



# The African People and the History of Slavery

*Africa, Africans and People of African Descent: 400  
Years After The Trans Atlantic Slavery.*

**FINAL EXAM PRESENTATION**

**HIST 374**

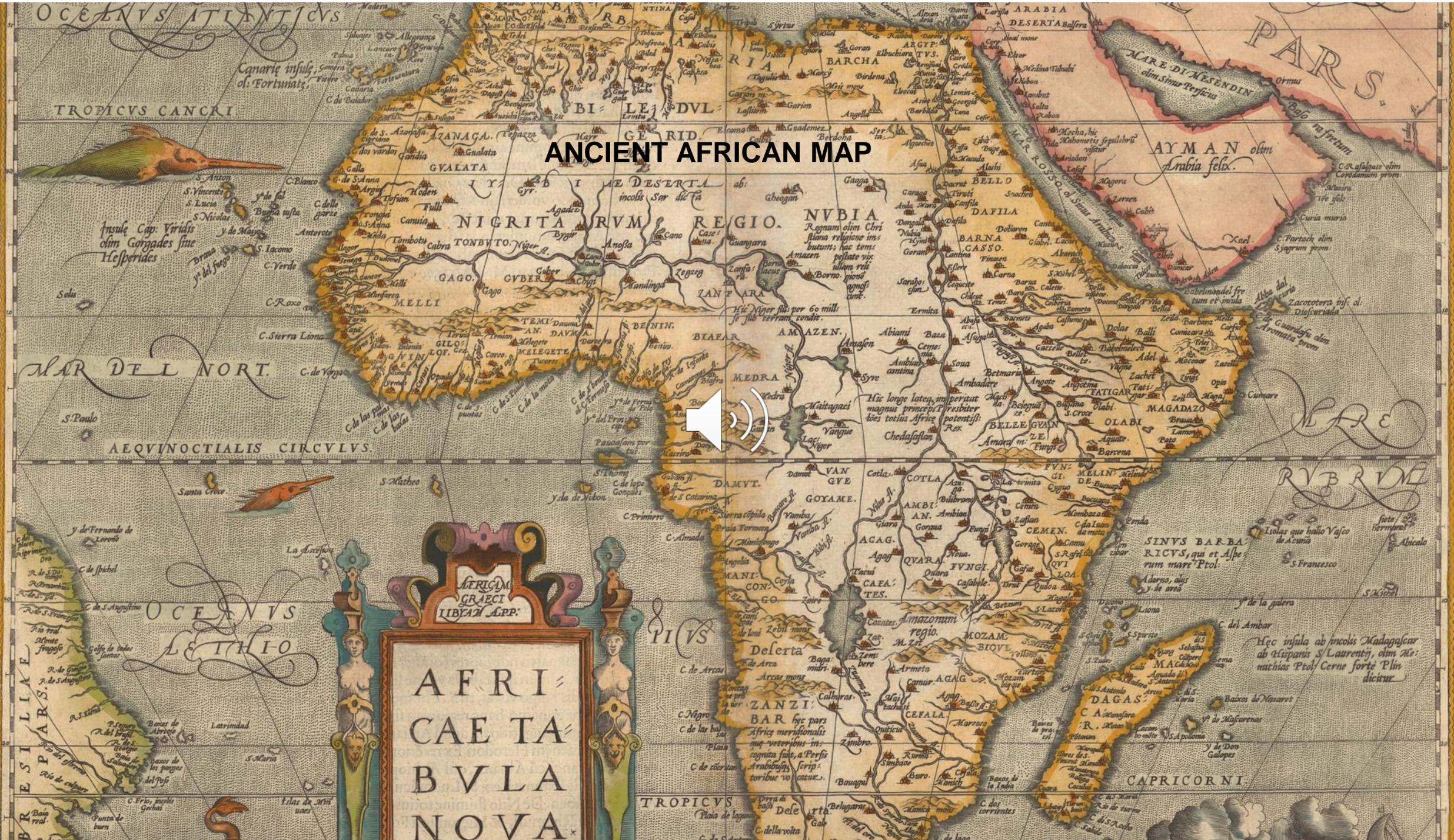
Professor Remi Alapo

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By: Cecilia Casanova



# ANCIENT AFRICAN MAP



# Introduction

- The future of Africans and people of African descent is shaped in part by how we face the legacy and history of the slave trade.
- Future implications for the psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural identities of people of African descent are structured by the awareness and understanding of the impact of the slave trade on modernity and social institutions.
- The impact of suffering from the slave system on the people of Africa continues to be felt by those of African descent, and the global consciousness of the ways in which our world is shaped by these past injustices.



Random photo of Jovenes Mursi- Mursi Youth from Africa

# Africa from early times to 1500

- Africa before the trans-Atlantic slave trade was a thriving economy, where before European contact there was richness in growing empires and natural resources.
- Without a written language, the earliest documents of slaves come from Mesopotamia (Perbi, 2001).
- Art was a primary way of disseminating history and culture.
- During the Middle Ages, learning centers in the East and West spread the written word in Christian Ethiopia with illuminated manuscripts (Bortolot, 2003). In western Sudan, the spread of Islam brought mosques and university libraries to Africa.

# Commerce and culture in Africa around 1500: Key Civilizations/kingdoms and contributions



This map shows Mansa Musa, wearing a gold crown with an Arab traveler.

# Commerce and culture in Africa around 1500: *Key Civilizations/kingdoms and contributions*

- The kingdom of Axum or “Aksum” around 100 BC, which preceded the Kingdom of Kush, is among the earliest kingdoms known to exist. This kingdom adopted Christianity.
- The kingdom of Mali was ruled by Mansa Musa, or The Lion King, with great riches it was one of the first states to accept Islam under his rule (Ancient Civilizations, n.d.).



Commerce and  
culture in Africa around 1500:  
*Facts about the slave trade*

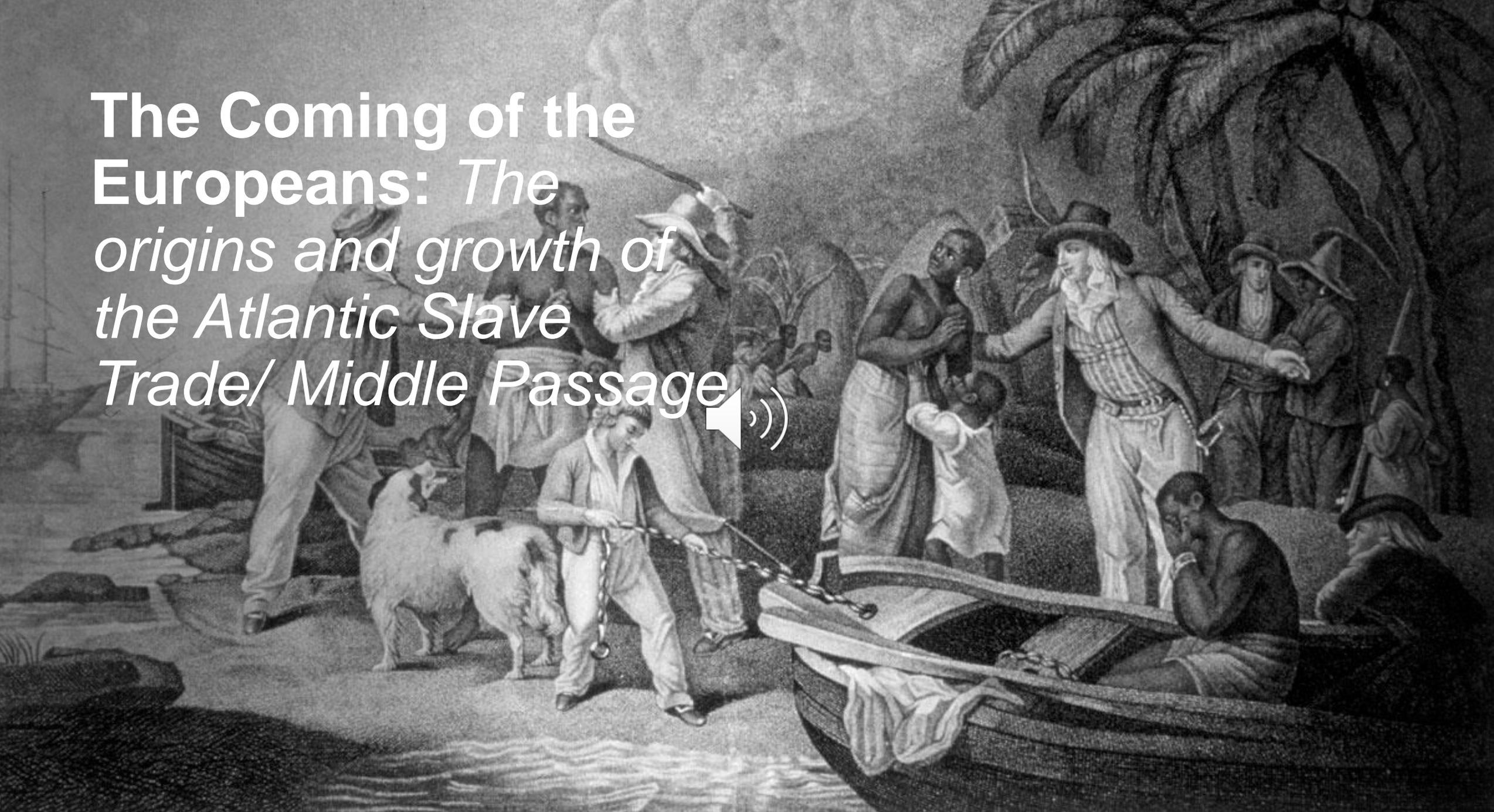


"Congolese men chained by the militia" (Anti Slavery International).

# Commerce and culture in Africa around 1500: *Facts about the slave trade*

- Slavery in the ancient world was a widespread practice. Networks sold Slavic slaves to Jewish traders (Smith, 2020). Most servants were treated as part of the tribal family, and there is little evidence of chattel slavery before the transatlantic trade (Khan Academy, n.d.). As slavery progressed, the disruption to African cultures and the environment progressed.
- The Trans-Saharan trade gave rise to elite slaveholding societies that controlled the products of slave labor, Plantation agriculture grew into extreme chattel slavery, human commodities and racial inferiority (Slavery before the Trans-Atlantic Trade, 2020).

# The Coming of the Europeans: *The origins and growth of the Atlantic Slave Trade/ Middle Passage*

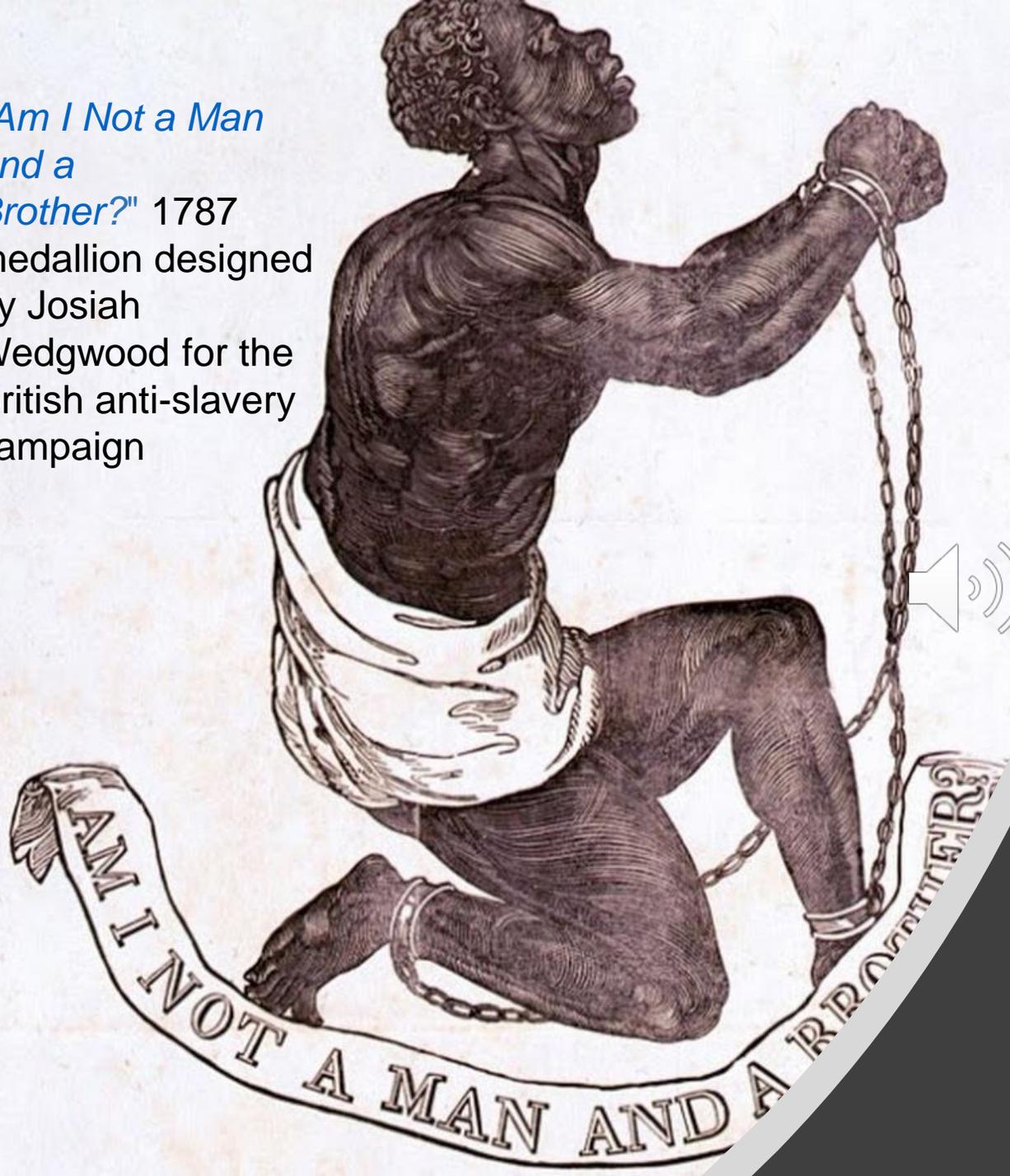


# **The Coming of the Europeans: *The origins and growth of the Atlantic Slave Trade/ Middle Passage***

- The Portuguese entered the interior of Africa as more Europeans purchased slaves; shippers transported goods through the Middle Passage of approximately 5,000 miles (Cinque, 2020).
- After the reality of the brutal nature of the slave trade began to spread to the public's awareness, more people began to recognize the true nature of slavery as a form of human rights violations.



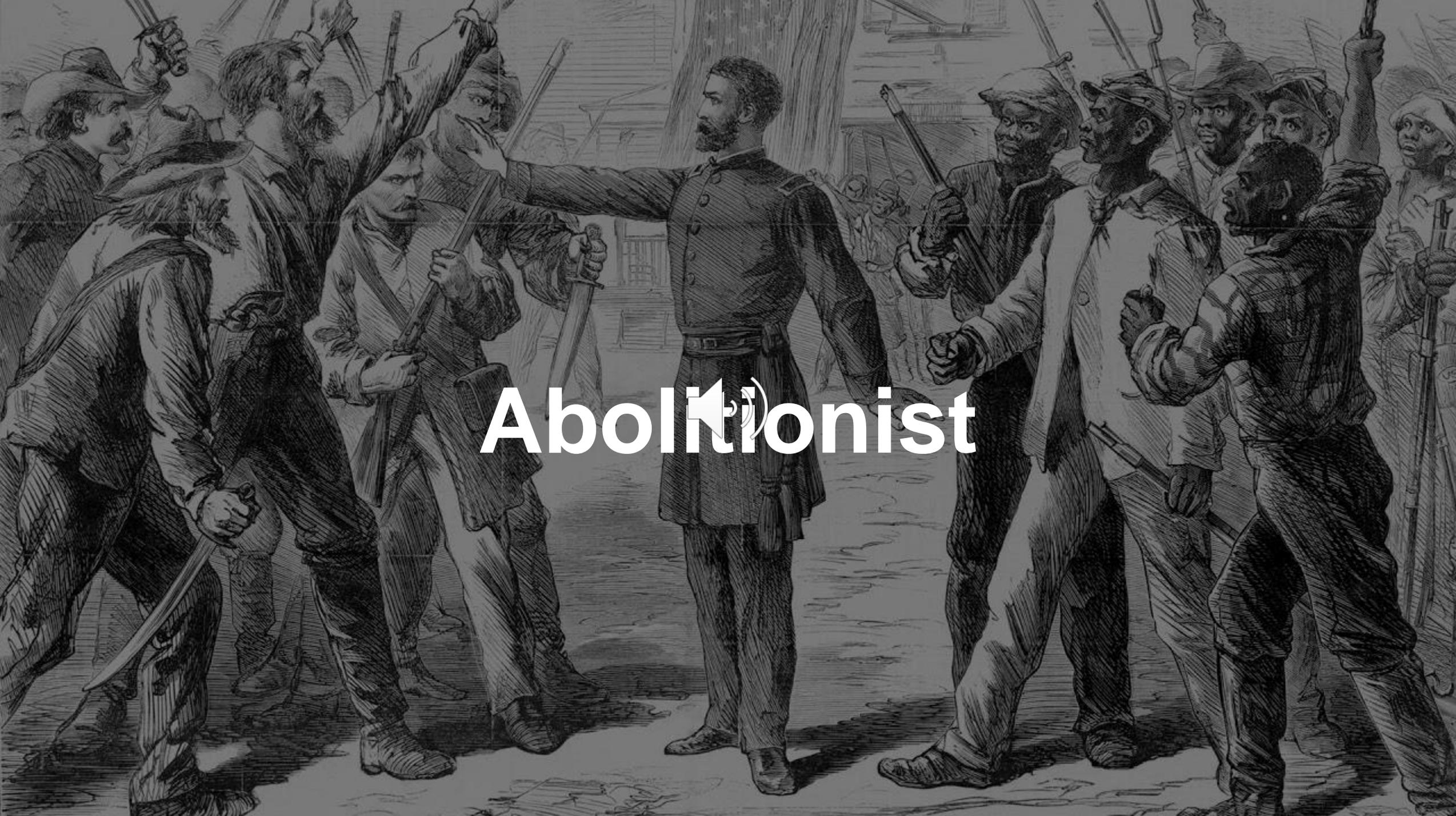
*"Am I Not a Man  
and a  
Brother?"* 1787  
medallion designed  
by Josiah  
Wedgwood for the  
British anti-slavery  
campaign



# Abolition Movement

# Abolition Movement

- The success of these movements varied with the impact of leaders and widespread engagement from within social systems, after facing years of failures (McNamara, 2019).
- The abolition of the slave trade in Africa met with resistance from the beginning, where the Africans built fortresses around their communities and formed resistance teams.
- The people used sabotage and resisted their captors, while freed people petitioned authorities and led campaigns to actively abolish the system (African, 2020).



# Abolitionist



# Abolitionist

- The abolitionist Frederick Douglass was born into slavery, on a plantation in Maryland. By the 1860s he was a prominent political activist who organized and was a respected journalist. His memoirs revealed the realities of slavery and he traveled to Britain to participate in the suffrage movement, highlighting the connections between the struggles for racial and gender equality (Lewis, 2019). William Wilberforce was the anti-slavery leader and member of parliament.
- The Nat Turner rebellion in the United States was successful because of its charismatic leader who encouraged direct action; this shows the limited potential in a social system that was designed to preserve slavery (French, 2004).
- Emancipation Proclamation- Abraham Lincoln



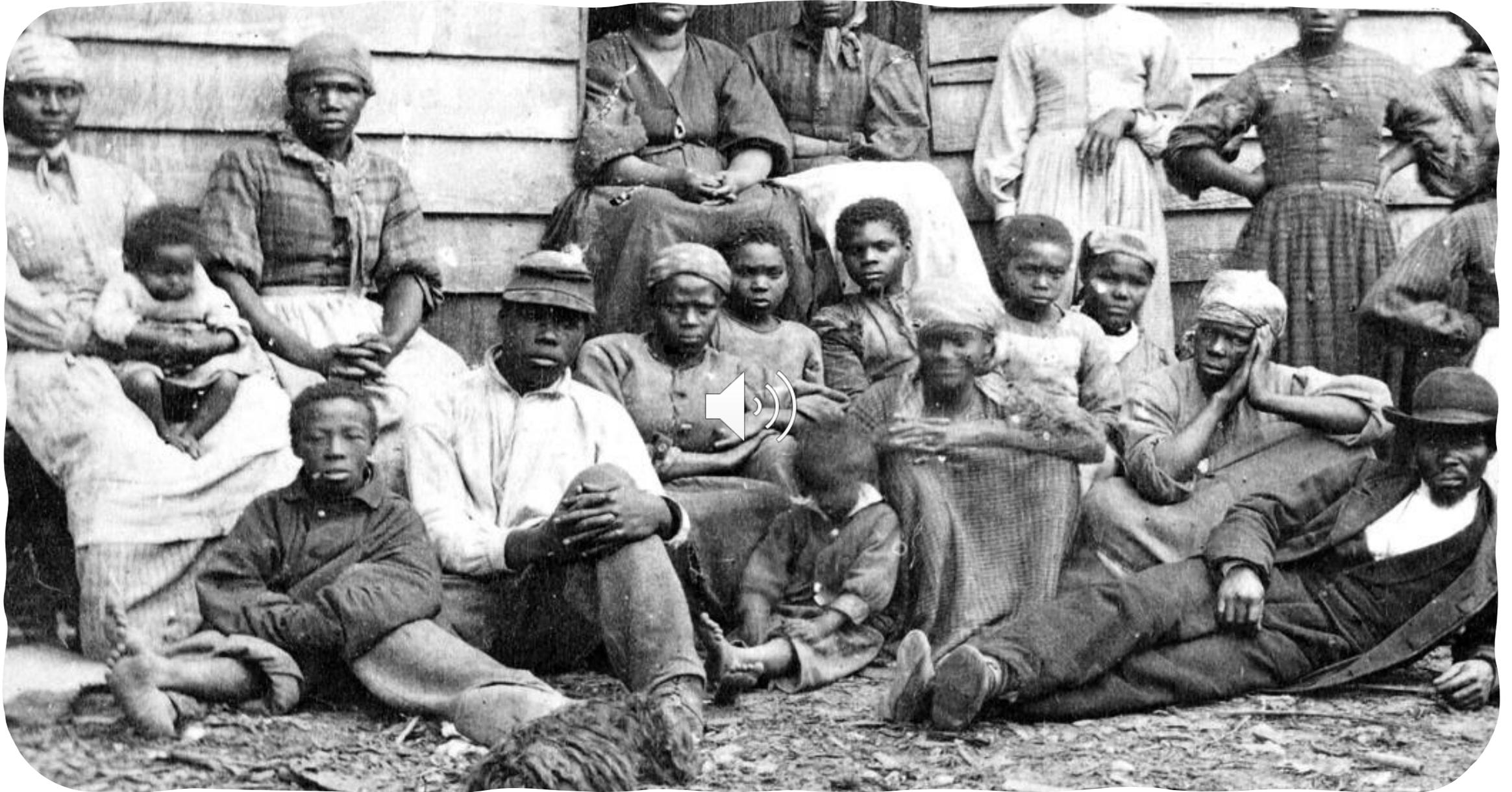
# 400 Years after Slavery: The Year of Return for People of African Descent



“Savage  
Whipping of a  
former slave” -  
Associated press.



Random web photo of impoverished Africans . (Source Unknown)

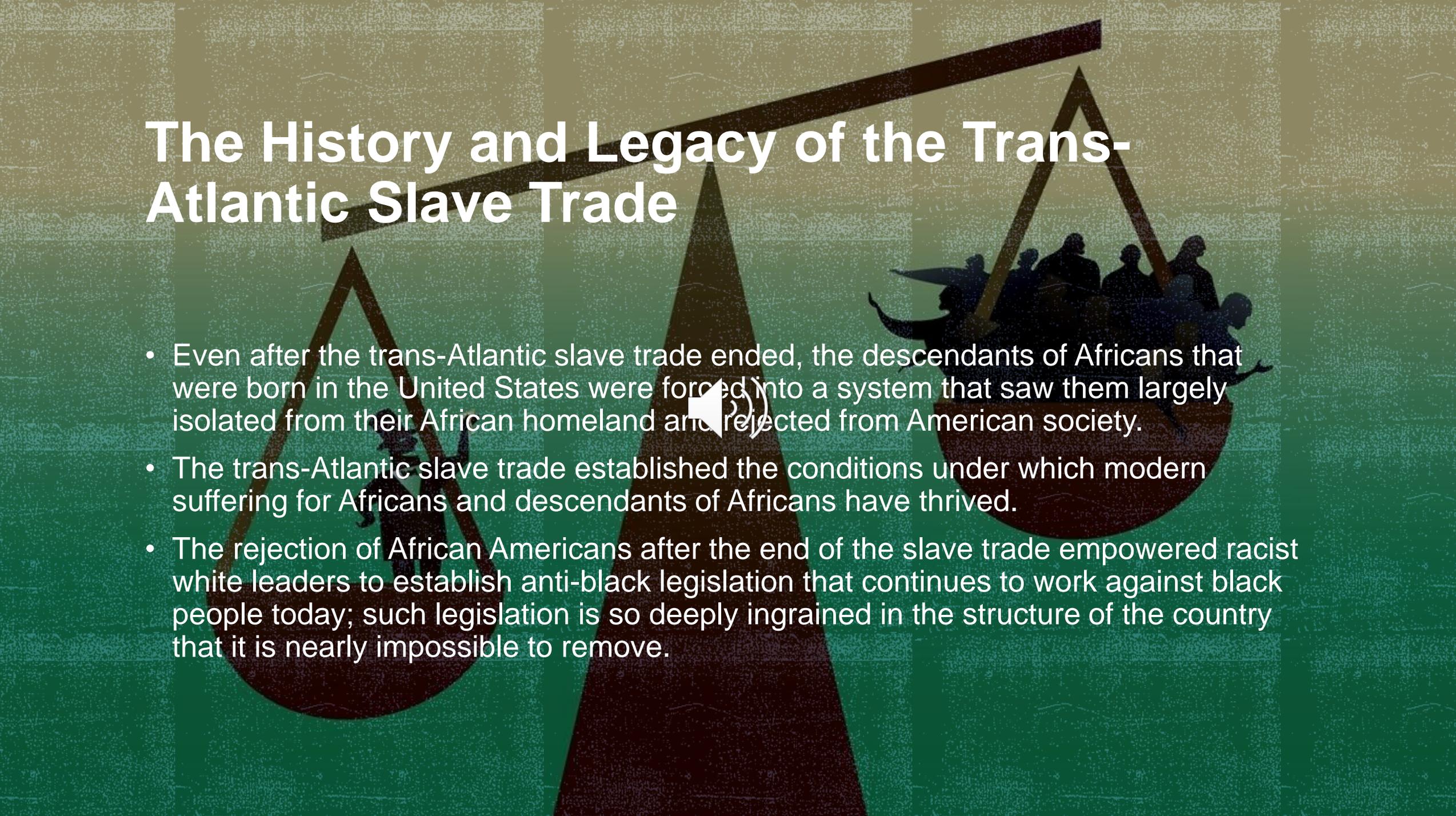


Group of Slaves in Virginia, 1862.

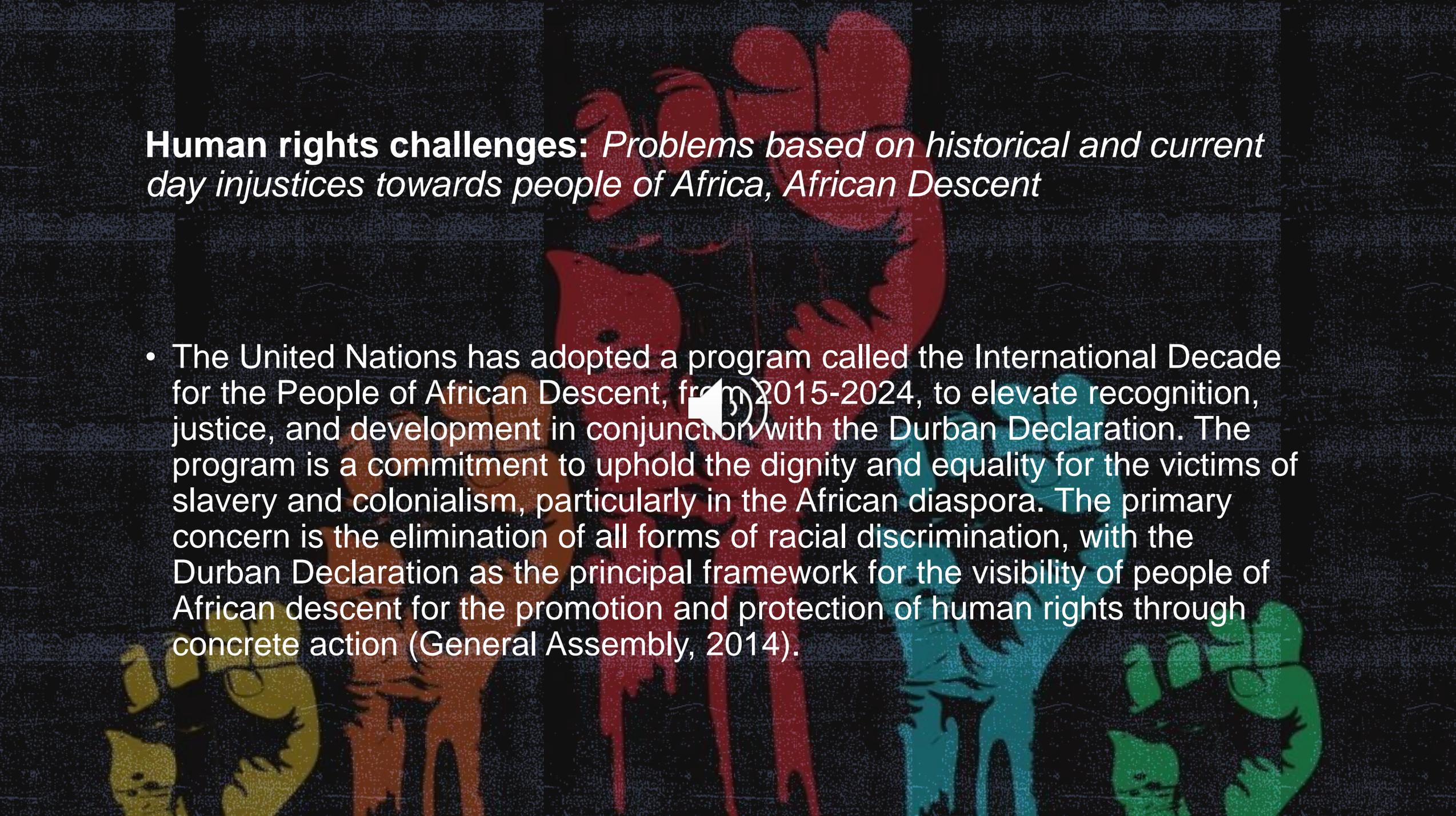
# 400 Years after Slavery: The Year of Return for People of African Descent

- The lasting effects of the slave trade are both economic and cultural. African communities were decimated by the loss of healthy and able-bodied people who might otherwise raise families and constructed social institutions that reflected the societies that were restricted or lost to colonization.
- Modern suffering from the lingering effects on descendants of Africans include the generations of families that were destroyed, and the lapses in family history that has resulted in gaps in the collective identity.

# The History and Legacy of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade



- Even after the trans-Atlantic slave trade ended, the descendants of Africans that were born in the United States were forced into a system that saw them largely isolated from their African homeland and rejected from American society.
- The trans-Atlantic slave trade established the conditions under which modern suffering for Africans and descendants of Africans have thrived.
- The rejection of African Americans after the end of the slave trade empowered racist white leaders to establish anti-black legislation that continues to work against black people today; such legislation is so deeply ingrained in the structure of the country that it is nearly impossible to remove.



**Human rights challenges:** *Problems based on historical and current day injustices towards people of Africa, African Descent*

- The United Nations has adopted a program called the International Decade for the People of African Descent, from 2015-2024, to elevate recognition, justice, and development in conjunction with the Durban Declaration. The program is a commitment to uphold the dignity and equality for the victims of slavery and colonialism, particularly in the African diaspora. The primary concern is the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, with the Durban Declaration as the principal framework for the visibility of people of African descent for the promotion and protection of human rights through concrete action (General Assembly, 2014).

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- The national and regional goals of the International Decade are to strengthen the social and civil, economic, and political rights of people of African descent. At the national level, states are to take practical steps to adopt legal frameworks and policies to combat racism, taking into consideration the situation of women, girls, and young males (General Assembly, 2014).
  - In the area of justice and state measures for access to justice, the General Assembly has adopted specific goals for the state. A primary objective of the program is to implement and enforce measures to stop racial profiling, eliminating the institutionalized stereotypes for people of African descent (General Assembly, 2014).

# **Recommendations: *Solutions to current day challenges***

- The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action provides the framework for ending racial discrimination and hate speech, utilizing the resources and technology to spread information. A challenge that the conference discussed was the sharing of good practices for fighting racism and intolerance.
- The Human Rights Council prepared resolutions for political guidance and decision-making for implementing the program. The council annually meets with States to address problems and set the standards for the governance of state conduct and these specific issues.

- The Human Rights Day, on December 10<sup>th</sup>, is a chance to rededicate efforts to the strategy of education. Human rights education is needed to ensure that every individual has dignity, in a culture of human rights and harmony, by learning about our rights and the development of skills for using the rights in daily life (Deputy Secretary General's Human Rights Day message to General Assembly stresses need to remember persisting abuses worldwide, 2004).
- The International Decade for the People of African Descent is an active community of stakeholders who work to raise awareness and equality. To promote respect and fulfilment of the human rights and freedoms, one must address at the national level the practical steps that are effective at addressing the legal frameworks that fight intolerance.

# Conclusion

- By supporting the rewriting of historical accounts and the narratives that highlight the human element in this system, we can grow as a global community and raise the collective social consciousness of the reality of slavery and its lasting effects.

The consequences of the slave trade system are the psychological, political, and economic restrictions that continue to limit upward mobility for an untold amount of people.

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