

From Africa to America

Not everyone who migrated to America came voluntarily. Between 1650 and 1860, as many as 15 million people were kidnapped in Africa, forced onto ships, carried to the Americas, and sold into slavery. Slavery was legal in Carolina from its beginning, and the first enslaved people arrived in the 1680s. But only in the eighteenth century did slavery in North Carolina begin to grow. By the time of the Revolution, slavery was firmly established throughout the South, and black people — nearly all of them enslaved — made up more than a quarter of all North Carolinians.

We'll begin this chapter by examining the cultures and societies of West Africa and West Central Africa, the regions from which most of the enslaved people in the American South came. Next we'll take a hard — and uncomfortable — look at the trade of enslaved people itself, through the eyes of the people who experienced it. We'll end by remembering what African people did in America to preserve their cultures and traditions — and to create new ones.

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- Africans Before the Atlantic Slave Trade
- Leo Africanus Describes Timbuktu
- A Forced Migration
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A memorial to enslaved people in Zanzibar, Tanzania, an East African port once important in the Indian Ocean trade of enslaved people.

For Teachers:

[Life in Colonial North Carolina \(Primary Source Sets\)](#)^[2] Lesson Plans, State Archives of North Carolina

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