**FINAL SCRIPT**

Slavery Routes

1620 – 1789

From Sugar to Rebellion

**Grey : narration**

Black : interviews / **subtitles**

**Orange : captions**

**Red : voice over**

**10 00 03 00**

**This is the story of a world whose territories and borders were drawn by the slave trade.**

**A world where violence, subjugation and profit imposed their routes.**

**This criminal system shaped our history.**

**On the island of São Tomé, the Portuguese invented an economic model with unprecedented profitability: The sugar plantation.**

**10 00 23 00**

**ANTONIO DE ALMEIDA MENDES 2**

Pour la première fois on peut parler d’une colonie de noir et donc une société esclavagiste.

**Subtitles :**

This was the first black colony the first slave society.

**10 00 29 00**

**IZEQUIEL BATISTA DE SOUSA**

On va assister au mariage de l’homme noir et la canne à sucre

**Subtitles :**

We witness the pairing up of the black man and sugar cane.

**10 00 35 00**

**The 16th century: by then, all of Europe was trying to imitate them.**

**A quest for profits would plunge a whole continent into chaos and violence.**

**Nearly 13 million Africans were thrown onto new slavery routes to the New World, where the English, the French, and the Dutch hoped to become wealthy… immensely wealthy.**

**10 00 58 00**

**SLAVERY ROUTES**

**1620 – 1789**

**From Sugar to Rebellion**

**10 01 38 00**

GUADELOUPE

**10 01 43 00**

**Because the Caribbean has the same geographical and climatic features as São Tomé, it eventually became the crossroads of the slavery routes.**

**Nowadays, these islands are synonymous with holidays.**

**Guadeloupe offers tourists the sweet life, sunshine and nature, rekindling mythical memories of a lost paradise.**

**Vacationers confine themselves to the beaches of Le Gosier, Sainte-Anne, or Saint-François.**

**But they could easily cross the threshold that separates the island’s two realities.**

**10 02 22 00**

**Skeletons were exhumed within yards of the bathers.**

**10 02 34 00**

**Between 500 and 1,000 graves are still buried beneath the sand.**

**The Raisins Clairs beach is one of the fifteen slave cemeteries that have been excavated among the thousand that exist in the Caribbean.**

**10 02 53 00**

**89 skeletons were exhumed for study by the archaeologists of INRAP – the National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research. Judging by the state of their bones, the archaeologists concluded that these men and women had not reached the age of thirty.**

**By the time of their death, working on sugar plantations had so deformed their bodies that they looked like 75 year-olds.**

**10 03 15 00**

**These people were guinea pigs for the sugar experiment, the collateral damage of an unprecedented commercial war, the sugar war.**

**10 03 25 00**

**David Eltis**

**Emory University**

**USA**

**10 03 25 00**

**DAVID ELTIS**

74% of all slaves carried off, were carried off because of sugar.

if you want to understand the slave trade, you just need to know about sugar.

**10 03 37 00**

**More addictive than pepper or cinnamon, sugar spread throughout Europe like wildfire. From the 17th century on, this rare and expensive food went to people’s heads.**

**In the salons of London, Amsterdam and Paris, sugar fever abounds, leading a new generation of adventurers to do anything to have their piece of the pie.**

**Ship owners, merchants and pirates everyone knew that to produce sugar, you needed a lot of slaves.**

**10 04 04 00**

**Englishman John Hawkins was one of these new entrepreneurs, for whom only profits mattered.**

**This privateer was a pioneer, the first to understand that you could make a fortune by shipping black captives to the New World.**

**He convinced Queen Elizabeth the 1st to lend him a ship, the “Jesus of Lübeck.” For the expedition, Hawkins conspicuously set the tone by choosing a trussed-up black man as his coat of arms.**

**10 04 34 00 - Hawkins et la Reine 1562**

*I confirm, your Royal Highness, I will return to you a profit of 40 000 marks without causing offense to any of your friends and allies. I will operate this enterprise for the benefit of your power, if you give me your agreement,*

*The expedition I propose involves sailing Negros to Guinea and selling them in the West Indies in exchange for pearls, gold and emeralds that I intend to bring back in abundance.*

**10 05 04 00**

1620

**10 05 05 00**

**1620. A century after sugar plantations were introduced in Brazil, the Atlantic became the battleground for the Sugar war.**

**Holland, England and France wanted to break Spain and Portugal’s hegemony over the New World. They colonized the Caribbean, an archipelago suitable for cultivating sugar.**

**The Dutch took over Curaçao, Sint Eustatius, Saint Martin.**

**The French, Saint-Domingue, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Grenada.**

**The English prevailed in the Bahamas, Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados and Dominica.**

**Only Cuba and Puerto Rico remained under Spanish rule.**

**After the extermination of the Arawak Indians, the first sugar canes flourished on this fertile land.**

**10 05 49 00**

**Vincent Brown**

**Harvard University**

**USA**

**10 05 49 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

The Caribbean became a space of conquest for the Europeans very early on, really, it was the first place that Columbus landed in the New World, the first place that the Spanish began to search for gold and the first place they began to enslave the Indians.

So they were thoroughgoing colonial spaces created by design of European planters and imperial policymakers and for their profit, right? There aren’t so many places where you can completely overlay a territory like that. So, in some ways, the Caribbean is a space where you find the purest of colonial territories, where the masters of the space actually get to create the space to suit their own needs.

**10 06 31 00**

**In Guadeloupe, every plot of land, every single square inch of ground, contains traces of this violent and deeply-rooted history.**

**10 06 52 00**

**Today, all that is left of the Sugar war is a field of ruins.**

**Of the 250 sugar refineries active in the late 19th century, only two remain in operation.**

**10 07 23 00**

**In 2017, at Anse-Bertrand, INRAP archeologists exhumed the remains of the “Saint Jacques” residence and sugar refinery.**

**A mill, stock rooms, and three rows of so called “Negro huts” where hundreds of slaves used to be confined.**

**In this concentration camp like universe, Man was but one tool among others… He was a mechanized, emaciated body, consumed by work until his last breath.**

**10 07 55 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

Both the times in which the slaves were digging the cane holes and the time in which they are harvesting are really the peak of the labor on a plantation…

You can almost see the slaves wasting away when they were digging these cane holes, because the work was so strenuous and they were getting fed so poorly.

You find women in all the gangs, half the time doing the hardest, dirtiest labor on the plantation, alongside the men or even before the men.

And one of the things that means, when you find young women doing this quite debilitating labor, is that the birth rate is very low and the mortality rate, infant mortality rate, is shockingly high. And in the mid-18th century, people talked about 9 out of 10 infant born to enslaved Jamaican women dying, right, within the first year. So, there is no way much the plantation can reproduce itself under those kinds of conditions.

**10 08 54 00**

**MYRIAM COTTIAS**

**CNRS**

**FRANCE**

**10 08 54 00**

**MYRIAM COTTIAS**

Les plantations sont gérées par des économes, qui vont développer des relations qui sont vraiment des relations proprement utilitaires ; on est dans de l’exploitation pure de la main d’œuvre. Donc, une société très, très particulière parce que le taux moyen de vie sur une plantation est extrêmement faible. Il tourne autour de … entre huit et dix ans.

**Subtitles :**

The plantations were managed by overseers who imposed strictly utilitarian relationships. This was pure exploitation of the workforce. It was a very particular society, because the average rate of life expectancy on a plantation was extremely low, it was about 8 to 10 years.

**10 09 21 00**

**JEAN-PIERRE SAINTON**

**UNIVERSITY OF THE FRENCH WEST INDIES AND GUIANA**

**FRANCE**

**10 09 21 00**

**JEAN-PIERRE SAINTON**

La logique du système esclavagiste, c’est la logique d’une disponibilité absolue de la main d’œuvre.

La main d’œuvre doit être disponible.

Et, pour que la main d’œuvre soit disponible, l’homme est conçu comme un accessoire, en quelque sorte de la Terre. Il apparaît d’ailleurs comme tel dans les inventaires d’habitations : les listes d’esclaves apparaissent, au même titre que le cheptel et au même titre que les instruments manufacturiers. Donc ça c’est tout l’aspect archaïque de ce système et, parallèlement c’est un archaïsme mais qui est mis au service d’un système capitaliste. Et qui répond essentiellement à la demande, qui répond aux offres du marché avec ses fluctuations, avec ses besoins, avec sa concurrence, sa libre concurrence.

**Subtitles :**

The logic of the slave system was one where the workforce had to be totally available.

And for this, man was thus conceived as an accessory of the land.He appeared as such in house inventories. Slaves are listed next to lists for livestock or manufacturing implements. That's the archaic aspect of the system, which was put to use by a capitalist system and which largely met demand and market supply, with its fluctuations, needs and competition, free competition.

**10 10 06 00**

**With the sugar plantation, slavery entered a new era: The stronger the demand for sugar, the more the slave trade expanded, and the more the slave traders sought bank support to finance their expeditions.**

**10 10 20 00**

**LONDON**

**10 10 22 00**

**London is one of the oldest centers of global finance.**

**The City of London was the first to create a commodities exchange, to develop credit markets and to issue banknotes on a massive scale.**

**Without the invention of a centralized banking system the explosion of the slave trade in the 18th century could not have been possible.**

**Preparing for a slave expedition was expensive, and having a financial arsenal gave England a decisive advantage over its competitors.**

**10 10 51 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**USA**

**10 10 51 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

You’ve got to remember that the state is getting a tremendous amount of revenue from the plantation complex so they have a very strong vested interest in the slave trade. If you had gone to the King of England in 1680 and said: “look I’m going to give you a choice: you can either have these thirteen colonies in North America or you can have this one little island called Barbados”, he would have taken Barbados in a split second because of the sugar revenues. And this is something that’s going to persist as a very important interest for European states up until the very end of slavery.

**10 11 33 00**

**To support the sugar war, the City lent money with abandon.**

**In the midst of these glass buildings, the two pillars of the English economy that financed the slave trade still dominate the London skyline.**

**On one side, the very honorable Bank of England, the world’s first central bank.**

**On the other, the UK’s most powerful insurance company, the prestigious Lloyd’s of London.**

**Within the Atlantic slave trade, slavers had to take on heavy debts to charter their ships. Without an insurance company, most would risk ruin on their first expedition.**

**10 12 13 00**

**FILIPA RIBEIRO DA SILVA**

**International Institute of Social History**

**Netherlands**

**10 12 13 00**

**FILIPA RIBEIRO DA SILVA**

You could lose a lot. You could lose the ship if the ship was your own, you could lose the crew, and you could lose the cargo that you put on board to barter for slaves in Africa. And you could also lose the supplies that you carried on board for the journey.

There was warfare in most of the period and of course there was a great chance that even if everything would be ok during the journey, and you wouldn’t lose anything, you could be attacked by pirates or you could be attacked by enemy ship and still lose your cargo…

**10 12 51 00**

**In this business, slaves were just another commodity of varying quality that slave companies sought to sell off at the best price. A 1686 letter from a slave trader to his associate illustrates this.**

**10 13 03 00 – LA RAC Letter 974** **Edwyn Steed & Stephen Gascoigne**, **Barbados, 1 July 1686**

*"The convoys that left your country on 21 February via the Orangtree and on 1 March via the Mary, arrived here on 29 June, with each boat having lost over a hundred of the Negros that it was transporting. The rest have had flu and are in very bad physical condition, which will hinder their sale. We fear we must let them go for a very low rate if we can even sell them at all. We are in the difficult position of not knowing what to do with the Negros that are in such bad condition that nobody dare come aboard to buy them.*

*In the future, we highly recommend that we are sent just as many good Negros from the Gold Coast that arrived still in good condition and accepted just as much here. But we urge you to stop sending Allampoes because they are so riddled with ringworm and so well known here that, if we let them come in such a state, they will rarely be sold, despite the price.”*

**10 14 24 00**

**The slave trader invested in the trade as if it were a game of poker. The risks were high, but if successful, the return on investment would far outweigh any other type of investment.**

**Insurers like Lloyd’s had everything to gain by participating in this game of chance. A successful expedition could yield up to three times the initial stake.**

**In the Lloyd Archives, barely any evidence remains of the profits amassed by insuring these perilous expeditions.**

**Most accounting records burned in a fire in 1838, the same year slavery was abolished in the British Caribbean.**

**10 15 01 00**

**Ports had to adapt to this race to Africa and the Caribbean.**

**In London, Blackwall became the slave trade’s principal wharf.**

**Here, trade goods were embarked: precious fabrics, jewels, porcelains, weapons and brandies, all bought on credit with the banks’ money.**

**Around this pier, a giant port complex gradually unfolded, a city within a city, entirely devoted to this new business.**

**10 15 30 00**

1663

**10 15 30 00**

**Following London, in 1663, the great seaports all rushed one after the other to take advantage of this lucrative trade…**

**Lorient**

**Copenhagen**

**La Rochelle**

**Bristol**

**Nantes**

**Liverpool**

**Bordeaux**

**Antwerp**

**… From all over Europe, slave ships set sail for Africa.**

**03 15 50 00**

**DAVID ELTIS**

When I began to see slave ships leaving from not just Liverpool and Nantes, but from every port in the Atlantic, as soon as a port becomes big enough to contemplate the transoceanic voyage, there is a good chance that voyage is going to be a slave trade voyage. And we have got 170 separate ports, tiny places. Today they have got no idea that once upon a time, they sent out slave voyages. Saint Peter's Port in the Channel Islands, charming place and yet, it is a slave trade port.

**10 16 35 00**

NANTES

**10 16 35 00**

**Over a period of two centuries, more than 3,500 expeditions set sail from French ports. More than half of them left from the port of Nantes, the French champion of triangular trade.**

**The sculpted figures along the quai de la Fosse or Feydeau Island are reminders of an era when great slave trading families displayed their pride in being the main architects of the city’s wealth. It was they who made Nantes France’s leading commercial port.**

**10 16 59 00**

**FREDERIC REGENT**

**UNIVERSITY PARIS 1 PANTHEON-SORBONNE**

**FRANCE**

**10 16 59 00**

**FREDERIC REGENT**

La richesse des riches s’est faite sur l’esclavage.

Donc il y a les négociants, il y a les armateurs, tous ceux qui produisent les denrées donc le vin, les producteurs de vin, les producteurs de farine, les producteurs de tissu, les producteurs de quincaillerie…

**Subtitles :**

Wealth came from slavery. There were negotiators, ship owners, all those who produced foodstuff. Therefore wine, wine producers, flour producers, fabric producers, hardware producers.

**10 17 14 00**

**MYRIAM COTTIAS**

**CNRS**

**FRANCE**

**10 17 14 00**

**MYRIAM COTTIAS**

Tous les ports atlantiques en fait irriguent un arrière-pays qui va très loin, parce que pour Nantes, ça va jusqu’à Orléans, par exemple, c'est-à-dire ça remonte tous les fleuves. Donc, l’esclavage produit de la richesse qui est une richesse essentielle pour la France.

**Subtitles :**

All the Atlantic ports irrigated inland areas that stretched very far: as far as Orléans, in the case of Nantes. It went up all the rivers. So the wealth that slavery produced was essential for France.

**10 17 39 00**

**1669**

**10 17 40 00**

**1669, from Nantes, Bordeaux, La Rochelle and Le Havre, slavery money flowed back up rivers to Rouen, Orléans and Angoulême. It had such repercussions on inland areas that it became a national objective.**

**Louis XIV fully understood this. To win the sugar war, he would need a powerful fleet.**

**10 18 04 00**

**Louis XIV ordered the construction of 500 galleons.**

**The Atlantic became the theatre of a naval war between France, England and Holland. A fight to the death in which each sunken ship was a total loss for the country’s economy.**

**10 18 21 00**

**FREDERIC REGENT**

C’est très coûteux de construire et d’armer, de payer l’équipage d’un navire de 74 canons…

Et, finalement, à qui ça coûte ? Parce que le financement de ces guerres, le financement des navires de guerre, des arsenaux, il est payé par la paysannerie française essentiellement …

**Subtitles**

It was very expensive to build, to equip and to pay the crew of a 74-gun ship.Ultimately, who bore the cost? The financing of these wars, the financing of ships and arsenals was mainly ensured by French peasants.

**10 18 42 00**

**Thousands of military ships followed in the wake of the slave trade fleet.**

**16,000 galleons were already protecting Dutch commercial ships, while the 3,000 light and fast Royal Navy cruisers terrified their adversaries.**

**France paled in comparison to such armadas.**

**10 19 04 00**

**Each nation needed a fortress in Africa if it was to compete in the Atlantic race.**

**Just like the Caribbean islands, these forts were the superstructures of the triangular trade. Genuine military platforms, they offered protection for bartered goods and captives before departure by sea.**

**10 19 24 00**

**In less than 80 years, 43 forts were built from Senegal to the Niger Delta.**

**Every stone, every beam, every element of masonry was transported by boat from Europe.**

**10 19 38 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**USA**

**10 19 38 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

Most of these fortresses are built by states: individual capitalists or even groups of trading capitalists did not have that kind of money in order to build those sorts of fortresses.

**10 19 51 00**

**1684**

**10 19 52 00**

**In 1684, Jean-Baptiste Ducasse, Director of the Companie du Sénégal, wrote a progress report for Louis XIV on the construction of forts.**

**The King kept an eye on spending. Every penny invested in the slave trade had to generate profit.**

**10 20 18 00**

**Texte Ducasse 1684**

***First of all, it is necessary to know what size the fortresses must be, the height of each bastion, and to control the quantity of bricks sand and whitewash that’s need to be carried.***

***As this expense, it will be considerable it is possible to provide some true commerce.***

***The Dutch have eight fortresses and two trading posts on the Gold Coast: It is easy to judge the considerable sums they have drawn since they supply 6,000 negroes per year.***

***Our fortress will supply even more through the colonies where they require a very large number of negroes, which will infinitely multiply sugar manufacture”.***

**10 21 12 00**

**For the time being, France only had one fort on the Gold Coast. It had to make up for lost time.**

**10 21 24 00**

1685

**10 21 27 00**

**The English already had thirteen, the Dutch ten, the Danish five… Even the Prussians, with their three forts, surpassed the French…**

**On the Gold Coast, on the site of present-day Ghana, the Fante and Ashanti rented Europeans plots of land to build their forts.**

**The Europeans established trading posts and fortresses all along the Atlantic coast, from the Ewé territory to the Kongo Kingdom.**

**Equatorial Africa became the world’s main source of captives.**

**10 22 03 00**

**In this Royal African Company accounting document written in 1688, we learn that over an eight year period, the English company shipped 60,783 captives. Each captive cost them 8 to 12 pounds sterling, the equivalent today of between 1,100 and 1,700 dollars.**

**All of them were bought with trade goods.**

**The demand for slaves was so high that the Europeans urged their African partners to plan, rationalize and industrialize their methods of mass deportation.**

**10 22 39 00**

**PAUL LOVEJOY**

**YORK UNIVERSITY**

**CANADA**

**10 22 39 00**

**PAUL E. LOVEJOY**

Slaves were often bought on credit. And so that meant that European ships would come, they would have a whole cargo full of textiles, different metal ware, rum, tobacco, whatever and these would be given to the local merchants, extended to them on credit and then the merchants would go inland with those goods and buy slaves and come back.

**10 23 05 00**

**EDWARD ALPERS**

**UCLA**

**USA**

**10 23 05 00**

**EDWARD ALPERS**

The biggest impact was the level of violence, the rising level of violence, the level of uncertainty that permeated society everywhere and also the opportunity for new big men to emerge, new powerful leaders. Somebody gets a hold of more firearms, somebody gets more aggressive, they build their own personal chieftain and, suddenly, they’re powerful.

**10 23 41 00**

**Among these was bosses Antera Duke, a major African broker from Calabar. In his diary, he spoke of the methods he used to terrorize captives. Kidnapping, sequestration, assassination…**

**10 24 04 00 Entera Duke**

*At about 4am. I got up. Awful rain. I walked up to the city trading house, where I met all the gentlemen. We got ready to cut off heads. 5am, we began decapitating slaves: 50 heads fell that day.*

**10 24 51 00**

**PAUL E. LOVEJOY**

Very clearly, these sacrifices were intended as a form of terrorism that were meant to make it very clear to the population who was the boss and who was not, very much the way the Mafioso type organizations behave in terms of making sure that the members of the association respect whoever the Godfather is and if anybody steps out of line, they can be assassinated or killed and so they don't step out of line, obviously.

**10 25 24 00**

**For the benefit of a handful of enterprising and unscrupulous profiteers, the entire continental economy was disrupted.**

**On the coast, African brokers knew all of the inner workings of the sugar plantation.**

**A slave ship from Saint-Malo, “Le Marie Séraphique”, docked at Loango in the Kingdom of Kongo.**

**Its captain’s drawings provide exceptional details of the negotiations between Europeans and Africans.**

**The merchants from the coast know that the Marie Séraphique’s captain is in a hurry: he absolutely had to arrive in the West Indies before harvest time. This is the time of year when slaves sell best and when the best sugar is available.**

**So they deliberately prolong negotiations to drive prices up.**

**312 captives are rounded up in 116 days.**

**10 26 22 00**

**PAUL E. LOVEJOY**

African response to the expansion of trade was directly tied to the fact that people in the various embarkation points in the African coast knew exactly what was going on in the Americas.

All of these individuals were entirely aware of the plantation system of the Americas. A number of them actually had reached Europe by actually first going to the Americas, seeing for themselves, because that’s the way the ships went and ended up in Europe. There was no problem about these merchants being on board slave ships or about any danger about them being sold into slavery or anything like that, because everyone knew each other. The trade ultimately depended on a lot of personal relationships between merchants in Africa, that is Africans, and merchants that were the slave ship captains.

**10 27 17 00**

**The Marie Séraphique arrived in Saint-Domingue one year after leaving France.**

**Only nine captives had perished. A good ratio for the crew, which celebrated its success. In the drawings of the Marie Séraphique, no allusion to the slaves’ suffering appears. They were dehumanized shadows, tallied and lined up like barrels at the bottom of the hold. Yet in many cases, the transportation of human beings turned into a nightmare…**

**10 27 51 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**USA**

**10 27 52 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

It’s very important to understand that violence on board slave ships would be used selectively. In other words: no captain wanted to kill the entire allotment of people on board because that voyage would then have no profit. So when there was resistance, what the captains would do, is organize a spectacle in which a small number of people would be executed in extremely vicious, horrific ways as a means of terrorizing everybody else. All of the enslaved would be forced to come up on deck in order to view these executions. One slave ship surgeon said that frequently the decks, the main deck of the ship would just be completely awash in blood, in the aftermath of one of these failed revolts. Revolts were common and they were almost always suppressed. But the captains would use that situation to kill a small number in order to intimidate everybody else, sending the message that if you resist us, this will be your faith.

**10 29 07 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

I’ve also suggested that the slave ship created categories of race. For example the multi ethnic Africans who are loaded on board a slave ship, go aboard as Ebo or Fante or Mende but when they come off the ship they are unloaded as members of a quote “negro race” end quote. And the same parallel process goes on among the sailors. These monthly crews they are English, Irish, also in some cases African. They leave their European port but when they arrive on the West coast of Africa, they become the White people.

**10 30 01 00**

GUADELOUPE

**10 29 59 00**

**On Caribbean beaches, captives disembarked as “blacks” in a world dominated by “whites”.**

**An outlet for a society founded on violence and race, the Carnival echoes the days when the sugar industry imposed its rhythms, rites and seasons and set the pace for island life.**

10 30 27 00 – (Subtitles) The negroes are angry.

**10 30 33 00**

**An era when drummers announced the end of wintering and the resumption of cutting, when fleeing slaves covered themselves in molasses to slip through the hands of their persecutors.**

**10 30 46 00**

**MYRIAM COTTIAS**

**CNRS**

**FRANCE**

**10 30 46 00**

**MYRIAM COTTIAS**

Ce qui se construit dans l’esclavage atlantique et ce qui est différent et ce qui marque la différence par rapport aux autres systèmes d’esclavage, c’est la construction de la race. C’est précisément cette superposition qui se construit entre une apparence physique qui est décrite par un terme et un statut. Donc, aux deux extrêmes de ce continuum, à la fois de statut et de couleur, il y a le Blanc maître et l’esclave noir.

Ce terme de « Blanc » n’existe pas avant les sociétés esclavagistes. Le terme de « Blanc », il se construit précisément dans les Antilles. Donc là, vous voyez comment cet espace esclavagiste atlantique est essentiel dans la construction de catégories raciales que nous utilisons actuellement et que nous utilisons comme des choses immuables, des catégories qui ont été immuables dans le temps et qui ne le sont pas.

**Subtitles :**

What progressively distinguished Atlantic slavery, what made it different from other systems of slavery was the construction of race. It was precisely this superimposition which developed between a physical appearance, described by a term, and a status. At the extremities of this continuum of both status and color, there was the white master and the black slave.

The term “white” did not exist before slave societies. The term "white" developed specifically in the West Indies. So you can see how vital this Atlantic slave area was to the construction of the racial categories that we still use now. We use them as though they hadn't changed throughout time, when, in fact, they have indeed.

**10 32 00 00**

**Race was a weapon of submission, meant to carve into flesh the supposed inferiority of some people and the infinite superiority of other people.**

**Cut off from their roots and their families, the blacks were reduced to a servile mass, without names and without bearings.**

**10 32 28 00**

**The plantation was a machine that devoured its workforce. It needed a constant supply of newcomers.**

**Landowners wanted to transform the slaves’ bodies into tools. On plantations, whipping and torture were methodically used to deprive them of their humanity.**

**In this torture garden, the master’s authority was absolute.**

**10 33 04 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

**USA**

**10 33 04 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

So you take, for example, a character like Thomas Thistlewood.

And you can almost see in his diary the escalation in the violence that he thinks he has to meet out to the enslaved to keep them working on the plantation.

**10 33 24 00 – THISTLEWOOD**

*I arrived as a foreman on the new plantation barely two weeks ago.   
We had to carry out justice on a Negro who had escaped.*

*We severely whipped him and rubbed pepper, salt and lime juice into his wounds.*

*Three days later, the body of another slave who had escaped was brought to us. I cut off his head and we burnt the body in public. That was the only way to exert our control over the Negros.*

*In this affair, my reasoning was adopted by all the colonies… The unfortunate condition of the Negro naturally led to us being hated. Only strength and violence can hold them back.*

**10 34 39 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

This kinds of tortures and these kinds of punishments, this kind of brutality actually became common place on these plantations where you had white people working out among armies of slaves who they feared they could not control.

The sound of the screaming and the stench of the burning bodies, that also became a fundamental feature of the Jamaican landscape, right. That is what plantation society is. It’s that smell, it’s that sound, it’s that fear and terror that’s compelling people to work and to obey their masters. There is no way to separate that kind of terror from the labour on the plantation from the profits that that labour produced.

**10 35 19 00**

**But the plantation owners could not squander the slaves they had bought on credit.**

**The State had financed the shipment of slaves and wanted its return on investment…**

**10 35 28 00**

1685

**10 35 28 00**

**1685. In France, Louis XIV promulgated the Code Noir, a set of laws designed to regulate the relationships between masters and slaves.**

*10 35 40 00*

*Article 42  
Only masters can chain up and beat their slaves with canes or ropes when they believe their slaves have deserved this. They are prohibited from administering torture or from any mulitation of limbs.*

**10 36 02 00**

**PAUL LOVEJOY**

**York University**

**Canada**

**10 36 02 00**

**PAUL E. LOVEJOY**

In all legal systems in which there is slavery, there are limitation that the law applies on what kind of violence you can commit with respect to… whether it’s the code noir, whether… it doesn’t matter what it is, there are specific limitations, but, in the end, there’s nothing to prevent a slave owner in any situation from committing the worst forms of abuse and we have tons of example of that happening. And then getting away without any punishment, without any consideration of the state in terms of protecting the individual who was abused.

**10 36 38 00**

**JEAN-PIERRE SAINTON**

**UNIVERSITY OF THE FRENCH INDIES AND GUIANA**

**France**

**10 36 39 00**

**JEAN-PIERRE SAINTON**

Alors le code noir est bien sûr devenu un symbole : un symbole d’une période, un symbole d’un système, un symbole de la négation de l’homme par la négation juridisée de l’homme par l’homme. Et un symbole extrêmement fort et extrêmement douloureux notamment pour les descendants, les descendants d’esclaves…

Dans la réalité, le code noir – je ne dirais pas qu’il n’a pas été appliqué, il a été appliqué, – c’est la référence du système mais il était contredit par tous les arrangements  presque quotidiens.

**Subtitles :**

The Code Noir has become a symbol. A symbol of a period, of a system, a symbol of the legal negation of man by man. A very strong and painful symbol for the descendants of slaves. Of course, the Black Code was applied. It was the system's reference point, but it was contradicted by all the arrangements that were made almost on a daily basis.

**10 37 39 00**

**The plantation society relied solely on market forces. Violence was a necessary cost, and thus included in balance sheets.**

**It took 4 years to amortize the price of a slave. Thereafter, he was valuable only insofar as he could still hold a machete. This was the price to pay so that Europe could eat sugar.**

**10 38 02 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

I don’t think that it’s possible to reduce another human being to a mere cipher, to a mere extension of your will.  And that’s where a lot of the tension and the possibilities for slave revolt and resistance come in, because if my purpose is to subject you absolutely, but you can never be subjected absolutely, we are always going to have conflicts. At the extremes of human domination, even in slavery, we find there is always resistance, there is always tension and there is always struggle.

**10 38 33 00**

**In the island’s Gazette, right next to the lost inferior column, an article runs through the list of Negroes on the run.**

*10 38 41 00*

*He was detained at Point à Pitre jail.*

*A small Negro called Jean-Jean of Creole origin, 12 years of age, good looking, belonging to Mr Papin.*

*A Negro who claims to be called Fermont, 5 foot 2-3 inches in height, around 40 years of age, a very large forehead.*

*A Negress named Charlotte, good looking, beautiful skin, 18 years of age.*

**10 39 03 00**

**Throughout all of the Caribbean, escaped slaves took refuge in the heart of the most remote forests. They were nicknamed “maroon slaves”, in reference to the Spanish word “cimarrón”, which originally designated cattle that had escaped into the wild.**

**In the most remote areas, they began to organize resistance.**

**10 39 20 00**

**On each island, men and women stood up against their oppressors.**

**In Jamaica, Captain Leonard Parkinson, the leader of the maroons, and Grandy Nanni, an Ashanti, known as the “maroon priestess”.**

**In Barbados, Boussa, an Ibo war chief…**

**Through rebellion, the insurgents found a name and an identity.**

**10 39 52 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

All throughout the mountainous areas of Jamaica, you have these communities of formerly enslaved people who have escaped, and they learn the territory, they learn to cultivate crops there, and they learn to fight as well: harassing plantations, taking gun powder, getting new recruits, and maintaining and building communities in the mountains, right? These become increasingly a problem for the British, and by the second/third decade of the 18th century, it breaks out into a major war. And the British aren’t even sure they are going to be able to maintain the Island.

10 40 30 00 – (Subtitles)

The maroons fought for freedomSingers, raise your voice!The maroons fought for freedom

People, clap your hands!Drummers, strike the Ka! People, set the stroke!Had they not been brave and strong,Had they not been proud and standing,

They wouldn't have ended suffering,They wouldn't have ended misery,Homage to Ignace who rose up!Homage to Massoteau who rose up!Homage to Delgrès who rose up!

**10 41 43 00**

**The sugar system rose to a fever pitch and went haywire.**

**After the islands, the fire reached the African coast.**

**Wars raged at the capture sites, notably in Senegambia, where the marabouts blamed slave trade goods for corrupting society.**

**These outbursts of violence plunged the sugar industry into a deadlock.**

**The crisis did not spare Europe.**

**In commercial ports, more and more voices rose to express outrage at the horrors of the slave trade.**

**10 42 16 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**USA**

**10 42 16 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

In all of the major slave trading ports, everybody knew the truth of the slave trade. And I’ll tell you one way in which they knew it. Slave trading vessels had a very specific smell and you could never get the smell out of the wood. In fact, it was said, in Charleston, South Carolina, which was the major port for the importation of slaves into North America, that when the wind was blowing off the water a certain way, you could smell a slave ship before you could see it. What that meant was that in every port these ships, these ships of horror that stank of human misery, that this was all very well known.

**10 43 15 00**

**SUZANNE SCHWARZ,**

**UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**10 43 15 00**

**SUZANNE SCHWARZ**

Certainly information about the slave trade and its characteristics, the experiences of enslaved Africans in the course of the middle passage came increasingly to public attention in the late 1780's. Abolitionist campaigners placed particular emphasis on the middle passage

**10 43 33 00**

**CATHERINE HALL**

**UCL**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**10 43 33 00**

**CATHERINE HALL**

That’s when the polemical arguments begin, and many pamphlets being published and the case being argued, slave owners realizing for the first time, that they’re going to have to make an argument about the legitimacy of colonial slavery.

**10 44 00 00**

**Within this context, in 1783, a trial opposing Lloyds and a slave trade company reverberated in England. Abolitionists used it as a platform to reveal the slave traders’ barbaric practices.**

**10 44 16 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

The so-called Zong massacre, which took place in the early 1780’s, was a very important event. It basically consisted of a slave ship captain throwing a group of living Africans overboard in an effort to collect insurance money. Now this was, this voyage went on and it only came to court a couple of years later because one of the, the insurance companies refused to pay. And when this event came to court, an abolitionist named Granville Sharp shows up at this court case. And the question being: “Were they actually property or not?” and Sharp’s answer is: “This is mass murder. This is just plain mass murder. This is not about property rights. These are human beings.”

**10 45 16 00**

**PAUL LOVEJOY**

**YORK UNIVERSITY**

**CANADA**

**10 45 16 00**

**PAUL E. LOVEJOY**

The judge actually upheld the insurance companies, which refused to pay insurance on the murdered Africans. And it was Vassa who brought this to attention of Granville Sharp and it was Granville Sharp who then turned it into a big issue that helped to mobilize public opinion in Britain*.*

**10 45 36 00**

**Gustavo Vassa was one of the most fervent English abolitionists.**

**Born in Nigeria, he is deported at the age of 11 to the Caribbean. When he is 21, he managed to buy his freedom while passing through England.**

**In his autobiography published in 1789, he recounts his experience of the “Middle Passage” down in the hold, and delivered a vibrant plea against slavery.**

**Facing the nations that had reduced him to the rank of an object, the Negro reclaimed his voice.**

**10 46 07 00** **EQUIANO**

*Gentlemen,*

*Such a tendency has the slave-trade to debauch men's minds, and harden them to every feeling of humanity!  It is the fatality of this mistaken avarice, that it corrupts the milk of human kindness and turns it into gall. (…)*

*Which violates that first natural right of mankind, equality and independency, and gives one man a dominion over his fellows which God could never intend! Yet how mistaken is the avarice even of the planters? Are slaves more useful by being thus humbled to the condition of brutes, than they would be if suffered to enjoy the privileges of men?*

**10 47 11 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

**USA**

**10 47 11 00**

**VINCENT BROWN**

One of the important things you see in Equiano, Gustave Vasa, is that he’s traveling around the Atlantic World. He’s enslaved, but then he works aboard a navy war ship. He works aboard a merchant ship, he’s then in London working with anti-slave trade campaigners, right? We can begin to get a sense that, just because someone has been enslaved in the Atlantic World does not mean they’re ignorant of its various contours. And I think understand that people’s geographic imaginations were more opened than we tend to think when we imagine a slave, head down, labouring on a plantation, that, to me, is a powerful idea.

**10 47 53 00**

**1789**

**10 47 55 00**

**By 1789, at the moment when Gustavo Vassa spoke out, 7.7 million Africans had been deported:**

**1 million from Senegambia;**

**3.4 million from the Bight of Benin and Biafra;**

**3.2 million from Central Africa;**

**and close to 73,000 from East Africa.**

**10 48 27 00**

**While David Eltis and the Emory University research team have clearly established deportation figures, the income gather by the slave trade is still currently being estimated.**

**Historians are still trying to assess today how much profit the slave trade yielded to banks and insurance companies.**

**10 48 50 00**

**MARCUS REDIKER**

The slave trade is not only a foundation of American capitalism; it is a foundation of all of European and Atlantic capitalism because it created this massively profitable economic system that linked the countries of North Western Europe to the Americas through the plantation system. The great scholar activist C. L. R. James pointed out that the slave system created the greatest planned accumulation of wealth the world had ever seen up to that moment in time. And this of course is a very important part of Western prosperity.

**10 49 42 00**

**Between 1633 and England’s abolition of the slave trade in 1807, English companies deported 2,755,830 African captives.**

**Most of them died on plantations, worn out from working in the sugarcane fields.**

**All of this for the sake of profit, and nothing else.**

**10 50 03 00**

**2007**

**10 50 04 00**

**In 2007, at the bicentennial commemoration of the abolition of the slave trade in the presence of Prime Minister Tony Blair and Queen Elizabeth II, one of the guests, Toyin Agbetu, a human rights activist, disrupted the ceremony.**

**10 50 20 00 – (Subtitles)**

I want all of the Christians who are Africans to walk out with me.

Think about the Middle Passage. If you are going to have this thing in the name of my ancestors, you don’t have the decency Mr Blair to make an apology.

If the word “sorry” is so hard to say… and you the Queen you are disgrace! You disgrace our ancestors.

Millions of us  ...xxx…  at the ocean without burial.  Not a mention of Samuel Sharp, not a mention of Nanny, not a mention of Queen Nzinga.

I expected this from the English. But you Africans stay here, watching, leaving me alone, leaving me alone to do the work you don’t have the courage to do.

Let go of me! Let go of me!

**10 51 24 00**

**How could they accept losing the hard-won Caribbean, the goose that laid the golden egg of global capitalism?**

**At the beginning of the 19th century, plantation owners and slave traders sought to thwart this wave of protest carried out by civil society.**

**By that time, slavery, a practice that dated back to the dawn of humanity, seemed immoral, and to belong to the past.**

**England had understood this before the others, and was thus one step ahead of its rivals. It was preparing itself for world domination.**

**FIN 10 52 03 00 Générique**