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AGREGATION EXTERNE D'ANGLAIS

ÉPREUVE HORS PROGRAMME

Première partie (*en anglais, durée maximale : 40 minutes*)

Vous procéderez à l'étude et à la mise en relation argumentée des trois documents du dossier proposé (A, B, C non hiérarchisés). Votre présentation ne dépassera pas 20 minutes et sera suivie d'un entretien de 20 minutes maximum.

Deuxième partie (*en français, durée maximale : 5 minutes*)

À l'issue de l'entretien de première partie, et à l'invitation du jury, vous vous appuierez sur l'un des trois documents du dossier pour proposer un projet d'exploitation pédagogique dans une situation d'enseignement que vous aurez préalablement définie. Cette partie ne donnera lieu à aucun échange avec le jury.

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DOCUMENT A

Herman Melville. *Typee, A Peep at Polynesian Life (1846)*, New York: Everyman's Library, 1958, pp. 4-6.

An intrepid missionary, undaunted by the ill-success that had attended all previous endeavours to conciliate the savages, and believing much in the efficacy of female influence, introduced among them his young and beautiful wife, the first white woman who had ever visited their shores. The islanders at first gazed in
5 mute admiration at so unusual a prodigy, and seemed inclined to regard it as some new divinity. But after a short time, becoming familiar with its charming aspect, and jealous of the folds which encircled its form, they sought to pierce the sacred veil of calico in which it was enshrined, and in the gratification of their curiosity so far overstepped the limits of good breeding, as deeply to offend the lady's sense
10 of decorum. Her sex once ascertained, their idolatry was changed into contempt; and there was no end to the contumely showered upon her by the savages, who were exasperated at the deception which they conceived had been practised upon them. To the horror of her affectionate spouse, she was stripped of her garments, and given to understand that she could no longer carry on her deceits with
15 impunity. The gentle dame was not sufficiently evangelised to endure this, and, fearful of further improprieties, she forced her husband to relinquish his undertaking, and together they returned to Tahiti.

Not thus shy of exhibiting her charms was the Island Queen herself, the
20 beauteous wife of Mowanna, the king of Nukuheva. Between two and three years after the adventures recorded in this volume, I chanced, while aboard of a man-of-war, to touch at these islands. The French had then held possession of the Marquesas some time, and already prided themselves upon the beneficial effects of their jurisdiction, as discernible in the deportment of the natives. To be sure, in
25 one of their efforts at reform they had slaughtered about a hundred and fifty of them at Whiti-hoo—but let that pass. At the time I mention, the French squadron was rendezvousing in the bay of Nukuheva, and during an interview between one of their captains and our worthy Commodore, it was suggested by the former, that we, as the flag-ship of the American squadron, should receive, in state, a visit from
30 the royal pair. The French officer likewise represented, with evident satisfaction, that under their tuition the king and queen had imbibed proper notions of their elevated station, and on all ceremonious occasions conducted themselves with suitable dignity. Accordingly, preparations were made to give their majesties a reception on board in a style corresponding with their rank.

35 One bright afternoon, a gig, gaily bedizened with streamers, was observed to shove off from the side of one of the French frigates, and pull directly for our gangway. In the stern sheets reclined Mowanna and his consort. As they approached, we paid them all the honours due to royalty;—manning our yards, firing a salute, and making a prodigious hubbub.

40 They ascended the accommodation ladder, were greeted by the Commodore, hat in hand, and passing along the quarterdeck, the marine guard presented arms, while the band struck up "The King of the Cannibal Islands". So far all went well. The French officers grimaced and smiled in exceedingly high

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spirits, wonderfully pleased with the discreet manner in which these distinguished personages behaved themselves.

45 Their appearance was certainly calculated to produce an effect. His majesty was arrayed in a magnificent military uniform, stiff with gold lace and embroidery, while his shaven crown was concealed by a huge *chapeau bras*, waving with ostrich plumes. There was one slight blemish, however, in his appearance. A broad patch of tattooing stretched completely across his face, in a line with his eyes, making
50 him look as if he wore a huge pair of goggles; and royalty in goggles suggested some ludicrous ideas. But it was in the adornment of the fair person of his dark-complexioned spouse that the tailors of the fleet had evinced the gaiety of their national taste. She was habited in a gaudy tissue of scarlet cloth, trimmed with yellow silk, which, descending a little below the knees, exposed to view her bare
55 legs, embellished with spiral tattooing, and somewhat resembling two miniature Trajan's columns. Upon her head was a fanciful turban of purple velvet, figured with silver sprigs, and surmounted by a tuft of variegated feathers.

The ship's company, crowding into the gangway to view the sight, soon arrested her majesty's attention. She singled out from their number an old *salt*,
60 whose bare arms and feet, and exposed breast were covered with as many inscriptions in India ink as the lid of an Egyptian sarcophagus. Notwithstanding all the sly hints and remonstrances of the French officers, she immediately approached the man, and pulling further open the bosom of his duck frock, and rolling up the leg of his wide trousers, she gazed with admiration at the bright blue
65 and vermilion pricking, thus disclosed to view. She hung over the fellow, caressing him, and expressing her delight in a variety of wild exclamations and gestures. The embarrassment of the polite Gauls at such an unlooked-for occurrence may be easily imagined; but picture their consternation, when all at once the royal lady, eager to display the hieroglyphics on her own sweet form, bent forward for a
70 moment, and turning sharply round, threw up the skirts of her mantle, and revealed a sight from which the aghast Frenchmen retreated precipitately, and tumbling into their boats, fled the scene of so shocking a catastrophe.

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DOCUMENT B

Stephen J. Gould. "American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin", in *The Mismeasure of Man* (1981), New York: W.W Norton, 1996, pp. 63-66.

In assessing the impact of science upon eighteenth- and nineteenth-century views of race, we must first recognize the cultural milieu of a society whose leaders and intellectuals did not doubt the propriety of racial ranking—with Indians below whites, and blacks below anybody else. Under this universal umbrella, arguments did not contrast equality with inequality. One group—we might call them "hard-
5 liners"—held that blacks were inferior and that their biological status justified enslavement and colonization. Another group—the "soft-liners," if you will—agreed that blacks were inferior, but held that a people's right to freedom did not depend upon their level of intelligence. "Whatever be their degree of talents," wrote
10 Thomas Jefferson, "it is no measure of their rights."

Soft-liners held various attitudes about the nature of black disadvantage. Some argued that proper education and standard of life could "raise" blacks to a white level; others advocated permanent black ineptitude. They also disagreed about the biological or cultural roots of black inferiority. Yet, throughout the
15 egalitarian tradition of the European Enlightenment and the American revolution, I cannot identify any popular position remotely like the "cultural relativism" that prevails (at least by lip-service) in liberal circles today. The nearest approach is a common argument that black inferiority is purely cultural and that it can be completely eradicated by education to a Caucasian standard.

All American culture heroes embraced racial attitudes that would embarrass public-school mythmakers. Benjamin Franklin, while viewing the inferiority of
20 blacks as purely cultural and completely remediable, nonetheless expressed his hope that America would become a domain of whites, undiluted by less pleasing colors.

I could wish their numbers were increased. And while we are, as I may call it, scouring our planet, by clearing America of woods, and so making this side of our globe reflect a brighter light to the eyes of inhabitants in Mars or Venus, why should we [...] darken its people? Why increase the Sons of Africa, by planting them in America, where we have so fair an opportunity, by excluding all blacks and tawneys, of increasing the lovely
25 white and red?¹ (*Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind*, 1751)

Others among our heroes argued for biological inferiority. Thomas Jefferson wrote, albeit tentatively: "I advance it, therefore, as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and

¹ I have been struck by the frequency of such aesthetic claims as a basis of racial preference. Although J.F Blumenbach, the founder of anthropology, had stated that toads must view other toads as paragons of beauty, many astute intellectuals never doubted the equation of whiteness with perfection. Franklin at least had the decency to include the original inhabitants in his future America; but, a century later, Oliver Wendell Holmes rejoiced in the elimination of Indians on aesthetic grounds : "[...] and so the red-crayon sketch is rubbed out, and the canvas is ready for a picture of manhood a little more like God's own image" (in Gossett, 1965, p. 243).

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35 circumstance, are inferior to the whites in the endowment both of body and mind”
(in Gossett, 1965, p. 44). Lincoln’s pleasure at the performance of black soldiers
in the Union army greatly increased his respect for freedmen and former slaves.
But freedom does not imply biological equality, and Lincoln never abandoned a
basic attitude, so strongly expressed in the Douglas debates (1858):

40 There is a physical difference between the white and the black races which I believe
will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality.
And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the
position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having
the superior position assigned to the white race.

45 Lest we choose to regard this statement as mere campaign rhetoric, I cite
this private jotting, scribbled on a fragment of paper in 1859:

 Negro equality! Fudge! How long, in the Government of a God great enough to
make and rule the universe, shall there continue knaves to vend, and fools to quip, so low
a piece of demagogism as this (in Sinkler, 1972, p. 47).

50 I do not cite these statements in order to release skeletons from ancient
closets. Rather, I quote the men who have justly earned our highest respect in
order to show that white leaders of Western nations did not question the propriety
of racial ranking during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this context,
the pervasive assent given by scientists to conventional rankings arose from
shared social belief, not from objective data gathered to test an open question.
55 Yet, in a curious case of reversed causality, these pronouncements were read as
independent support for the political context.

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DOCUMENT C

Kehinde Wiley. *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps*, 2005. Oil on Canvas, 274.3 x 274.3 cm. Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York.

