Africa and the Atlantic World

APWH – Chapter 26
Introduction

• One of the trickiest parts of the history of the Atlantic slave trade is to avoid the social Darwinian trap of portraying the Africans as passive victims of the Europeans, or as “backwards” peoples with “prehistoric” weaponry and technologies destined to be conquered by “advanced” Europeans with “modern” technologies.
• African political and economic structures underwent a great deal of turmoil when the Europeans began to explore and trade, particularly on Africa’s west coast and sub-Saharan interior, although even the eastern coast was affected by the widespread introduction of Europeans.
The population of the African continent increased in this era due to the introduction of American foodstuffs, however, even with the slave diaspora. The “Columbian Exchange” was ultimately beneficial to the African peoples on a large scale.
• As with most cultures we have studied, slavery was common in African societies.
• There were thriving slave markets and routes that connected continental markets with southwest Asia in particular.
• The Atlantic slave trade, which began with the Portuguese, was not unique in its use of Africans as slaves, but was disastrous to many African states and societies because of the sheer number of slaves that were “marketable” global commodities between 1450 and 1850.

• This African diaspora was the largest forced migration of humans in the world’s history up to that time.
• The Atlantic slave trade was disastrous not only to states and societies in Africa, but was appallingly awful for the individuals who were shipped across the Atlantic to labor mostly plantations.

• Upon reaching the western Atlantic shores, however, these individuals had to craft a place for themselves and preserve as much of their culture as they could in a hostile and foreign environment.
• These Africans of the slave trade diaspora and their American-born descendants ultimately created a unique, syncretic African-American culture, which blended their African traditions with the European/American realities in which they had to live.
Between 1650 and 1860, approximately 10 to 15 million enslaved people were transported from western Africa to the Americas. Most were shipped to the West Indies, Central America, and South America.
Document Questions

Use the two documents provided to answer the questions in your notes. You should be able to get this done during class.

HOMEWORK

There are two PPTs posted on my website to cover the main points of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Chapter 26 of your textbook.

QUIZ on Wednesday covering CH 25 and 26 and any notes you have on Colonial America and Slavery. Will be both reading and stimulus questions.