1705 to 1865, Virginia sentenced thousands of the enslaved to whippings or other corporal punishment, deported at least 983, and put 1,237 to death (see Philip J. Schwarz). Owners of executed slaves were compensated.

Slaves authored an enduring tradition of struggle. Generations sang "O Freedom, O Freedom over me; and before I'll be a slave I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free." In 1712, New York City authorities burned thirteen at the stake, hanged eighteen, and deported eighty enslaved blacks for torching buildings and killing nine whites. Fear prompted the assembly to impose a heavy tax on slave imports. Elsewhere, in South Carolina bondmen killed three whites in 1720. In 1730, a bondman revealed his brethren's plot to capture Charleston. Under pretense of holding a "dancing bout" in St. Paul's Parish, blacks gathered together, ready to seize arms, but the militia defended the armory. Most of the rebels were killed and a few escaped. The Stono Rebellion of 1739 in South Carolina incited white panic across the South. Led by African-born Jemmy, about twenty enslaved black men marched toward Spanish

Florida, beating drums, burning houses, killing white people, and adding recruits. While they camped, a white posse ambushed and killed most of them.

The "inalienable rights" of the American Revolution forecast gradual emancipation in the North amidst widening slave unrest in the South. Many of the enslaved ran to the British lines as Lord Dunmore's Proclamation promised freedom to them. Patriot masters manumitted many of the enslaved. Probably 100,000 slaves of British Loyalists and American Patriots were freed by flight, manumission, and evacuation with the British Army at the war's end. Others bolted into Canada or to Florida among the Amerindians. Those blacks were inspired who learned of the slave rebellion in the French colony of St. Domingue. Also known as the Haitian Revolution, it began in 1791. Headed by Toussaint L'Ouverture, the enslaved rose up against the whites and won their freedom in 1793 and independence by 1804. Numerous slaveholders embarked for Cuba, New Orleans, Savannah, Charleston, and Baltimore. France abandoned military plans to reclaim St. Domingue (renamed Haiti) and consented to a US purchase of Louisiana. The advent of an independent black republic, "the child of a revolt, had an emboldening effect on the slaves in the United States" (see Benjamin Quarles).

Major slave conspiracies in the United States developed under the leadership of Gabriel Prosser in Richmond (1800), Denmark Vesey in Charleston, South Carolina (1822), and Nat Turner in Southampton County, Virginia (1831). Gabriel's conspiracy morphed on the plantation of Thomas Prosser, a few miles from town. Emulating the rebels on St. Domingue, he and 110 bondmen made a vow to fight for liberty or death. They planned to capture the armory and strategic buildings, believing that 50,000 slaves would join the battle. But one slave told his master; a fierce storm arose on the target date and the federal cavalry decimated them. After speedy trials, Gabriel and three dozen of his brethren died on the gallows. Vesey purchased his freedom in 1800 with winnings from a lottery. An exhorter in the local African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, he had been to St. Domingue and, like Toussaint, wanted to liberate his people. Accordingly, he set a judgment day against slaveholders. Insurgents planned to take over and torch Charleston. Then, after seizing all ships, they would sail to the West Indies. But a spy disclosed the plot and caused a bloody backlash. Authorities hanged Vesey alongside thirty-four others and deported thirty-seven to slavery in the Caribbean, which was known to be harsher. Laws were enacted to ban free blacks from entering the state, to close Charleston's AME Church, to silence black preachers, and to prohibit slave importation. Turner's insurrection happened within seventy miles of Richmond and incited widespread fear. A mystic and lay preacher, he exerted great influence over his peers. So, on a divinely appointed night, he and his followers invaded plantations, killing sixty whites before militias retaliated. Militias killed more than a hundred blacks. Turner, thirteen enslaved men, and three black freemen were tried and hanged.

Resistance escalated. The enslaved purchased and stole freedom. Using earnings from hiring out, a craft, or vending, many paid their owners' asking price. North Carolina slaves Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley and Lunsford Lane liberated themselves and

family members by "bill of sale." Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, and Harriet Tubman escaped, like 100,000 others between 1810 and 1850. Some of the enslaved fled slavery on their own, but most received help from black and white conductors and stations on the fabled *Underground Railroad*. Perhaps 40,000 fugitives traveled through Ohio alone. Fugitive and narrator William Wells Brown saw them "running from under the stars and stripes, and taking refuge in the Canadas; ... some leaving their wives, some their husbands, some leaving their children, some their brothers, and some their sisters" (see Paul Jefferson). They represented an estimated loss of \$30,000,000 to slaveholders, who demanded stricter federal enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act (1850). Most bondmen, women, and children could not escape, but they longed to break their shackles. Earlier slave uprisings forecast abolitionist John Brown's aborted insurrection at Harpers Ferry in 1859.

Antislavery and Emancipation

Accelerated by the activism of African Americans and their allies, events sweeping from the 1830s to 1861 sharpened conflict over the "peculiar institution." The outcome was Southern secession, the Civil War, the destruction of slavery, and the constitutional emancipation of four million black folk, freeing "a larger number of slaves than lived in all other New World slave societies combined" (see Ira Berlin et al.). Early efforts to ameliorate and contain slavery set the stage for those consequences. Opposition to bondage was deep-rooted, with the enslaved and free blacks playing critical roles in organized antislavery.

Religious dissenters were crucial. As the enslaved hoped and masters feared, a few religious groups condemned slavery as immoral. Quakers helped to lead the cause. They ceased slave trading and, by the 1760s, slaveholding. Forming an abolition society in 1775, the Quakers supported free black petitioners and runaway bondmen during the Revolutionary War. In the North, ill suited for a slave economy of scale, the First Emancipation had begun. A gradual process, it lasted until 1846. Vermont authorized abolition in 1777; Massachusetts and Pennsylvania in 1780; New Hampshire in 1783; Rhode Island and Connecticut in 1784; New York in 1799 and 1827; and New Jersey in 1804 (see Arthur Zilversmit). At the same time, with passage of the Missouri Compromise, Congress barred slavery in the territory north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi Rivers.

Antislavery societies seized the moment. They publicized slavery's injustices and strengthened their ties to British abolitionists such as Olaudah Equiano, whose influential *Narrative* traced his journey from kidnapping in Africa at age eleven and New World bondage to buying his freedom. "Tortures, murder, and every imaginable barbarity and iniquity, are practised upon the poor slaves with impunity," he asserted. "I hope the slave trade will be abolished" (see Robert J. Allison). Antislavery societies assisted runaways, provided schooling for blacks, and, at times, promoted colonization of freed blacks, and mobilized through their churches, clubs, and fraternal orders.

Like shipbuilder Paul Cuffee of Westport, Massachusetts, many free blacks were back-to-Africa pro-colonizers.

However, sailmaker James Forten of Philadelphia rejected colonization because it would remove free from unfree African Americans. Frederick Douglass counted himself among the anti-colonizers. Anti-colonizers were the larger and more militant group. Airing "the contagion of liberty" born of Haiti's independence, they demanded abolition of slavery and denounced the American Colonization Society (ACS). Founded in 1816, ACS enlisted rich slaveholders among its members and established the African colony of Liberia (1821). The anti-colonizers also monitored congressional debates on the Missouri Compromise (1820), which admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, easing sectional tension even as abolitionism grew. By 1827 it consisted of 154 organizations, dozens of them black. Freedom and slavery were antithetical, abolitionists argued, widening the North-South divide. They challenged America to insure liberty to all.

Abolitionists were increasingly outspoken: "Remember Americans, that we must and shall be free," warned North Carolina-born free black Boston resident David Walker, in *Walker's Appeal*, which Southern legislatures suppressed (see Charles M. Wiltse). Walker excoriated ACS colonizing, arguing that "America is more our country than it is the whites'—we have enriched it with our blood." Invoking "a God of justice," he called upon the enslaved to wage a violent revolt. African emigration and individual manumission were like telling "a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm," declared William Lloyd Garrison, a white Bostonian and publisher of *The Liberator*, the leading abolitionist journal. "I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation" (see Truman Nelson). He vowed "no union with slaveholders." In 1833, two years after Nat Turner's rebellion and the year Parliament approved compensated emancipation in the British West Indies, Garrison and other radicals founded the American Anti-Slavery Society (AAS). It not only accepted women and blacks into membership, it also crusaded for immediate and uncompensated emancipation. Within a decade AAS distributed a million pieces of literature, chartered 1,350 branches, and recruited 250,000 members, Frederick Douglass being one of the most outstanding.

The movement exacerbated intersectional politics. When disputes about moral suasion versus political action split Garrisonians, opponents vilified them as "abolition tyrants." Activists such as Douglass still were the conscience of 1840s and 1850s third parties—Liberty, Free Soil, Republican—while the stirring orations of abolitionist Sojourner Truth or the freedom lawsuit of the enslaved Dred Scott intensified the "irrepressible conflict." To Southern planters, John Brown's raid and 1860 election of a free-soil Republican president confirmed the North's scheme to dominate the Union. They opted to protect their region and slave property and retain the ability to expand slavery westward by seceding from the Union.

Secession, the cornerstone of the Confederate States of America, ignited the Civil War. "One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong and ought not to be extended," explained President Abraham Lincoln. He proposed to disturb neither existing slavery nor the domain

of free labor but to preserve the Union. But abolitionists, as Douglass put it, envisioned "the complete and universal abolition of the whole slave system" (see Gary B. Nash et al.). The enslaved prayed that they were on the verge of "being free." An ex-slave woman remembered "the whisperings among the slaves—their talking of the possibility of freedom." Vindicating her, the Union defeated the Western world's most powerful planter class and forced emancipation.

Emancipation involved the interplay of the enslaved's initiative and Union strategy. Masters were upset as so-called docile slaves ran to Union lines; almost 30,000 by 1862. Called "contrabands," thousands more came, worked for wages, and helped prod Lincoln and Congress to confiscate Confederates' slaves; to emancipate the enslaved in the District of Columbia and allocate funds for colonizing them; to authorize recruitment of black soldiers; to secure diplomatic recognition from England and France (neither recognized the Confederacy); and, after a major victory on the battlefield, to declare the Emancipation Proclamation (1863). Though it exempted 800,000 slaves in Union-loyal Border States, Lincoln called it "an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity." As news of his words "forever free" spread, slaves' defections rose. Black enlistments in the Union Army and Navy totaled 200,000. Still, most blacks were not liberated until the final defeat of the Confederacy and adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865.

Freed people provided abundant evidence of their expectations. They undertook "a dress rehearsal for Reconstruction" in missionary and government experiments. In the Union-occupied Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia, among other places, they embraced free labor arrangements. They grasped the opportunity to earn wages and acquire land; to attend schools and worship in their own churches; to reunite slave families and develop black institutions. These experiences deepened their commitment to self-help and empowerment. In 1865, they hailed General William T. Sherman's Field Order Number 15, distributing Confederate lands to 40,000 freedmen, women, and children in forty-acre lots. Although the measure was rescinded, they fully expected "that, in short, we be dealt with as others are—in equity and justice" (see Thomas R. Frazier). With that hope, they determined to struggle for equality in modern America.

Summary

Underlining the above discussion is the importance of a theoretical approach emphasizing cultural encounter and fusion. New World slavery constructed a crucible of interaction between Amerindians, Europeans, and Africans. In the Caribbean and South America, as in the British North American colonies and eventual United States, red, white, and black peoples interacted in slave-based societies where whites exercised racial hegemony.

The hemispheric perspective provided in this chapter considers Africans' and African Americans' experience in and contribution to those multiracial interactions.

Scholars continue to explore the encounters, but no longer in terms of whether Africans were stripped culturally and then acculturated. As illustrated in Joseph E. Holloway, ed., *Africanisms in American Culture* (1990), they focus on the provenance, retention, and fusion of African culture in the Americas. Portia K. Maultsby, Beverly J. Robinson, and Robert L. Hall explore West African music, folklore, and religion in slaves' history. John E. Philips demonstrates that African retentions influenced the making of white America's customs (like cooking) and institutions. *Slave Culture* (1987) by Sterling Stuckey traces Africans' resilient values and worldview.

This chapter points to the *Doctrine of Discovery's* role in setting European monarchs on the path of domination of indigenous peoples in Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas, and Australia and New Zealand, and it emphasizes the evolution, character, and destruction of black bondage in the colonies and states that became the United States. Prior to the large-scale importing of Africans, whites did not hesitate to enslave the New World's indigenous peoples. As the Amerindians battled and escaped from the white conquerors, millions died in European-borne epidemics of malaria, measles, and smallpox. White servants also were too few to supply the mines and fields, so employers turned to Africa. Considered subhuman but robust, easily identified by their ebony and brown skin, African laborers were held in intergenerational servitude. Touted as an inexhaustible source of labor, they were the "final solution" to whites' labor problem in the New World and North America after 1619.

Slavery proved to be most profitable in the American South, creating an Empire of Cotton that extended to international markets. Enriching owners of especially cotton, but also tobacco, indigo, and sugar plantations, it chained generations of Africans and their descendants to a yoke of unpaid labor. The numbers of the enslaved on the mainland increased slowly not only by natural birth rate, but also by the slave trade increasing imports annually to 1650. Within a half-century there were about 25,000 enslaved Africans and American-born Creoles in British North America (nearly a tenth of the total population), and more than four million by 1860. In northern colonies, including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, farms were generally small and the numbers of the enslaved minimal. Indeed, businessmen viewed slave labor as an obstacle to commerce and industry. In 1700, New Englanders owned fewer than 1,000 of the enslaved, and many of them were houseworkers. Plantations dominated the Chesapeake and southern Low-Country, enslaving tens of thousands. Enslaved South Carolinians outnumbered whites 90,000 to 40,000 in 1765 alone. The enslaved were deemed essential to the planters' wealth and to the culture of white supremacy.

Black captivity lasted in spite of the Declaration of Independence, which defined liberty as an inalienable human right, and the US Constitution (via the three-fifths and other clauses). Slaves were classified as chattels; legally, they could not sue, own property, make contracts, marry, or learn to read and write. They could travel only by permission. Slavery's cruelty was palpable in the courts: when a bondman was executed for a capital crime, the state compensated his slaveholder.

Denying the humanity of Africans and African Americans, slavery served three major functions: to maintain forced labor, commonly by brutalizing enslaved men

and women; to sustain a caste order of masters, non-slaveholding whites, the enslaved, and free blacks; and to regulate race and class relations, using racism to enforce black subordination and white deference. Slavery thus evolved through nearly 250 years as an economic, political, and social superstructure that perpetuated planter domination, white supremacy, and black subjugation in the United States.

Culturally, the enslaved straddled two worlds. Uprooted from Africa, yet retaining many of their native traditions, they experienced subjugation and isolation in America. Captive blacks responded with resilience, entwining African survivals and American realities. Their responses varied on a continuum from abject acquiescence and passive resistance to confrontation and insurgency. The organized antislavery movement owed its effectiveness to individuals, groups, and organizations, white and black, from colonial times. It burgeoned during the American Revolution and First Emancipation, as well as in the national crisis of Southern secession, war, and the Emancipation Proclamation. It foreshadowed the Thirteenth Amendment, which ensured slaves' general emancipation, and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments that laid the foundation for racial equality and participation in democratic processes.

Study Questions and Activities

1. Forced displacement and isolation proved to be central mechanisms in New World enslavement of Africans. What are some other factors that explain why they were enslaved?
2. On the North American mainland, how and why did African slavery become so important in Southern colonies and states?
3. By what means did African American slaves seek survival and liberation?
4. Slaves and free blacks' actions propelled the issues that culminated in the Civil War and Thirteenth Amendment. Do you agree or disagree? Provide evidence for your position.
5. Annually, thousands of Americans visit the African diaspora landmark on the Island of Gorée, Dakar, Senegal. Discuss pros and cons of having a national slavery monument or museum in America.

Glossary

Abolitionist Movement: Biracial antislavery crusade (1831–1865) pursuing immediate abolition without compensation to masters.

African Diaspora: Dispersion of Africans throughout the world from ancient to modern times, mainly by slave trading and slavery; emphasis on transatlantic trade and its consequences in the Western Hemisphere (1441–1888).

Africanisms: Beliefs and customs of African origin; enabled slaves and free blacks to create African American culture and establish themselves as an integral part of a varied cultural mix in the Americas.

Amerindians: Indigenous peoples of the Americas; their civilizations and kingdoms thrived before the arrival of white colonists.

Black Belt: Region stretching through densely black counties from Virginia to Texas; center of cotton production and the antebellum slave system.

Black Codes: Laws regulating slaves and free blacks in slave colonies and states.

Cotton Kingdom: Expansion of cotton cultivation and slavery in the Lower South (1800–1860) along with the US textile industry.

Extended Family: Adaptation of African kinship; connecting the nuclear slave family to blood and fictive kin (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) in order to form a supportive network—locally and between plantations.

First Emancipation: Gradual freeing of slaves in northern states (1780–1846) by constitutions, courts, and legislatures.

General Emancipation: Thirteenth Amendment (1865), emancipating all slaves in US states and territories.

Haitian Revolution: The 1791 overthrow of slavery on the French island of St. Domingue culminating in independence (1804); fearful of its influence on slaves, the US refused to recognize the black republic until 1862.

Indenture: Servant's contract to work a fixed number of years for transportation and upkeep.

Invisible Institution: Black religion under slavery; slaves' conversion to and hidden practice of Christianity.

Manumission: Formal release of the slave by the slaveholder, usually in a deed or will.

Maroon Colony: Rebel slave community, typically in a remote or hazardous area.

Money Crops: Sugar, coffee, tobacco, corn, indigo, wheat, rice, and cotton were major ones; required intensive labor; their marketing helped to propel capitalism and slavery.

Peculiar Institution: Moniker for slavery in the American South; system of unfree labor, racial caste, and master-class domination; context of African American culture, agency, and freedom struggle.

Proslavery Clauses: Article I, sections 2, 8, 9, Article IV, section 2 of the US Constitution, legalizing slavery.

Saltwater slaves: New imports of enslaved Africans in the transatlantic slave trade.

Seasoning: Slavemaking on plantations; work routines, breaking the will of new slaves.

Slave Compensation: Market price of an executed bondman or woman, payable to the master; allocated from tax revenues of the colony or state.

Task System: Incentive-based labor practice started on rice plantations; slaves who completed assigned tasks could leave the fields by mid-afternoon to help themselves.

Underground Railroad: South-to-North support networks for runaway slaves; some runaways authored narratives and became abolitionist leaders.

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6

European Exploration and Conquest of Africa

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Introduction

The following chapter discusses the reasons why Europeans became interested in Africa in the aftermath of the slave trade, the strategies they used to divide and conquer the continent beginning in 1884–1885, and how they managed to maintain an exploitative rule on the continent until the 1960s and 1970s. Although the historicity of colonial rule is indisputable, analysts' views about the motives that led the Europeans to conquer Africa by force during the nineteenth century differ. While some tend to stress only economic motives as a corollary to the industrial revolution in Europe, others point to the preponderance of nationalist reasons among the nation-states of Europe that regarded overseas empires as symbols of national grandeur.

Some experts, including economist Joseph Schumpeter, have even viewed imperialism as an "atavism" or as an irrational but irresistible historical tendency on the part of any state to attempt to conquer alien peoples and lands. Most scholars, however, claim that to understand Western imperialism in Africa, one must analyze Europe, country by country, and that economic, nationalist, cultural, and religious factors, as well as "scientific" curiosity, played a role. According to them, therefore, no single theory can adequately explain European activities in Africa during the period 1885–1960. On colonialism, Africanists are still debating the nature of direct and indirect rule, its policies, and its effect upon the Africans. Recent scholars, however, have shown more interest in the African response toward colonial rule and its policies, with the objective of perhaps rewriting or reinterpreting the history of the continent following the introduction of colonialism.

Major terms and concepts: Slavery, slave trade, colonialism, imperialism, exploration, Berlin Conference, effective control, indirect and direct rule, assimilation, association, paternalism, warrant chiefs, "scramble" for Africa, "*mission civilisatrice*," and "burden of empire."