

African american history before 1877

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African American History Before 1877 al Affiliation Slavery in America began as early as in the seventeenth century, and the main reason behind this was so that the slaves would help in production of crops grown by the colonies, such as Tobacco. By the late eighteenth century, slavery had become a dominant system in the American society. However, it was during this time that antislavery movements rose, beginning in the North, as they endeavored to abolish slavery in America. Despite the fact that various differences existed between the slavery systems of the North and the South, prior to the eighteenth century, they were heightened by the abolitionist movements. However, a number of similarities still existed between slavery systems in the North and the South in the eighteenth century. Majority of the differences rose from the facts that most Northerners were puritans, who loved to work for themselves, and mainly focused on growing food only for their families. Southerners on the other hand were less religious and more focused on attaining economic success, thus mainly grew crops for export. Majority of the similarities rose from the facts that most of the slaves both in the North and South were of African descent, both lived in houses away from their masters, and had similar responsibilities. Keywords: Slavery, Slaves, Planters, Masters, North, South, Plantations, Farms, Abolitionists, Eighteenth Century Introduction Slavery in America began in the early seventeenth century, when the earliest slaves from Africa were brought Jamestown, Virginia, which was a colony of North America. The main reason behind this was so that the slaves would help in production of crops grown by the colonies, such as Tobacco. Morgan points out that “ during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, three distinct slave systems evolved: a Northern non-plantation system and two Southern plantation systems, one around <https://assignbuster.com/african-american-history-before-1877/>

Chesapeake Bay and the other in the Carolina and Georgia low-country” (1993, p. 81). By the late eighteenth century, slavery had become a dominant system in the American society. The demand for more slaves, especially in the south, heightened in the late eighteenth century, as a result of the development of the cotton gin. However, it was during this time that John Locke’s theories of all men being equal and possessing unalienable rights were gain roots, beginning with North America (Schneider, D. & Schneider, C., 2007). It is for this reason that during the eighteenth century, various differences and similarities existed between slavery systems of the North and those of the South in America. This paper discusses those differences and similarities. Differences between Slavery Systems of the North and South during the 18th Century in America During the eighteenth century, there were a number of features that differentiated slavery systems in the North and South of America. These include: 1. The difference in the average number of slaves in the North compared to those in the South. In the eighteenth century, slave holdings in the North had about 25 slaves, while in the South slave holdings comprised of approximately 100 slaves (“Facts about Slave Trade and Slavery,” n. d.). 2. The presence of large estates, known as plantations in the South, and conversely smaller farms in the North. Due to its size, the South was not a distinct region, but was rather divided into three zones namely the backcountry, Carolina, and Chesapeake, with Chesapeake standing as the largest among the three. Tobacco was a dominant crop grown in vast plantations of the three regions in the south, and this increased the need for slaves to work in the plantations, making the slave system quite solid. Agriculture in the South was mainly for export. In the North on the other hand, farmland was smaller with farming usually

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taking place on a small scale, and was mainly focused towards providing for the families. As a result of this feature, slaves in the North were fewer compared to the south, and the slave system was not as solid. 3. The religious inclination of Northerners, most of whom were puritans, while the Southerners had less attachment to religion. Most Northerners were puritans from England and liked to work for themselves, making the slavery system considerably insignificant, while most Southerners had their focus on economic prosperity, making the slavery system very significant. 4. The rise of the abolitionist movement in the North, while the Southern states rejected it. The North began the first emancipation, as they set their slaves free and advocated for abolition of slavery. Vermont, a Northern state was the first to abolish slavery in 1777, while other Northern states followed later (Kubesh, McNeil, & Bellotto, 2007). According to Kubesh, McNeil, and Bellotto, “ in the South however, many planters did not want to free their slaves and did not want the state governments to declare slavery illegal” (2007, p. 15).

Similarities between Slavery Systems of the North and South during the 18th Century in America 1. Slavery was legal in both the North and South in the eighteenth century. Despite the fact that the North began to view slavery as an inhumane practice in the late eighteenth century, slavery had not been made illegal. 2. In both the North and South, most of the slaves in the eighteenth century were of African descent (Foner, 2006). 3. Both the Northern and Southern planters, who consisted of the English, French, and Spanish constructed houses for their slaves away from their homes. Majority of slaves in the eighteenth century lived in small groups, and worked by themselves on farms and plantations far from the homes of their masters (“ Facts about Slave Trade and Slavery,” n. d.). 4. In the eighteenth century,

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the responsibilities held by slaves in the North and the South, were similar. This is because they all carried out the duties of working on the lands of their masters. In conclusion, slavery was still a very prominent feature of the American society in the eighteenth century. The practice was still legal in both the North and South of America, despite the fact that majority of the states in the North had begun to abolish it. Substantial differences and similarities existed between Slavery systems of the North and South during the 18th Century in America as discussed in this paper. Reference List Facts about Slave Trade and Slavery. (n. d.). Retrieved June 28, 2013, from <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/slavery-and-anti-slavery/resources/facts-about-slave-trade-and-slavery>

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