



## Chapter 5 After You Read

Read each section carefully, then write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

### Comprehension Review

1. Why does the author say that the term *mfecane* “describes in a very African way the essence of the African Diaspora?”
2. What caused the African Mfecane?
3. How did the form of slavery practiced by Europeans in the late 1500s differ from the form of slavery practiced in Africa?
4. What did early Portuguese explorers hope to find in Africa?
5. How does indentureship differ from enslavement?
6. How did Queen Isabella I of Spain rule on the question of Spanish participation in the slave trade?
7. On what false belief did Las Casas base his request to replace Native Americans in

Hispaniola with Africans?

8. How did Spanish slave traders overcome the belief that the slave trade was unchristian?
9. How did the slave trade help Britain’s economy to flourish?

### Center Your Thinking

10. The author states that while the practice of slavery existed in many cultures, the mass enslavement of Africans in the late 1500s differed in three distinct ways. Work with a classmate to create a visual, such as a Venn diagram or chart, which compares the forms of slavery found in certain cultures with the enslavement of Africans.

### Vocabulary and Concept Development

1. A simile is a comparison between two items, using the terms *like* or *as*. Review the opening paragraph on page 44 for two similes. Identify each. Describe what is being compared and note how the items are alike.
2. The prefix *de-* means “to undo or remove.” How does understanding the meaning of this prefix aid in defining the word **dehumanization**?
3. Why does the author state that “the relationship between Africans and Europeans on the Iberian Peninsula was very complex”?
4. What is the meaning of the statement “The culture of Native Americans made them extremely vulnerable to Spain’s immoral goals of conquest and commerce”?
5. Explain the meaning of the term **exploitation** in the following sentence: “Britain’s economic success set in motion an even more dangerous pattern of exploitation.”

### Reading a Timeline

Use Unit 2 and Chapter 5 timelines to complete the following:

1. Describe the relationship between the West Africans and the people of the Iberian Peninsula from 700 to 1440.
2. Describe how that relationship changed between 1441 and 1515.
3. Match the following key items leading to and shaping the European Slave Trade in Column A, with the correct definition in Column B.

*Continued*



There were many asientos. Each one gave non-Spanish traders, such as the English and the Dutch, limited rights to Spain's monopoly of the trade in the American colonies in exchange for agreeing to transport Africans to Spain's colonies in the Americas. Trading companies, supported by their governments, as well as private businesses, competed fiercely for the right to the asiento.

Those European nations which did not have the asiento often traded with those that did so they could bring Africans into the Spanish colonies. Access to the lucrative Caribbean and American colonies was critical for the nations of Europe to develop their own economies with goods and products received from the sale of Africans.

Money brought in by the slave trade was laundered and "made clean" by its use in all sorts of domestic industries in Europe. Supremacy in the dirty business of the slave trade changed hands often during the 18th century. The Spanish sold asientos to Dutch, Portuguese, and English merchants to operate in specific regions of Africa. With the asiento, each country could only transport Africans from the region assigned to them. Many of these countries bought and sold asientos among themselves. They also challenged each other's right to the trade.

### **THE DUTCH CONTROL THE TRADE**

In 1621, the Dutch founded the Dutch West India Company and challenged Portugal's superiority in the trade with Africa. By the mid-17th century, the Dutch had taken control of the major trading routes in the Americas and the Caribbean. As the 17th century came to a close, Dutch traders were active in the ports of almost all the American colonies. They also brought the first Africans to the French Caribbean islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. The Dutch were also involved in introducing the first Africans into servitude in Virginia in 1619. These Africans, who were seized from a Spanish ship, were indentured servants, not slaves.

### **THE BRITISH DOMINATE THE TRADE**

Britain's highly developed fleet of merchant ships, increased military power, and imperial ambitions to enlarge its political and economic interests made it a fierce competitor for the asiento. Although Britain succeeded in acquiring the asiento in 1713, their actual involvement in the European Slave Trade began in the 1560s. John Hawkins, an English slave trader, changed the system of trade. He established middlemen on the West African coast. Many of these middlemen were criminals released from English prisons. Their job was to round up and capture Africans and to manage the fortresses where the Africans were imprisoned until the ships arrived.

The asiento gave Britain a monopoly of the trade in the Spanish colonies from 1713 to 1750. The monopoly, and a need for raw materials for its factories, fed the British desire to engage in the trade of Africans. Although the British were not part of the early development of the European slave trading practices in Africa, their extensive participation in the trade made them a dominant player. During the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), Britain transported more than 10,000 Africans to Cuba and approximately 40,000 to Guadeloupe. By 1788 more than 60 percent of Africans brought by Britain to the Americas had been sold to colonies controlled by other European countries.

Britain's economy flourished. British colonies in the Caribbean and the Americas were heavily taxed. The British government also charged a 10 percent duty on all private companies participating in the slave trade. The duties and taxes collected by Britain provided enormous resources and capital for investment and industry. The profits generated by this activity made the cruel trade in humans an important factor in Britain's economic life. Britain's economic success set in motion an even more dangerous pattern of **exploitation** of African people.



## THE CASE OF HISPANIOLA



The Spaniards in Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic today) learned quickly that Africans were violently opposed to their enslavement. Numerous revolts against slaveholders led to increased brutality against Africans. Africans in Hispaniola fled into the hills and

swamps, which were not easily accessible to slave overseers. There they established their own communities and lived as free people. From their vantage point in the highlands and marshes, the **maroons**, or runaway Africans, raided the European sugar plantations, freeing other Africans and taking the supplies they needed. A similar pattern would emerge later among enslaved Africans in Jamaica, Brazil, Colombia, and in the Carolinas and other parts of the United States.

Nanny, a Jamaican maroon, is one of the island's national heroes.

a possibility. Bondage in this region, however, would be rapidly transformed from indentured servitude, with the possibility of gaining one's freedom, to permanent enslavement. Africans became victims of enslavement, the most brutal form of human forced labor. They had no rights and no possibility of freedom.

By 1515, when the European Slave Trade began in full force, Spain and Portugal had become the major transporters of Africans to the north, south, central, and Caribbean regions of the Americas. This brutal trade in Africans is also called the Triangular, International, or European Slave Trade.

### Competing for Control

As the Spanish explorers colonized the Americas and took control of the captured land, called **colonies**, the slave trade was thought to be unchristian. To get around this problem, slave traders petitioned the Spanish government and the Catholic Church for permission to bring Africans to the Spanish colonies to work as slaves. This special permission was called the **asiento** (ah-see-EN-toh). The traders, to whom the asiento contracts were granted, were required to pay a tax to the Spanish government on each African brought to the colonies.

In his book, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, John Hope Franklin noted:

"The asiento changed hands rather frequently. Flemish traders [from the southwestern part of the Low Countries now occupied by Belgium and France] had it in 1516. In 1528 German merchants had it; later in the century Flemish and Portuguese companies enjoyed the privilege."

Conflict among the leading nations of Europe for access and control of the slave trade was inevitable. By 1650, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and England were the leading slave trading nations. Each nation sought African "slave" labor to develop the valuable natural resources of the Americas. There were conflicts about where each nation could capture Africans for the trade, who had the right to capture Africans, and which nation had the right to "sell" Africans and where they could be sold.

Because this type of conflict happened so often during the 15th and 16th centuries, the Europeans used the asiento contracts as a way to negotiate the claims. One of the important principles accepted in the Treaty of Utrecht in 1718, which ended the War of the Spanish Succession, was the continuation of the asiento.

### DID YOU KNOW ?

John Newton (1725-1807) was a notorious and cruel slave trader. He converted to Christianity and wrote the famous hymns, *Amazing Grace* and *How Sweet The Name of Jesus Sounds*.



## W. AFRICA AND EUROPE, 1441–1800



### DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Starting with Elmina, Europeans established forts in Africa, which eventually became prisons to hold enslaved Africans destined for the slave ships. What do you notice

about the locations of these forts? What conclusions can you make about the European presence in Africa during the European Slave Trade?

and respect for other humans. Their culture made them extremely vulnerable to Spain's immoral goals of conquest and commerce.

By the middle of the 16th century, Native Americans, enslaved by the Spaniards, were dying at an alarming rate. They were dying from European diseases and the backbreaking labor to which they were subjected by the Spaniards. A Catholic bishop, Bartholomew de las Casas,

pleaded with King Charles V to allow Africans to replace Native Americans as slaves in Hispaniola. Las Casas' argument was based on the false belief that the indigenous people were weak and that Africans, in contrast, possessed superior physical strength. Those who survived the harsh working conditions in Hispaniola were perhaps better able to adapt to the agrarian, or farm, life on the plantations based on a strong African tradition of resilience, resistance, and communalism, which would be reinforced over the next 250 years. It is also quite possible that the Africans were able to withstand the European diseases based on their longer history of contact with them.

Las Casas' request was granted and Africans soon outnumbered enslaved Native Americans. The policy of using Africans for forced labor in the Caribbean and Americas set in motion the inhuman practice of permanent African enslavement based on race.

The idea of enslaving another human being and totally controlling that person's life and time spread throughout the Americas and the Caribbean as

slaveholders instituted more severe measures of control. Enslavement was known in the Americas among the various cultures before the Europeans brought the Africans. The type of slavery that existed among the ethnic groups of the Americas was much more like the ancient forms of slavery practiced in Africa, where captives were not dehumanized and freedom was

## NATIVE AMERICAN AND AFRICAN CAPTIVES

There are several reasons why African captives were used to replace Native American captives. Before the arrival of the Europeans, there were large populations of Native Americans, but many of them were unable to survive the invaders' diseases. Those who survived were often not

culturally prepared to farm since they were hunters and gatherers. Many ran away into the swamps and hills. The African captives, brought in greater numbers, were often experienced farmers and miners and capable of withstanding the diseases.



## PORTUGAL'S AGE OF DISCOVERY

During the 15th century, Portugal's "Age of Discovery," Prince Henry (1394–1460), the son of the ruling monarch, John I, started a navigation school which sent adventurers around the world, particularly along the coast of West Africa. Some 20 years following Prince Henry's death, Portuguese explorers ventured over the globe. Vasco da Gama

(1460–1524) went as far as India. Pedro Cabral (1467–1520) opened Brazil to Europe. But it was the African continent that received the most frequent visits from Portuguese sailors as they traveled along its western coast to the Azores, Madeira Islands, Cape Bojador, and Cape Verde on their way to the African mainland.

By 1444, the Portuguese were bringing Africans regularly to Europe. Spain would follow in 1492 when they finally defeated the Moors. A dangerous system was beginning. Portuguese and Spanish sailors were leading frequent raids in the West African coast in areas that we know today as Senegal, Guinea, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire in French). They captured or traded, for Africans (who were ruled by corrupt kings). In turn, the captives were traded to the wealthy in Europe.

Despite the spirited opposition of some African leaders, the number of Africans forced into Europe skyrocketed from less than 20 to more than 1,000 between 1441 and 1450. Soon Portugal was bringing in 800 Africans a year to work as slaves. Africans were so common in Seville, Spain, that King Ferdinand (1452–1516) and Queen Isabella I (1451–1504) of Spain nominated a popular African, Juan de Valladolid, as the "mayor of the Negroes" in Seville.



Fifteenth-century Lisbon was a busy port and the capital of Portugal. Today, parts of the city continue to reflect its slave-trading past.

## SPAIN ENTERS THE TRADE

During her reign, Queen Isabella I refused to allow Spaniards to trade or enslave Africans in Spain. However, she permitted Spaniards to participate in the slave trade in the Spanish colonies if the Africans were baptized as Christians. It may seem strange that the queen would permit the enslavement and trade of Africans in the Caribbean and the Americas only if they were baptized as Christians. Perhaps she thought this was a way to excuse Spain's involvement in the trade, which some groups believed was unchristian. Nevertheless, when Queen Isabella I died, her husband King Ferdinand yielded to the merchants, allowing them to trade or enslave Africans in Spain. Like Nicholas Owen, the slave trader, Spanish merchants apparently saw the trade of Africans as a quick path to wealth. It furnished their businesses with free labor, and since the Africans were considered personal property, they could be sold for cash.

The importation of Africans into the Caribbean and the Americas continued to be a problem for Spain's rulers. By the time King Charles V (1500–1558), the grandson of Isabella I and Ferdinand, came to power in 1516, Spanish colonists on the island of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic) did not have enough Native Americans or Christian Africans to work on the plantations.

## LAS CASAS REQUESTS AFRICANS

The **Native Americans**, the indigenous people of the Americas, had a culture of trust, nonviolence





For several centuries, the Moors of North Africa, such as the one shown here, ruled Portugal and Spain. Their use of gold for trading and their knowledge of shipping may have sparked Portugal's interest in Africa.

It is by accident that Portugal became the country to start the European Slave Trade. The northern region of the African continent is very near to Portugal. With the exception of Spain, its neighbor on the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal is closer to Africa than it is to any country in Europe. Furthermore, for over 780 years, the Moors controlled Portugal as they had held Spain from the 8th century. The **Moors** were Africans who lived in northern Africa and the Sahara (see Origins, p. A6). Between 700 and 800 C.E., Arabs, who practice the religion of Islam, joined the Moors and invaded the Iberian Peninsula. Portugal regained its independence from the Moors in 1143 but Spain did not defeat the Moors until January 2, 1492. With their independence from the Moors, Portugal was now free to establish a relationship with Africa years before any other European nation.

## AFRICANS IN PORTUGAL

In the narrow streets of the former Moorish quarters of Lisbon, merchants' tales about gold in Africa sparked the interest of many Portuguese. It was not the trade in people but the trade in gold that brought the first Portuguese adventurers to the African continent. Soon, however, this would change. In 1441, Portuguese sailors, under the sponsorship of

Prince Henry the Navigator, sailed down the coast of West Africa. They returned to Portugal with 10 Africans as "gifts" to Prince Henry. The Portuguese were curious about the Africans from the West Coast. Although they were familiar with the Moors, they had very limited contact with West African cultures and ethnic groups. From this point forward, Africans became a part of Portuguese society. Some Africans traveled to Portugal on their own as diplomats, workers, and students of Christianity. Others were captured and taken to the royal court in Portugal and, later, to Spain where they worked as paid or indentured servants in the homes of wealthy Portuguese or in the fields alongside Portuguese and Spanish peasants. **Indentureship** was a European practice that allowed a person to enter into a contract or bond to work as a servant for someone else, usually for a period of seven years. At the end of the contract, the indentured servant was freed with a small amount of pay.

The relationship between Africans and Europeans (see Origins, p. A6) on the Iberian Peninsula was very complex. Some Africans were free, some were slaves, and some were indentured servants. Africans were integrated into every level of society from peasantry to royalty. There was intermarriage into the royal families in both Spain and Portugal. Edward Scobie, a noted historian, wrote:

"Blacks were adopted into royal families, given royal surnames and accepted into marriage with the noble families."

One such example is Don Alfonso Carlos de Bourbonne, an African architect, who was the adopted son of Charles III of Spain, who reigned in the 16th century.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

The Moors of North Africa taught the people of Al-Andalusia, the area now occupied by Spain and Portugal, how to build boats and establish trade relations, which later led to European exploration of Africa and the Americas.



Owen told his readers there was “no place” where he could so quickly acquire wealth than in the trading of Africans. Owen’s greed is apparent as he explains that he and fellow slave traders:

“spend the prime of youth among Negroes, scraping the world for money, the universal god of mankind, untill death overtakes us.”

The institution of slavery was not new. The idea of treating human beings like **chattel** or personal property was, however, radically different from the type of slavery that existed in Africa. European slave traders so thoroughly dehumanized Africans that in their view Africans were **commodities**, goods or merchandise that could be bought and sold for profit.

Before the mass enslavement of African people by Europeans in the late 1500s—the form of slavery that is most widely studied in modern times—the conditions of slavery and the social standing of slaves differed greatly among cultures. In Europe, slavery was a legal system. In Africa, slavery was a social condition which did not dehumanize slaves. In the eyes of their African masters, African slaves maintained their human qualities. They could work their way out of slavery and, in some instances, could marry into the ruling family, thus gaining their freedom.

In some cultures, this form of slavery was used to punish people for breaking the law or for not paying their debts. In other cultures, people could voluntarily sell themselves and their families into slavery for financial gain or to repay a debt. In still other societies, those who could not provide for themselves often became slaves to the wealthy. Prisoners of war were sold as slaves, becoming part of the lower classes in the victor’s society.

The enslavement of Africans by Europeans had three distinct differences from the form of slavery practiced in other cultures:

- First, African people were singled out for enslavement on a scale that had never been seen before. The European Slave Trade began

the largest forced migration in the history of the world. From 1515 to 1808, European traders armed with guns raided the coastal villages of West Africa, which stretched from Senegal to Angola, and captured millions of Africans for trade.

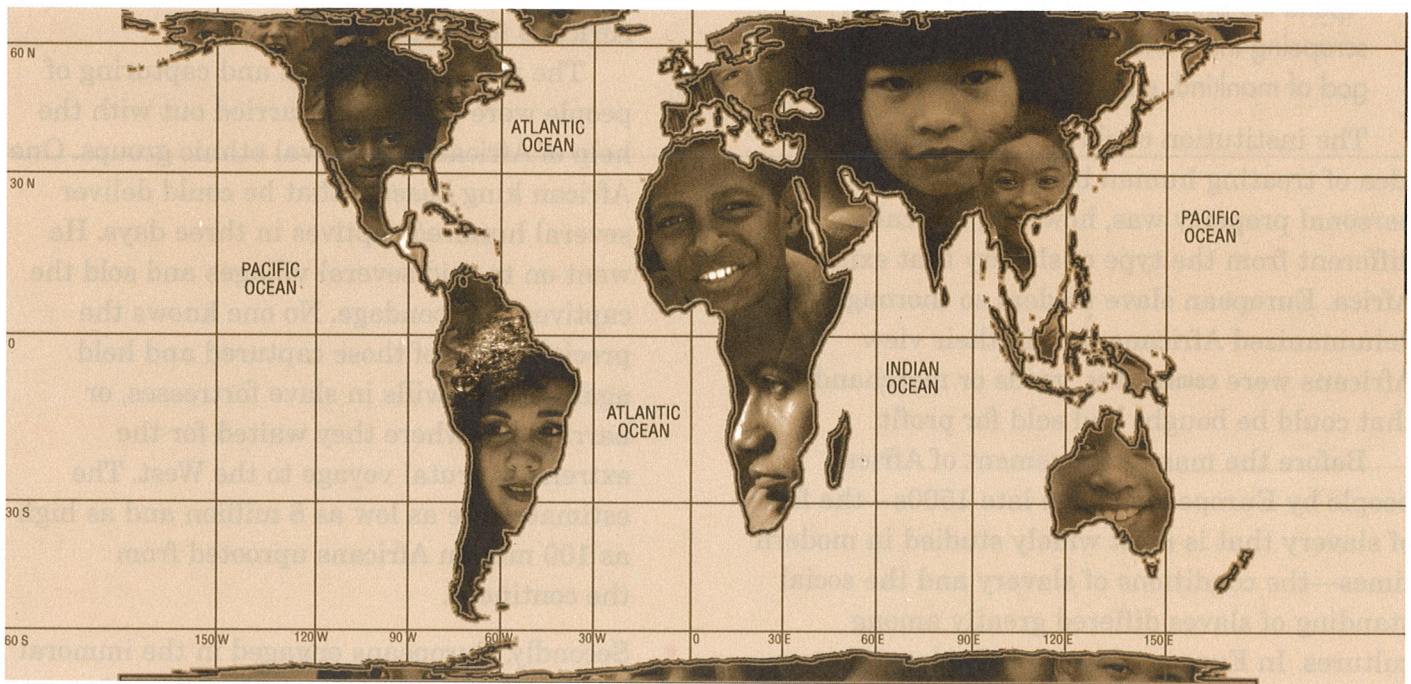
The raiding of villages and capturing of people were sometimes carried out with the help of Africans from rival ethnic groups. One African king boasted that he could deliver several hundred captives in three days. He went on to raid several villages and sold the captives into bondage. No one knows the precise figure of those captured and held against their wills in slave fortresses, or barracoons, where they waited for the extremely brutal voyage to the West. The estimates are as low as 8 million and as high as 100 million Africans uprooted from the continent.

- Secondly, Europeans engaged in the immoral and ruthless enslavement of Africans for one single purpose—economic profit. To justify the dehumanizing system of enslavement, Europeans invented the false argument that Africans were inferior and deserved this cruel and unrelenting enslavement.
- Finally, African enslavement and oppression—the unjust and cruel exercise of power against Africans—became the most prolonged instance of inhumanity ever practiced against any race. The effects of enslavement and racism are still with us today.

## Portugal Leads the Trade

Lisbon, the capital city of Portugal, reflects the country’s haunting past with enslavement. Neglected old buildings line the avenues once used by the nation’s most famous sea captains. Within the buildings, paintings and statues of enslaved Africans are mixed in with Portuguese explorers, adventurers, and slave traders. These works of art appear in Lisbon earlier than in any other major cities in Europe.





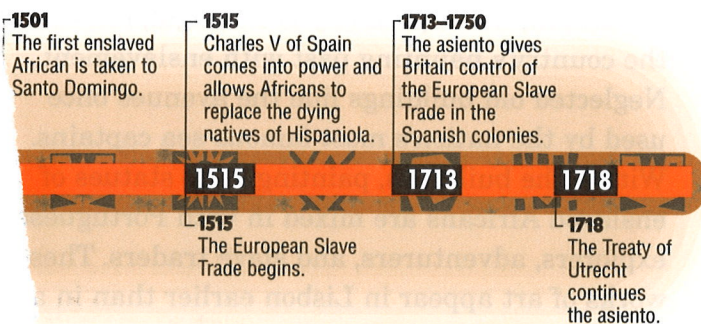
The African Mfecane, set in motion by the European Slave Trade, resulted in the dispersion of Africans around the world. Regardless of their nationality or physical features, all people of African descent are part of the African Diaspora.

African people. All people of African descent are part of the Diaspora, regardless of their nationality and birthplace.

The events leading up to the African Mfecane as we know it today were rooted in a system of oppression that began innocently in trading practices between nations and was later corrupted by power and economic greed. The **European Slave Trade**—trading Africans for material

wealth—was responsible for the forced migration of Africans to Europe, the Americas, and the Caribbean. The trade led to the legal enslavement and **dehumanization** of Africans for the sole purpose of financial gain. When one group of people dehumanizes another group of people they attempt to take away or minimize their human qualities. Thus, dehumanizing Africans—seeing them as less than human—allowed Europeans to justify their trade in human beings. Today, people of African descent use the terms **enslaved** and **enslavement** to counter the dehumanizing effects of the slave trade. These terms are a powerful reminder that 400 years of enslavement cannot erase four million years of humanity and contribution to the world.

The European practice of **slavery**, which allowed the domination of one person by another for economic purposes, was a system based on greed. One slave trader, Nicholas Owen, wrote about his involvement in the slave trade in 1758.







## AS YOU READ

- What caused the African Mfecane?
- How did the European Slave Trade begin?
- What effect did the *asiento* have on the slave trade?

# A Dangerous Pattern of Exploitation

## Chapter Outline

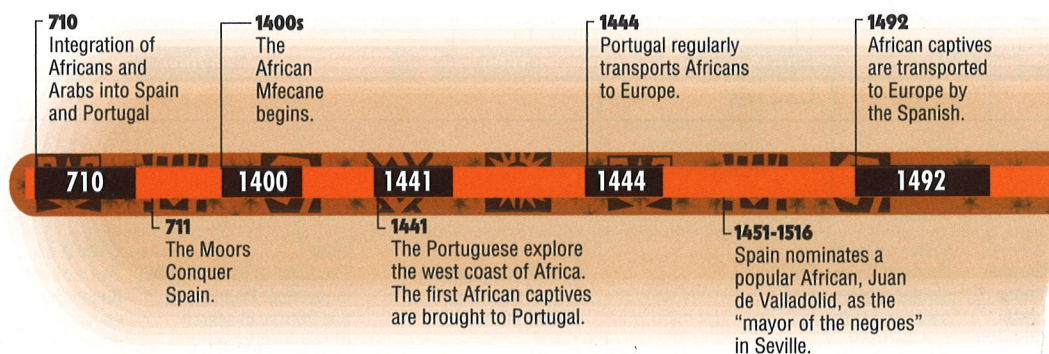
- The African Mfecane
- Portugal Leads the Trade
- Competing for Control

### Vocabulary

- African Mfecane • African Diaspora • European Slave Trade • dehumanization
- enslaved • enslavement • slavery • chattel • commodities • Moors • indentureship
- Native Americans • maroons • colonies • *asiento* • exploitation

## The African Mfecane

Some historic events unfold over thousands of years; others hit like a lightning bolt, occurring in a few short centuries. In the 1400s, Europeans invaded Africa and set off a series of events that caused millions of Africans to be brutally uprooted from their homeland. These African captives were scattered across the earth like tiny seeds across a vast plain. This forced removal and dispersion of Africans formed what is known today as the **African Mfecane**, or what many historians call the **African Diaspora**. According to some historians, Africans first began to use the term *mfecane* (em-fah-CAH-nee) in the early 1800s, during the brutal military domination of parts of southern Africa by Shaka, king of the Zulus. His military drive scattered rival ethnic groups across the great expanse of southern Africa. *Mfecane* is a word from the language of the Zulu people meaning “great scattering.” It describes, in a very African way, the essence of the African Diaspora (die-AS-pah-rah)—the dispersal or scattering of





# Scattered To The West: The European Slave Trade

700 C.E.—1808 C.E.

**Unit Summary**—During the 1400s, the Portuguese, followed by other European traders, traveled to Africa in search of gold. They found a land rich in many resources. At first, the visitors were satisfied transporting these African resources back to Europe where they were sold for profit. Fueled by greed, the European visitors soon targeted Africa's greatest natural resource—its people—for mass enslavement. The enslavement of Africans was different from the form of slavery practiced in Africa and many other cultures. Millions of Africans were brutally uprooted from their homeland and dispersed around the world for economic profit. Their dispersion is called the African Mfecane. (Chapter 5)

The Europeans soon recognized that a vast market was rapidly developing for enslaved Africans in the colonies. European industries in the colonies grew at a rapid rate which created a strong need for labor. This led to the European Slave Trade, an immoral business of conquest and domination that damaged Africa's economy and made the nations of Europe wealthy. (Chapter 6)

For three centuries, Africans were brutally uprooted from their homes and forced to endure an inhumane voyage at sea. The Europeans treated their African captives as mere goods that could bring great profit. While disease and death were common on the slave ships, thousands of courageous Africans refused to give in to their oppressors. The African captives who survived were separated from their families and homeland. They were forced to begin a new life among people who were hostile toward them. (Chapter 7)

## UNIT 2

### BEFORE YOU READ

Most people seek some level of material wealth. This desire can act as a motivator. When held in balance, the desire for material wealth can be quite positive.

However, when the need for material gain violates the natural rights of others, greed sets in. In this unit, you will read how many Europeans' desire for wealth grew into an immoral greed that brutally violated the rights of millions of Africans.

Think about a time when you were victimized by another's greed. How did the experience make you feel about yourself and the other person?

