Chapter 20

Africa and the Africans in the Age of the Atlantic Slave Trade
The French artist Auguste François Biard painted this scene of the west African slave trade in 1840 in an attempt to show its cruelties. Represented here are not only the European merchants and sailors receiving the slaves but west African merchants and soldiers involved in supplying them. The painting was eventually acquired by an ardent English abolitionist.
Chapter Overview

I. Africa and the Creation of an Atlantic System
II. The Atlantic Slave Trade
III. African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade
IV. White Settlers and Africans in Southern Africa
V. The African Diaspora
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1400 C.E.</th>
<th>1500 C.E.</th>
<th>1600 C.E.</th>
<th>1700 C.E.</th>
<th>1800 C.E.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1415 Portuguese capture Ceuta (Morocco); beginning of European expansion</td>
<td>1562 Beginnings of English slave trade</td>
<td>1652 Dutch establish colony at Cape of Good Hope</td>
<td>1700–1717 Osei Tutu unifies the Asante kingdom</td>
<td>1804 Usman Dan Fodio leads Hausa expansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441 First shipment of African slaves brought directly from Africa to Portugal</td>
<td>1570 Portuguese establish colony in Angola</td>
<td>1713 English get right to import slaves to Spanish Empire</td>
<td>1815 Cape colony comes under formal British control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1481 Portuguese fort established at El Mina (Ghana)</td>
<td>1591 Fall of Songhay Empire</td>
<td>1720s Rise of the kingdom of Dahomey</td>
<td>1818–1828 Shaka forges Zulu power and expansion; mfecane under way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1790s Abolitionist movement gains strength in England</td>
<td>1833 Great Britain abolishes slavery in the West Indies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1792 Slave uprising in Haiti</td>
<td>1834 Boers make “Great Trek” into Natal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Africa and the Creation of an Atlantic System

• Expansion
  – European demand
  – Diaspora
    ▪ Millions of Africans to Middle East, Europe, and Americas
    ▪ Slavery featured in continents bordering Atlantic Ocean
    ▪ Exchange and synthesis of culture
    ▪ However, independence in Africa
The Atlantic Slave Trade

• The Portuguese
  – Factories
    ▪ Entrepots for interior trade
      • Especially gold
    ▪ Generally with local consent
  – El Mina
  – Missionaries followed
    ▪ Especially to Benin, Kongo
    ▪ King Nzinga Mvemba, Kongo
      • Converts to Christianity
Portuguese exploration and trade in the 15th century eventually evolved into trade, conquest, and missionary activities. In west Africa regular relations were established with a number of kingdoms like Benin and Kongo; in east Africa the Portuguese created outposts in Mozambique and along the Swahili coast, and in Ethiopia missionaries sought alliance with local Christians.
The Atlantic Slave Trade

• The Portuguese
  – Move south
    ▪ Angola
      • Luanda, 1570s
        – Mbundu people
    ▪ Mozambique
      • Gold trade from Monomotapa
  – Few settlers
Figure 20.2 African artists were impressed by the strangeness of Europeans and sometimes incorporated them in their own work, as can be seen in the headpiece of this beautifully carved ivory head of a Benin monarch. Europeans in turn employed African artisans to produce decorative luxury goods.
The Atlantic Slave Trade

- Common European pattern
  - Trading stations
  - Slave trade becomes central
- Trend Toward Expansion
  - 1450–1850
    - 12 million Africans sent across Atlantic
    - 10-11 survive
The Atlantic Slave Trade

• Trend Toward Expansion
  – 18th century
    ▪ Height
    ▪ 80 percent of total trade
  – Muslim areas
    ▪ Trans-Saharan, Red Sea, East Africa
    ▪ 3 million slaves traded
### Table 24.1 Slave Exports from Africa, 1500–1900* (in Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Trade</th>
<th>1500–1600</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>1601–1700</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>1701–1800</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>1801–1900</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Sea</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-Sahara</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-Atlantic</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,868</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6,133</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3,330</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>11,656**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,175</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2,868</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7,433</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5,422</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>16,898</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Note: Estimates of the trans-Atlantic trade have now raised by 8% to the figure to 12,570,000 between 1501 and 1867 rather than the estimate of 11,656,000 reported here.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region and Country</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>3,902,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Caribbean</td>
<td>2,238,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish America</td>
<td>1,267,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Caribbean</td>
<td>1,092,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guianas*</td>
<td>403,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British North America</td>
<td>361,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Caribbean</td>
<td>129,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish Caribbean</td>
<td>73,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9,468,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes Dutch, French, and British colonies, namely, Berbice, Cayenne, Demerara, Essequibo, and Suriname.
The Atlantic Slave Trade

- Demographic Patterns
  - Saharan trade
    - Mostly women
  - Atlantic trade
    - Primarily young men for hard labor
The Atlantic Slave Trade

- Organization of the Trade
  - Portuguese dominate first
    - Until 1630
  - Dutch
    - Seize El Mina, 1630
    - Rival Portuguese
  - English
    - Slave trade from 1660s
    - The Royal African Company
The Atlantic Slave Trade

• Organization of the Trade
  – French
    ▪ 18th century
  – Dahomey
    ▪ Indies piece, value of an adult male slave
    ▪ Royal monopoly on flow of slaves
The Atlantic Slave Trade

• Organization of the Trade
  – Economic importance unclear
    ▪ Triangular trade
    ▪ Same profits as other trade
    ▪ Value tied up with plantation and mining economy
    ▪ Definitely ties Africa to global economy
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

- African slave traditions changed
  - Intensified use of slaves
- Slaving and African Politics
  - West and Central Africa
    - Small, volatile states
    - Warfare endemic
      - Military captives feed into slave trade
    - European influence
      - States close to coast dominate
Slavery and Human Society

- Slavery
  - Seen in all parts of the globe
  - Necessary, natural phenomenon
  - Rarely questioned in many societies
    - Slaves became nonpersons
      - "Social death"
  - Enlightenment criticizes c. 18th century
  - Associated with Africa
    - Debate: impact of trade, economy
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

- Asante and Dahomey
  - Asante (Ashanti) Empire
    - Akan people
    - Center at Kumasi
    - Between the coast and Hausa and Mande regions
    - 1650, Oyoko clan
      - Firearms
      - Centralization, expansion
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

• Asante and Dahomey
  – Asante Empire
    ▪ Osei Tutu
      • Asantehene
    ▪ Dutch
      • Trade directly with Asante
  – Benin
  – Controls trade with Europeans, but not slave trade
Figure 20.3 The annual yam harvest festival was an occasion when the power and authority of the Asante ruler could be displayed. The English observers who painted this scene were impressed by the might of this west African kingdom.
Figure 20.4

The size of African cities and the power of African rulers often impressed European observers. Here the city of Loango, capital of a kingdom on the Kongo coast, is depicted as a bustling urban center. At this time it was a major port in the slave trade.
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

• Asante and Dahomey
  – Dahomey
    ▪ Fon peoples
    ▪ Center at Abomey
    ▪ Firearms by 1720s
    ▪ Agaja (1708–1740)
      • Expansion
      • Takes port of Whydah
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

- Asante and Dahomey
  - Other developments in Dahomey
    - Divine right kingship
      - Akin to European absolutism
    - Some states limit royal power
      - Oyo, Yoruba peoples
      - King and council
    - Artistic achievements
      - Especially Benin, the Yoruba
Figure 20.5
Portuguese soldiers serve as the base for this ivory carving done by West African craftsmen. Objects like these demonstrated the contact of European and African cultures.

(Saltcellar: Portuguese Figures. Photo: Stan Reis. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA. Image Copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, NY.)
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

• East Africa and the Sudan
  – East coast
    ▪ Swahili trading towns
      • Ivory, gold slaves to Middle East
    ▪ Zanzibar
      • Cloves
  – Interior
    ▪ Luo dynasties in great lakes area
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

• East Africa and the Sudan
  – Bunyoro, Buganda
    ▪ Monarchies
  – Northern Savanna
    ▪ New Islamization
  – Songhay breaks up in 1500s
    ▪ Successor states
      • Pagan Bambara of Segu
      • Muslim Hausa states in northern Nigeria
African Societies, Slavery, and the Slave Trade

• East Africa and the Sudan
  – Muslim reform movements, from 1770s
    ▪ Fulani (Fulbe) people
    ▪ Usman Dan Fodio, 1804
      • Hausa states
  – New kingdom of Sokoto
White Settlers and Africans in Southern Africa

- Bantu into southern Africa by 1500
  - Left arid areas to Khoikhoi, San
  - Agriculture, pastoralism
  - Iron, copper
  - Chiefdoms common
White Settlers and Africans in Southern Africa

- Capetown
  - Dutch colony, 1652
  - Estates worked by slaves
  - Wars with San, Khoikhoi
  - By 1760s, encounter Bantu
  - 1795, Britain occupies colony
    - 1815, possession
  - After 1834, Afrikaners push beyond boundaries; Great Trek
White Settlers and Africans in Southern Africa

• The Mfecane and the Zulu Rise to Power
  – Nguni people
    ▪ 1818, Shaka creates Zulu chiefdom
      • 1828, assassinated
    ▪ Beginning of mfecane
  – Mfecane
    ▪ Period of disruption, wandering
    ▪ Defeated into new areas
      • Swazi, Lesotho
Figure 20.6

This Zulu royal kraal, drawn in the 1830s, gives some idea of the power of the Zulu at the time that Shaka was forging Zulu dominance during the mfecane.
The African Diaspora

• Slave trade in joining Africa to world economy
• Slave Lives
  – Middle Passage
  – Millions killed
    ▪ Poor hygiene
    ▪ Disease
    ▪ Bad treatment; fear of bad treatment
  – Families destroyed
The African Diaspora

• Africans in the Americas
  – Plantation system

• American Slave Societies
  – Distinction between
    ▪ Saltwater slaves
    ▪ Creole slaves
  – Miscegenation
  – Hierarchy
Africans performed all kinds of labor in the Americas, from domestic service to mining and shipbuilding. Most worked on plantations like this sugar mill in the Caribbean.
The African Diaspora

• The People and Gods in Exile
  – Dynamic, creative
  – Religion adaptive
    ▪ Obeah, religious practices
      • Brazilian candomblé
      • Haitian vodun
The African Diaspora

• The People and Gods in Exile
  – Muslim Africans
    ▪ 1835, Brazil
      • Muslim Yoruba and Hausa slaves
  – Palmares, Brazil
    ▪ 1600s, runaway slave state
  – Suriname
    ▪ Fusion culture formed by runaway slaves
Visualizing the Past

The Cloth of Kings in an Atlantic Perspective
Figure 20.8
African, American, or both? In Suriname, descendants of escaped slaves maintain many aspects of African culture but have adapted, modified, and transformed them in various ways. This wooden door shows the imaginative skills of African American carvers.
The African Diaspora

• The End of the Slave Trade and the Abolition of Slavery
  – Slave trade ended outside of Africa
    ▪ Possible causes
      • Probably not economic self-interest
      • Influence of Enlightenment
      • England
        – William Wilberforce