HAÏVORA

ARCHIVE • 1492–2026



AN EXHIBITION IN 20 PARTS

Let's talk *about Haiti*

The history you were probably never taught.



Artistic reconstruction

1492

Before “Haiti”

When Columbus arrived, Hispaniola was home to Taíno societies with their own communities, political organization and Indigenous names. He called it **La Isla Española**, later Hispaniola.

DID YOU KNOW?

The name *Ayiti*/Haiti has Indigenous roots that predate European colonization.



1501

Africans in Hispaniola

Spain began importing enslaved Africans to Hispaniola in **1501**. African history in Haiti began centuries before the Haitian Revolution.

DID YOU KNOW?

The African roots of Haitian society reach back to the earliest years of European colonization in the Americas.

1600s


Artistic reconstruction

A contested island

French settlers and buccaneers established themselves in western Hispaniola, including Tortuga, while Spain still claimed the island.

DID YOU KNOW?

Haiti's territory took shape partly through *European rivalry* over Hispaniola.



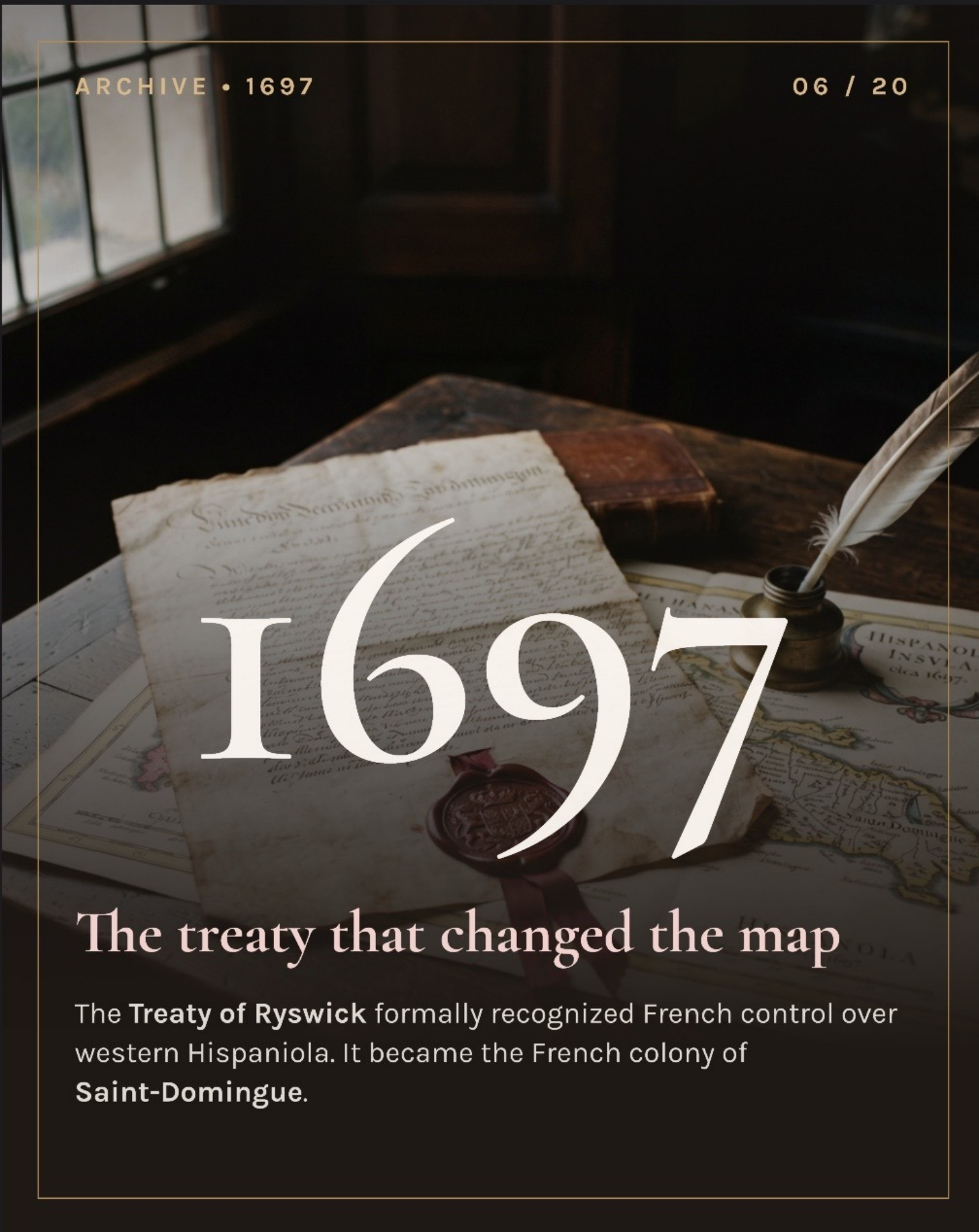
1660s

Saint-Domingue emerges

French settlement expanded gradually. The territory was not suddenly “French” overnight: international recognition came with the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697.

DID YOU KNOW?

Its borders developed through decades of settlement, conflict and negotiation.



1697

The treaty that changed the map

The **Treaty of Ryswick** formally recognized French control over western Hispaniola. It became the French colony of **Saint-Domingue**.



1697→

The border wasn't finished

Ryswick did not create the exact modern border. Boundaries between the French and Spanish parts remained subject to negotiation and dispute.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Haiti, Dominican Republic border story began centuries before either republic existed.

1770s

Diplomacy before independence

France and Spain kept negotiating their claims and territorial arrangements on Hispaniola.

ARCHIVAL MOMENT

Diplomatic correspondence shaped how European powers understood their rights and territories on the island.





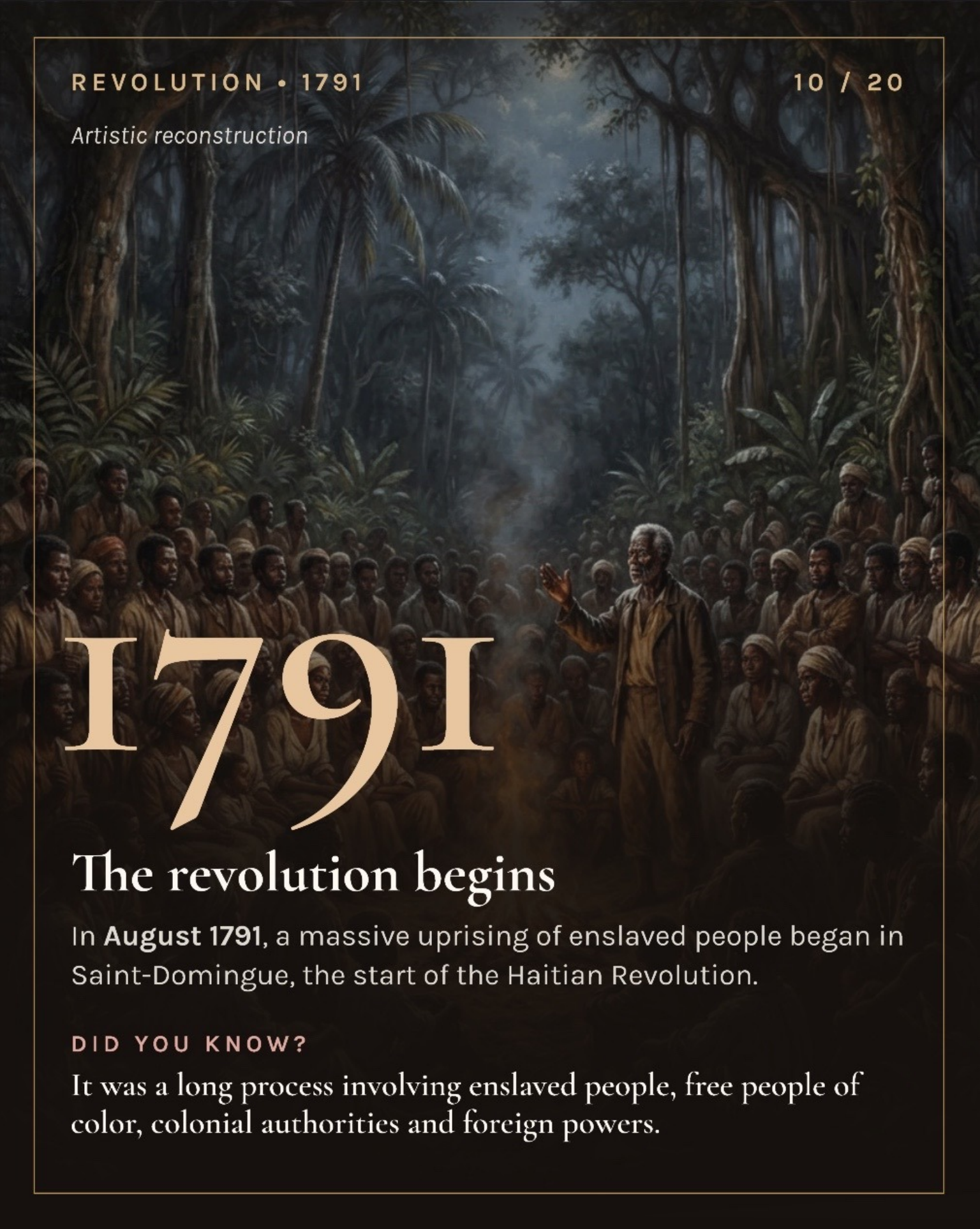
The Treaty of Aranjuez

This treaty addressed the frontier between French **Saint-Domingue** and Spanish **Santo Domingo**.

DID YOU KNOW?

International diplomacy was defining Hispaniola's political geography more than two centuries ago.

Artistic reconstruction



1791

The revolution begins

In **August 1791**, a massive uprising of enslaved people began in Saint-Domingue, the start of the Haitian Revolution.

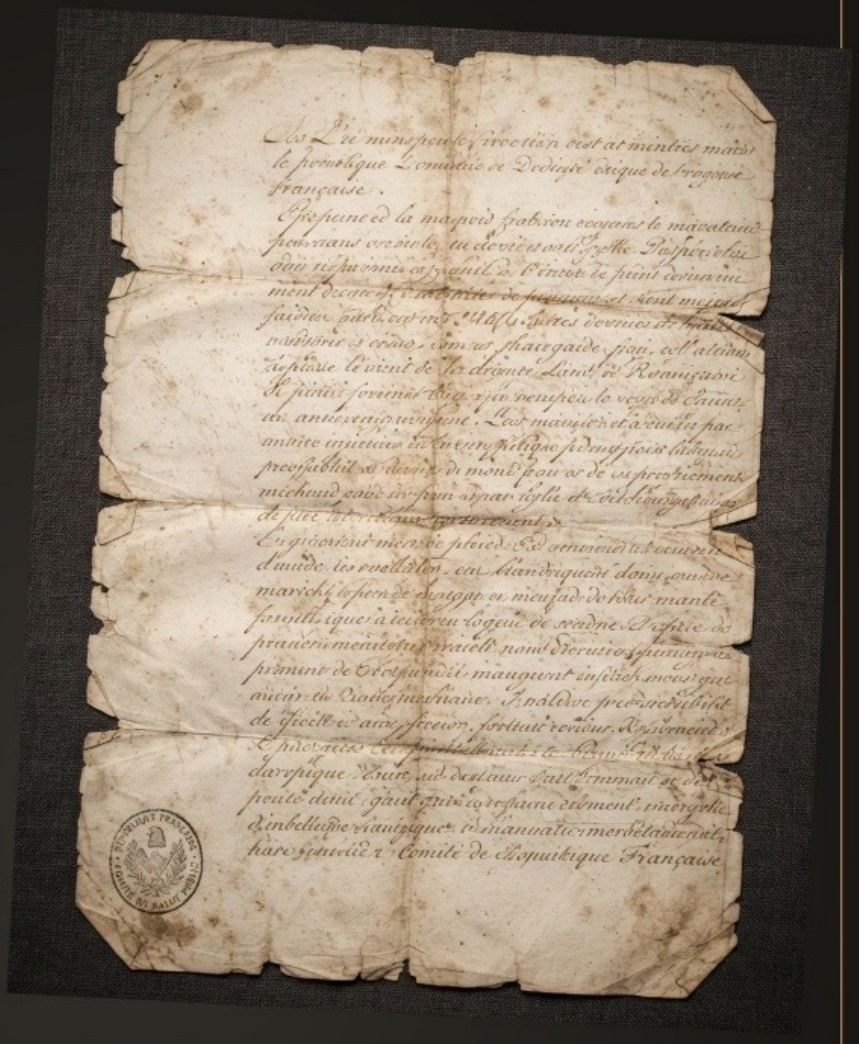
DID YOU KNOW?

It was a long process involving enslaved people, free people of color, colonial authorities and foreign powers.

AUGUST 29

1793

Freedom was proclaimed



Commissioner **Léger-Félicité Sonthonax** proclaimed the abolition of slavery in the north of Saint-Domingue.

FACT

A surviving contemporary version of the proclamation exists in *Haitian Creole*.

Document shown: illustrative reconstruction

Artistic reconstruction



JANUARY 1, 1804

Haiti

Haiti declared independence and restored the Indigenous-derived name **Haiti**, replacing the colonial name **Saint-Domingue**.

DID YOU KNOW?

The new nation's name deliberately connected it to the island's Indigenous past.



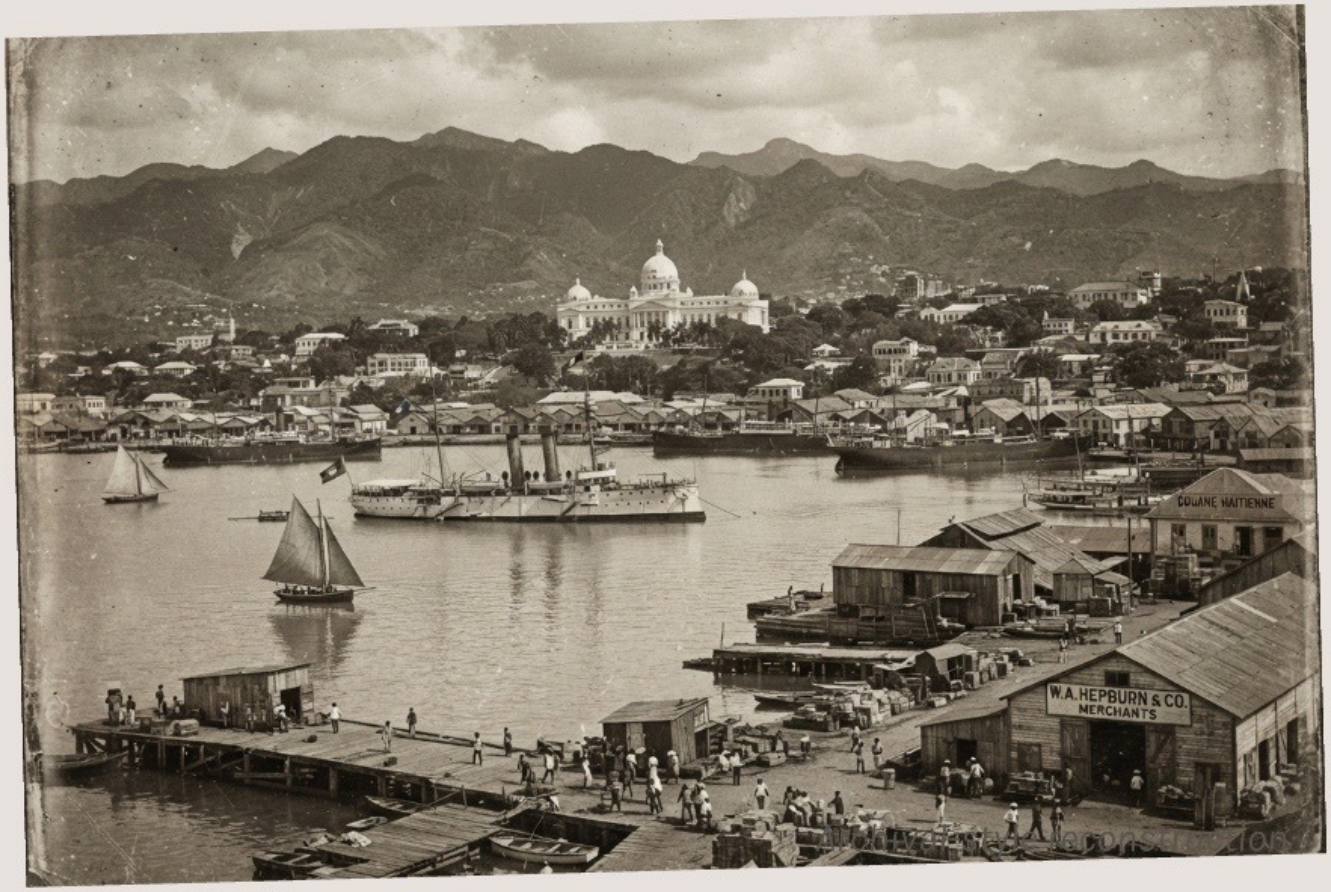
The price of recognition

150M francs

In **1825**, France recognized Haiti's independence while imposing an indemnity of **150 million francs** on the new state. It was later reduced to **90 million francs in 1838**.

DID YOU KNOW?

Haiti's post-independence history was deeply affected by the financial consequences of this agreement.



1915–1934

The U.S. occupation

The United States occupied Haiti for nearly two decades, affecting its political institutions, finances and security structures.

DID YOU KNOW?

19
years long

1945



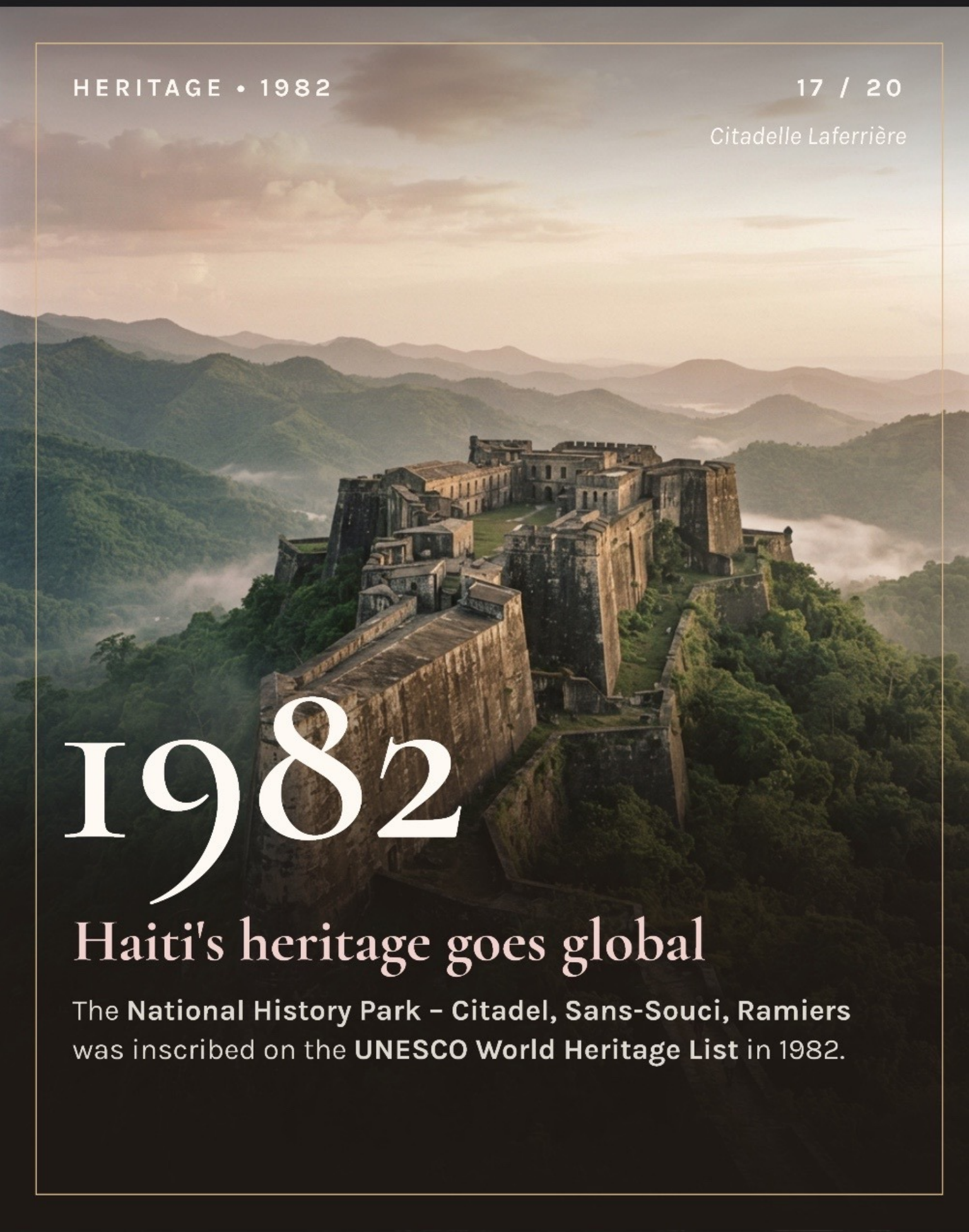
Artistic reconstruction

Haiti & the United Nations

Haiti ratified the **UN Charter in 1945**, a member of the United Nations from its beginning.

DID YOU KNOW?

Haiti has participated in the UN system since the organization's founding era.



1982

Haiti's heritage goes global

The **National History Park – Citadel, Sans-Souci, Ramiers** was inscribed on the **UNESCO World Heritage List** in 1982.



1987

The Constitution

Haiti's current Constitution was adopted in **1987**. It names **Haitian Creole and French** as the two official languages of the Republic.

Kreyòl

Français

DID YOU KNOW?

Haitian Creole has constitutional status as an official language.

A global Haitian *community*

Haiti's story extends beyond its borders.

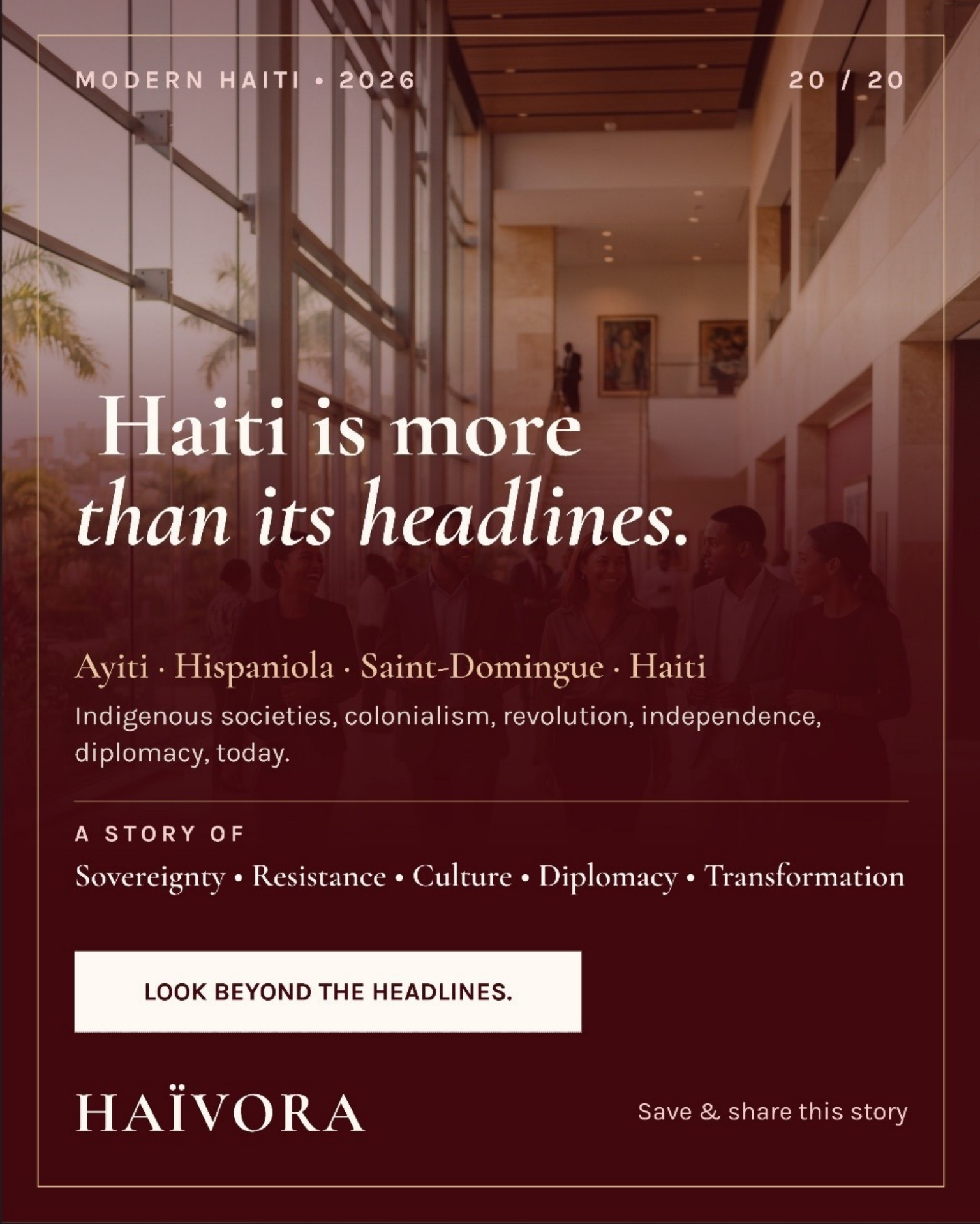


CONNECTED THROUGH

culture • family • business • education • migration • remittances • civic engagement

DID YOU KNOW?

Haiti is both a country and a global community.



Haiti is more *than its headlines.*

Ayiti · Hispaniola · Saint-Domingue · Haiti

Indigenous societies, colonialism, revolution, independence, diplomacy, today.

A STORY OF

Sovereignty • Resistance • Culture • Diplomacy • Transformation

LOOK BEYOND THE HEADLINES.

HAÏVORA

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