**CHAPTER 12**

**The South Expands:**

**Slavery and Society, 1800–1860**

**I. The Domestic Slave Trade**

**A. The Upper South Exports Slaves** (1776–1809: 115,000 Africans imported; 1809 – U.S. participation in Atlantic trade ended; illegal importation continued through Spanish Florida until 1819 and then through Mexican province of Texas, bringing 50,000 slaves between 1810 and 1865.)

1. Slavery in the Chesapeake region – Black population grew naturally in the Chesapeake; traders began selling slaves to planters in the Deep South; by 1860, more than 440,000 slaves were traded from Virginia alone; transfers and sales took place; slaves were given to grown white children settling in the western slave territories; by 1860, majority of slaves lived in the Deep South (Georgia to Texas).

2. Transfer and sale – Some Chesapeake planters sold their plantations and moved their slaves to the Southwest; others gave slaves to children who moved west; transfers accounted for 40 percent of African American migrants; 60 percent were “sold south” through traders. Chesapeake planters increased their wealth substantially through sales; coastal trade in slaves from Atlantic coast to sugar plantations in Louisiana was highly visible and widely condemned by abolitionists; inland system was less visible, but traders marched slave purchases in coffles from Chesapeake to Alabama, Mississippi and Missouri in the 1830s, and to Arkansas and Texas in the 1850s.

**B. The Impact on Blacks**

1. Emphasis on slaves as property – Domestic trade revealed how vulnerable slave population was as “property”; whites emphasized slaves’ status as property as key to slave discipline, threatening to sell them if they did not behave.

2. Individuals and families – Interstate slave trade focused on young adults; approximately one-fourth of slave marriages were destroyed by trade; separated one-third of slave children under age 14 from their parents; family ties were strong among slaves, despite conditions; planters often viewed themselves as “benevolent masters” caring for their “family,” including their slaves; often argued they only sold those who were difficult; few questioned the morality of the trade.

1. **The World of Southern Whites**

**A. The Dual Cultures of the Planter Elite**

1. The Traditional Southern Gentry – Expansion split the plantation elite: traditional Old South aristocrats (wealth from rice and tobacco, lived in Chesapeake, South Carolina, Georgia) and capitalists/planters (cotton-producing states); aristocrats married their children to one another to maintain privileged identity; men were planters, merchants, lawyers, newspaper editors, ministers; lived extravagantly; rice planters were wealthiest in the Chesapeake and Old South; production of goods changed with migration and transfers; tobacco farmers moved west to gain wealth from cotton.

2. The Ideology and Reality of “Benevolence” – Planter aristocracy defended slavery as a “positive good” or “normal condition”; some required slaves to attend church services, building churches on their land; attempted to shape slaves’ behavior; used religion to justify slavery; many absentee slave owners lived in urban areas.

3. Cotton Entrepreneurs – Less extravagance in the Deep South among capitalists; slavery was more harsh in this region and slaves resisted the system more vigorously; unlike in the Chesapeake, where slaves gained other skills, cotton production was labor intensive; “gang-labor system” (1820s) used to increase output and keep slaves working at a steady pace; by 1840s, gangs were producing approximately 4 million bales of cotton annually.

**B. Planters, Smallholding Yeomen, and Tenants**

1. Planter Elites – Approximately 5 percent of white population in the South owned 20 or more slaves; substantial proprietors, another 20 percent of population, owned 6-20 slaves each; lawyers had wealth; either owned slaves or managed the financial affairs of those who did.

2. Smallholding Planters and Yeomen – Were the majority; owned 1-5 slaves and less than 100 acres of land; wanted more land but either could not afford it or were waiting to inherit it from fathers; wives of yeomen had little power, losing all legal identity at marriage; women participated in evangelical Baptist and Methodist churches, outnumbering men by a margin of two to one; white landowners in this class worked alongside slaves.

3. Poor Freemen – Propertyless whites had no social mobility; slave owners refused to pay taxes to fund public schools; poor white men struggled to get jobs that required labor because landowners preferred slave labor; served in slave patrols as a requirement of citizenship even if they did not own slaves; enjoyed the psychological satisfaction that they were ranked “higher than blacks in southern society; when possible, migrated to west of the Appalachian Mountains, where they hoped to establish a home/farm with family members.

**III. Expanding and Governing the South**

**A. The Settlement of Texas**

1. The Austins – Moses Austin received a land grant and Mexican citizenship when he moved to the region after Mexico was granted independence in 1821; son Stephen followed him and received approximately 180,000 acres, which he sold to newcomers; in 1835, nearly 30,000 Americans (white and some black slaves) were living in what is today eastern and central Texas; S. Austin led the “peace party” of settlers who accepted Mexican rule but wanted political autonomy for Americans in the region; “war party” wanted independence.

2. “Remember the Alamo” – Political differences continued between Americans and President Santa Ana, who wanted to impose his authority throughout Mexico; On March 2, 1836, “war party” began a rebellion, supported by the Americans in Texas; after Americans were defeated at the Alamo in San Antonio, newspapers published romantic descriptions of the fighting men and called for Americans to “Remember the Alamo”’; Americans went to Texas to fight under General Sam Houston; in April 1836, Battle of San Jacinto led to independence; debate began in the U.S. over whether to annex Texas, desired by the Texans but not by President Van Buren.

**B. The Politics of Democracy**

1. Taxation Policy – Debate ensued in Alabama over taxation; Democrats wanted low taxes; Whigs wanted higher taxes to provide subsidies for banks, canals, roads; Whigs appealed to the common people; Alabama legislators appealed to slave owners who had money and power in the state; between 1830 and 1860, 70 percent of state revenue came from taxes on slaves and land; Alabama was viewed as a state that taxed democratically; more often, yeomen bore the burden of taxation in southern states.

2. The Paradox of Southern Prosperity – Two extremes: extreme hardship, poverty for African Americans vs. wealth and prosperity for white planters; South had a higher per capita income among whites than France and Germany; compared to North, a lower standard of living; focused on land and agriculture, not on new technology of the 19th century: factories, machine tools, steel plows, crushed gravel roads, water and steam-powered factories were all part of life in the industrial North; urban growth in the North was limited in the South to New Orleans, St. Louis, and Baltimore; few immigrants to the South because of lack of opportunity; by 1860, some 84 percent of southerners still worked in agriculture.

**IV. The African American World**

1. **Evangelical Black Protestantism**

1. African Religions and Christian Conversion – African-born slaves continued to worship their traditional gods and spirits; ministers such as Presbyterian Charles C. Jones believed that whites should convert slaves; some slaves became Christians in the Chesapeake and then were sold to the Deep South.

2. Black Worship – Adapted Protestantism to their needs; slaves disliked and avoided passages in the Bible that told them to obey authority without question; some believed they would be liberated as the Jews had been in the Old Testament; adapted music to their African roots and spiritual needs; worship became “distinctive and joyous.”

**B. Forging Families and Creating Culture**

1. African influences – By 1820, the percentage of slaves born in Africa was decreasing (20 percent in South Carolina); regional differences were evident; Mississippi Valley population had large number of slaves who descended from the Congo region of West-Central Africa; shunned marriages between cousins (African incest taboos).

2. Kinship and marriage – Cousin marriages were common among whites in the South; slave marriages were not recognized by law, although marriages did often take place in front of ministers; slaves who came from Africa often gave their children African names; many American-born slaves chose English names.

**C. Negotiating Rights**

1. Working Lives – Families and communities provided order among slaves; collective unity aided slaves in achieving additional rights (“task” work in South Carolina); slaveholders feared rebellion among slaves that organized; was difficult to maintain order unless a slave owner was comfortable using violence; only hardened or sadistic masters had the stomach for such violence.

2. Survival Strategies – Slaves slowed the pace of work by feigning illness or breaking tools; insisted that they be sold in families; burned master’s home or barn; poisoned food; destroyed crops; any of these tactics could be met with violence by masters, including rape of slaves; few slaves rebelled violently (Gabriel and Martin Prosser in 1800; Nat Turner in 1831); escape was difficult for those in the Deep South; escape from any plantation meant leaving family members.

**D. The Free Black Population**

1. Northern Blacks – About half of free blacks lived in the North; discrimination against blacks kept them in low-paying jobs and considered socially inferior; few northern states gave black men suffrage; only Massachusetts allowed blacks to testify against whites in court; black activist Martin Delaney remarked: “We are slaves in the midst of freedom.” Created strong institutions including businesses, schools, mutual-benefit societies, Free African Societies, and a new religious denomination—the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

2. Standing for Freedom in the South – The free black population in slave states was approximately 225,000 in 1860; most lived in coastal cities and in the Upper South; faced dangers of being forced into slavery, denied jury trials, or simply kidnapped and sold; very few free blacks owned slaves (mixed-race David Barland in Mississippi owned at least 18); free black men were symbols to slaves of potential for freedom.