

Lectures 13 and 14

Part I: Case Studies: The Power of
Circumstances: Blacks and Indians in the
United States

Part II: Chinese in Mississippi

Part I: The Power of Circumstances: Blacks and Indians in the United States



I. Slave Trade

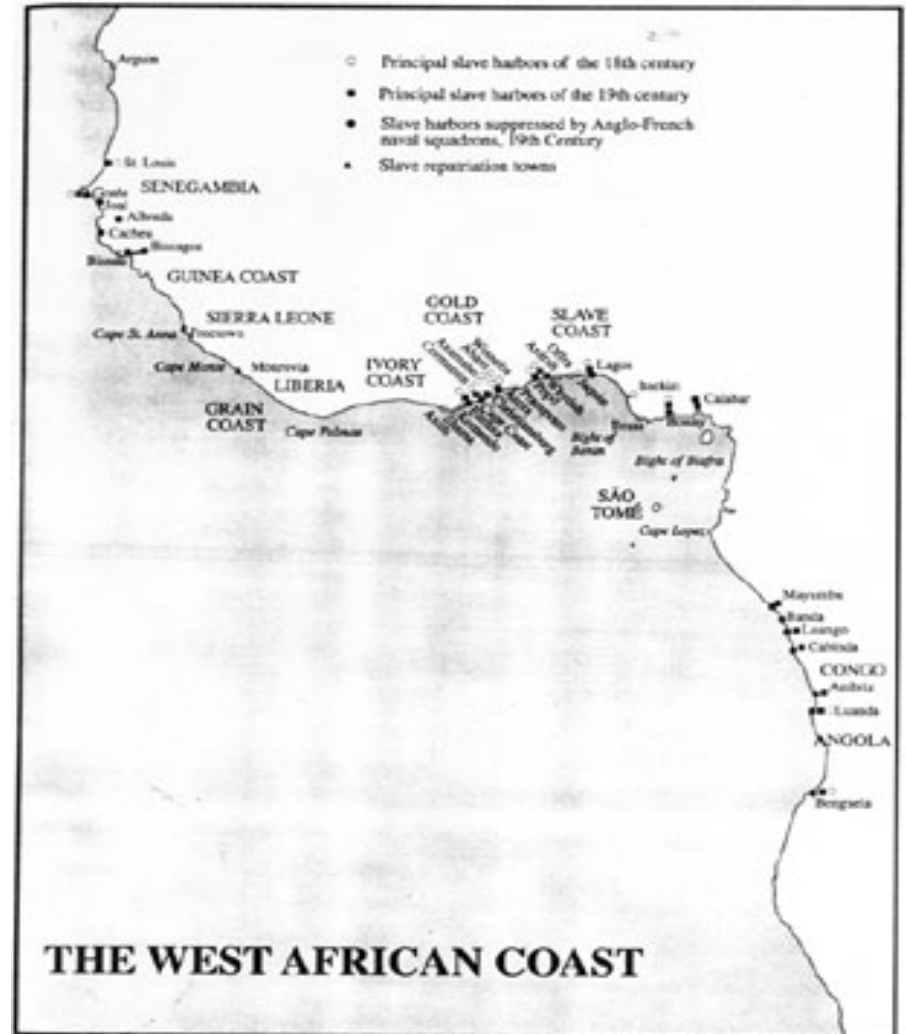
A. When? Around 1500 to 1807

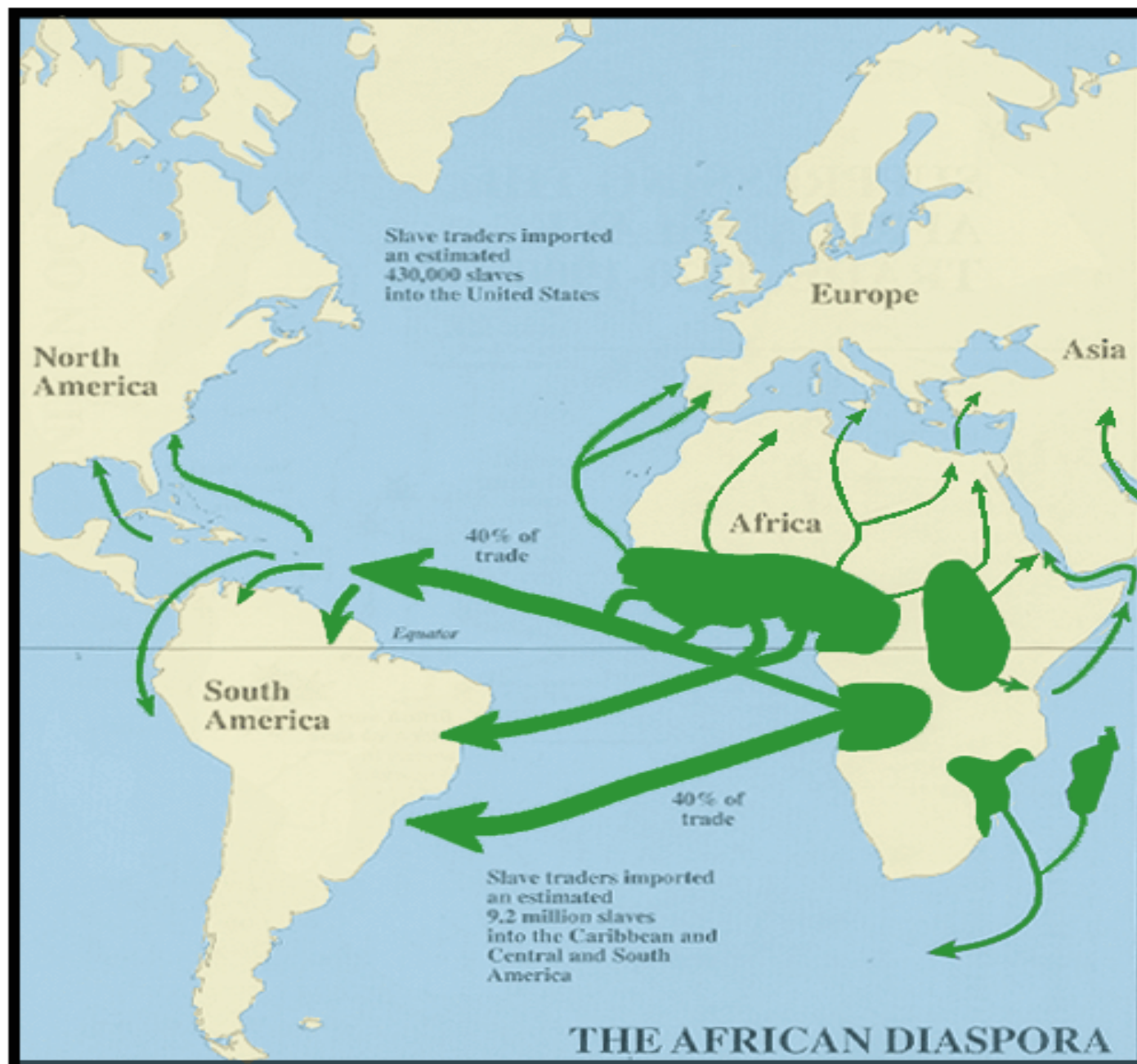
B. Why? Labor source

African slaves were used because they were resistant to Western diseases + they could work in the hot weather

Slave Regions in Africa

- The slave trade moved peoples along 3000 miles of Africa's west coast to the New World.
- Many slaves brought from inland areas of the continent.





***European
Settlements in
North America
and Caribbean,
1733***

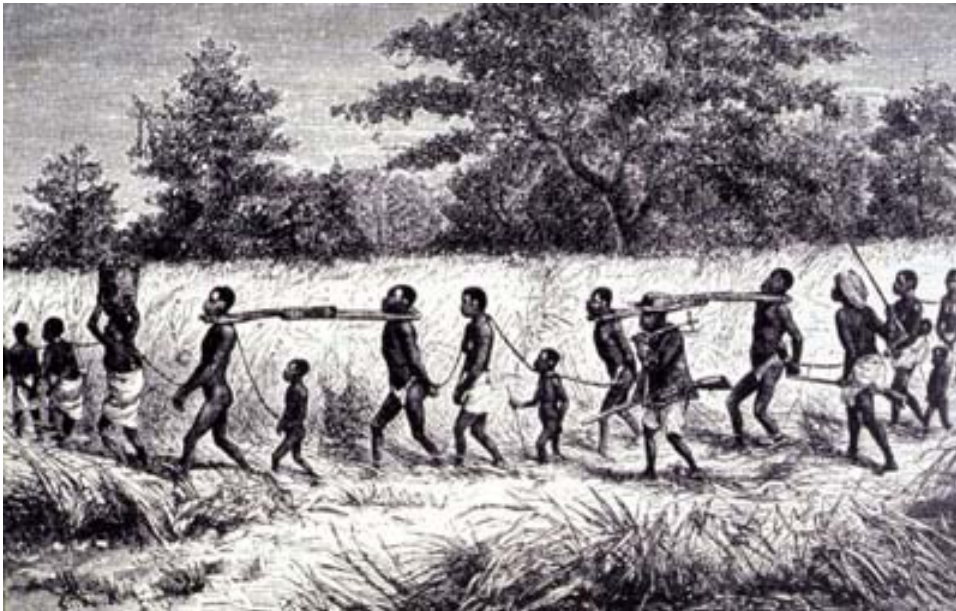


Slaves were captured
by Africans and
Europeans for sale or
trade

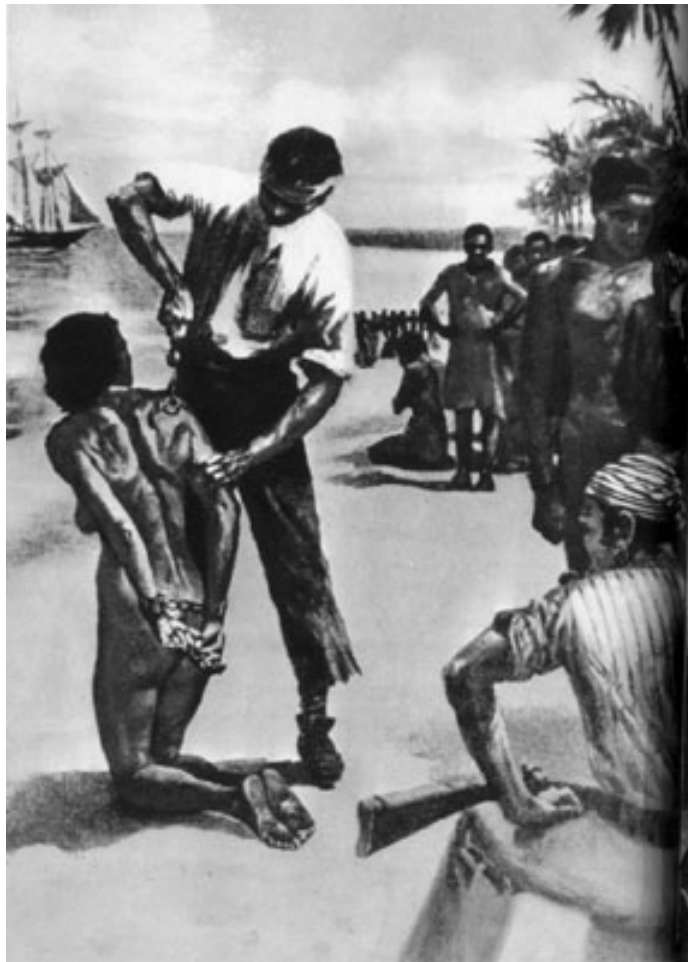
Slave Coffle, 1870s



Slave Coffle, Central Africa, 1861



Branding an enslaved woman



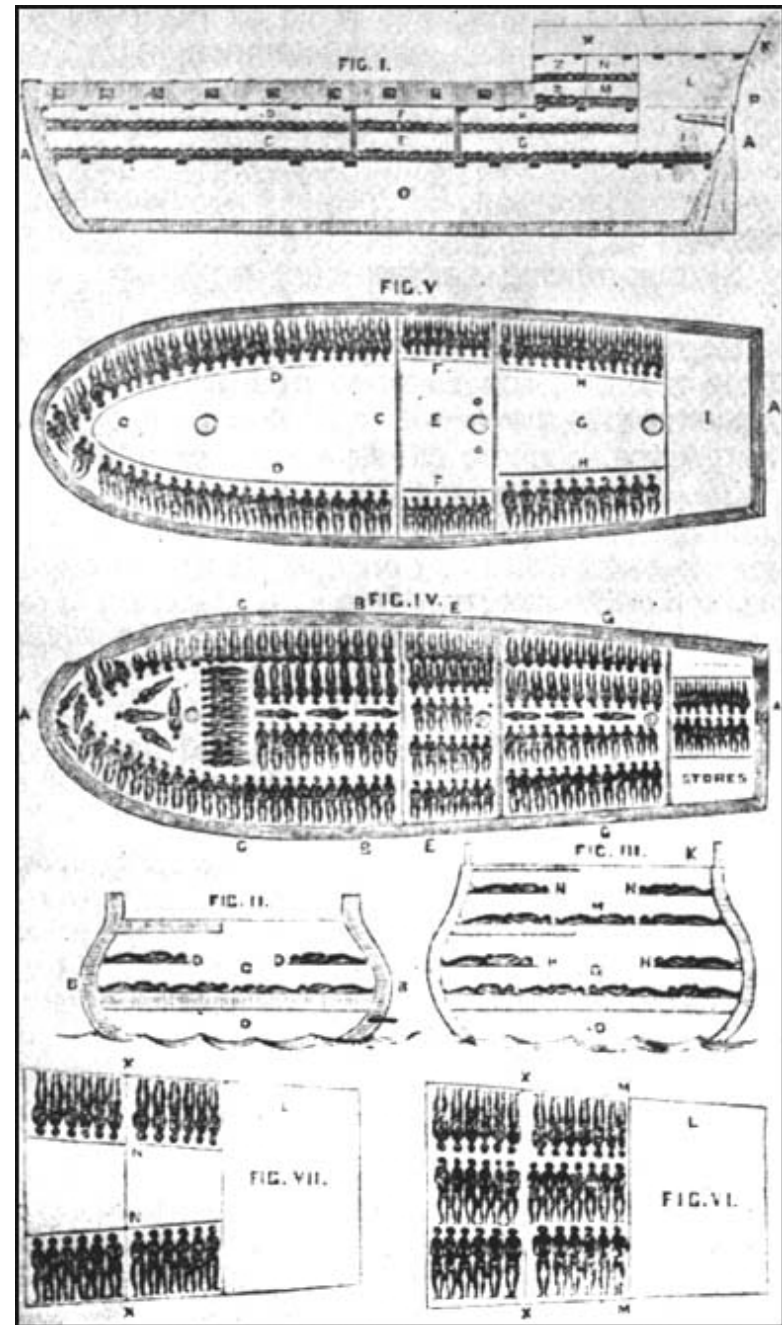
Slave Barracoon, Sierra Leone, 1840s



2. The Middle Passage

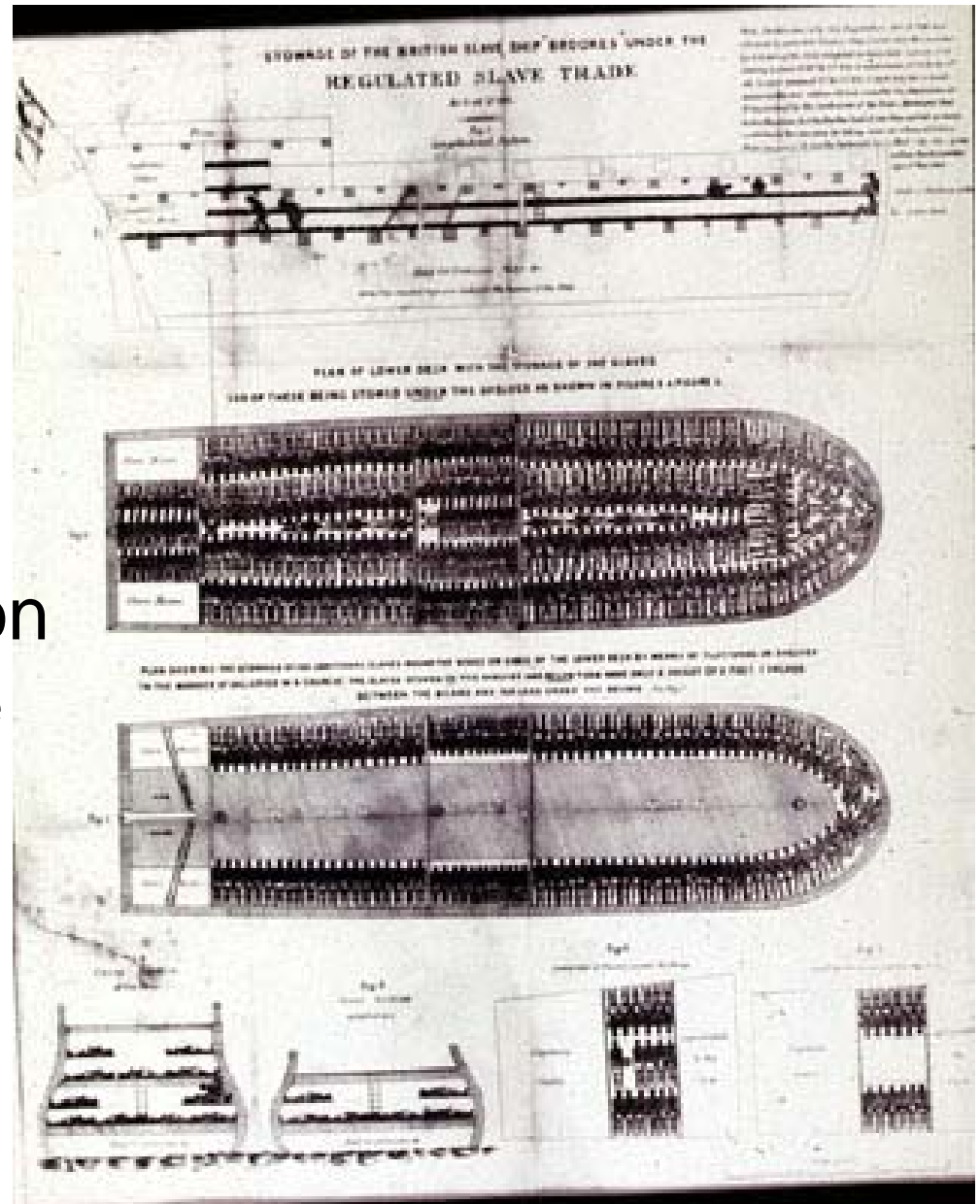
a. Tight Pack

- putting as many slaves as possible on the boat
- more slaves made the trip, but more died



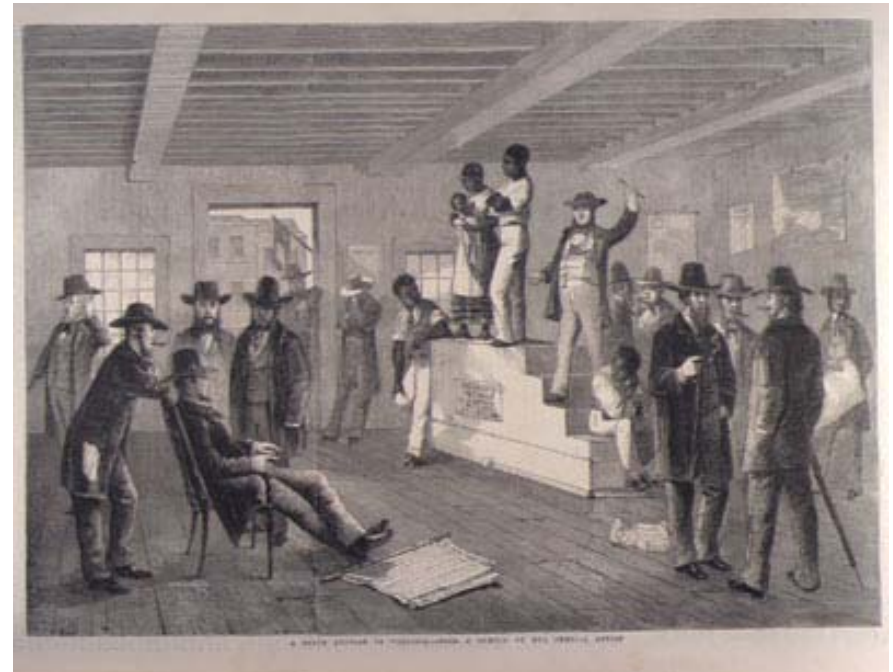
b. Loose Pack

- limiting the number on the boat to maximize survival



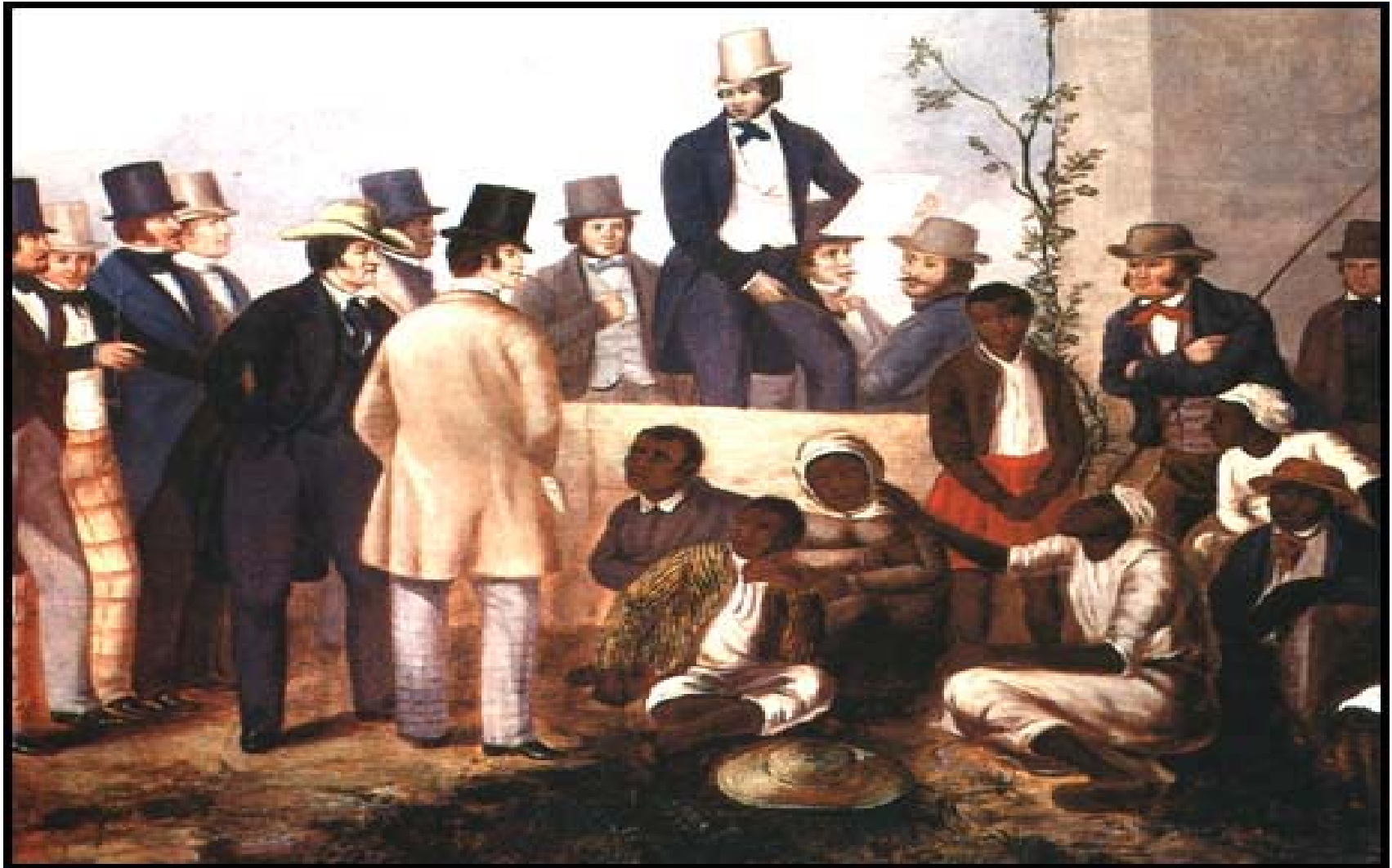
1789, slave ship Brookes

If the slaves survived the Middle Passage, they were sold at markets



Slave Auction, Richmond, Virginia, 1861

A slave-market in America.



West Indies, c.1898



II. Growth of Slavery in the United States

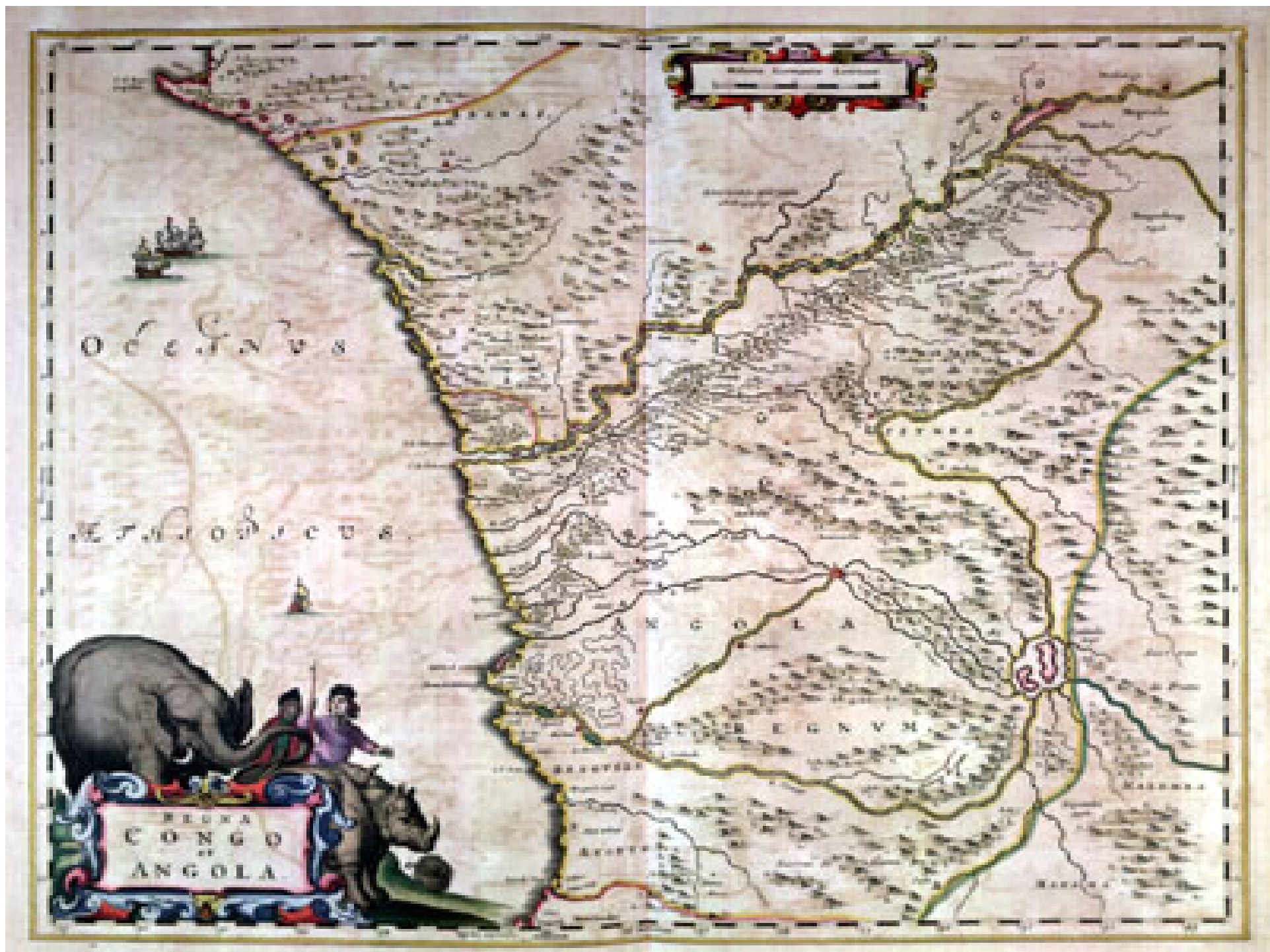
A. Number of slaves in 1860: 4 million

B. Impact of the cotton gin

1. the cotton gin made cotton profitable

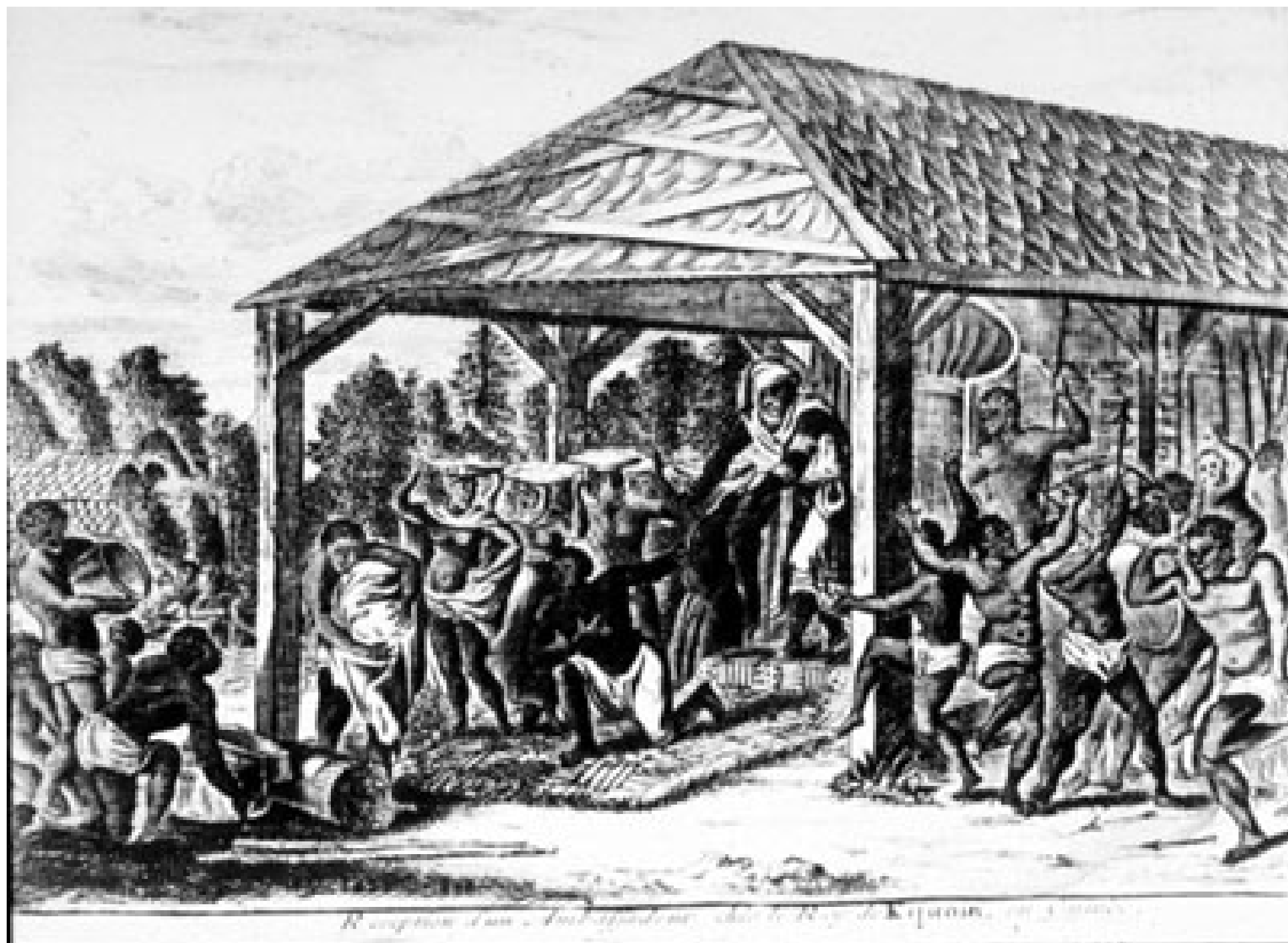
2. with a gin (engine) a slave could get 10 times the cotton ready for sale in the same time

3. the rise in cotton's profitability created a demand for labor (slaves!)

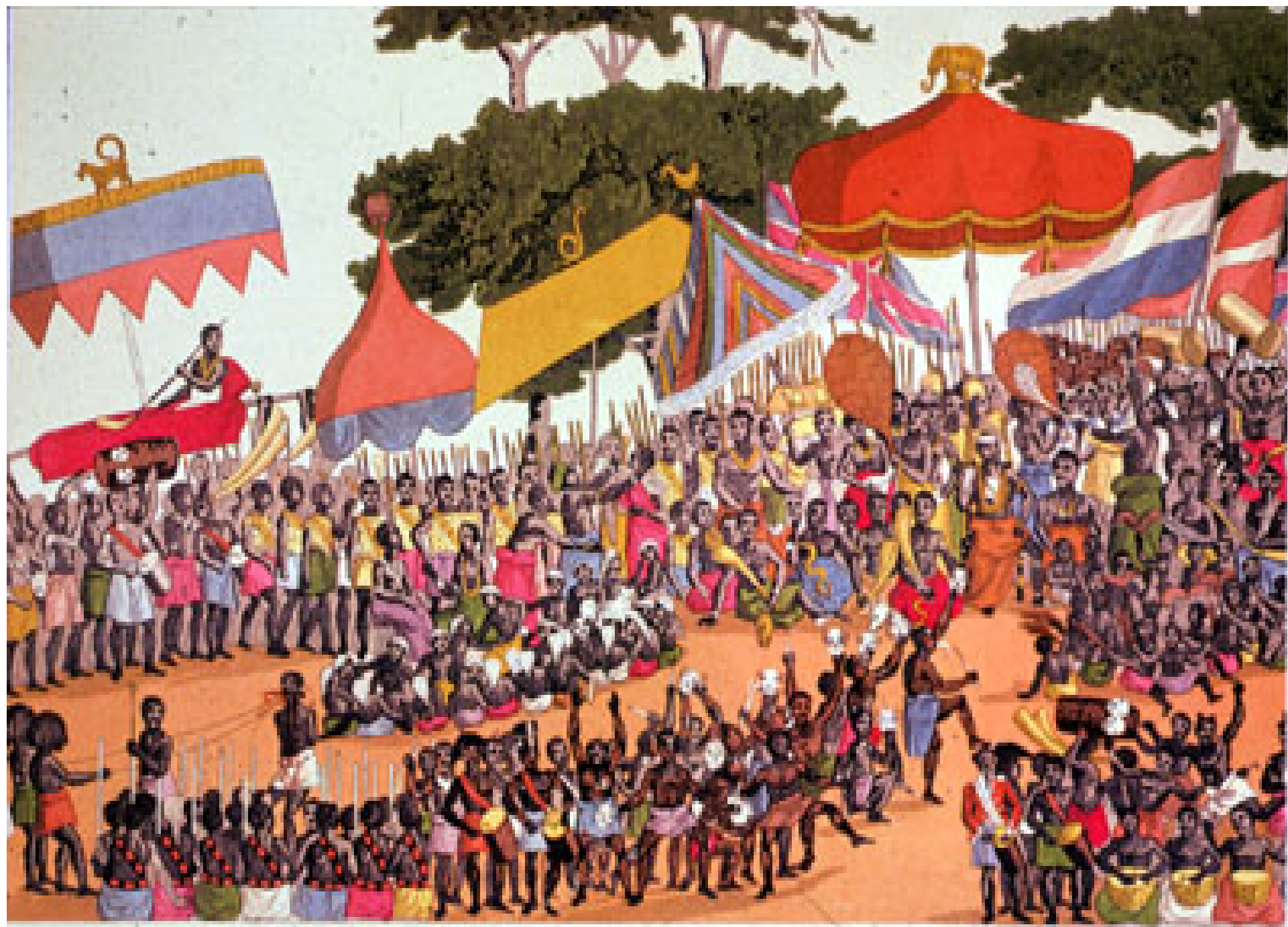


African Diversity

- The slave trade involved people from many different ethnic groups (“tribes”)
- Slave traders recognized the differences, and thought that people from some groups made better slaves.
- Overall, the slave system tended to destroy the differences between groups



Réception d'un Indigène, au Fort de Kourou, en 1763.



THE FIRST DAY OF THE YAM CUSTOM.



THE WOMEN OF TIMBO DRAWING WATER.



Negres de traite en voyage.





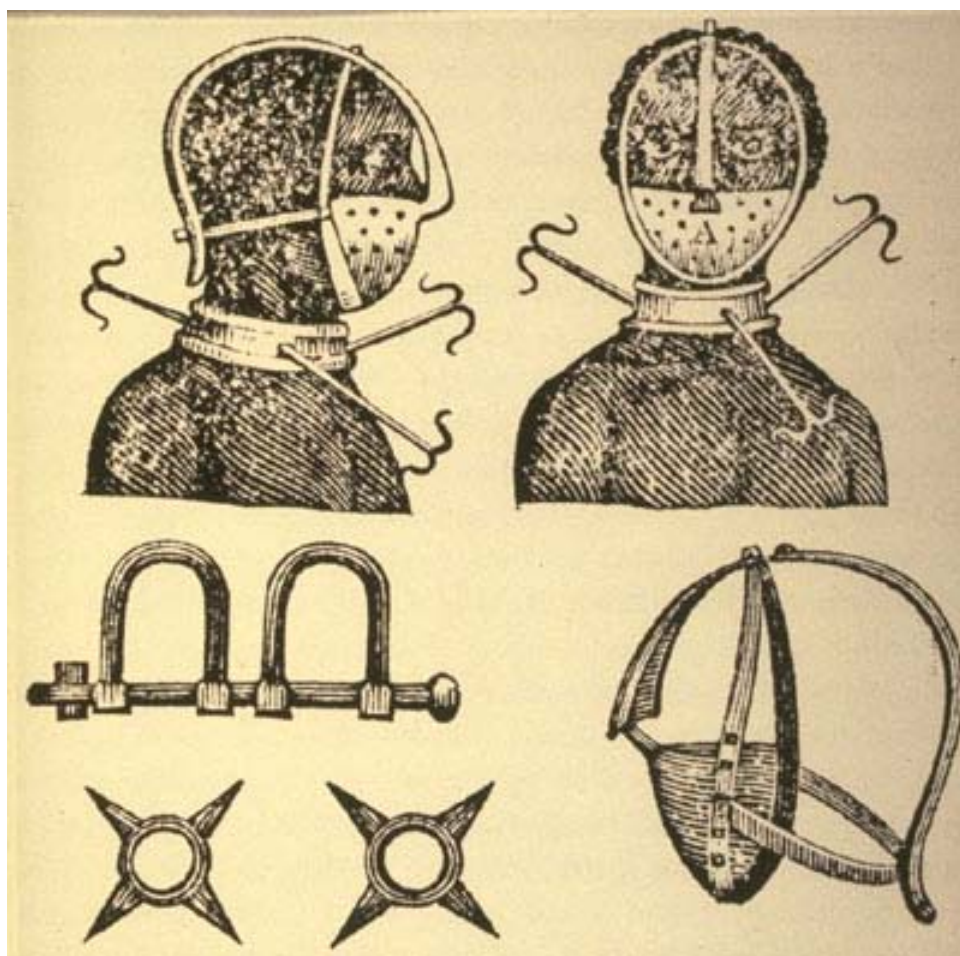
Undermining Ethnic Identities

- Slaveholders recognized no interpersonal attachments among slaves
- Slaves bought and sold in “lots”, and such a market system dispersed slaves in multi-ethnic groups.

Undermining Ethnic Identities

- Slaveholders understood that slaves had heartache and outrage, and might rebel
- To quell cooperative rebellions, they worked hard to destroy African ethnic identities and culture that might foster cooperation.
- There were a few exceptions where ethnic culture survived, but this was the exception.

100 DOLLS. REWARD.
RAN AWAY
From me, on Saturday, the 19th inst.,
Negro Boy Robert Porter,
aged 19; heavy, stoutly made;
dark chesnut complexion;
rather sullen countenance,
with a down look; face large; head low on the
shoulders. I believe he entered the City of
Washington on Sunday evening, 20th inst. He
has changed his dress probably, except his
boots, which were new and heavy.
I will give \$50 if taken and secured in the
District of Columbia, or \$100 if taken north
of the District, and secured in each case and
delivered before the reward shall be good.
Dr. J. W. THOMAS.
Pomunky P. O., Charles Co., Md.



*Iron Mask, Neck Collar,
Leg Shackles, and
Spurs, 18th cent.*

\$100 REWARD!

RANAWAY

From the undersigned, living on Current River, about twelve miles above Doniphan, in Ripley County, Mo., on 2nd of March, 1860, **A NE GRO MAN**, about 30 years old, weighs about 160 pounds; high forehead, with a scar on it; had on brown pants and coat very much worn, and an old black wool hat; shoes size No. 11.

The above reward will be given to any person who may apprehend this said negro out of the State; and fifty dollars if apprehended in this State outside of Ripley county, or \$25 if taken in Ripley county.

APOS TUCKER.

Gullah Culture of South Carolina

- 23,773 slaves came to South Carolina from Africa between 1804 through 1807, and 14,217 of these originated from Angola, Congo, or "Congo and Angola".
- The newly arrived slaves breathed new life into African traditions already established on the islands.



Gullah Creole Language

- **beat on ayun:** "mechanic"; literally, "beat-on-iron"
- troot ma-wt:** "a truthful person"; literally, "truth mouth"
- hush ma-wt:** "hush mouth"; literally, "hush mouth"
- sho ded:** "cemetery"; literally, "sure dead"
- tebl tappa:** "preacher"; literally, "table-tapper"
- ty oonuh ma-wt:** "Hush, stop talking"; literally, "Tie your mouth"
- krak teet:** "to speak"; literally, "crack teeth"
- i han shaht pay-shun:** "He steals"; literally, "His hand is short of patience"

Constructing the Racial Boundary

- Slavery made race a fundamental part of US social organization.
- There were two categories of people: free and unfree (free Blacks were the exception)
- Public culture reinforced this divide: Negro, colored, or Black on one hand, and White on the other.
- Race distinguished not only among persons but also among statuses: one race was inferior (culture, biology) to the other.

Race in the Aftermath of Slavery

- After the civil war, African Americans were politically and socially active
- They asserted an African American political consciousness to find freedom and liberty .
- Their efforts were thwarted in the 19th and early 20th century



Civil Rights

- It was not until the 1950s and the beginning of the Civil Rights movement that Black Americans finally made changes in the racial system
- Not yet complete, but great victory in bringing Blacks into the political arena

Out of the Schools and Into the Buses



- The arrest of Rosa Parks (December, 1955)
- The Montgomery, Ala. Bus Boycott
- The leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- The “Montgomery” model for Civil Rights activism: boycott, publicity, courts
- SCLC formed (1957)

A Mass Movement Takes Shape



- Lunch counter “sit-ins” begin:
Greensboro, NC
(February, 1960)

A Mass Movement Takes Shape



- Demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama (April, 1963)
--Eugene “Bull” Connor
- “Letter from Birmingham City Jail”
- Governor George Wallace tries to block integration of the University of Alabama (Fall, 1963)

A Mass Movement Takes Shape



- JFK finally begins to campaign for Civil Rights legislation
- Continued violence even in the face of some progress
- Martin Luther King, Jr. and the March on Washington (August, 1963)
-- “I Have a Dream”

Native Americans

- The pattern of Native American involvement in US society is very different from African Americans.
- As a result, the process of identity construction among Native Americans is distinct from African Americans.

Native American Society Around 1492

At the time of Columbus' arrival, there were hundreds of different native groups living in all areas of North, Central and South America.





Land Versus Labor

- The African and Indian experience with Whites was much different
- At times Indians were enslaved for their labor (in American Colonies), but most of the time the labor provided was different
- Indians were the key source of furs for the European fur trade

Fur Trading

- Fur trading in the 1820s was a good cash crop for many people and it was very popular up by the Great Lakes.
- Fur trading was a two way road from Europeans factories to the forests of North America.
- The main fur was between the Indians and Whites



Fur Trading

- During the fur trapping around 100,000 beaver pelts were being produced for top hats for men , and in the 1830s the Hudson Bay Co. made a concerted effort to trap out the beaver population in Montana and Idaho , the last great concentration of the animals with the reach of Americans.



Fur Trading and Labor

- Indians entered fur trade by choice
- The production remained under their control
- Indians caught and prepared the animals and traded them for good at outposts
- When fur hats went out of style, the relationship with White Americans changed

Shift from Fur to Land

- Shift from land to labor had dramatic consequences
- Indians were forced en masse from their land, and in some cases, violently.
- The removal process involved treaties
- The treaties involved both coercion and the recognition that Indian groups with have sovereignty over their nations

Reservations and Tribes

- Violent removal of groups and placement on reservations altered yet preserved tribal boundaries
- It left the groups impoverished on a diverse set of reservations across the country
- Tribes had the ability to govern their own groups, and this also reinforced tribal identities
- **How might things have been different if Native Americans entered the labor force as individuals rather than remaining on the reservations?**



Emergence of Supratribal Consciousness

- After WWII, Native Americans migrate into US cities
- 1950s and 1960s, emergence of multitribal communities
- Political mobilization
- Today, **both** tribal and Native American identities

Comparing African Americans and Native Americans

- In the Black case we have a **labor-oriented history** of intergroup relations which, over time, undermines a pre-existing set of identities and provides the foundation for another, more comprehensive one.
- In the Indian case, we have a **land-oriented history** of intergroup relations which, over time, sustains a pre-existing set of identities and inhibits the emergence of another more comprehensive one.

Part II

Case Studies: Between Assertion and
Assignment: Chinese Americans in
Mississippi

Sam Sue

- Reared in Clarksdale, Mississippi, Chinese American Sam Sue has bitter memories about growing up not knowing how or where to fit in. Since their arrival in the American South over three hundred years ago, Asians have encountered an invisible racial barrier. Neither white nor black, Americans of Asian descent were somewhere in between with no fixed “place in society.”

Sam Sue...

- *There is this shot in the opening scene of the movie, Mississippi Burning, where you see two water fountains. One is broken, and chipped, and water is dripping from it. The other is modern, and shining. A white guy goes up to the nice one, and the black kid goes up to the old one. I remember saying to myself, "If I was in the scene, where would I drink?"*

Sam Sue...

- *As a kid, I remember going to the theater and not knowing where I was supposed to sit. Blacks were segregated then. Colored people had to sit upstairs, and white people sat downstairs. . . . I guess I was always considered marginal with whites and blacks.*

Chinese Immigrants

- A small group of Chinese immigrants came to Mississippi after the American Civil War.
- In their new environment, they sought ways to earn money and to adapt to the predominant culture of the state while preserving their ethnic identity.
- They came into a society dominated by Mississippians of British or African ancestry, and the Chinese carved out a distinctive place within this society.

Chinese Immigrants

- The majority of the Chinese who settled in the Mississippi Delta arrived between 1910 and 1930.
- Questions concerning the social, economic, and political future of the Chinese in Mississippi began much earlier, starting in the mid-1800s when a number of Chinese “coolies” (indentured laborers) from Cuba were brought to the American South as a substitute for black labor

Chinese Immigrants

- Cotton and rice growing depended upon an abundant supply of cheap labor.
- After the emancipation of black slaves, several southern plantation owners suggested that they find another source of labor.

Chinese Immigrants

- General William H. Chase in 1857 argued that renewing the African slave trade was preferable to introducing Chinese contract laborers and that “this was the only solution for the problem of the labor shortage” .
- Southern industrialists favored the importation of Chinese, for they, in Cuba and Peru, were reported to be highly industrious and well-behaved.

Chinese Immigrants

- Planters preferred black labor to any other kind, since they “worked harder, could be fired or disciplined with greater ease, and could be taken advantage of, financially, with little fear of retribution”.
- High cost of transporting workers from China and economic competition with industries on the West Coast prevented large numbers of Chinese from coming to the American South.

Chinese in Mississippi

- Overall, the campaign to bring in Chinese labor was unsuccessful—the population never exceeded a couple of thousand people.
- The labor situation changed for the Chinese with the introduction of the Jim Crow system which in effect put Blacks back into economic slavery

Chinese in Mississippi

- Chinese do not enter sharecropping system
- Few Blacks engaging in small business for a variety of reasons.
- Chinese see the **open niche** of opening grocery stores.



Chinese Grocers

- Not only did Chinese grocers do business in the black community, but they also lived there; and were thus “subject to the same discrimination and prejudice” that the blacks received from the whites
- The Chinese grocer consequently acted friendlier toward the black customer than did the white grocer. For instance, most Chinese grocers “did not require the deferential courtesy forms customarily demanded by whites”

The Chinese and Racial Segregation

- A vast social and economic gulf yawns between the dominant white and subordinate black. Yet one group in Mississippi, a "third race," the Chinese, has managed to leap that chasm. Negroes do not consider them exactly white; Caucasians do not consider them black. They are privileged and burdened with an ambiguous racial identity.

The Chinese and Racial Segregation

- This unique situation gave the Chinese in Mississippi the opportunity to “switch” from one racial group to another, while at the same time, remaining “in-between” the white and black communities.
- In the end, most realized the benefits of being classified as White



Strategy of Racial Reassignment

- Goal to change their image among Whites
- 1.) Alter their own behavior to fit with Whites (broke relationships with Blacks).
- 2.) Develop parallel institutions to serve their community



Strategy of Racial Reassignment

- The Chinese were “insisting that their men shall refrain from having Negro mistresses, and no half-breed children” .
- Interracial marriages between Chinese and blacks were intensely criticized and severely discouraged by the Chinese community as a whole.
- This desire to assimilate forced the Chinese community to avoid any social interaction with the black community.

Why were the Chinese Successful?

- 1.) Did not challenge racial system
- 2.) They were successful in the grocery store business.
- 3.) Little White political or economic reason for whites to subordinate Chinese into lower levels of society