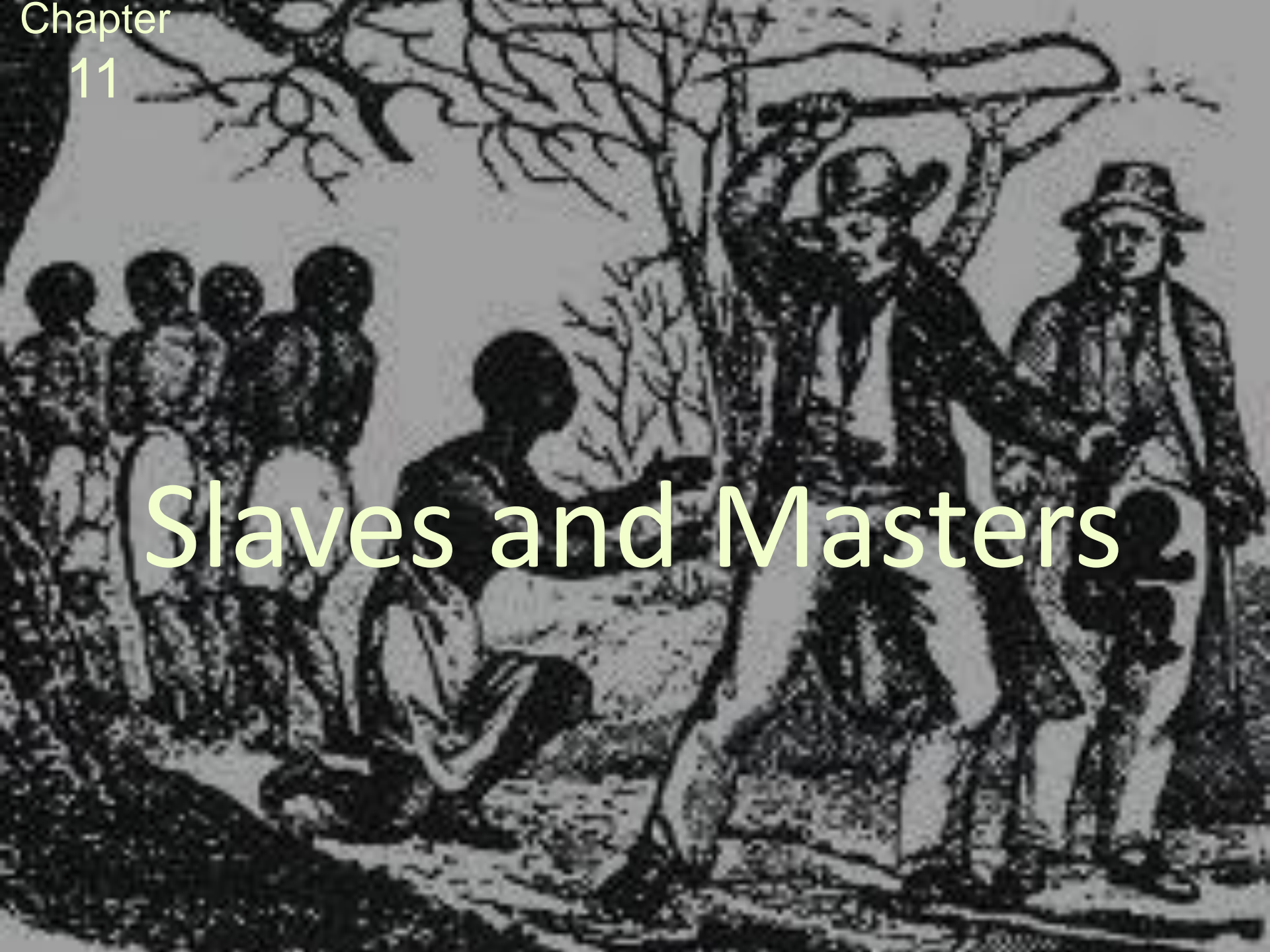


Slaves and Masters



The Divided Society of the Old South

- Wealth divided white Southerners by class
- White society also divided by region
- Black society also divided with about 6% free
- Race divided all Southerners by caste

The World of Southern Blacks

- Constant resistance of Southern ideology, repression



- Constant aspiration to freedom
- *Psychic survival* helped create and maintain a unique African American ethnicity

Slaves' Daily Life and Labor

- 90% of slaves lived on plantations or farms
- Most slaves on cotton plantations worked sun up to sun down, 6 days a week
- About 75% of slaves were field workers, about 5% worked in industry
- Urban slaves had more autonomy than rural slaves

Slave Families, Kinship, and Community

- Normal family life difficult for slaves
 - Fathers cannot always protect children
 - Families vulnerable to breakup by masters
- Most reared in strong, two-parent families
- Extended families provide nurture, support amid horror of slavery
- Slave culture a family culture that provided a sense of community

African American Religion

- Black Christianity the cornerstone of an emerging African American culture
- Whites fear religion's subversive potential, try to supervise churches and preaching
- Slave religion kept secret from whites
 - Reaffirmed the inherent joy of life
 - Preached the inevitable day of liberation

Resistance and Rebellion

- 1800: **Gabriel Prosser**, literate enslaved blacksmith, rebellion fell apart because of violent storm
 - In reaction, the Virginia and other legislatures passed restrictions on free blacks, as well as the education, movement and hiring out of the enslaved.
- 1822: Denmark Vesey
 - Well-planned conspiracy for slaves to seize armory and then take Charleston slaves
- Great Dismal Swamp fugitives
- 1831: **Nat Turner** led bloodiest and most terrifying slave revolt resulting in the deaths of up to 65 white men, women and children and 200 slaves.

Resistance and Rebellion

- 1835–1842: 2nd Seminole War
 - Slaves escaped and joined Seminoles
- Runaways often aided by the Underground Railroad



\$1200
TO
1250 DOLLARS!
FOR NEGROES!!

THE undersigned wishes to purchase a large lot of NEGROES for the New Orleans market. I will pay \$1200 to \$1250 for No. 1 young men, and \$1000 to \$1100 for No. 1 young women. In fact I will pay more for likely

NEGROES,

Than any other trader in Kentucky. My office is adjoining the Broadway Hotel, on Broadway, Lexington, Ky., where for my Agent can always be found.

WM. F. TALBOTT,
LEXINGTON, JULY 2, 1852.

Resistance and Rebellion

- Work-related:
 - Work slowdowns
 - Sabotage
 - Poison masters
- Stories, songs asserting equality



Slave Rebellions and Uprisings, 1800–1831

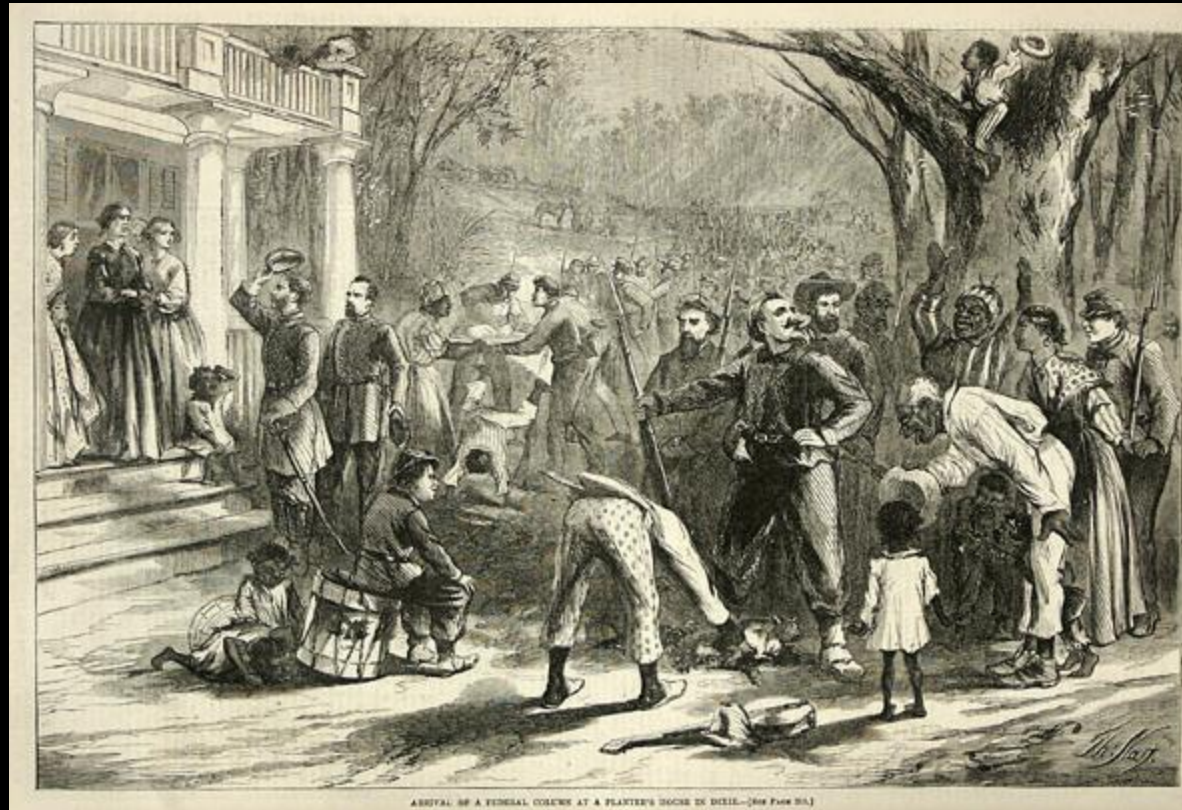


Free Blacks in the Old South

- Southern free blacks severely restricted
 - Sense of solidarity with slaves
 - Generally unable to help
- Repression increased as time passed
- By 1860, some state legislatures were proposing laws to force free blacks to emigrate or be enslaved

White Society in the Antebellum South

- Only a small percentage of slave owners lived in aristocratic mansions
 - Less than 1% of the white population owned 50 or more slaves
- Most Southern whites were yeomen farmers



The Planters' World

- Big planters set tone, values of Southern life
- Planter wealth based on:
 - Commerce
 - Land speculation
 - Slave trading
 - Cotton
 - Planting
- Plantations managed as businesses
- Romantic ideals imitated only by richest

Planters and Paternalism

- Planters prided themselves on paternalism
- Better living standard for Southern slaves than others in Western Hemisphere
- Relatively decent treatment due in part to their increasing economic value after 1808
- Planters actually dealt little with slaves
- Slaves managed by overseers
- Violent coercion accepted by all planters

Small Slaveholders

- Slave conditions worst with fewer than 20 slaves
 - Slaves share the master's poverty
 - Slaves at the complete mercy of the master
- Masters often worked alongside the slaves
- Most slaves would have preferred the economic and cultural stability of the plantation

Yeoman Farmers

- Small farmers resented large planters
- Some aspired to planter status
- Many saw slavery as guaranteeing their own liberty and independence
- Slavery viewed as a system for keeping blacks “in their place”

A Closed Mind and a Closed Society

- Planters feared growth of abolitionism
- Planters encouraged closing of ranks
- Slavery defended as a positive good
 - Africans depicted as inferior
 - Slavery defended with Bible
 - Slavery a humane asylum to improve Africans
 - Slavery superior to Northern wage labor
- Contrary points of view suppressed

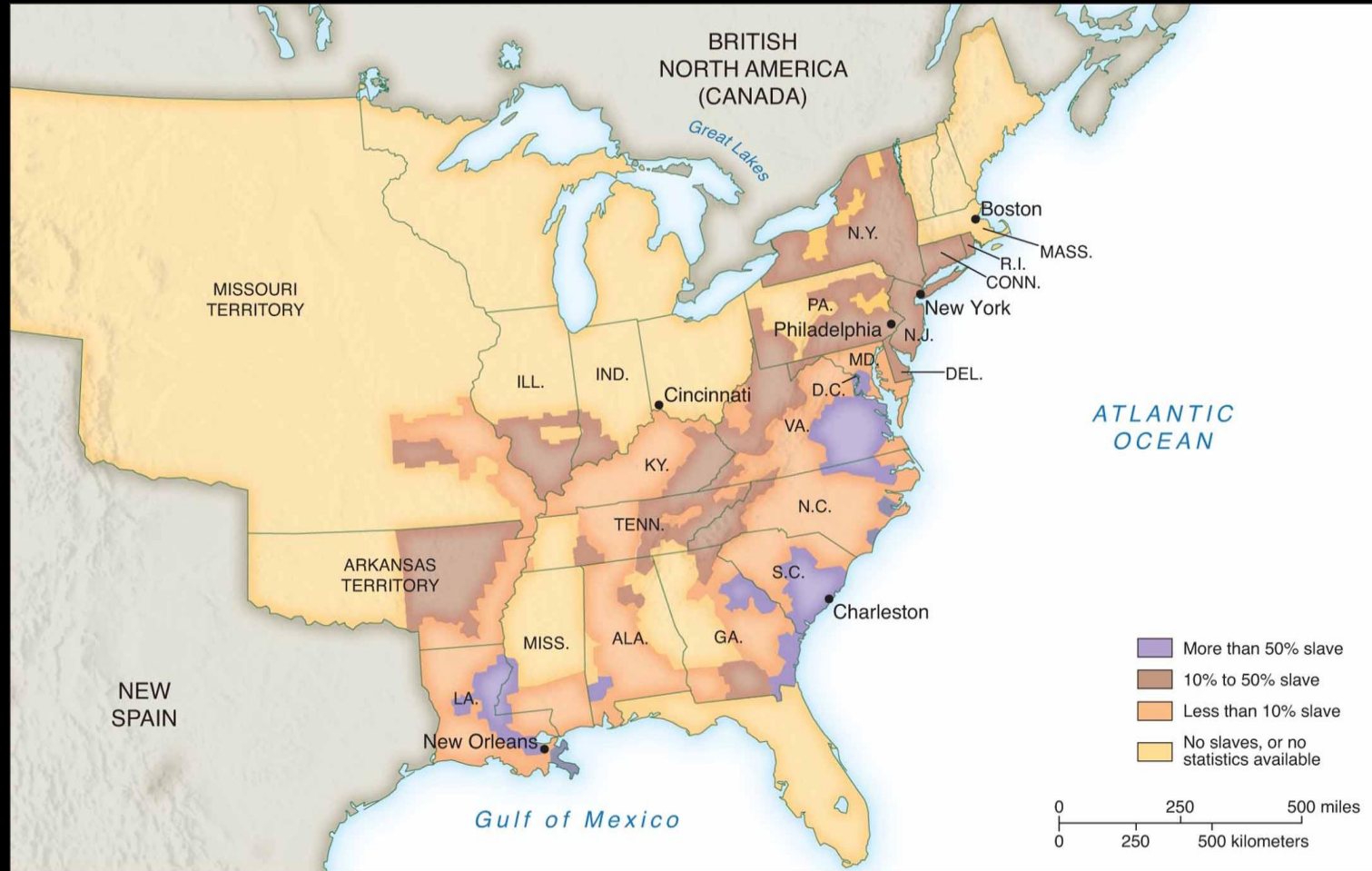
Slavery and the Southern Economy

- White Southerners perceived their economic interests to be tied to slavery
- Lower South: Slave plantation society
- Upper South: Farming and slave-trading region

The Internal Slave Trade

- Mixed farming in Virginia and Maryland
- Needed less labor, more capital
- Upper South sold slaves to lower South
- Virginia, Maryland, and Kentucky took on characteristics of industrializing North
- Sectional loyalty of upper South uncertain

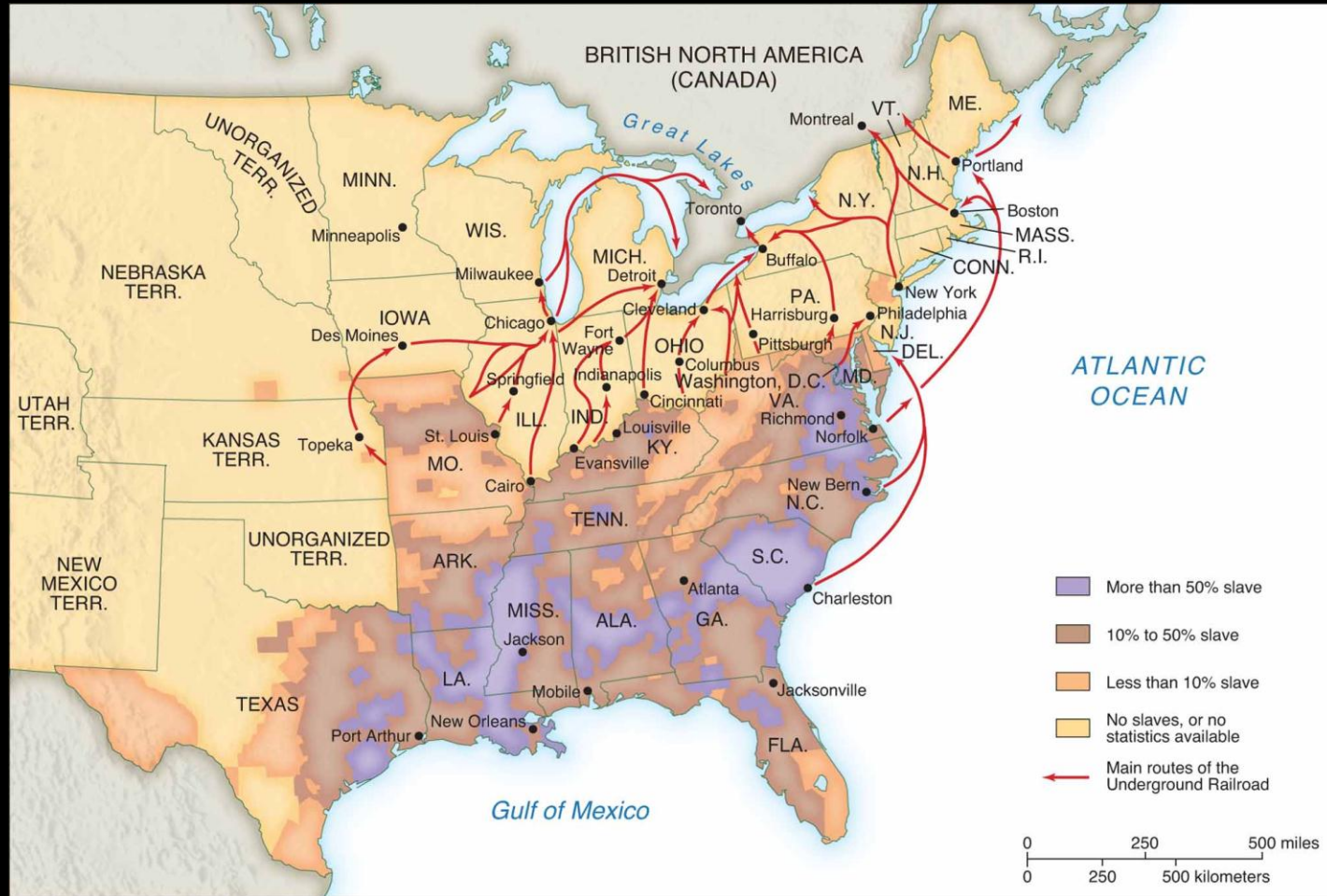
Slave Concentration, 1820



The Rise of the Cotton Kingdom

- “Short-staple” cotton drove cotton boom
- Cotton gin made seed extraction easy
- Year-round requirements suited to slave labor
- Cotton in Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, east Texas
- Large planters dominated cotton production
- 1850: South produced 75% of world’s cotton, cotton the most important U.S. business

Slave Concentration, 1860



Slavery and Industrialization

- Southerners resented dependence on Northern industry, commerce
- Southerners project industrial schemes
 - Some proposed using free white labor
 - Others proposed the use of slaves
- Slaves worked in Southern factories
- High cotton profits discouraged shift to industry

The “Profitability” Issue

- Slavery not profitable for South as a whole
- White small farmers had lower living standards than most Northern farmers
- Profits from cotton not well-distributed
- Slave system resulted in waste of human resources, Southern underdevelopment

Worlds in Conflict

- Separate Southern worlds
 - Planters
 - Slaves
 - Less affluent whites
 - Free blacks
- Held together by plantation economy, web of customary relationships