

Analyze the extent to which the migration of slaves across the Atlantic Ocean changed social structures in Africa and the Americas from 1450 to 1850.

Document 1

From New Spain are obtained gold, silver and other things. One fifth of all profits go to the king. Great quantities of gold and silver used to be out in the open; with all of it gone, now gold and silver have to be mined.

The work is hard and the Spaniards are not willing to do the work, Natives who have become Christians are not allowed to be forced to do the work because the Emperor freed them. So now it is necessary to acquire negro slaves [enslaved Africans], who are brought from the coasts of Africa. Their masters are making them work too hard and giving them too little to eat, they fall sick and the greater part of them die. . . .

Source: Merrick Whitcomb, ed., "The Gold of the Indies 1559," The University of Pennsylvania

Document 2

Throughout this realm there are many Blacks, mulattoes, mestizos and many other mixtures of people, and every day their number increases ... These people grow up with great vices and [excessive] liberty, without working nor having any trade, and they are often to be found drinking or engaging in witchcraft. Those [Spaniards] who reflect on this matter with care, fear that in time the number of these [castas] will become much larger than that of the children of Spaniards born here (who are called criollos)... and that therefore they will be able to raise a city in revolt; and if they so raise one city, an infinite number of Indians would join them, since they are all of one casta, and understand each others' thoughts because they have been raised together ... and if so many joined together, it would be easy for them to take all the cities in this realm [Peru] one by one .

Source: José de Acosta, a Jesuit chronicler on the question of castas in Peru, 1585

Document 3

Our country is being completely depopulated, and your Highness should not agree with this nor accept it as in your service. And to avoid it we need from (you) no more than some priests and a few people to teach in the schools, and no other goods except wine and flour for the holy sacrament. That is why we beg of Your Highness to assist us in this matter, commanding your factors that they should not send here either merchants or wares, because it is our will that in these Kingdoms there should not be any trade of slaves nor outlet for them...

Moreover, Sir, in our Kingdoms there is another great inconvenience which is of little service to God, and this is that many of our people, keenly desirous as they are of the wares and things of your Kingdoms, which are brought here by your people, and in order to satisfy their voracious appetite, seize many of our people, free and exempt men; and very often it happens that they kidnap even noblemen and sons of noblemen, and our relatives, and take them to be sold to the white men who are in our Kingdoms...

Source: King Afonso I of Kongo, Letter to King Jao of Portugal, 1526.

Document 4

"I do not know if coffee and sugar are essential to the happiness of Europe, but I do know well that these two products have accounted for the unhappiness of two great regions of the world: America has been depopulated so as to have land on which to plant them; Africa has been depopulated so as to have the people to cultivate them."

Source: J.H. Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Voyage to the Isle de France, Isle de Bourbon, The Cape of Good Hope...* (1773)

Document 5

This traffic is the principal source of the destructive wars which prevail among these unhappy people, and is attended with consequences, the mere recital of which is shocking to humanity. The violent reparation of the dearest relatives, the tears of married and parental affection, the reluctance of the slaves to a voyage from which they can have no chance of returning, must present scenes of distress which would pierce the heart of any, in whom the principles of humanity are not wholly effaced. This, however, is but the beginning of sorrows with the poor captives.

Source: William Dillwyn, Quaker and abolitionist, *The Case of our Fellow Creatures, the Oppressed Africans*, 1784

Document 6

Taking up one of my observations, he remarked, "The white men who go to council with your master, and pray to the great God for him, do not understand my country, or they would not say the slave trade was bad. But if they think it is bad now, why did they think it good before? Is not your law an old law, the same as the Muslim law? Do you not serve the same God, only you have different fashions and customs?"

"If the great king would like to restore this trade, it would be good for the white men and for me too, because Asante is a country for war, and the people are strong... In the white country, if you go there, I will give you plenty of gold, and I will make you richer than all white men. I cannot make war to catch slaves in the bush, like a thief. My ancestors never did so. But if I find a king, and kill him when he is insolent, then certainly I must have his gold, and his slaves, and the people are mine too... I killed Dinkera, and took his gold, and brought more than 20,000 slaves to Coomassy... Unless I kill them or sell them, they will grow strong and kill my people. Now you must tell (your king) that these slaves can work for him, and if he wants 10,000 he can have them. And if he wants fine handsome girls and women to give his captains, I can send him great numbers."

A conversation between Osei Bonsu, Asante king, and British diplomat Joseph Dupuis, 1820.

Document 7



Source: Thomas Wallace Knox, *The Boy Travelers on the Congo*, 1888.