

Chapter 3: "Sugar" Kahil Gibran Mohammad

75. Sugar was an important economic factor. Brazil had many sugar plantations. Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, France, and Britain conducted the slave trade to bring people to work the sugar plantations in the new world. Today, Brazil is the world's largest sugar exporter. The US is the biggest per capita consumer of sugar in the world.

Sugar has a critical role in America's national poor health—diabetes, obesity and cancer. Additionally, sugar kills Blacks at a great rate than Whites. It was through the brutal work of Blacks that we created the unhealthy situation we now have. Sugarcane was a difficult crop and before slavery it was a luxury crop consumed locally.

Arab enslavers in the 8th century began spreading sugar plantations in S. Europe. Sugar followed the Koran. During the Renaissance, sugar became a status symbol in Europe. Sugar cane stalks went to the W. Indies with Christopher Columbus. The Caribbean islands, Greater Antilles, Cuba, Puerto Rico became sugar islands. Africans were enslaved and natives were displaced for sugar cultivation.

Aronson and Budhos: Sugar Changed the World. Sugar dominated the slave trade.

Excursus: This makes sugar look bad. It also shows how the rich in their consumption make the world a worse place.

76. Sugar was an important addition to British working classes. Sweetened tea was based on 2 imports. Sugar from the Americas, tea from the far east.

77. Barkley's Bank building featured an enslaved, fettered boy holding bags of money. Before the middle passage in the 18th century, African chiefs had an intra-Africa slave trade.

Slaves in Africa were drawn from

1. War captives
2. Criminals/undesirables
3. Victims of kidnapping

78. This process tore families apart. While men were preferred as laborers, ships aimed for a 2:1 ratio men to women, some children.

79: A Black identity began to be forged at the Atlantic passage stage of the slavery experience. Death rate in the middle passage 5 to 20 %.

80. American slave trade began in Rhode Island. Eventually, it produced 1000 voyages; 106,544 enslaved Africans.

Book: Williams: Capitalism and Slavery.

Rum was a crucial ingredient in the triangle. The American memory of sugar often fails to take it seriously because the trading sites were not yet states. Louisiana was an exception.

81. 22,000 captive Africans were brought to Louisiana between 1763 and 1812. Haiti Revolution (1804). Haiti produced sugar and had the reputation for being particularly brutal. Sugar in Louisiana outstripped cotton. Louisiana was the 2nd richest state. The value of enslaved people was in the 10's of millions.

83. Sugar slavery in Louisiana was particularly brutal.

85. White terrorism in Reconstruction brought former confederates back into control of the South.

Excursus: The reassertion of control in the south following the breakdown of Reconstruction shows how virulent the drive to control was

There are virtually no Black cane farmers in Louisiana today.

The third chapter, "Sugar," shows how sugarcane cultivation in the 17th and 18th centuries rivaled cotton both in economic importance and in the brutality imposed on workers. Ironically, the product itself added little nutritional value to the diets of Americans and Europeans, and even became a health liability for the descendants of the very enslaved people who made sugar an important part of the world's food system. One historian said that, beginning in the 8th century, slavery-supported sugar cultivation followed the Koran and came to the New World with Christopher Columbus. Sugar plantations flourished in the Caribbean and even jumped to Louisiana. Sugar was a key element in the famous 18th century trade triangle where Britain exported manufactured goods to Africa in exchange for slaves. Enslaved Africans sailed to the Americas, mostly the Caribbean and Brazil, for sugar production. Sugar, rum, rice, etc. were shipped back to Britain. This all resulted in economic development at all three points in the arrangement. Africa rounded up criminals and was captives for enslavement. Britain financed the slave trade. Sugar, rum rice were cultivated in the Americas and exported back to Britain. Thus, the displacement of so many Africans and the establishment of a slave economy was structured around sugar.