

PRESENTATION OF THE HOUSE OF NEGRITUDE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

ROOM 1: THE WILL OF CHAMPAGNEY

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1-CHAMPAGNEY IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Champagney is located in the bailiwick of Amont and depends on the seigneurie of Passavant of which the Abbot of Lure is lord. Since the attachment of the seigneurie to France in 1678, the Abbot of Lure lost part of his powers to the benefit of the royal bailiff but he still has many seigneurial rights.

Champagney had about 2,000 inhabitants in 1789. Its population has grown considerably thanks to the coal mining and the presence of glassworks. All social categories are represented in this village where the development of industries and coal mining allowed the emergence of bourgeois families. The communal administration is in the hands of an alderman and 5 clerks who are in charge, among other things, of distributing the royal tax.

The church is at the centre of rural life, both spiritually and materially. The priest has multiple obligations. In addition to his ministry, he must maintain the civil register and disseminate royal decrees.

ARTICLE 29:

The original text is preserved in the Haute-Saône departmental archives.

“The inhabitants and community of Champagney cannot think of the ills being suffered by Negroes in the colonies without feeling a stabbing pain in their hearts, at the thought of those like them and still closely joined to them through Religion, being treated even harder than beasts of burden.

The are unable to comprehend that goods from the said colonies can be used, bearing in mind that they have been washed with the blood of those like them: They rightly fear that future generations, more enlightened and more philosophical, will accuse the French of this century of cannibalism, which goes against what it means to be French and, even more, Christian.



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That is why their religion requires that they appeal very humbly to His Majesty to use the means necessary to make these slaves become useful subjects of both King and Country.”

2-THE CONTEXT IN WHICH REGISTERS OF GRIEVANCES ARE WRITTEN

The kingdom of France was experiencing serious financial difficulties which forced King Louis XVI to convene the States-General on January 24, 1789 for the month of May of the same year. Only French citizens aged at least 25 years old, who have lived in their parish for at least 3 years and pay a minimum of taxes, could take part in the drafting of the register of grievances and the election of deputies.

The main subjects discussed are:

- Regular meeting of the States-General
- Equality before tax
- Uniformity of laws, weights and measures
- Removal of the mortmain
- Removal of seigneurial rights

3-THE“VŒU DE CHAMPAGNEY”, A UNIQUE TEXT?

Champagney's register of grievances was probably written from a standard model. However, its Article 29 is surprising. Although it is not the only register of grievances dealing with the slavery of Blacks - there are about sixty of them, probably drawn up in response to the request of the Society of the Friends of the Blacks to address this subject in the registers of grievances - it is the only one to call for the abolition of slavery of Blacks for humanist reasons.

This document was probably suggested by Jacques Antoine Piqueler (1753-1802), a local notable and bodyguard of Louis XVI, who was on semester holidays in his native village. However, it is likely that the inhabitants of Champagney accepted it only because it gained their support and corresponded to their inner feelings.

4-UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF LÉOPOLD SENGHOR AND AIMÉ CÉSAIRE:

The Maison de la Négritude was founded in 1971 by the local historian René Simonin (1911-1980) who unearthed the Champagney's register of grievances from the Departmental Archives of Haute-Saône.

recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

6-UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AN IDEAL TO BE REACHED

70 years after its publication, the Declaration of Human rights remains an ideal to be reached. Today, everywhere throughout the world, human rights are violated: practice of torture, death penalty, obstacle to freedom of expression, genocides, disappearances, limited or non-existent access to education are some examples.



Beggar in the streets of Kathmandu (Nepal)

ROOM 3: VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TODAY

1-SLAVERY IS NOT DEAD

“No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.” Article 4 of the Declaration of Human rights (1948).

And yet today, slavery endures everywhere in the world... Modern slavery takes a variety of forms and affects people of any age, of any sex. Children are not spared either. Mining, forest industry, agricultural sector are only some examples of the most affected sectors.

2-TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Trafficking in human beings means recruiting a person, transporting her, lodging or accommodating her by using deception, constraint or violence. The aim of this trafficking today did not change compared to the time of the slave trade: to exploit the workforce of the people who are the victims. The only difference is that the people are not captured but sometimes come voluntarily, hoping to find a better life.

3 AND 4 - THE NEW FACES OF SLAVERY

Sexual exploitation, debt bondage, forced labour, forced begging, domestic slavery are some examples. Vulnerable people find themselves under the influence of a master everywhere in the world. Women and children are most often victims of domestic slavery. They are subjected to very hard chores, often underpaid or not paid at all, and sometimes even mistreated.

5- THE DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (10 DECEMBER 1948)

The General Assembly proclaims by this declaration a common standard of achievement for all people and nations so that all individuals and organs of society shall strive to promote respect for human rights and freedoms, and to secure universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

6-UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AN IDEAL TO BE REACHED

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It owes its name to Léopold Senghor (1906-2001), then President of Senegal, who granted it his patronage. In 2007, the Maison de la Négritude received the patronage of another defender of Negritude: Aimé Césaire (1913-2008), former Deputy Mayor of Fort-de-France (Martinique).

Négritude is a movement to valorise black cultures long despised by slavery and colonisation.



The wise man King Balthazar

ROOM 2: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM

SECTION 1: BEFORE THE SLAVE TRADE

PANEL 1: SLAVERY BEFORE THE SLAVE TRADE:

Slavery is attested since the 4th millennium before our era in Mesopotamia. It is the foundation of the ancient society where work is unworthy of the free man. All tasks are therefore likely to be performed by slaves. With the fall of the Roman Empire, slavery declined. It will be gradually replaced in Western Europe by serfdom, which declined since the 12th century onwards. Africa, as for it, became a reservoir of servile labour for North Africa and Southern Europe as early as the 7th century with the rise of the Arab world.

PANEL 2: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA BEFORE THE EUROPEAN SLAVE TRADE

Sub-Saharan Africa had no contact with Europeans until the 15th century. At that time, it was the home of many civilizations much more developed than one might imagine. It is becoming a major trade hub between Europe and Asia. It is on these commercial networks that the Eastern and Western slave trades will be based.

PANEL 3: FROM INDIAN SLAVERY TO BLACK SLAVERY

The arrival of Europeans in the 15th century disrupted the lives of the peoples of America. The collapse of the indigenous population, used by force in the tropical plantations, led Europeans, with the papacy's agreement, to resort to Black slavery.

A MIXED POPULATION ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENT AND IN THE WEST INDIES:

The descendants of slaves are numerous throughout the American continent. Over the centuries, they often mingled with Europeans and Amerindians, especially in the early years of colonization.

WHAT IMPACT ON AFRICA?

The demographic impact on Africa is certain but difficult to measure. We estimate that between 10 and 15 million black people have been deported to America. Some geographers and historians attribute trafficking to an increase in initial population inequalities.

However, by the middle of the 19th century, the African continent remained poorly known. Exploration expeditions were launched by Europeans, which led to the signing of treaties with local chiefs. In the 1880s, soldiers replaced explorers. The major European powers then realized that Africa was rich in raw materials: gold, diamond, copper... The controls of the immense African territories would ensure prestige and power to those who would establish themselves there. A race to the colonies begins.

At the beginning of the 20th century, almost all of Africa was under English or French domination. While colonial exhibitions celebrate the benefits of France in its colonies, protest movements develop, especially among the elites of colonized people. This is the case of "negritude", a movement both literary and political led by Léopold Senghor and Aimé Césaire.

Between 1954 and 1975, almost all African States rebelled against the colonizers and regained their independence. But the new states inherited the colonial borders. They often include very different populations.

On the other hand, peoples united by the same language are sometimes scattered between two or three countries. This lack of unity makes African states fragile. Revolutions, coups d'état, ethnic struggles prevent stability in these countries, which are marked by the negative effects of colonization.

As soon as these laws were introduced, Blacks reacted and fought to preserve their rights.

The protest of Blacks has taken many forms. The most emblematic was the boycott of the bus company in Montgomery, Alabama, following the imprisonment of a black NAACP seamstress, Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her seat to a white passenger as required by law in that state. Blacks led by Pastor Martin Luther King boycotted the Montgomery buses for more than a year, leading the US Supreme Court to declare segregation illegal on buses in 1956.

Segregationist laws were abolished in the 1960s.

It was not until 2008, with the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States, that a black man reached the highest political positions.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FORMS OF SERVITUDE

After the abolition, the problem of land development arises. Black labor is considered too expensive and is replaced by free contract workers from Africa, from India and China. In the French West Indies and Reunion Island, Indian immigration was organized between 1854 and 1885 by the public authorities. Victor Schoelcher fought against this system called coolie-trade in the British colonies and engagement in the French colonies.

THE MUSICAL HERITAGE

Having brought their folklore and beliefs as their only luggage, the slaves spread this cultural richness that, in contact with other populations and religions, gave rise to jazz, blues, samba and reggae.

SECTION 2: THE CROSSING

PANEL 4: THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF SLAVERY:

Slavery and the slave trade developed from the 16th century onwards. The objective for nations involved in this trade and in the exploitation of black-skinned men and women was to limit the import of raw products as much as possible and to export as many finished products as possible so that their trade balance was in surplus. This is called mercantilism.

Slave trade is most often carried out in three stages:

1st stage: Europe/Africa:

The slave ships loaded with junk (fabrics, weapons, jewellery, glassware, spirits...) make several stops along the west coast of Africa to exchange these products for men with black skin.

2nd stage: Africa-America:

Slaves cross the Atlantic to be sold in Brazil, the West Indies or in the south of the United States.

3rd stage: America-Europe:

Slaves are sold on slave markets. The slave ships return to Europe loaded with colonial products: sugar, cotton, coffee, cocoa,

PANEL 5: FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA

The first European trading post was built by the Portuguese in Sao Jorge de la Mina in 1482 (now Ghana). Others will follow on the west coast of Africa in what is now Mauritania and Angola. However, the number of Europeans on the African coast will never exceed 3000 people at a time. The supply of slaves of these trading posts is essentially carried out by the African coastal rulers who will set up an efficient and rational organization. With slave trade, a vast and complex exchange network allowing the rise of coastal states is organized in the heart of Africa: European products (floral "indienne", trafficking guns, alcohol) enter Africa while captives raided in the heart of the African continent take the roads leading to the coast.

PANEL 6: A TERRIBLE CROSSING

New or used, slave ships require temporary arrangements, particularly in the steerage where captives are crammed together.

The staff is doubled to compensate for any deaths. This is one of the reasons for the high cost of preparing a slave ship.

The specialists belong to the staff. Key figures, their work is a major factor in the success of a slave expedition: the cooper ensures the quality of the water; the carpenter arranges the ship, both for the transport of goods and for the transport of slaves. As for the surgeon, he is essential to detect the onset of diseases in time, treat the patients, or even make them presentable at the end of the trip. There is also a cook who has the status of a non-marine officer.

As for the ordinary seamen, generally recruited in the ports in the days preceding the departure of the slaver for Africa, they suffered losses equivalent to those of slaves (between 10 and 30%).

Between 12 and 15 million Africans were transported to the colonies in 3 and half centuries.

PANEL 7: FROM LANDING TO SALE

When slaves land in America, they are not immediately sold on the markets. It is necessary to "refresh" them to erase the traces of trying voyage. They will not be sold until several days after their arrival.

The sale is always announced by poster and is done by auction.

SECTION 3: LIFE ON THE PLANTATIONS

PANEL 8: LIFE AND WORK OF SLAVES IN A PLANTATION

Most slaves work in the plantations. These vast farms surrounded by wild nature sometimes have several hundred slaves.

The daily life of slaves is marked by a succession of dull and exhausting days under constant threat of punishment. Only emancipation (extremely rare and the only legal way to regain freedom), or "marronnage" (escape) can get slaves out of the plantation where they are condemned to work and to die.

SECTION 5: HERITAGES

RACISM IS CHILD OF SLAVERY

In the 18th century, the color of black skin was a sign of the quality of slaves. Even free, the black man was not considered a full citizen.

After the abolition of slavery, discrimination based on the skin color persisted. It reached its peak in the United States with segregation and in South Africa with Apartheid.

THE EXAMPLE OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA:

This system, established in 1948, which in Afrikaans means "separation of the races", aimed at "safeguarding the moral and physical purity of the Afrikaners". To this end, they created laws prohibiting mixed marriages, access of certain public places for Blacks...

This racist system could only be maintained by force. Opponents were hunted down and imprisoned like Nelson Mandela (1918/2013) who spent 27 years in prison before becoming President of the Republic of South Africa (1994/1999).

Although several countries that lobbied for its abolition condemned the policy of apartheid, it was repealed only in 1992.

THE EXAMPLE OF SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

After the American Civil War, slaves were released and granted citizenship. However, in the southern United States, a violent reaction movement aimed at dispossessing Blacks of their civil rights was set up. By force and intimidation, Blacks were excluded from political and economic life. Racial segregation was introduced. In most southern states, measures to prevent contact between Blacks and White were adopted.

They were approved by the United States Supreme Court in 1896, which considered that they were not in contradiction with the principle of equality established by the American Constitution insofar as they offered each group a development "separated but equal".

PANEL 14: THE ABOLITION OF BLACK SLAVERY IN THE WORLD

Chronology

1777 - Vermont puts the abolition of slavery in its constitution.

1787 - Foundation in London of the Society of the Friends, for the abolition of the slave trade.

1788 - Foundation in Paris of the Society of the Friends of the Blacks.

1791 - August 22-23: Beginning of the rebellion of the slaves of Santo Domingo.

1793 - Abolition of slavery proclaimed in Santo Domingo

1794 - Decree of the Convention abolishing slavery in the French colonies.

1802 - Law of the 30 Floreal Year X -restoring slavery in the French colonies

1815 - the European powers pledge to prohibit the slave trade at the Congress of Vienna

1833-1838 - Progressive abolition of slavery in the British colonies of the West Indies, British Guiana, Mauritius.

1848 - April 27: Decree on the abolition of slavery in the French colonies signed by the provisional Government.

1863 - Abolition of slavery in the Dutch Caribbean colonies, Suriname and Insulinde.

1861-1865 - Civil war, known as the American Civil War, in the United States.

1863-1865 - Abolition of slavery in the United States.

1880-1886 - Progressive Abolition of slavery in Cuba.

1885 - Measures relating to the repression of slavery in Africa taken at the Berlin Conference.

1888 - Abolition of slavery in Brazil.

PANEL 9: SLAVERY LEGISLATION: THE EXAMPLE OF THE BLACK CODE IN

THE FRENCH COLONIES

The public authorities must deal with the problems posed by slavery in the French colonies:

- numerical superiority of slaves (there are two black slaves for a free white)
- indifference of settlers to the religious education of their slaves
- fear of slave revolts

It is therefore less a concern for humanity than for tranquility that motivated the drafting of the ordinance concerning the police of the islands of America in 1685 also called "Black Code".

The "Black Code" is a legal text composed of sixty articles. In force in the French colonies from 1685 to 1848, it governed the life of the slave from his birth (or captivity) until his death. It made the slave a "piece of furniture" whose soul paradoxically must be saved through baptism.

The objective of the "Black Code" is to:

- Guarantee the submission of slaves by terror
- Limit the barbarity of the masters in order to avoid revolts
- Define the conditions of sale, inheritance and seizure of slaves
- Codify emancipation conditions

The "Black Code" was applied in the French West Indies in 1687, in French Guiana from 1704, on Bourbon Island (now Reunion Island) in 1723. It was rebuilt for Louisiana in 1724.

Other countries have had a "Black Code" inspired by that in force in the French colonies.

PANEL 10: RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY

The attitudes of slaves towards their condition are diverse, whether they were born in Africa or were Creole. While some resign themselves to it, others try to



Illustration: "Am I not a man and a brother? ", illustration of the famous anti-slavery medallion designed by William Hackwood or Henry Webber on behalf of Josiah Wedgwood, around 1787.

©Wedgwood museum/WWRD

conditions, used the various means at their disposal to sabotage a system whose profitability they ensured:

- The revolt
- The escape
- Passive resistance to orders and daily work
- The suicide
- Women's refusal to have children
- Poisoning of livestock or the master

SECTION 4: TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

PANEL 11: THE EMERGENCE OF A CRITIQUE AGAINST SLAVERY IN THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE: FROM PHILOSOPHERS TO THE SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE BLACKS

Before the 18th century, the protesters of the slave system were few and their action condemned. So is the Capuchin Epiphane de Moirans.

The first doubts as for the "virtues" and justifications of slavery were first expressed modestly in the Enlightenment. The French abolitionist movement is slowly emerging and even at its peak, it will never have the audacity of the British abolitionist movement.

Philosophers, from Voltaire to Montesquieu, were careful not to denounce categorically the slavery of the Blacks.

The Encyclopaedists condemned slavery without appeal, in particular the Chevalier de Jaucourt in his article "Traite". Same for Diderot, the Abbé Raynal or Benjamin-Sigismond Frossard. However, it was a mitigated abolitionism that prevailed until the French revolution, particularly in the ranks of the Society of the Friends of the Blacks created in 1788. The progressive abolition of slavery appeared to be the most appropriate solution, since Blacks are not ready for the freedom and the economic weight of slavery is such that it would ruin all those who benefit directly or indirectly from this system.

"Blacks, slaves had been taken in the war and without us, they would have been slaughtered.

Without us, would there have been fighting? Aren't the dissensions of these peoples your work? Don't you carry murderous weapons for them?...

Why do they get back to freedom as soon as they can? The last argument used to justify slavery is that it is the only means to lead the Negroes to eternal bliss...

O debonair Jesus, have you foreseen that your sweet maxims would be used to justify so much horror."

The Philosophical and Political History of European Settlements in the Two Indies (1770)

PANELS 12 AND 13: TWO-STEP ABOLITION IN THE FRENCH COLONIES

If the humanistic theories of the philosophers were disseminated, particularly by the Society of the Friends of the Blacks, the French revolution did not immediately take the party of the slaves. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (August 26, 1789) is not applied to slaves in the colonies.

Under pressure from the revolted slaves of the French colony of Santo Domingo, the island's civil commissioners were forced to temporarily decree the abolition of slavery in 1793. The Convention ratified this measure and extended it to all French colonies, on February 4, 1794.

However, the application of the abolition decree will only be effective in Guyana and Santo Domingo. Napoleon Bonaparte's arrival in power allowed the settlers to take their revenge. Slavery was re-established by the law of 30 Floreal Year II (1802).

After the abolition of the slave trade in 1815 at the instigation of the English, the revival of abolitionism began. As slave revolts multiplied, the Catholic Church behind Pope Gregory XVI became involved in the movement.

The struggles in the assembly undertaken by François Arago and Victor Schoelcher within the Republican Party and the advent of the Second Republic led to the definitive abolition of slavery in French territories on April 27, 1848.

The owners will be compensated for the loss for their slaves.