

# Reciprocal Influence

Cultural Interactions between Slaves and Plantation  
Owners

8-1.4 - Explain the significance of enslaved and free Africans in the developing culture and economy of the South and South Carolina, including the growth of the slave trade and resulting population imbalance between African and European settlers; African contributions to agricultural development; and resistance to slavery, including the Stono Rebellion and subsequent laws to control slaves.

## \* Triangular Trade



## \* Origins of slavery in SC

- \* Many slaves were brought from **Barbados**
- \* **Majority** of slaves were forced on the “Middle Passage” from the **West coast of Africa** and then sold on the auction block.

# The Middle Passage



## Facts:

- \* 10 to 16 million Africans were transported across the Atlantic to the Americas between 1500-1800
- \* At least 2 million died during the Middle Passage
- \* Horrific living conditions, lack of food/water, poor sanitary conditions.

# Impacts

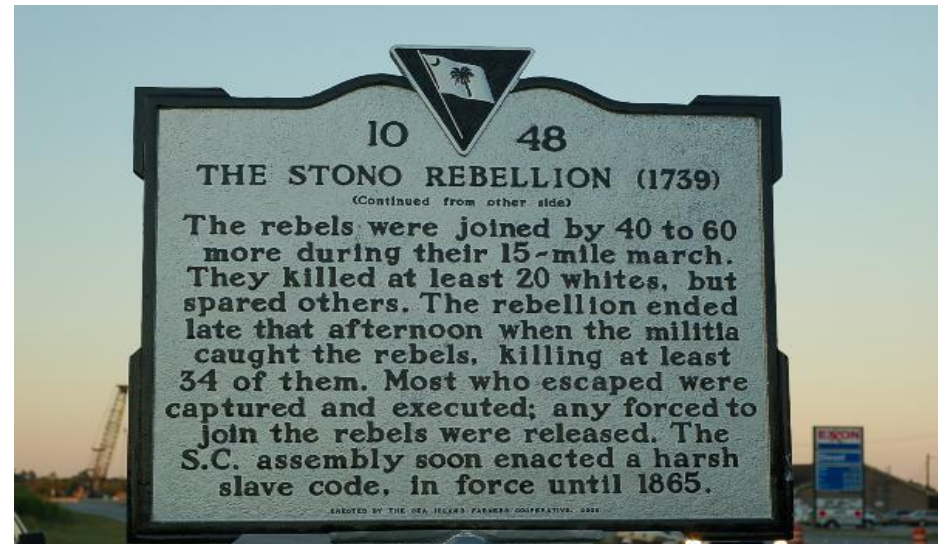
- \* **Economy:** slaves provided an inexpensive and reliable source of labor which SC relied on for their experience in the plantation system.
- \* Rice, indigo, naval stores and later cotton were labor intensive crops which required many slaves.



INDIGO PLANT IMAGE

# Impacts

- \* African slaves greatly **outnumbered** white settlers in SC and attempted several revolts once slavery became too cruel.
- \* **Stono Rebellion – Slave Codes**



# Slaves were not always slaves!

- \* Came from distinct culture, heritage, tradition, and language
- \* Over 800 different ethnic and language groups in Africa
- \* Came to N. American colonies with specialized knowledge and skills
- \* Different regions of Africa, like N. America, were better suited to different types of agriculture
  - \* Different regions therefore had different foods
- \* Different regions and groups had their own distinct customs, mores, and folkways

# What does it all mean?

- \* Africans came to N. America with their own culture, heritage, traditions, and customs
  - \* To Plantation owners, they came with special skills and knowledge
  - \* Different groups were forced to live together after “relocation”
- \* African culture in N. America became an amalgam of hundreds of different backgrounds
  - \* Africans brought with them: Foods, Music, and Specialized Knowledge & Skills
  - \* This meant that Africans from certain regions were more desirable to plantation owners growing specific goods, could fetch higher prices at auction because of their origins and knowledge (Increased value to owners)
    - \* ie. The Grain Coast brought Africans with specific knowledge of rice cultivation

# Different Types of Slaves

- \* Laborers – Slaves that would toil in the fields, from sun up to sun down, performing grueling manual labor, as long as the weather was not too severe
- \* Farmers – Slaves with specialized knowledge and skills that could be more effectively used in cultivation
- \* Cooks – Usually worked in the “Big” house, cooked for the owner and the family, learned to cook “white” food, but had African ingredients and style (Infusion)
- \* “House” Slaves – Slaves, usually females and children, that performed work in the house for the owner and family
- \* Musicians – Had normal work duties, would play for slaves at end of the day, highly sought after, played for owners at many events, had more freedoms, could earn extra money



# Plantations were not always Plantations

- \* Several varieties of Plantation: Rice, Indigo, Tobacco, Cotton
- \* Different regions in the N. American colonies better suited to different types of agriculture
- \* Many farms started off very small and only grew over time
  - \* In many cases, slaves and owners would live together, eat together, and sleep together
- \* South Carolina well suited for the cultivation of rice along the coast and its many islands

# South Carolina Rice Plantations

- \* Well suited for the growing of rice
  - \* Problem! Most colonists and Europeans did not know how to properly plant, grow, and harvest rice
  - \* They were taught how to do it; by whom? African slaves purchased from the “Grain Coast” of Africa had incredible knowledge of rice production
  - \* Most came from Western and Central Africa, Sierra Leone and other areas
- \* South Carolina shared many commonalities with these regions of Africa (Temperature and Conditions)



# Slave & Owner Interactions

- \* Most farms began small with slave and owner living and working together
  - \* Mixing of culture
- \* Isolation was a constant problem; lack of transportation means and methods, mainly by water but also with some pack animals
  - \* Limited number of partners for slaves
- \* Slaves held on tightly to traditions and customs, brought music, food, and knowledge

# Slave Population in South Carolina

Year	Number of slaves	Total population	Percentage Of Population Enslaved
1708	3,000	9,500	31.5 percent
1724	32,000	46,000	69.5 percent
1750	39,000	64,000	60.9 percent
1760	57,253	76,000	75 percent
1765	90,000	130,000	69.2 percent
1790	107,094	249,073	42 percent
1800	149,338	345,591	42.1 percent
1810	196,365	415,115	46.1 percent
1820	258,475	502,741	50.2 percent
1830	315,401	581,185	53.9 percent

Slave population rose as production of rice rose

Slaves brought to S.C. in mass numbers, came from certain regions of Africa (particularly Western Africa)

# Africans Came with Knowledge



Colonists had little to no knowledge of how to cultivate rice

Africans brought knowledge of rice cultivation, taught colonists how

Knew specialized ways of clearing, irrigating, and planting

Adapted African ways of doing things to N. American bondage

# Importance of Origins

The origins of Africans made a difference to plantation owners

Windward & Rice Coast was an important point of origin

**TO BE SOLD** on board the  
Ship *Banc-Iland*, on tuesday the 6th  
of May next, at *Apple-Ferry*; a choice  
cargo of about 250 fine healthy  
**NEGROES,**  
just arrived from the  
Windward & Rice Coast.  
—The utmost care has  
already been taken, and  
shall be continued, to keep them free from  
the least danger of being infected with the  
**SMALL-POX**, no boat having been on  
board, and all other communication with  
people from *Charles-Town* prevented.  
*Austin, Laurens, & Appleby.*  
N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the  
**SMALL-POX** in their own Country.

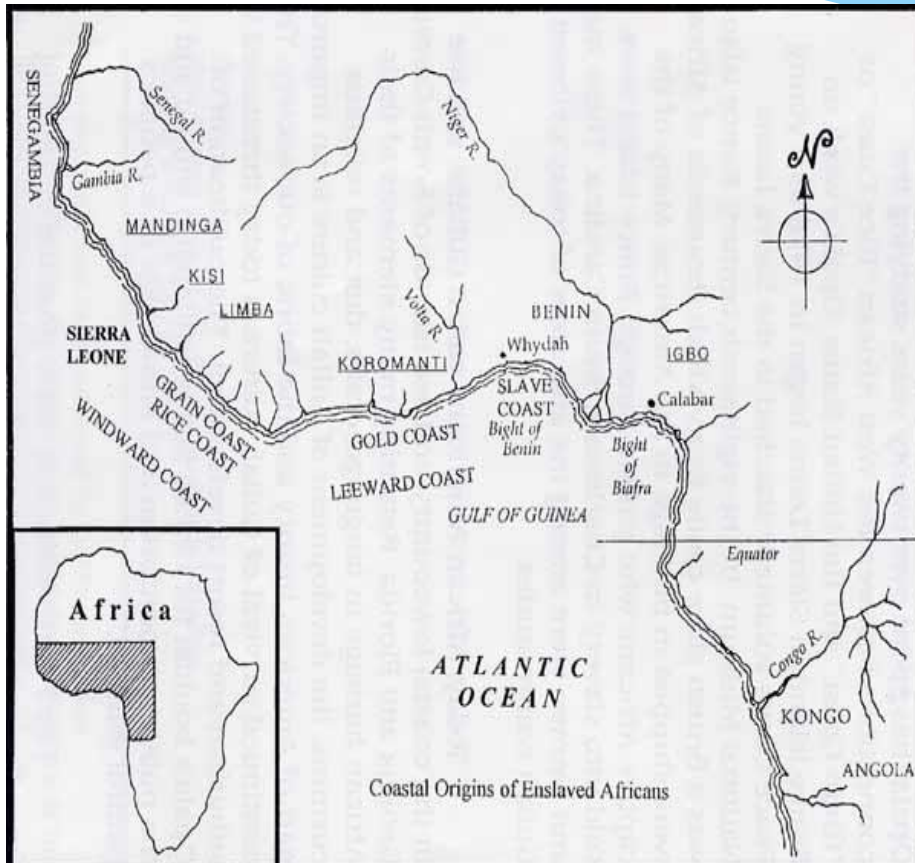


*Charleston, July 24th, 1769*  
**TO BE SOLD,**  
On **THURSDAY** the third Day  
of August next,  
**A CARGO**  
OF  
**NINETY-FOUR**  
PRIME, HEALTHY  
**NEGROES,**  
CONSISTING OF  
Thirty-nine MEN, Fifteen BOYS,  
Twenty-four WOMEN, and  
Sixteen GIRLS.  
JUST ARRIVED,  
In the Brigantine *DEMBA*, from *SIERRA-LEON*, by  
**DAVID & JOHN DEAS.**

**TO BE SOLD** on board the  
Ship *Banc-Iland*, on tuesday the 6th  
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# West Coast of Africa



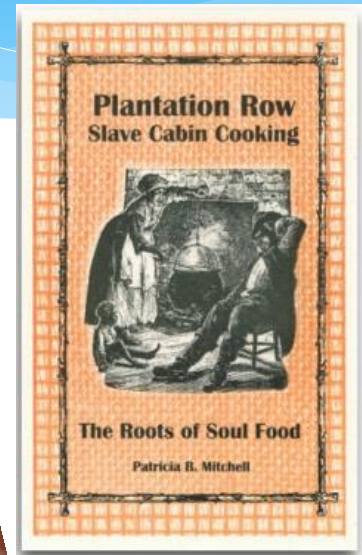
Western & Central Africa shares similar climate and conditions with South Carolina

Africans came with knowledge of rice cultivation, irrigation, and foods

Slaves knowledge of rice and different ways of preparing it, was extremely important in connecting cultures

1850s Georgetown County, SC was Western World's top rice producer

# Infusion of Food



African culinary traditions mixed with “white” food; slaves were the cooks for the owners and while they learned how to cook “white” food, many mixed in African influences



# Africans' Music

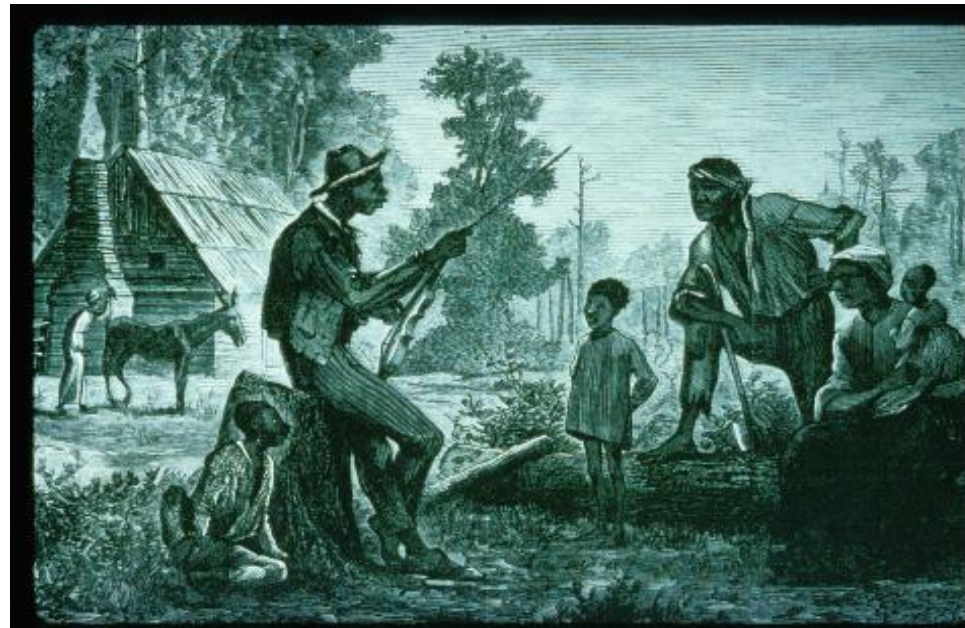
“...more than perhaps any other aspect of African culture, music survived the ordeal of the Middle Passage to play a significant role in the lives of American slaves and contribute greatly to indigenous forms of American music.” (Boles)

Slave musicians were highly prized and sought after

Often given extra “freedoms”

Could earn extra money (Had to split it with the owner)

Brought slave community together



# Africans Music Continued

- \* Music helped in fields
  - \* Kept up moral
- \* Music taught lessons
  - \* Helped socialize people
- \* Music taught heritage
  - \* Kept traditions
- \* Music taught history
  - \* Oral tradition
- \* Music conveyed messages
  - \* Including secret ones



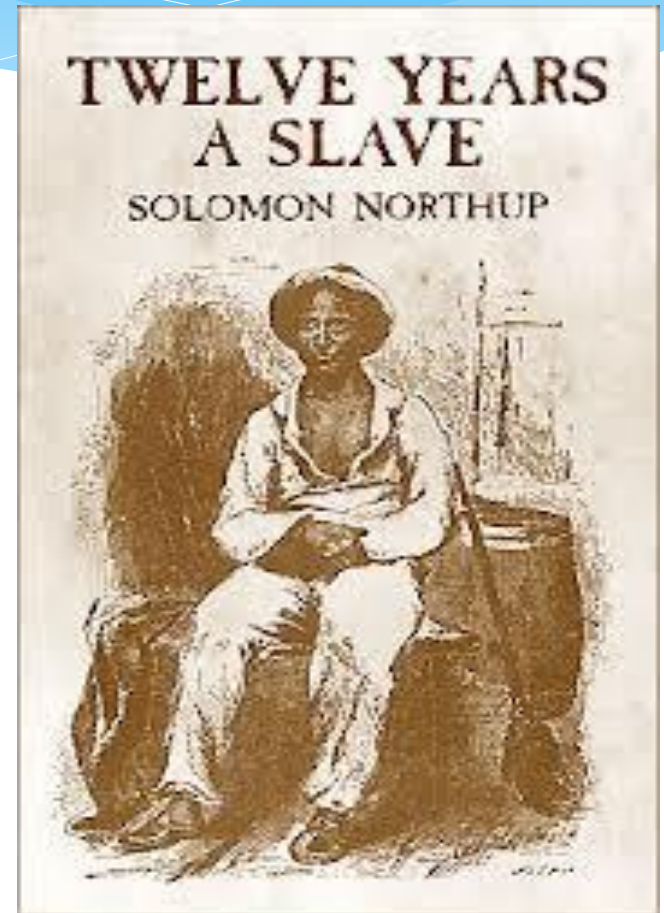
# Solomon Northup

Free Black & Skilled Musician

Captured and sold into slavery

His music helped:

- bring slaves together
- get through difficult times
- reminded them that they were still human
- got him through his time as a slave



# “The Lost Society” The Gullah



The Gullah of South Carolina & Georgia

Held on to much of their heritage and culture, infused it with their American environment



Sweetgrass baskets came from Africa, but had to be modified because of different resources

Isolation along with perseverance helped the Gullah people preserve their own culture, customs, & ways

# Culture

- \* Slaves brought their African culture with them to SC.
- \* Knowledge of cattle herding, growing rice.
- \* **Gullah** including: language, music, dance, wood carving, folk medicine, and religion.



# Current Rice Plantations

- \* [www.Middletonplace.org](http://www.Middletonplace.org) – Charleston, SC Rice Plantation
- \* [www.Mansfieldplantation.com](http://www.Mansfieldplantation.com) – Georgetown, SC Rice Plantation
- \* [www.Hopsewee.com](http://www.Hopsewee.com) – Georgetown, SC Rice Plantation
- \* <http://www.sc-heritagecorridor.org> – S.C. State wide heritage

# What You Get!! Free Stuff!

- \* Entire Lesson Plan – SC 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Standard/Indicator
- \* Powerpoint Presentation – Companion to Lesson Plan
- \* Worksheet – Critical Thinking Questions
- \* Places that students & teachers can visit
  - \* Physically and Virtually

# Bibliography

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