

# Ch. 11. Cotton, Slavery and the Old South

## Focus Questions:

- ☞ How has slavery been perceived in pop culture?
- ☞ Identify and describe the different regions of the south and how they were distinct from one another.
- ☞ How did slavery shape the social and economic relations in the Old South?
- ☞ Identify the industrial areas of the south and problems with southern industrialization.
- ☞ Explain the characteristics of the different social classes in the south.
- ☞ Explain the different forms of slave resistance and the outcome of Nat Turner's Rebellion.
- ☞ Analyze and explain slave life, society, religion, family and culture in the south.



CHIEF KAUFMAN  
STARRING  
A FILM BY  
BRUCE MCKEON  
STARRING  
CHIEF KAUFMAN

# 12 YEARS A SLAVE

A FILM BY BRUCE MCKEON  
STARRING CHIEF KAUFMAN  
CASTING BY  
COSTUME DESIGNER  
EDITED BY  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS  
PRODUCED BY  
WRITTEN BY  
DIRECTED BY

# The Rise of “King Cotton”

## The Cotton Economy

- \*cotton dominated southern economy
- \*tobacco market was too unstable
  - quickly sapped soil of its nutrients
- \*wheat, rice, sugar grown in certain areas
- \*new strain of cotton could be grown anywhere
  - grew best in the “deep south”
- \*3/4 of the World’s cotton produced in US by 1861
- \*cotton made up 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of America’s exports
- \*slavery expands rapidly (4 million slaves by 1861)
  - slave value worth more than all the nation’s factories, railroads and banks combined
  - vast majority of slaves in the “Deep South” (3 million)



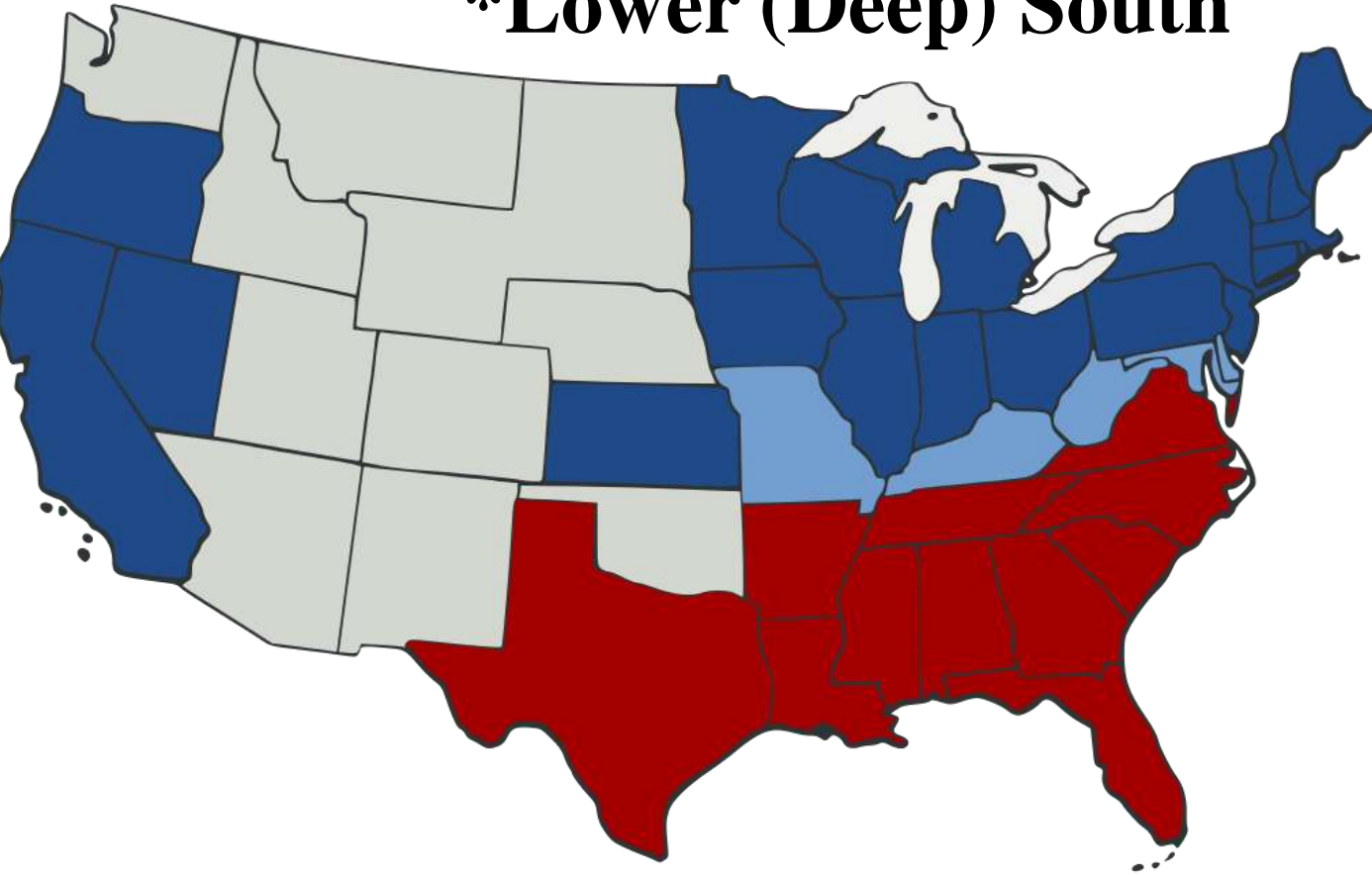
# The Old South

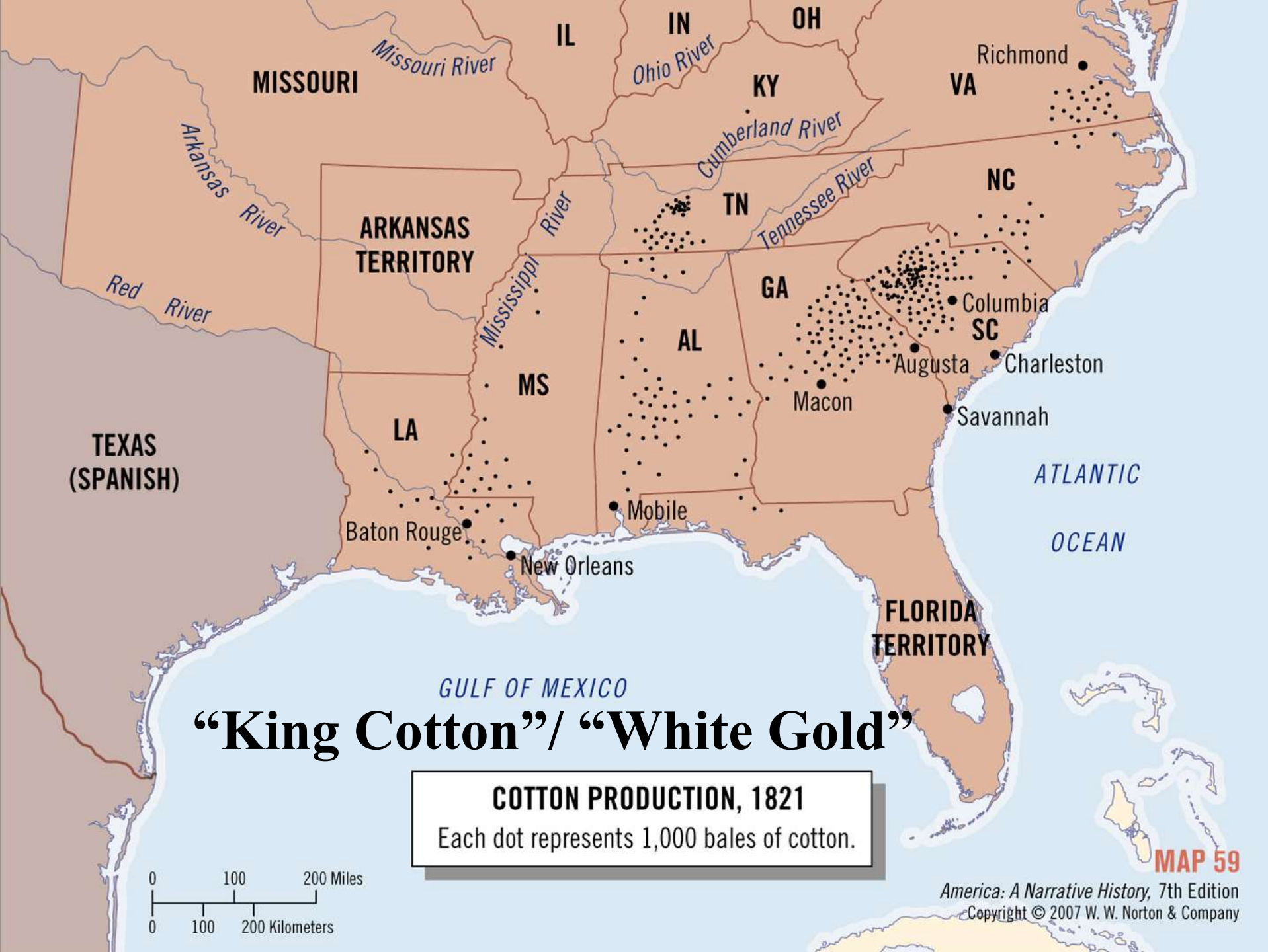
**Southern distinctiveness and differences**

**\*Border States**

**\*Upper South**

**\*Lower (Deep) South**

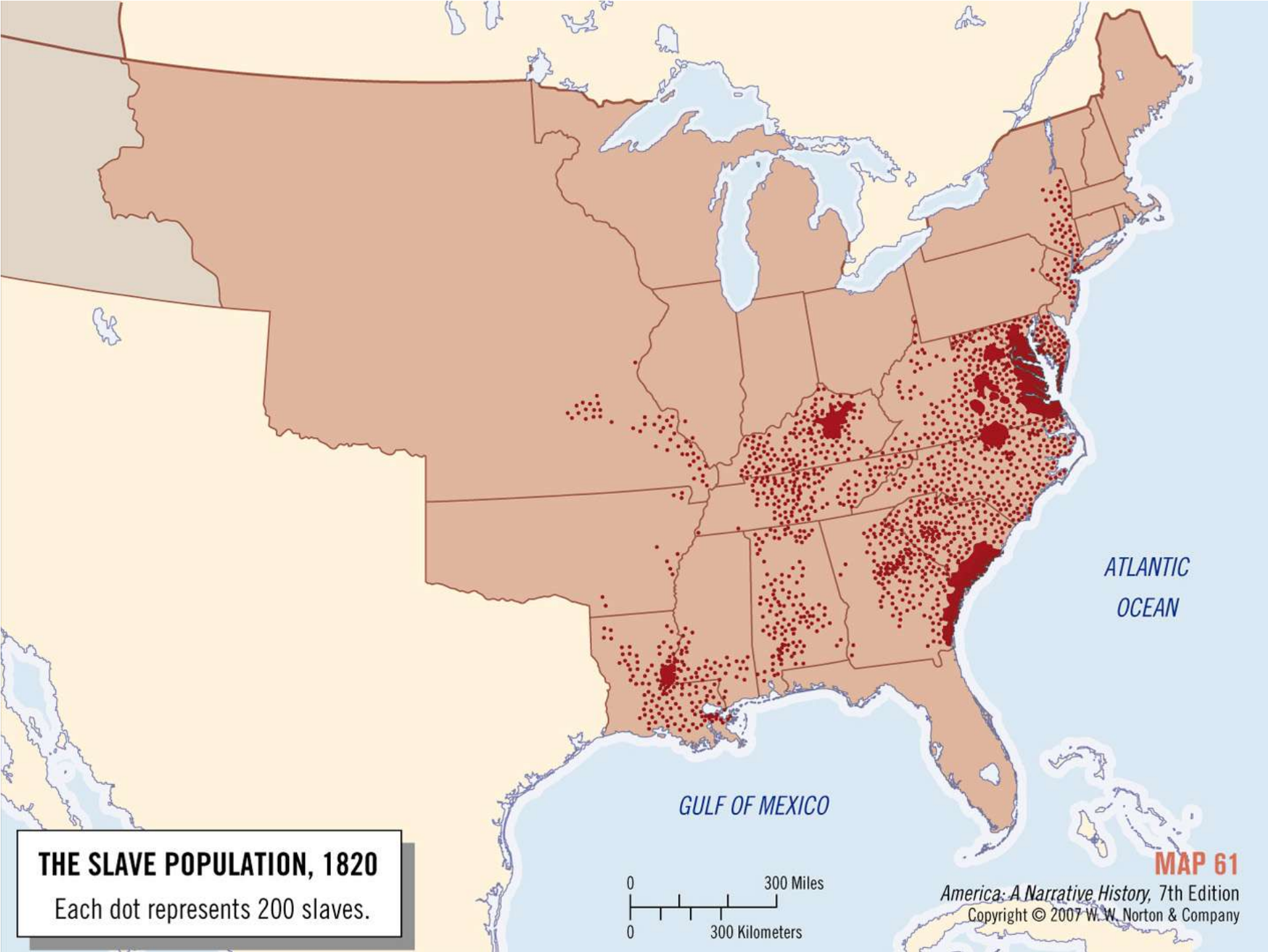




# “King Cotton”/ “White Gold”

**COTTON PRODUCTION, 1821**  
Each dot represents 1,000 bales of cotton.





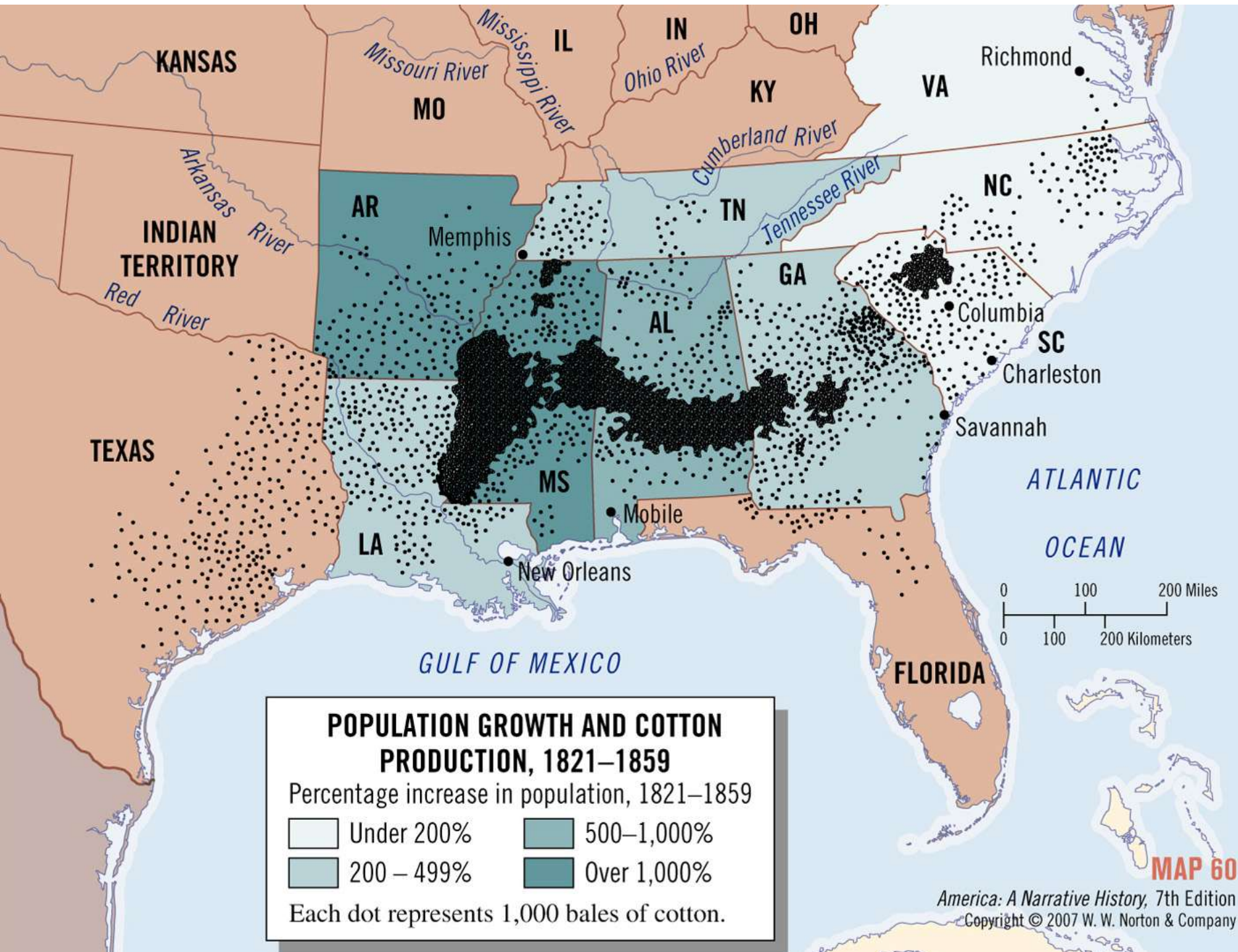
## THE SLAVE POPULATION, 1820

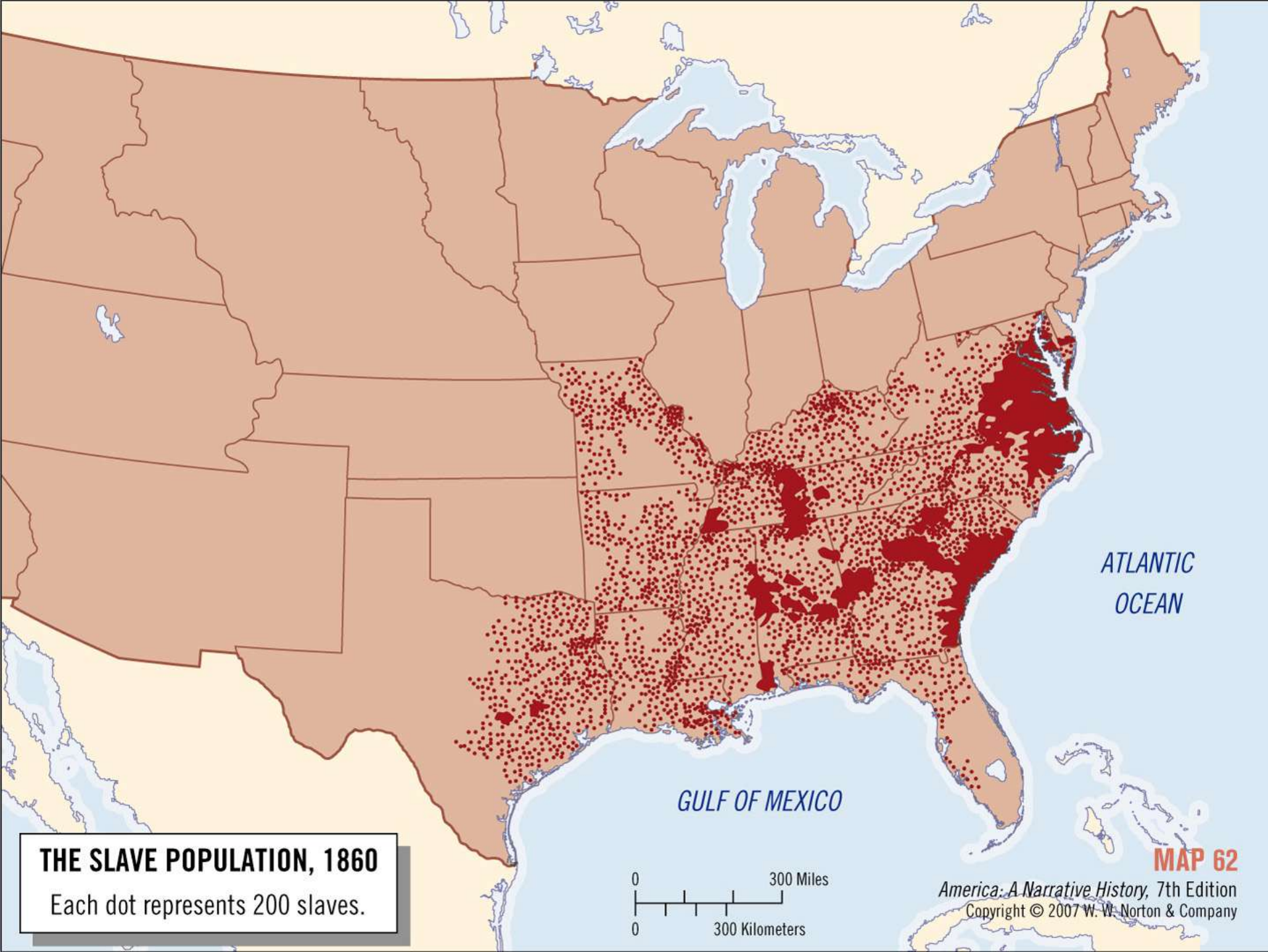
Each dot represents 200 slaves.

0 300 Miles  
0 300 Kilometers

**MAP 61**

*America: A Narrative History, 7th Edition*  
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## THE SLAVE POPULATION, 1860

Each dot represents 200 slaves.

0 300 Miles  
0 300 Kilometers

ATLANTIC  
OCEAN

GULF OF MEXICO

MAP 62

*America: A Narrative History*, 7th Edition  
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# Southern Trade and Industry

## Weak Manufacturing Sector

- \*only 7% of total US manufacturing
- \*manufacturing in Upper South mostly
- \*flour and textile mills, iron factories
  - Tredegar Iron Works, Richmond, Virginia
  - Atlanta
  - New Orleans



## Merchants

- \*mostly cotton brokers who traded cotton
- \*New Orleans, Charleston, Mobile, Savannah
- \*bankers and lawyers all involved in cotton trade
- \*all men of influence (upper, middle class)



# Problems with Southern

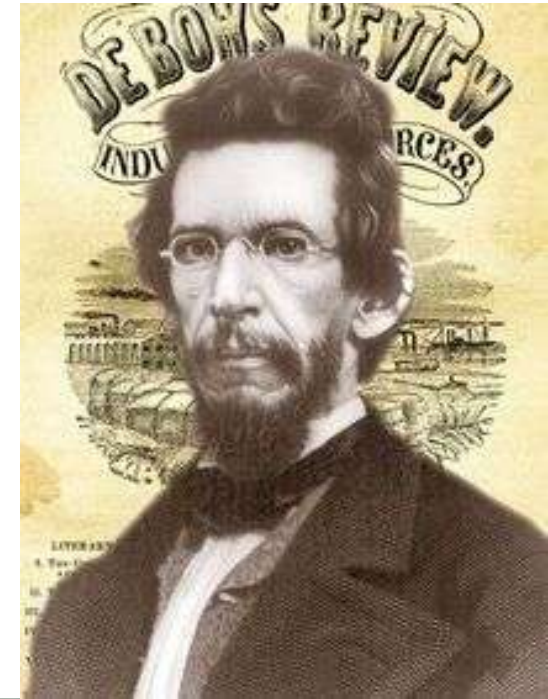
## Economy

### Inadequate transportation systems

- \*roads were terrible
- \*almost no canals
- \*very few railroads
- \*planters mostly used rivers
- \*most of the south remained unconnected

### James B.D. De Bow

- \*journalist who published, *De Bow's Review* (1846-1880)
- \*argued that south relied too much on north
- \*south should gain economic independence
  - build textile mills in south



### Lack of Industrialization

- \*cotton too profitable
- \*southerners mistrusted industry
  - slaves not fit for factory work
  - didn't want immigrants flooding into south
- \*believed industry was not:
  - “chivalric”
  - leisurely
  - elegant



# White Society in the South

## The Planter class

- \*plantations dominated society
  - controlled markets, credit, banking
  - controlled politics
- \*40 or more slaves
- \*enforced patriarchal society
  - considered themselves aristocrats
- \*smallest % of pop. but owned the most slaves

## The “Southern Lady”

- \*women usually more subordinate
- \*less access to education
- \*participated in agricultural tasks
- \*hosted social gatherings



## Southern Honor

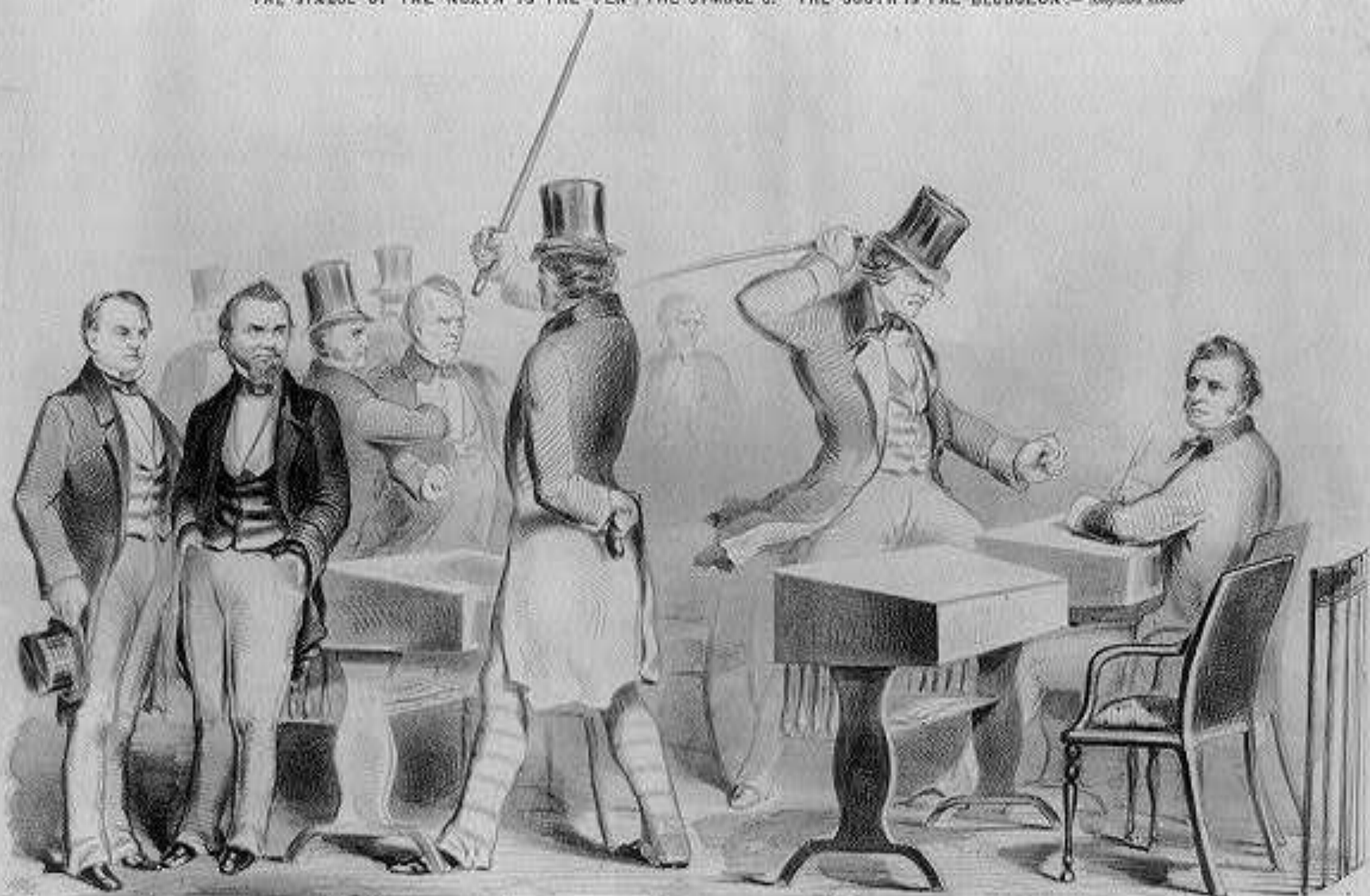
- \*South was highly militaristic
- \*chivalry important
- \*maintaining honor important
- \*fighting/dueling common

## Bleeding Sumner, 1856

- \*Preston Brooks v. Charles Sumner



"THE SYMBOL OF THE NORTH IS THE PEN; THE SYMBOL OF THE SOUTH IS THE BLUDGEON."—*Copyright, 1861.*



FRANK

REYNOLDS

WEBSTER

SEY

ANDERSON

ARGUMENTS OF THE CHIVALRY.

# White Society in the South

## Middle Class

- \*cotton merchants
- \*plantation foremen
- \*overseers “crackers”

## The Plain Folk

- \*vast majority of whites were poor
- \*yeoman/subsistence farmers
- \*little access to education
- \*hardly any owned slaves
- \*most whites supported slavery because:
  - racism
  - slavery kept them the supreme race
  - too poor to fight it

## Hill People “Dirt Eaters”

- \*whites who lived in Appalachian Mountains
  - almost no slave population
- \*usually didn't support slavery
- \*very isolated
- \*simple subsistence living
- \*did not support secession



% of White Population

% of Slaves owned

Upper Class:

3%

90%

Middle Class

7%

9%

Lower Class

90%

Less than 1%

Little known facts:

1. There were roughly 250,000 free blacks living in the South before the Civil War.
2. 28% of free blacks in the south owned slaves as opposed to around 11% of the white population.

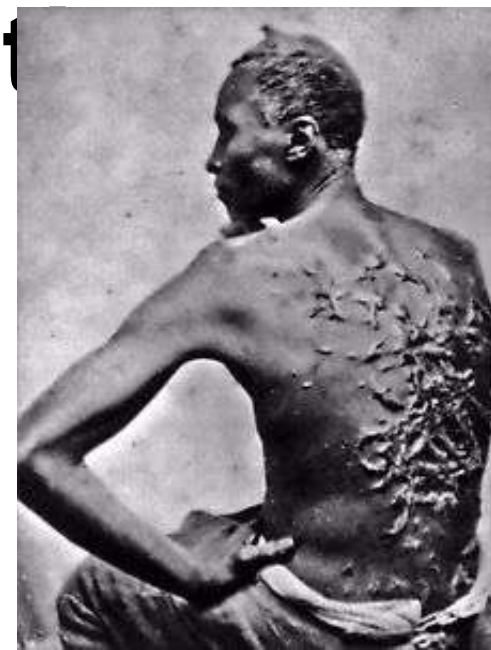
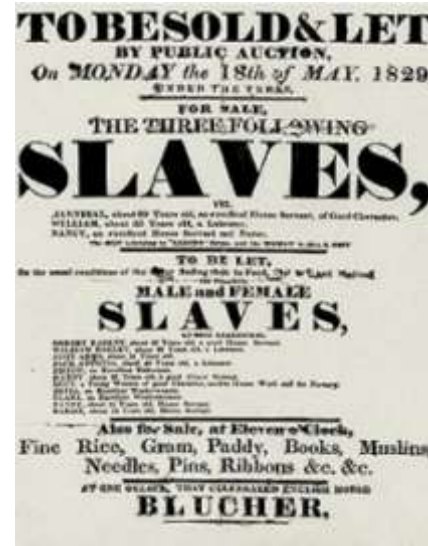
# The Peculiar Institution

## Slavery in the south

- \*slave codes
  - slaves could not; own property, be out after dark, gather, carry firearms, hit a white person, learn to read and write, testify in court
- \*killing a slave usually resulted in no punishment
- \*death penalty for slaves that committed murder
  - \*punishments were frequent
- \*majority of slave owners were small farmers
  - close relationship with their slaves
  - relied on one another
- \*majority of slaves on medium or large plantations
  - task system (work until daily task is done)
  - gang system (groups work until done)
  - overseer/slave driver managed work crews

## Slave Life

- \*daily life was hard
- \*worked from sunup to sundown
- \*harsh living conditions
- \*usually adequately fed and cared for medically



# Varieties of Slavery

## Slave women

- \*worked in fields with men
- \*cooked and did house chores as well
- \*expected to bear children and still perform
- \*endured sexual abuse
  - mulattos (mixed race) considered slaves
- \*usually raised children without fathers

## House slaves

- \*nursemaids, housemaids, cooks, butlers, coachmen
- \*closer relationship to master's family
- \*treated better

## Urban Slaves

- \*fewer than in rural areas
- \*much different experience
- \*usually given freedom to roam and run errands





# The Peculiar Institution

## Free Blacks

- \*250,000 mainly in Virginia and Maryland
- \*usually former slaves who were set free or paid for their freedom
- \*many owned slaves themselves
- \*usually had a particular skill that was valuable

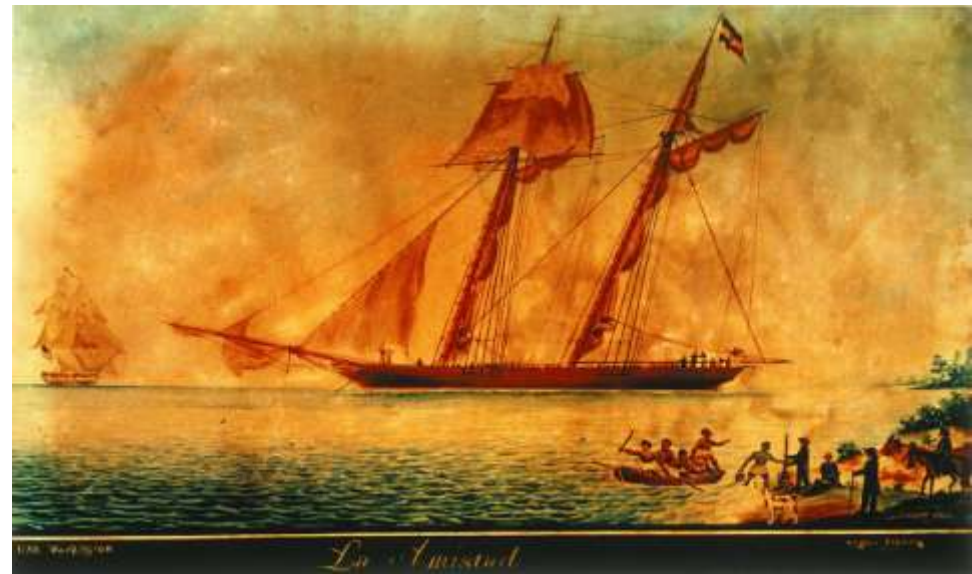
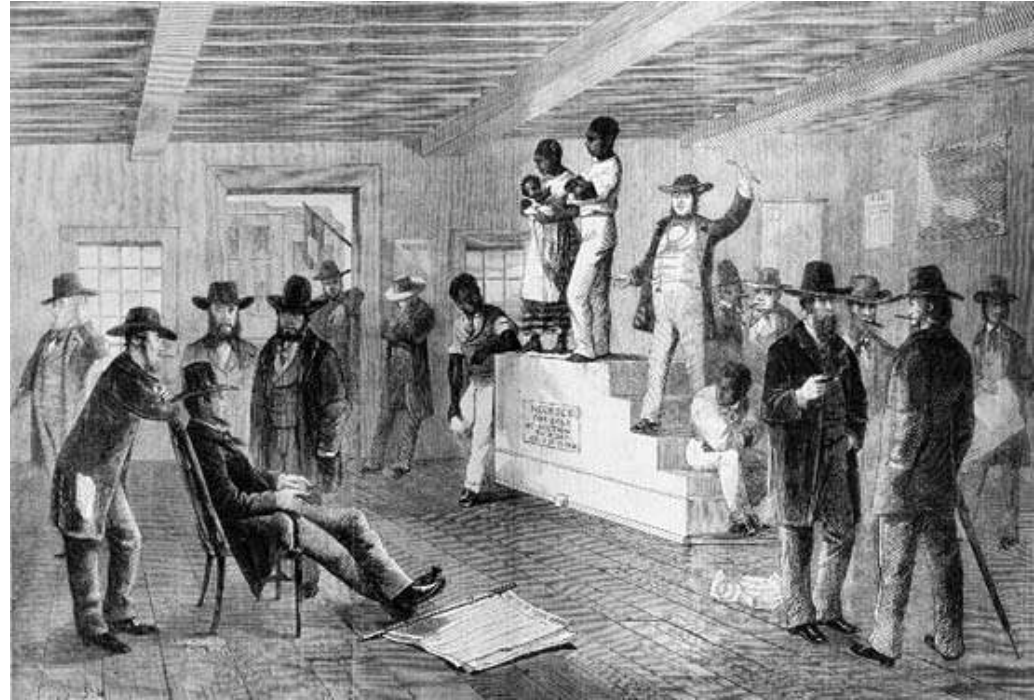
## Slave Trade

### Domestic

- centered around slave markets
- slaves traded and sold routinely
- bred like cattle and sold the same way

### Foreign

- Slave importation illegal by 1808
- slaves still smuggled in
- \**Amistad*, 1839
  - slave revolt aboard a slave ship from Cuba
  - JQA argued they should be free
  - returned to Africa



# Slave Resistance

## Rebellion

- \*came in many forms
- \*whites constantly afraid of uprisings
- \*Nat Turner's Rebellion, 1831
  - only successful slave rebellion
  - over 100 armed slaves killed 66 white men, women, children in Virginia
  - all of Turner's followers captured and executed
  - stricter laws enforced

## "Sambo"

- \*acting dumb or not understanding instructions
- \*"Br'er Rabbit"
- \*feigning sickness or injury
- \*breaking tools or farm equipment

## Running Away

- \*happened frequently
- \*tried to escape to free states, Canada, Mexico
- \*not very successful
- \*Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman
  - former slave in Maryland
  - series of safe houses
  - helped 100,000 slaves escape



# Slave Culture

## Language and Music

### \*"Pidgin"

- now recognized as a separate language
- mix of several African languages and English
- ways for slaves to communicate secretly

### \*Music

- very important to slave society
- way of passing the time
- way of communicating as well

## Religion

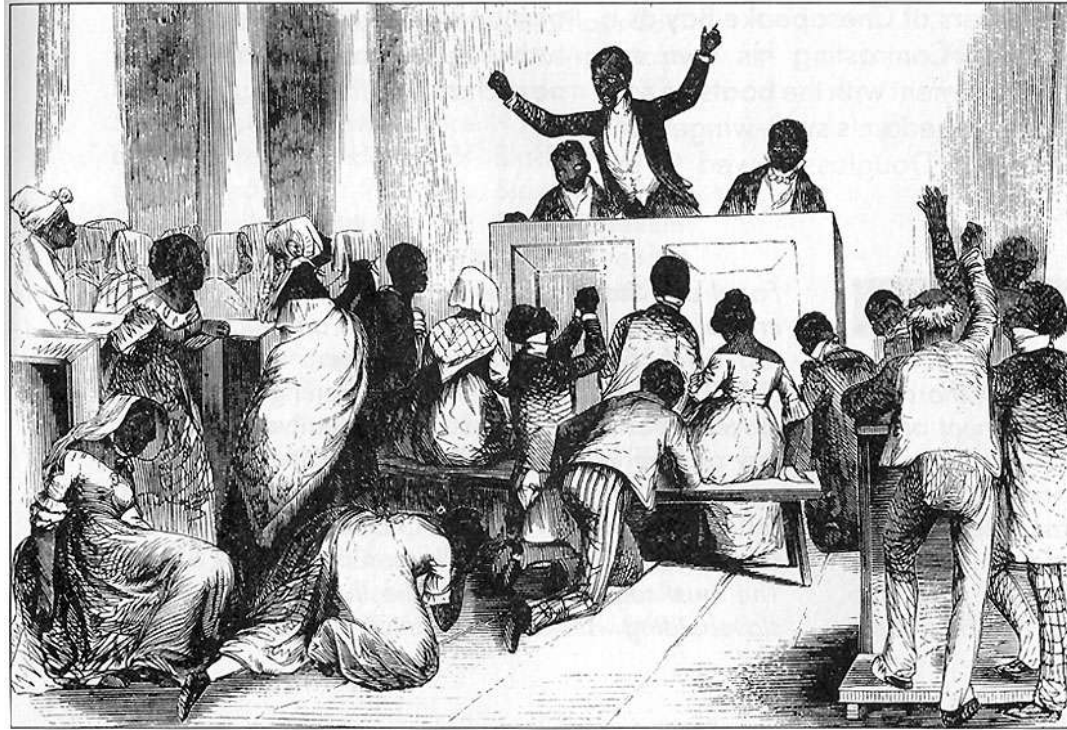
### \*most slaves were Christian

### \*mixed Christianity with other beliefs

- voodoo, hoodoo, polytheistic beliefs

### \*extremely emotional and uplifting

### \*helped with everyday toil of bondage

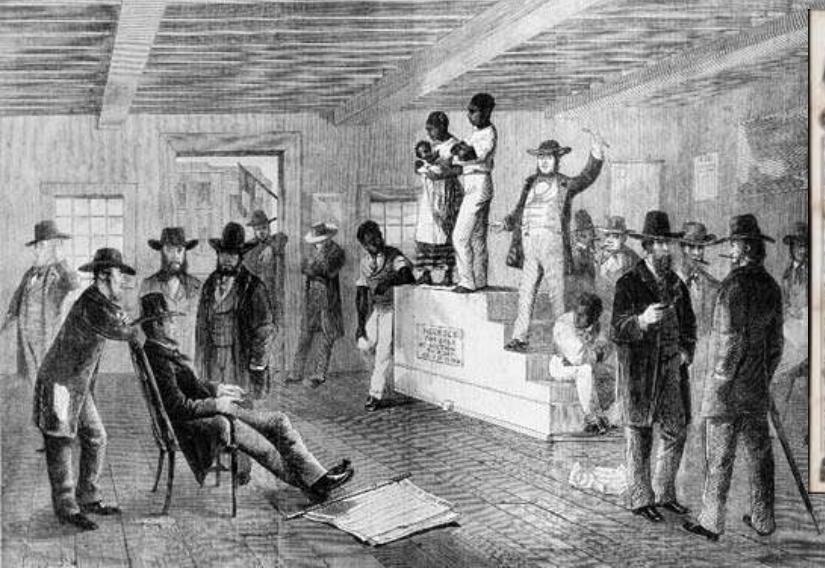


# Slave Culture

## The Family

- \*many direct families broken apart
  - children taken from mothers and sold
- \*extended families “Kinship” networks
  - everyone part of an adopted family
- \*important to slave life
- \*helped with depression of bondage
- \*slave marriages common
  - “jumping the broom”
- \*many slaves felt paternalistic relationship with masters





*Ten Pounds Reward.*  
**RUN AWAY,**  
 From my plantation, the 18th instant,  
*Two Negroes:*  
 A fellow, named JACK, about 6 feet high, with a downcast look, branded on his buttock S S; and a wench, about 5 feet 8 inches high, was born in New Providence, speaks very good English. Whoever will bring them to my plantation on Great Ogechee, or deliver them to the gaoler in Savannah, shall receive the above reward.

*Samuel Stiles.*  
 September 22, 1822

Crash Course US History: Slavery



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