

**TOPIC : SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE**

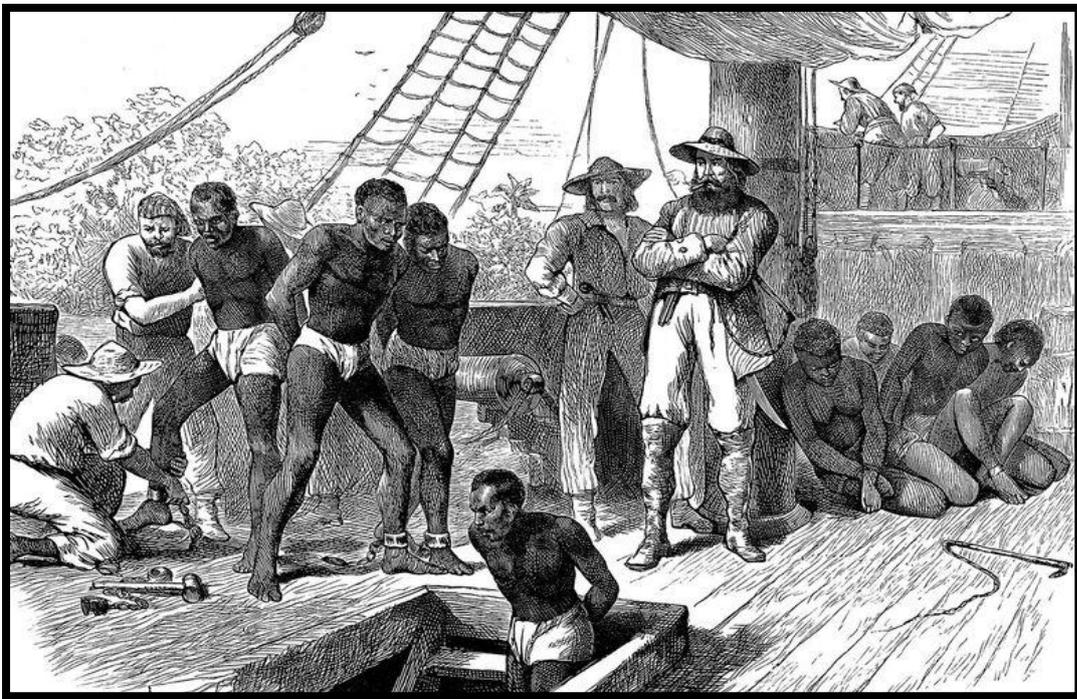
**SUBTOPIC : SLAVE TRADE IN AFRICA**

### **OBJECTIVES**

**BY THE END OF THE SUBTOPIC, LEARNERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

- ✓ Describe slavery and slave trade in Africa.
- ✓ Identify the causes of the Slave Trade in Africa.
- ✓ Explain methods used in obtaining slaves in Africa.
- ✓ Describe the effects of slavery and the slave trade on the Africans.

### **Introduction**



Slave ship

- Slavery was the worst kind of inhumanity that was practised by European countries.
- It lasted for more than a hundred years and it had negative effects on the African continent. A slave is an individual who is owned by someone.

- Slavery is a term that refers to the practice or system of owning slaves and slave trade became a system/ practise of buying and selling human being.
- Slavery is the idea of an individual who is completely owned and controlled by a master.
- Slavery had existed in the African continent way back before the colonisation of Africa.
- The kind of slavery that existed was different from the European type of slavery.
- Africans tended to enslave other people not their own ethnic or cultural group.

### **Causes of slavery in Africa**

- From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century the city of Ouidah, in Benin served as a major slave –raiding post in West Africa and slaves were supplied by fellow Africans in exchange for items such as clothes, knives, swords and guns.
- There were several reasons as to why slavery was conducted in Africa and below are some of the reasons for slave trade in Africa.

#### **(a) Need for labour**

- Africans were enslaved due to the economic systems developed by the Europeans, for instance, Europe began to colonise the Americas and the Caribbean and obtained new lands for their plantations.
- Africans were considered a source of cheap labour, the plantation owners needed to maximise profits using slaves.
- It then resulted in the enslavement of Africans, leading to the development of Atlantic Slave trade.



European domination of West Indies

(b) Growth of plantations

- The British had established Plantations that required a workforce to plant, maintain, harvest and process sugar cane.
- The French colonies of Mauritius and the Reunion in the Indian Ocean also demanded labour for its sugar plantations.
- The cocoa plantations on the island of Sao Tome and coffee plantations in Brazil.
- Labour was needed in clove and coconut palm plantations of the Arab islands of Zanzibar and Pemba.
- This fuelled African slave trade as more labour was needed in plantations.

(c) Not enough British criminals

- The British criminals were sent to work in plantations in West Indies as a source of punishment.
- Therefore the British criminals were not enough to support the plantations.

(d) Failure to find alternative source of labour



### Sugarcane plantations

- Local people could not provide enough labour in the plantations due to their attitude.
- Work on plantation was done under harsh conditions Europeans turned to Africans for a number of reasons such as:
  - The local indigenous people had proved to be problematic and did not meet the demands of the Europeans.
  - Africans were experienced farmers and agriculturists.
  - Africans were immune to European diseases and epidemics such as small pox.

### (e) Ethnocentrism

- Slave trade was done to show superiority among the European powers.
- The change of European powers from Spain and Portugal to France and Britain during the 17th century.
- These European powers were strong in terms their military powers and technological strength thus they were able to enslave Africans.

#### (f) Racism

- Racism refers to prejudiced (biased) view of another race.
- Africans were enslaved due to deep-rooted racism among Europeans thus Europeans justified slavery by labelling Africans as an inferior race.
- Therefore Africans were more suited to work on the plantations and mines.

#### (g) Shortage of indentured servants

- These were people who worked in return for food, shelter and clothes.
- British servants could not support the expansion of plantation and productivity.
- Transportation of these servants became expensive thus they opted for African labour.

#### (h) Religious factors

- The Church of England was not against the issue of slave trade this meant that it was accepted and promoted by religious factors within Europe.
- The Church of England went to an extent of branding slaves with the word 'society' in their chests.  
The church was part of the state and the political policy of those in power.

### Triangular slave trade

- This was the slave trade that involved the transportation of human beings across the Atlantic Ocean to America and the West Indies.
- It was also known as the 'transatlantic slave trade', and it involved three continents that are Africa, Europe and America.
- Slave traders travelled from Europe to West Africa where they came together to create somewhat a triangle thus it was called the triangular slave trade as it was conducted in three stages.



Map showing triangular slave trade route

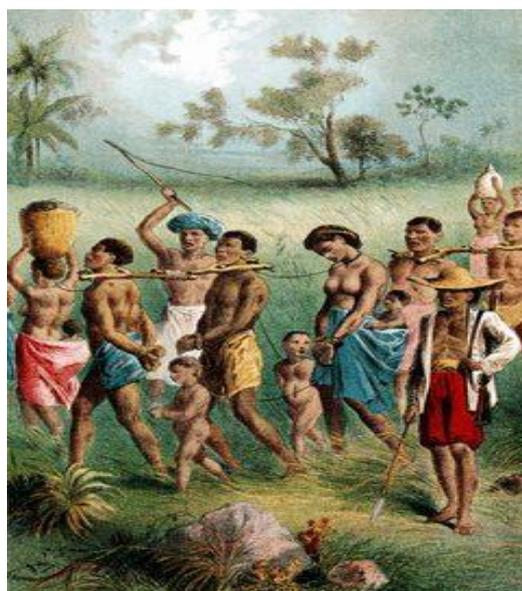
### Slave trade routes

#### 1. Europe

- Slave ships would leave ports such as London, Liverpool, and Bristol for West Africa.
- The slave ships carried manufactured goods such as guns, cloth, ironware and alcohol.

#### 2. Africa

- The goods would be exchanged for men, women and children who had been captured by the slave raiders and marched to the coast.



Captured slaves

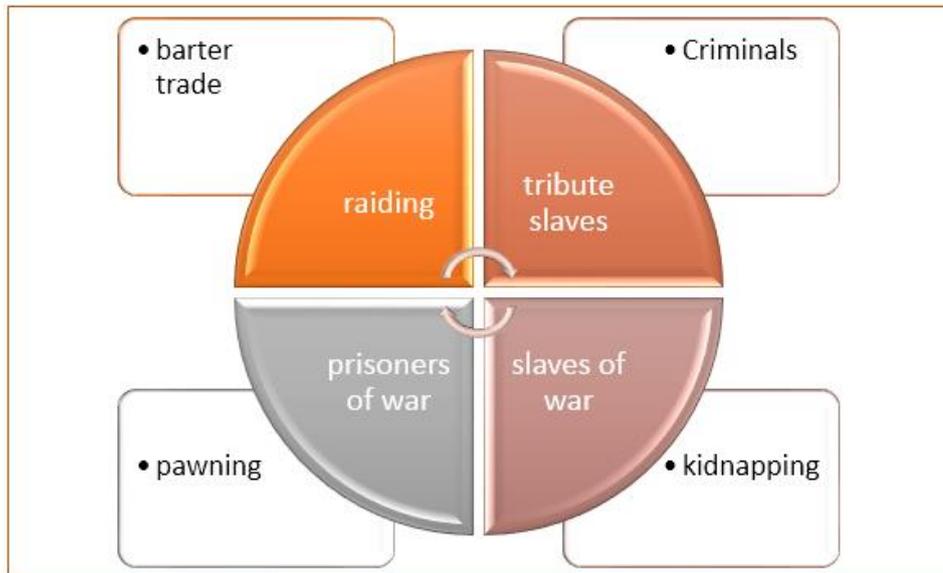
- The African dealers would have kidnapped these people from villages in the African interior.
- Captured slaves marched to the coast to be exchanged with goods and slave ships sailed up and down the coast, filling their holds with enslaved Africans.
- Africans were packed into the ship and placed below the deck.

### 3. Americas

- The journey from Africa to Americas was also known as the middle passage, it was the crossing from Africa to the Americas with human cargo.
- Upon arrival in the Americas, Africans were paraded and inspected to be sold.
- Africans would work in coffee, tobacco, cotton, and sugar plantations.
- The women slaves became domestic servants they were not well treated and were abused by their masters.
- Slaves were considered as property and not human beings thus they were sold at markets along with their goods.

## Methods used to obtain slaves

- Different methods were used to obtain slaves especially in Africa.



Methods of getting slaves

- Rich African nations traded with Europeans in exchange for slaves, goods such as guns, tobacco, alcohol, beads and textiles.
- Slave dealers would get slaves who were prisoners of war in Africa and these types of slaves constituted the largest number of slaves.
- There was warfare which was rife in Africa that is in East, West, Central and Southern Africa.
- Members of the ruling class would visit slave markets so as to buy slaves that they used to trade with.
- The famous markets were established along the caravan routes in North and West Africa for instance, Tabora, Ujiji and Karayi and Nyamwezi people were in charge of Central route.
- The Yao people controlled the southern routes.
- Raiding and kidnapping people into slavery were common practices in all regions of Africa for, instance the Lozi of Zambia and the Sena of Mozambique and the Amharas of Ethiopia kidnapped people of East and Central African interior.

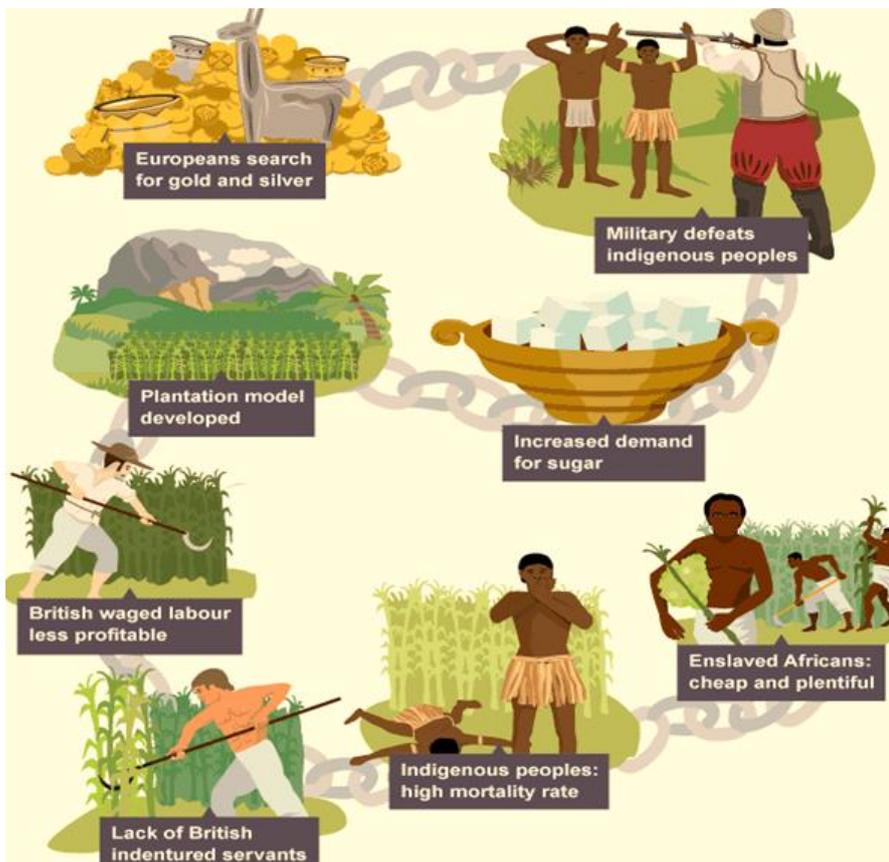
- Kidnapping was mostly done by slave traders or European.
- At times innocent Africans were kidnapped during raids.
- Some African chiefs began to raid and kidnap their own people so as to sell them as slaves.
- They raided neighbouring chiefdoms and this was done by powerful chiefdoms.
- At times Europeans themselves went into the interior to raid Africans.
- Enemy attacks were conducted for the purpose of capturing slaves.



A village being burnt in slave raid

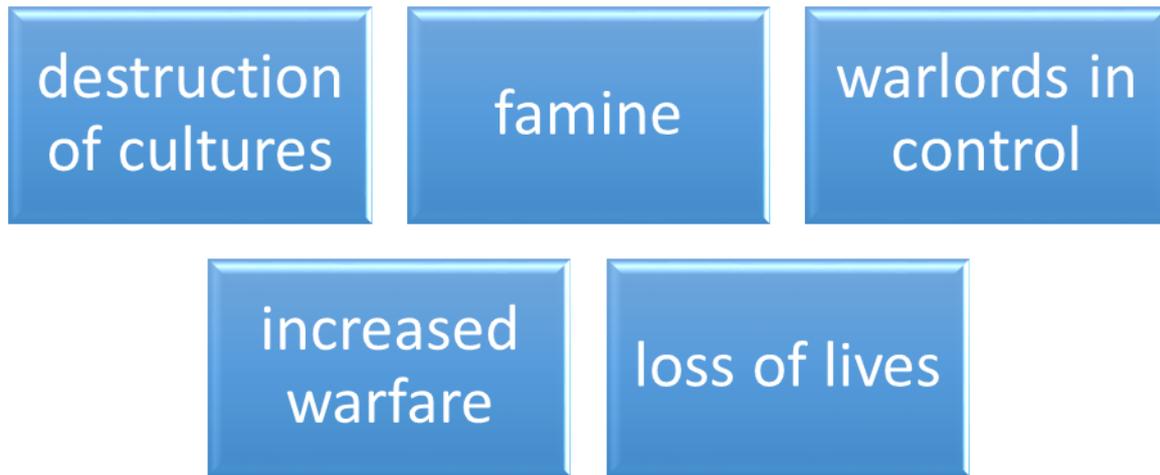
- Tribute which was a form of loyalty was used as a method to obtain slaves for example, the Yoruba of Nigeria practised tribute slavery.
- These slaves were given as gifts to the kings or chiefs by their owners as a form of honour.
- The African owners ended up selling these to European slave traders in exchange of weapons such as guns.

- As a result of the wars and conflicts that took place amongst Africans, those captured would become prisoners and eventually be sold into slavery.
- Bribery was used by Europeans as a method of obtaining slaves.
- African leaders would be bribed with items such as guns, alcohol and beads in turn they provided outcasts in their societies.



Development of slave trade

## Impact of the slave trade



### Impacts of slave trade

- The slave trade brought about negative effects on the African Continent especially in West Africa.
- The development of slave trade destroyed societies especially families who separated because of the human trade.
- Most African families were disrupted as some members of a family would be taken away.
- African leaders within the African society continued slavery and this led to slave-based states and economies.
- The loss of able-bodied young people underdeveloped Africa as the state was left with old, weak and crippled people who could not develop their own societies.
- Furthermore the exchange was unequal and one sided. For instance items that were exchanged were cloths, guns, gun powder, spirits and ornaments for people, these items did not develop African societies.
- The slave trade promoted disunity among African states, they constantly fought and there was insecurity among Africans.

- Disunity amongst the African paved a way for colonisation.
- The slave trade brought about hunger and starvation amongst the African states as some villages were destroyed in order to obtain slaves.
- The slave trade led to African societies preying upon others in order to obtain slaves in order to obtain guns which would serve as protection.
- African societies were left with the burden of children and women bearing the responsibility of work.
- The slave trade was a continuous process of exploitation of human resources, labour and commodities.
- The slave trade benefitted the African kings politically and economically as they worked hand in hand with European slave traders.
- Slavery encouraged African Warfare as a way of getting slaves.
- The slave trade disrupted the rich African culture and developed a legacy of violence, bitterness and social disturbances.
- It also increased cultural diffusion, the exchange of ideas and goods from slave traders brought in new weapons, goods to the African continent, whilst slaves brought their beliefs, legends and music to the Americas such Haiti.
- There was population decrease in many areas especially those that were near the coast.
- The Atlantic slave trade left Africa with an estimated 12 million Africans being forcibly removed from Africa and transported across the Atlantic to the Caribbean islands and the American continent.

## Abolition of slavery and slave trade



Anti-slavery emblem

- The slave trade continued despite its effects on Africans.
- Slave trade was profitable for the Europeans as it boasted the economic system of the Europeans
- Countries such as Britain were making use of raw materials from the Americas to boost their industries.
- Even though slavery was beneficiary to people it was opposed by a number of people of different backgrounds such as the:
  - British.
  - Americans.
  - French.
  - Former slaves.
  - Parliamentarians.
- They wrote books, poems pamphlets, essays, newspaper articles and some went to court on behalf of slaves.

## Abolition campaigners

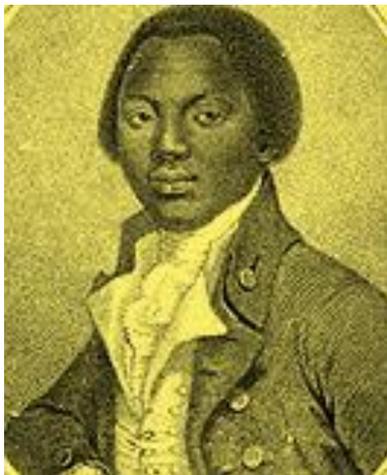
- An abolitionist is a person or group of people who were against slavery.
- These were people who wanted an end to slave and these were wealthy individuals, those who had been involved in the trade, Christians and former slaves.
- The abolitionists included the following:
  1. William Roscoe
  2. Quakers
  3. John Newton
  4. Alexandra Falconbridge
    - He was a slave ship surgeon from Bristol who published a book in 1788.
    - He gave evidence on anti-slavery practices before the British Parliament.
  5. Elizabeth Heyrick (1769-1831)
    - She was a prominent female campaigner against slavery.
  6. William Cowper
    - He was a poet who wrote anti- slavery poems and got them published.
  7. Toussaint Louverture 1743-1863
    - Led Haitian slave revolt.
    - An ex -slave who campaigned against slavery.
  8. Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846)
    - He was an Anglican clergyman, who wrote anti-slavery essays.
    - Clarkson created the first Abolitionist Committee in 1787.



Thomas Clarkson

9. Olauda Equinano (1745-1798)

- He was an ex- slave who resided in London as a freeman in the 1780s.
- His autobiography became very famous as it described how he was kidnapped and sold into slavery in the West Indies.
- The autobiography gave information on his life as a slave and how he struggled to buy his freedom.



Equinano's picture

10. William Wilberforce

- He was an anti-slavery abolitionist.
- He was a parliamentarian, who came from a wealthy background.

- He was eloquent in speech and well connected and he was well known for his integrity.
- He made speeches against slavery.



Wilberforce

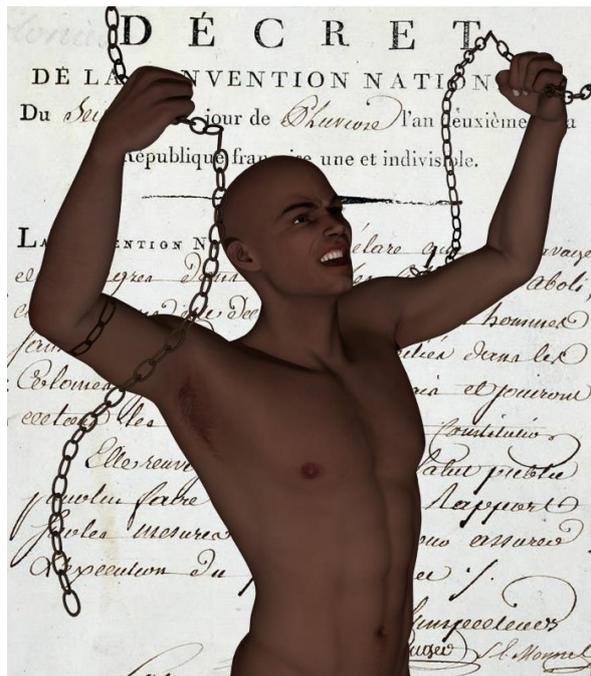
11. Granville Sharp

- He chaired the committee to abolish the slave trade.
- He was the oldest and most experienced member and he was a wealthy religious man.
- He campaigned against slavery through the use of pamphlets.
- He went on to take court cases of slaves who run away from the West Indies
- The most famous case that he won was the James Somerset case in 1771. In which black servants would not be deported back to slavery in the West Indies.



Granville Sharp

## Reasons for the abolition of slave trade and slavery



A free slave

- Britain abolished slave trade in 1807 after a number of campaigns that were against the slave trade such as:
- The resistance from Africans who were enslaved for example Toussaint L 'ouveture led a successful slave revolt in Haiti.
- Other revolts followed in Barbados 1816 and in Jamaica from 1831-1932.
- These disturbances reduced the slave trader's profits and at the same time the Europeans were made aware of the dangers of continuing the trade.
- There was parliamentary reform in Britain which called for the end of the slave trade.
- European countries were made aware of slave trade dangers by the abolition campaigns and religious groups.
- Prices for commodities dropped as people could not purchase goods from slave traders.

## Challenges in the abolition of the slave trade

There were several challenges to the slave trade, these included that:

- The slave trade was profitable to the Europeans as it gave them wealth, consumer goods and a work force.
- It therefore took considerable time for the trade to end.
- Abolitionist campaigns made people aware of the inhuman treatment of African slaves.
- The smuggling of slaves was a challenge even though it had been outlawed in 1807 by the British.
- It however took about 60 years for it to come to an end.
- Other European countries delayed in enforcing the bill passed by Britain.
- The British Royal Navy found it expensive to continue enforcing the ban, as they had to free Africans as well as capture ships.
- The slave trade was brought to an end in 1833.