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Gavins: Diasporic Africans and Slavery

This chapter of the book is written by Raymond Gavins, who reflects on the slavery of Africans by force and trading them to the United States. When the western world get into agriculture and mining, they need a large of labors. Initially, there were labors from Aztecs, Incas and other Amerindian people from Europe. Later on, they were replaced by the black slaves. When the traders found that black slaves are cheaper so they started supplying the servants to the colonies. The people living in colonies were happy because it was now easier to identify the slaves due to their skin color. Some of the states in Europe were making a continuous progress in trading the agriculture products because of the overwork done by the slaves. Slaves were continuously dehumanized by their masters. Regardless of the efforts of Catholic churches against the slavery, slaves were more tortured. The slaves were socially excluded through laws like “Black Codes”. There were harsh laws for those slaves who resist the suppression. In the United States, the slavery remain for more than two centuries. However, the trading of slaves continued for several years. There were more slaves in southern region as compared to the Northern part. The arrival of Africans increased in the 18th Century. Now, black slaves were also allowed to marry and make a family. However, under the US constitution slavery was legalized in those areas where it was practiced in larger number. During the industrial revolution, the demand for slaves further increased in Southern region in order to produce more cotton. Slaves played a crucial role in developing the economy of south at that era. Moreover, the white people used the white supremacy and treated blacks as natural slaves. When slaves united to fight back for their rights, the masters would exert control on them. They were deprived of all the basic needs of life like housing and clothing. The response to slavery took many forms. They were considered as complex property because some of the slaves might raise voice while others would accommodate. Slaves started fighting for their freedom. Moreover, in the 18th century slaves started getting converted into Christianity A large number of Slave community converted into Christianity during the Second Great Awakening. Likewise, the Christian missionaries played a greater role in educating slaves and showed them a path of salvation. However, the Black Americans were not allowed to get education because they thought that when slaves will get education, they will challenge their masters. Such practices did not stop some of slaves from fighting for their rights. They became rebels and started torturing white people. By the 19th century African Americans were much aware about their right and they started challenging the institutions for their freedom. All those movements of anti-slavery became one of the reasons of Civil War. The religious leaders played a significant role in spreading the message that slavery is against the ethical standards and moral values. Movements were formed to abolish the slave trade. However, in 1865 under the 13th amendment each citizen was given freedom to live. The traditional practices were improved. As a result, slaves were replaced by free labors. It was a chance for the Black community to earn, get place to live and attend the school. It was the movement for slaves’ community get empowered.

**Questions**

Q1**:** Forced displacement and isolation proved to be central mechanism in New World enslavement of Africans. What are some other factors that explain why they were enslaved?

Q2: On the North American mainland, how and why did African slavery become so important in southern colonies and states?

Q3: By what means did African American slaves seek survival and liberation?