



Prince Among Slaves *Outreach Resource Kit*



Dear Participant,

Prince Among Slaves: The Cultural Legacy of Enslaved Africans is an educational and dialogue project anchored in the public square and globalized on the Internet (www.princeamongslaves.org).

With your help, *Prince among Slaves* will reach a large and diverse audience, provide a rich and deeply rewarding experience for its participants, and create a ripple effect of follow-on humanities-based dialogues at homes, places of work, civic institutions, and schools across the country.

By agreeing to host a dialogue with *Prince Among Slaves*, you are providing a rich and deeply rewarding experience for the participants you plan to engage. Your dialogue is part of hundreds of others occurring at homes, places of work, civic institutions, and schools across the country as part of our 20,000 Dialogues project (www.20000dialogues.org).

We created this Outreach Kit to help you host a successful *Prince Among Slaves* dialogue event. In it, you will find essential tips and best practices for how to reach diverse audiences in your program, and make your dialogue a catalyst to deepen public understanding about the impact and legacy of American cultural and religious history, and the legacy of African culture in the present day.

The centerpiece of the project is the award-winning PBS documentary, *Prince Among Slaves*, a film that tells the story of Abdul Rahman Ibrahim Sori, a West African Prince enslaved in the American South for 40 years before finally regaining his freedom through dramatic circumstances and returning to Africa. He made a lasting impression on everyone he met, and in his lifetime become one of the most famous people in America. But like the contributions that the many other enslaved Africans made to America, his story is now forgotten and overlooked.

Throughout this process, you will learn how to bring important issues to the forefront of your communities, how to create fruitful discussions, and how to inspire collaborative connections using *Prince Among Slaves*.

An interactive website (www.princeamongslaves.org) will help you continue to participate in an ever-growing series of *Prince Among Slaves* dialogues and online learning in the humanities. It also has valuable updates and additional information for doing successful events.

Thank you for your participation. Together, we can work in the spirit of building one nation that acts with wisdom and with an appreciation of our diverse cultural heritage. Together, we can make peace happen.

Unity Productions Foundation





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Overview



In 1788, a young African Prince named Abdul Rahman is torn from a life of power and privilege, and thrust into enslavement in a strange land. There he endures unimaginable hardship, yet carves out a meaningful life. Through improbable circumstances he gains his freedom and begins an extraordinary journey.

This film tells his story.

Produced by: Unity Productions Foundation in association with Spark Media and Duke Media

Executive Producers: Alex Kronemer and Michael Wolfe

Producer/Director: Andrea Kalin

Director of Reenactments: Bill Duke
Narrated by: Most Def

This Outreach Resource Kit contains everything you will need to bring a *Prince Among Slaves* event to your community, helping you to leverage the powerful message of the film *Prince Among Slaves*.

	<p><i>Prince Among Slaves</i> Movie Trailer http://www.upf.tv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=77&Itemid=68</p>
	<p><i>Prince Among Slaves</i> Website http://www.princeamongslaves.tv</p>
	<p><i>Prince Among Slaves</i> Facebook Page http://www.facebook.com/?ref=logo#!/pages/Prince-Among-Slaves/109417372418218</p>



What is a *Prince among Slaves* Event?

The award-winning NEH-supported documentary film *Prince Among Slaves* is the centerpiece for a *Prince Among Slaves* event. The event consists of two parts:

1. The public screening of the film *Prince Among Slaves*
2. A guided interactive discussion of the film's themes

In this Outreach Resource Kit you will find everything you need to host a successful *Prince Among Slaves* event in your city.

Getting Ready for Your Event

Facilitator's Guide

Resources

- Background information on the film and its key themes.
- Guidelines for setting up, budgeting, and funding your event.
- Links to event-planning resources.
- Guidelines on conducting your event.
- Tips and strategies for an effective dialogue.
- Discussion questions based on the key themes.
- Suggestions on extending the event for your participants.
- Links to resources to help you expand the scope and impact of your event.

Prince Among Slaves events have been held across the country in historic venues and local gathering places, including The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, Howard University, and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.



Part 1: Getting Ready for Your Event

Hosting a *Prince Among Slaves* event is a rewarding and challenging experience. You are gathering a group of people together to open up new ideas, break down stereotypes, and confront your own and others' assumptions about questions concerning race, religion, identity, and history.

These are challenging but attainable goals, ones you will want to put your best efforts toward achieving. The more time and effort you put into the preparation for the event, the more successful your event will ultimately be.

To prepare yourself for your event:

1. Watch the film, *Prince Among Slaves* to learn about Abdul Rahman and the three themes.
2. Educate yourself on the three themes that are embedded in the film.
3. Work with community leaders to organize the details and craft a memorable event.

1. Watch the film, *Prince Among Slaves* to learn about Abdul Rahman.

Prince Among Slaves explores and dramatizes the incredible true story of an African prince, Abdul Rahman Ibrahim Sori, who was captured in Africa during a war and sold into slavery in the American South. He endured the horrific Middle Passage, and ended up the “property” of a poor planter named Thomas Foster from Natchez, Mississippi. He remained enslaved for 40 years, before regaining his freedom under dramatic circumstances, becoming a famous person in his day, and returning to Africa with his royal status acknowledged. The film ends with a coda filmed in the present-day, featuring a family reunion between Abdul Rahman’s African and American descendants in Natchez, Mississippi.

Abdul Rahman’s story of courage and forbearance under the meanest of circumstances is a powerful drama that speaks directly to the African American experience and to the human experience as well.

It expands our idea of what it means to be human, what we’re capable of surviving, and how our dignity may remain intact, even under relentless assault. And because his story begins around 1776, it also illuminates the foundational period in American history, viewed from a perspective that is generally ignored: that of African people enslaved in the early years of the United States.

The film’s executive producers are Michael Wolfe and Alex Kronemer of Unity Productions Foundation. It was funded by major contributions from the National Endowment for the Humanities and other foundations and individuals.



2. Educate yourself on the three themes that are embedded in the film.

Viewers of the *Prince Among Slaves* film are immediately introduced to three large thematic areas of the slavery experience:





Theme One: Identity

To understand our nation and ourselves, it is essential to examine the stories we tell about our past and how they shape our present cross-cultural relationships. Slave narratives often are not connected to the themes of identity, or racial and religious heritage. Yet these stories, and how we tell them, say a lot about who we are.

“Indeed, what Alex Haley did for genealogical studies with the fictional resurrection of his ancestor Kunta Kinte [in *Roots*] over the last thirty years, *Prince Among Slaves* and the product that comes out of it will accomplish too, helping us relate to Blacks, Muslims, and to all the other religious and ethnic minorities that give color and meaning to America as that part of the planet where even alien beings from outer space, should they come calling, would find humanity almost fully represented.”

~Dr. Sulayman Nyang, Howard University



The rich and diverse economic and social contributions enslaved people brought to America are seldom recognized in conversations about the formation of America. Popular American culture usually portrays the societies of the enslaved people as primitive and unsophisticated. Yet they came from advanced West African civilizations, many of which rivaled their European counterparts in literacy, economic development, and cultural output. Despite this popular misunderstanding of the slavery experience as primitive and unsophisticated, many young people, particularly Muslim Americans, have looked to antebellum slave narratives as a source of identity and a basis for community building.



“The narratives of African Muslims enslaved in America play a critical role in Muslim community-building in the United States - as young Muslims realize that Islam's roots in the New World harkens back to the 17th century.”

Dr. Hishaam Aidi, Columbia University

Books, oral histories, and films like *Prince Among Slaves* are helpful resources for opening conversations and raising awareness about the important contributions of Muslims in the history of America. They help us to re-examine the complex nature of identity, too.



Theme Two: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

The belief that particular cultures are uniquely predisposed to enslavement often leads to stereotypical and prejudicial thinking.

Many people think of slavery as a system that was unique to the United States, or enslavement as a predisposition of Western Africa at the time. In reality, slavery was a global system that operated in Africa, Asia, Europe, and throughout the Americas. Indeed, during the time of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, most of the people in the world lived in some kind of bondage or forced servitude. The Trans-Atlantic slave trade was facilitated by the existence of indigenous slavery in West Africa. A substantial slave trade also grew from the east coast of Africa to the Arab and Islamic world. It was a global phenomenon and many of those in the position to do so exploited it for economic gain. Just about everywhere there were victims and everywhere there were exploiters. It was, in short, an economic system.

“It is absolutely essential that the fuller context of the African past be better appreciated, in order to dispel so many of the myths associated with the black experience in the United States and the rest of the Americas. Africans were not always slaves, nor did they lack cultural and socio-political institutions prior to the transatlantic slave trade. Nor were Africans the only population subjected to slavery; the history of human civilization reveals that the vast majority of people the world over were at some point in time embedded in some form of servile capacity.”

Dr. Michael Gomez, New York University

According to Dr. Tisa Wegner, a professor at Yale Divinity School, “...the trans-Atlantic slave trade shaped the experiences of West African Muslims, bringing them into contact with Native Americans as they struggled to defend tribal identities and land claims and were also implicated in a global slave trade.”

Films like *Prince Among Slaves* give us an opportunity to challenge our assumptions about slavery and the enslaved.



Theme Three: Muslims in Early America

The film's third major theme focuses on the fact that Muslims were a distinct and significant religious minority from the earliest days of our nation. Islam is not new to America. Estimates vary, but based on the different locations that the enslaved Africans were captive from, many scholars estimate that approximately 15% were Muslim. Some place the estimates much higher, others slightly lower. In addition to Islam, the first generation of enslaved Africans included adherents to dozens of other local religions indigenous to Africa. Slavery made it difficult, if not outright impossible, for any of the enslaved persons to continue their religious observations.

“Enslaved Muslims struggled in many ways to maintain their faith, but under the pressures of slavery and the nineteenth century growth of Christianity among slaves, the number of professing Muslims declined by the late 1800s, all but disappearing until the 1920s and 1930s, when thousands of black Americans, following several different schools of Islamic thought, once again called themselves Muslims.”

Dr. Edward Curtis, Indiana University

Muslim slaves, nonetheless, shared a unique cultural and religious identity that proved to have a lasting impact on American culture. According to Dr. Sylviane Diouf, an expert on Caribbean history, “The Muslim presence in the United States was essential to maintaining literacy and religious identity amongst the slave population, and this was in many ways the cultural and intellectual resistance to slavery.” In their letters, texts and autobiographies written under extremely oppressive conditions, Muslim slaves showed how much they valued literacy, formal education, and intellectual and religious pursuits.

Abdul Rahman's story, portrayed in *Prince Among Slaves*, provides a starting point to better understanding the spiritual life of the first generation of enslaved Africans slaves, and the role religion played in their lives and in the lives of their owners.



“The experience of slavery, far from making the Africans' religious fervor disappear, deepened it.”
~Sylviane Diouf, Author, *Servants of Allah*

3. Work with community leaders to organize the details and craft a memorable event.

The story of Abdul Rahman is a compelling one. Now that you have watched the film and understand its messages, you can begin planning the details of your film-and-discussion event.

You will need to answer these questions:

1. What do you hope to achieve through this event?
2. Who will help you organize this event?
3. Whom do you want to attend your event?
4. Where and when will you hold the event?
5. How will you market and publicize your event?
6. How will you fund your event?

1. What do you hope to achieve through this event?

Identifying your objectives will lay the foundation for your event planning. Consider your organization's goals and needs and how you can use the film to support them in a practical way. Think about what you'd like to get out of the event, how it can benefit your organization, and what you can realistically accomplish. Here are a few suggested objectives:

1. Raise awareness about race, religion, identity and history and how these topics impact your community.
2. Foster communication among different community organizations and stakeholders in the community.
3. Establish coalitions with other organizations.
4. Engage general audiences around the film's issues.
5. Heighten your organization's visibility by connecting it with the issues raised in the film.



2. Who will help you organize this event?

As the organizer of this event, you can create a committee from creative and motivated stakeholders within your community. Here are some roles you might want to fill:

Event Chair	<p>Manages all other committees to make sure that the screening event is coming together.</p> <p>Answers questions that arise regarding the event.</p>
Logistics & Audio/Visual/Technology Coordinator	<p>Finds a venue (theater, hotel, university, etc.), and coordinates a date and time that works well with the venue.</p> <p>Obtains appropriate DVD equipment.</p>
Reception Coordinator	<p>Organizes the catering or makes sure that there is a café on the premises that is open.</p> <p>Makes sure that the various dietary preferences of the different faiths are accommodated.</p> <p>Arranges a prayer room, handicapped accessibility, parking, etc., if needed.</p>
Ticket Chair & Ticket Sellers	<p>Manages advertising for the event.</p> <p>Budgets costs of ticket distribution appropriately.</p>
Sponsorship Coordinator	<p>Identifies potential sponsors, provides them with information about the film-and-discussion event, and solicits their sponsorship for their event.</p> <p>Keeps track of the various sponsors and their levels of sponsorship.</p> <p>Makes sure the sponsors get the publicity they have been promised.</p>
Collaborating Organizations Coordinator	<p>Identifies and collaborates with African American, Muslim Interfaith, and Intercultural Organizations.</p> <p>Help these groups get involved with the screening, advertise to their supporters, speak to potential sponsors, etc.</p> <p>Identifies a keynote speaker, someone local or from out of town, and books them for the event.</p>



3. Whom do you want to attend your event?

Your event should be community-based, and include partnerships with a minimum of three local organizations.

For example, the University of Arizona humanities department partnered with the local city government outreach office, a local Muslim institution, and a local interfaith organization. This partnership model enables the planners and organizers to build strong cultural diversity into their events, and it ensures a good turnout.

Think about contacting local African American Student Organizations, the NAACP or Urban League Chapter, African American churches, HBCU (Historically Black College or Universities), local Muslim organizations, *20,000 Dialogues* partners, and most importantly, the Humanities Council in your state.

You might want to include a guest speaker from your community to give a brief introduction or lecture. You may invite a UPF representative who will speak at your event for an honorarium of \$500 plus travel and lodging expenses.

Aim for an audience of 50-150 people. The target audiences that have been identified for this project are:

- Civic-minded African American audiences
- Muslim and Arab organizations
- 18- to 30-year-olds

The more diverse the audience, the more meaningful and productive the post-film discussion will be.



4. Where and when will you hold the event?

Choose a location for your event that is large enough to accommodate your audience, is accessible to all attendees, and is affordable. Consider hosting your event at a local university, a community center or a town hall, a hotel banquet room, a library, a museum, or a local school auditorium. Often civic locations are booked far in advance, so plan accordingly. You might want to have a backup location or two just in case your first choice is unavailable.

Choose a time that is convenient for the groups that will be attending. For example, if you want to include 18- to 30-year-olds, a daytime event would probably not work as many of them hold full-time jobs.

Also consider the length of the event as a whole. You'll want to leave time to introduce the film, and time for participants to break into smaller groups. You might even want to include a break for coffee and/or refreshments.

A detailed time schedule for your event might look like this:

5:00pm	Set up chairs, screen, food, and activities, if applicable
6:30pm	Doors open for attendees to arrive and sign in
7:00pm	Welcome/Introduction
7:05pm	Words from guest speaker
7:15pm	Show film
8:15pm	Film ends
Short break	
8:30pm	Discussion groups
9:30pm	Program ends



5. How will you market and publicize your event?

It is important to use both community connections and online platforms to market and publicize your event. This approach will help expand the impact and reach of the event, and allow for deeper engagement with the humanities subjects being presented.

Think about the resources that are available to help you get the word out about your event. Here are some great places to start:

- Post details on community websites.
- Use social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Meetup.com, and encourage viral promotion by the events' attendees.
- Send emails to targeted audience members.
- Post flyers around the event location.
- Contact local media outlets; for example, call community newspapers or radio stations.
- Involve sponsor businesses or organizations in spreading the word to their members/customers.
- Provide community organizations with details, including local African American, Arab, or Muslim student organizations, an NAACP or Urban League Chapter, or community religious centers.
- Contact university outreach programs.

The film's major underwriters should be mentioned in all written acknowledgements, especially the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Black Programming Consortium, the El Hibri Charitable Foundation, the Safi and Anita Qershey Foundation, and Sohail and Mona Masood.



Here are several online resources to help you:

20,000 Dialogues

<http://www.20000dialogues.org/>

Association of African American Museums:
Institutional Members

<http://www.blackmuseums.org/memberlinks/institutional.htm>

Beliefnet

www.beliefnet.com

Big Brothers Big Sisters

www.bbbs.org

Boys & Girls Clubs of America

www.bgca.org

Cush City: World's Largest African-American
Selection: Newspapers

<http://www.cushcity.com/newspapr.htm>

Educators for Social Responsibility

<http://esrnational.org/>

Interfaith Alliance

www.interfaithalliance.org

International Islamic Museum of America

<http://www.islamicmuseumofamerica.org/>

Into Islam: Islamic: Newspapers

<http://www.intoislam.com/islam/Islamic/News/papers/>

Krista Tippett on Being

<http://being.publicradio.org/>

NAACP: Find Your Local Unit

<http://www.naacp.org/pages/find-your-local-unit/>

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

<http://www.nasaa-arts.org/>

National PTA

<http://www.pta.org/>

National Urban League: Urban League Affiliates

<http://www.nul.org/in-your-area/affiliate-map>

NEH: State Humanities Councils

<http://www.neh.gov/whoweare/statecouncils.html>

PBS Thirteen: Religion & Ethics Newsweekly

www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics

Teaching Tolerance

www.tolerance.org

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of
the United States of America

<http://www.elks.org/>

The Institute of Interfaith Dialog

www.interfaithdialog.org

The Islam Project

<http://www.islamproject.org/>

The Pluralism Project at Harvard University

www.pluralism.org

The Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious
Understanding

www.Tanenbaum.org

United Way Worldwide

<http://www.unitedway.org/worldwide/>



6. How will you fund your event?

Once you've identified a location for your event, decided on an agenda for the event, and identified what materials you will need to promote the event, you will have a clearer idea of how much money you will need to host the event.

Fundraising

There are several approaches to raising the necessary funds; choose the one that works best for you and your community. Of course, you are not limited to these methods. Be creative in your fundraising.

It is essential that you acknowledge and thank those who help you fund your event. You can thank them privately, and ask if they would also like a public acknowledgment at the event or in writing. Thanking your funders will strengthen good will and increase the likelihood of future participation.

Secure Sponsors

Reach out to high-profile sponsors for your event, as it will help broaden your reach and establish new and potentially long-term coalitions. Look to local businesses, schools, or community organizations that have an interest in your topic and ask them to help out. This will increase the visibility and success of the event and will help put a spotlight on the issues in the film.

The key when approaching co-sponsors is to help them understand how your event fits into their priorities as an organization, and how they will ultimately benefit from being associated with your plans. Be sure to allow enough lead-time – building new relationships often takes time.

You may want to offer different levels of support for sponsors. For example, you might offer Sponsor, Co-Sponsor, Host, or Friend levels, each of which would require a different level of contribution. Offer the option for contributors to give the amount directly, or to raise it by gathering smaller checks from their friends or colleagues.

To fund a film screening in Michigan, organizers were able to get a doctor's office and a financial planner to contribute \$1,000 each. To acknowledge their generous contributions, a slide with the sponsor names was created and shown at the event.



Contact Your State Humanities Councils

The 56 humanities councils located in U.S. states and territories support local humanities programs and events. The state humanities councils are funded in part by the federal government through the National Endowment for the Humanities. They also receive funding from private donations, foundations, corporations, and, in some cases, state government.

Because of the topic of the film and the generous support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, we **require** that you contact the Humanities Council in your state and invite them to participate in the screening. The exact means by which they participate, e.g. receiving free tickets, serving on your screening committee, purchasing tickets, publicizing, etc. is up to you and the Humanities Council. You will find the council to be an able and willing partner.

Use the following link to find contact information for the Humanities Council in your state:

<http://www.neh.gov/howeare/statecouncils.html>

Sample Email to the Humanities Council in Your State

Subject: Your participation in screening of NEH Funded Film

Dear (name of President of council in your state):

I'm writing to invite your participation in the screening of the film *Prince Among Slaves: the True Story of an African Prince Enslaved in the American South*. This film was generously funded by National Endowment for the Humanities and is produced by Unity Productions Foundation, an organization to which I donate and for which I volunteer.

The film was featured in the September/October issue of Humanities Magazine of the National Endowment for the Humanities. You can read about it here: <http://www.neh.gov/news/humanities/2006-09/PrinceAmongSlaves.html>. It also won the prestigious Best Documentary Award from the American Black Film Festival.

I am on the screening committee for (name of your city) and we'd love to have the participation of the Humanities Council to help promote the screening, attend, and possibly find sponsors. I can be reached at (your number) to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

(your name)

Host a Reception

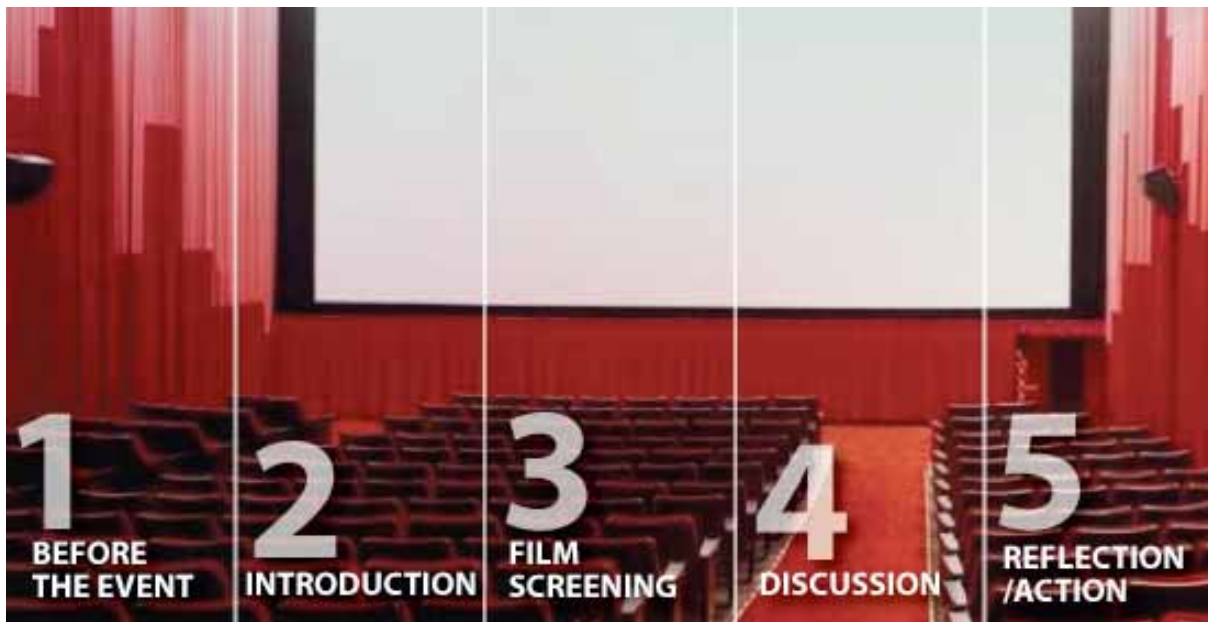
A reception with invited leaders is a good way to network and raise money if you still need to cover event costs. At the DC premiere screening of a recent film conducted by an interfaith coalition, a reception was held before the screening at a church. The food and church were donated, and \$50 per person was charged, raising \$5,000, which helped cover the event costs.



Part 2: Facilitator's Guide

Every community is different and every event is unique. As a facilitator, you must determine how to approach your event in a way that makes the most sense for your community and the participants. The options outlined here are just suggestions. Feel free to be creative!

Your event will be organized into five main parts:



Before the Event

Every venue will be different, but here are some things to check before your guests arrive:

- If there is a PA system, check that the microphones are working.
- Conduct a general check of all video and audio equipment.
- Run a small segment from the DVD to make sure it works properly.

You may want to have an icebreaker activity ready for your guests as they arrive. This is a low-pressure way to get people involved and ready for the film screening. Here are two ideas:

Activity 1: Add Your Comment

Post three large sheets of paper on the walls and provide markers. Write one of the following questions on each sheet:

1. What event in American history do you think has had the greatest impact on our lives today?
2. What facts do you remember learning about slavery in America?
3. What factor is most essential to forming a person's identity?



As people come into the room, invite them to add their responses to the pages.

Activity 2: Memory Post-Its

Write the following on a large sheet of paper. Post it on the wall near a table containing post-it notes and markers.

“Memory boxes are places where people collect treasured items that capture important events in a person’s life and are meaningful to them. What one item would you want to include in a memory box?”

Ask participants to use a post-it to write or draw one item they would include in a memory box, and stick the post-it on the wall.

Introduction

Begin by welcoming people to the event, introducing the host or sponsoring organizations, and explaining briefly the purpose and schedule of the event. Set a warm and inviting tone so that participants feel comfortable sharing and contributing their ideas and thoughts.

Film Screening

Prince Among Slaves is a one-hour film. Before the film begins, pose one or two questions for participants to think about while they view the film.

Here are some sample questions:

- What kinds of experiences impact a person’s identity?
- How does a person maintain his or her cultural identity when adapting to a new environment?
- How is slavery portrayed in the film?
- Who controls your identity? Is it an internal or an external feature? Can your identity be changed?
- Does the past provide lessons about religious diversity that we can use as Americans today?

Discussion

When the film ends, a wonderful opportunity for dialogue begins. Dialogue is a new approach to an age-old challenge. It is the meeting of minds and hearts in candid discussion. Its goal is as simple as it is challenging: to enable participants to see the “other” in a new way, and to learn and grow from the experience. Dialogue is inherently risky, because it opens us up to the possibility of change and transformation. These conversations are often controversial, challenging, enlightening, and entertaining.

Provide your participants with guidelines for a compelling discussion. The goals of a dialogue are to understand other’s ideas, to learn from one another, to build relationships, and to speak freely without arguments, proselytizing, or pressure.



The discussion questions provided below are organized by theme and bring up important issues related to identity, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and Muslims in Early America. This does not mean that you need to address all the questions, or even all the themes. There are many ways to implement your discussion session: the choice is yours. Consider the size of your audience, the time allotted for discussion, and the makeup of the groups. Here are some ideas:

- Give one discussion question/prompt from each theme to different groups. Have them discuss within their group and then summarize their discussion to the larger audience.
- Give each group a question/prompt from each theme to discuss. Ask each group to identify which theme's discussion was the most productive.
- Allow the groups to choose the theme they would like to discuss, and report on their results.
- Give all groups the same question/prompt. Compare important points when they are finished.

IDENTITY QUESTIONS

1. Before he was taken from Africa, Abdul Rahman was a prince in the kingdom of Futa Jallon, and a commander in his father's army. After his capture, he was enslaved by a poor, semi-educated white planter. What effect do you think this had on his identity? How do you think such a huge change might affect you?
2. Slaveholders forced their enslaved Africans to learn English and stripped them of their identities. Many were expressly forbidden to practice their religions. For the rest, the general restrictions of slavery meant that it was nearly impossible to continue in their religious expressions. Rahman's hair, a sign of his nobility, was cut off early to break or "season" him. He later hid his Muslim faith in order to help win the support of several important people who promised to help him and his family gain their freedom because they believed he was a Christian. How do you think it would feel to be kept from practicing your religion, or to have to hide it? What might this do to a person's sense of identity?
3. Are there any similarities and/or differences between the challenges Abdul Rahman faced and the challenges people face today in preserving their sense of identity?
4. How do you think the slave trade inhibited the continuance of the culture and traditions of those societies that were enslaved? What types of information were lost due to the slave trade?

Tips for a successful dialogue:

- When someone is speaking, give him or her your full attention.
- Be as open and curious as you can.
- Ask honest questions; remain sensitive to others' feelings.
- Try to involve everyone in the conversation.
- Have one conversation at a time.
- Suspend judgment — seek to understand.
- Talk just enough; leave space for others to talk.
- Encourage others to listen to each other without interrupting.
- Be prepared to be pleasantly surprised by something someone says.
- Try to use "I-statements" when you share, such as "I feel that..."



Respond to this quote from the film:

“What you are essentially doing is you are removing the identity of an individual and you are giving him a very different identity- one that you as a slave owner choose and this communicates very effectively that the person is now a slave... the person is now chattel...the person is now someone who is owned.”

TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE QUESTIONS:

1. Had Abdul Rahman NOT been captured and sold into slavery, what do you think he might have accomplished in his own country? On a larger scale, there were millions of Africans enslaved throughout the Americas. What human potential was lost for their African countries?
2. An astonishing fact: for every European who came to the “New World” during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, four involuntarily arrived from Africa. As mentioned in the film, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade was the basis of the “New World” economy, and the currency of the economy was people. What does this global economy have to teach us about our present economic systems?
3. Does the film present information that supports or conflicts with what you already knew about the Trans-Atlantic slave trade?

MUSLIMS IN EARLY AMERICA QUESTIONS:

1. Does it make a difference to the issues regarding American Muslims today to know that there were Muslims living in America and contributing to its cultural legacy from the first days of our country’s history? In general, what difference—if any—do the stories of the past make in our lives today and in the way we interact with one another in society?
2. What does Abdul Rahman’s life story have to teach us about religious diversity in America? The enslaved Africans themselves represented many indigenous local African religions. Some of the conflicts among the various African people that led to their captivity was over their religious identities. What does *that* have to say about religious diversity?
3. Religion played an enormously important role in sustaining the inner lives of the enslaved generations born in America. For their ancestors among the first generation who were denied this ability, how do you imagine they were able to cope? Even today, people around the world are prohibited, persecuted, and stigmatized for practicing their various faiths. What has changed in all these years? What are the possible remedies to this problem?
4. How could the one-million Muslims who were brought to America during the slave trade maintain their religious structure and traditions in the face of such overwhelming adversity? What can we learn from their resiliency?



Reflection/Action

The final portion of the event is about reflection and action. There are three parts: debriefing, making a plan to act, and extending the experience.

1. Debriefing

Once the participants have had a chance to dialogue within their groups, ask them to participate in a final debrief.

Ask everyone to comment using only the following phrases:

- I like.....
- I wish.....
- What if.....

Have someone capture these responses. You might consider creating an on-site audio booth and invite people to share their reactions to the event. This can be as simple as setting up a tape recorder, using a computer program such as Garage Band, or using a video or flip camera.

2. Making a Plan to Act

After the participants have spoken out about the film, give each person two blank index cards and ask them to write their answer to this question on both cards: *What have you learned from this film and what can you do to act on it?*

One card should be given to someone they trust. They should ask this person to contact them in one month to check on what actions they've taken.

Collect the second card to help you evaluate the success of the event. The information you gather should be shared with UPF. UPF will incorporate this feedback to measure the impact of the *Prince Among Slaves* program.

3. Extending the Experience

Ask the participants to brainstorm ideas about how to share what they learned from this event with their community. Some ideas might be painting t-shirts with messages, setting up a blog to continue the conversations that began at the event, creating a mural, writing a piece for a newsletter, developing a public service announcement, or screening the film at another venue.

Before you end the evening, it is important to let the participants know that their experience can be extended and enhanced through the *Prince Among Slaves* website. The website contains lectures, educational modules, and forums in which the user can learn about humanities themes and participate in the *Prince Among Slaves* community.

One way to let participants know about this website is to distribute a card containing the link to the website and the following question. Ask them to visit the forums on the website and post their answer to the question.



“Share a story from your life or a story found in your faith tradition and culture that helps to guide you in overcoming oppression and adversity. What is one lesson you can take from Abdul Rahman's story?”

Thank your audience for coming, and encourage them to continue to participate in and spread the word about the extended community around *Prince Among Slaves*.



Part 3: Resources

It is our hope that this Outreach Resource Kit contains all the tools you need to create an effective and memorable event for your participants. Here are some additional resources from which you can draw:

Prince among Slaves Website: One component of the *Prince Among Slaves* project is the *Prince Among Slaves Website*, (www.princeamongslaves.org) an interactive website designed to reach new audiences for the humanities and expand the overall reach of the program. It contains filmed lectures, modules, and forums.

Filmed Lectures: The *Prince Among Slaves* project began with a series of public events that included a screening of the film *Prince Among Slaves* and a humanities lecture. The lectures were given by a leading scholar or public figure (see Scholars section below) and addressed one of the themes from the film. These lectures were filmed and are available on the *Prince Among Slaves* website. You can use these lectures as a part of your own presentation, recommend them to your audience for further review, or use them to increase your own knowledge of the themes from the film.

The titles of the available lectures are:

- A. "From the Slave House to the White House: How An Enslaved African Gained the Support of America's Most Powerful Politicians and Businessmen"
- B. "Literate African Muslims in America During Slavery"
- C. "African Muslims and the Blues"
- D. "Jacksonian Political Figures: Political and Social Figures of Antebellum America"
- E. "Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of West African Slaves in the Americas"
- F. "Growing Up Between Two Worlds"
- G. "Why They Beat Us to It: Ending Slavery in the British Empire"
- H. "A Time of Civility? The Historical Roots of Interreligious Tension and the Prospect for Harmony"
- I. "The Anti-Slavery Movement"
- J. "Black Routes to Islam: Antebellum Narratives and Black Identity"
- K. "Piecing the Family Back Together: The Genealogy of Futa Jallon"
- L. "Narratives of Enslaved West Africans: Reconciliation, Genealogy and Family Narratives"
- M. "We Have a Religion: Slavery, Colonization, and Religious Encounter"



Modules: The *Prince Among Slaves* website includes learning modules that are designed to reach a variety of demographics, ages, and educational levels. Users can complete the modules to enhance their knowledge of the humanities themes covered in the film *Prince Among Slaves*. The modules are:

Module I: “The Geographies of Slavery: Tracing Prince Abdul Rahman’s Life Voyage, Using Google Earth”

Module II: “Introduction to African civilization: Futa Jallon and Timbuktu”

Module III: “Comparing Futa Jallon and the United States in the late 18th Century”

Module IV: “Muslims Enslaved in America”

Module V: “Luminaries: How Abdul Rahman Sori Connected with Historical Luminaries of Early 19th Century America”

Module VI: “Strategies for Survival and Change”

Module VII: “The Function of Eloquence”

Module VIII: “The Philosophies of the Anti-Slavery Movement”

Module IX: “Remnants of Identity: How West African Islamic Chant and Music Were Transformed through Slavery into the Roots of the American Blues”

Module X: “The Difference a Story Makes: Seeing Beyond Slavery”

Module XI: “Share Your Reaction to the Film”

Forums: Participants in the *Prince Among Slaves* website forum can discuss their views on humanities topics, tell their own stories, post video and pictures, and chat with other users in synchronous and asynchronous time.



Prince Among Slaves Scholars

Dr. Hishaam Aadi, Professor of International Relations at Columbia University, presents on his ongoing research of youth religious and cultural identity in a lecture entitled, “Black Routes to Islam: Antebellum Narratives and Black Identity.” In this lecture, Dr. Aadi examined the way that stories, narrative, oral history, film, and other media are shaping contemporary African American and African American Muslim identities in America.

Dr. Terry Alford is the author of the eponymous book on which the documentary film *Prince Among Slaves* is based. He continues to play a key advisory role on the *Prince Among Slaves* project. The working title of his lecture is, “The Anti-Slavery Movement.” Dr. Alford’s lecture helps participants understand the ante-bellum Southern cities that Abdul Rahman knew. In many ways, New Orleans, Natchez, Mississippi, Washington, DC and Cincinnati – all of which Abdul Rahman visited on his trek to gain freedom for his family – were part of a global economy, teeming with diversity and the slave trade. In this lecture, participants gain a deeper understanding of the global economy of the American South and how that economy functioned.

Dr. Edward Curtis, Professor Millennium Chair of the Liberal Arts & Professor of Religious Studies and American Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis has created two lectures entitled, “From the Slave House to the White House: How An Enslaved African Gained the Support of America’s Most Powerful Politicians and Businessmen.” Dr. Curtis comments, “In the 1820s, Abdul Rahman Ibrahima of Natchez, Mississippi was thrust into the center of national politics, the movement to abolish slavery, and the attempts to settle black Americans in Africa. This lecture uses his incredible life story as a way to reveal new insights into the antebellum history of the United States.”

Dr. Sylviane Diouf was one of the advisors and on-air commentators for the film *Prince Among Slaves*. She is a resident scholar of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and a researcher in residence at the New York Public Library. Dr. Diouf developed two lectures entitled “Literate African Muslims in America During Slavery,” focused on the ways in which the widespread literacy of the enslaved African Muslims contributed in general to the artistic and cultural legacy of the enslaved people in America. The second lecture is called “African Muslims and the Blues,” explored the musical aspect of this legacy more deeply. “Music has always been a major part of the identity of African Americans,” says Dr. Diouf, “and their contributions to American music are now widely acknowledged and celebrated; however, the historical background is generally overlooked.” Dr. Diouf continues: “As eminent musicologists and historians have demonstrated, perhaps the most emblematic American music, the Blues, is a direct product of the singing style – itself influenced by the recitation of the Qur’an and the call to prayer – brought by West African Muslims.” In this lecture, early 20th-century recordings capturing old slave songs that closely resemble the call to prayer are used to explore the roles that Muslim slaves played in developing the Blues.

David Dreyer, resident genealogist at the Natchez Public Library and on-air commentator for *Prince Among Slaves*, continues as an advisor for *Prince Among Slaves*. Mr. Dreyer remains the foremost genealogical expert on Abdul Rahman’s family lineage. His lecture, which was delivered at the Natchez Public Library, is called “Piecing the Family Back Together: The Genealogy of Futa Jallon.” In this talk, Dreyer uncovers his genealogical project on the Abdul Rahman family of Futa Jallon, and looks at the challenges, as well as the rewards, of understanding one’s own genealogy.



Dr. Daniel Feller, Professor of History at the University of Tennessee, explores the broader political context of the antebellum era. Feller's expertise is in Jackson-Era politics and social history. His talk illuminates the lesser-known political and social figures that shaped Abdul Rahman's time. The lecture is entitled, "Jacksonian Political Figures: Political and Social Figures of Antebellum America," and it provides essential context to the period.

Artemus Gaye, one of Abdul Rahman's West African descendants and a Ph.D. candidate at Loyola University, has prepared a lecture entitled, "Narratives of Enslaved West Africans: Reconciliation, Genealogy and Family Narratives." It focuses on the history and genealogy of enslaved Africans from Futa Jallon, Abdul Rahman's birthplace in West Africa.

Dr. Michael Gomez, Professor of History at New York University, is a key advisor and a scholar who appeared in the *Prince Among Slaves* film. His lecture entitled, "Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of West African Slaves in the Americas," highlights Prince Abdul Rahman, as well as other slave narratives from the early pre-Antebellum period.

Adam Hochschild, popular writer of fiction, history, and biography, brings his expertise in African history to the *Prince Among Slaves* project. Hochschild's most celebrated work, "Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves," a finalist for the National Book Award, touched on the theme of the global nature of slavery and the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Hochschild's lecture revealed how the struggle to end slavery began in the British Empire. "American abolitionists came to London to watch every move of the ending of slavery, because they knew it would have the same ramifications in the United States." His lecture is aptly titled, "Why They Beat Us to It: Ending Slavery in the British Empire."

Dr. Sulayman Nyang, Chairman of Howard University's African Studies Department, has prepared a lecture entitled, "A Time of Civility? The Historical Roots of Interreligious Tension and the Prospect for Harmony." This lecture examines, through a comparative method, the historical period of interfaith cooperation during Abdul Rahman's pre-Antebellum America, and the post 9/11 interreligious landscape of the early 21st Century. What does Abdul Rahman's period have to teach us about interreligious harmony and tolerance? How does this period shape the identities of religious communities in our day?

Dr. Nyang comments: "At the time of Abdul Rahman's life, slavery and the disrespect of other faith communities were paramount. Today America has evolved and matured and this higher level of spiritual and cultural sophistication stands to benefit immeasurably from the saga of Abdul Rahman."

Ilyasah Shabazz, award-winning author of *Growing Up X* and the daughter of African American Muslim activist, thinker and civil rights leader Malcolm X, is a *Prince Among Slaves* project advisor. Entitled, "Growing Up Between Two Worlds," her lecture focuses on the role of early twentieth-century American Muslim social movements and their impact on her father's political and spiritual conscience. Dr. Shabazz's writing emphasizes the importance of promoting literacy among African American youth, a theme that plays a powerful role in the film *Prince Among Slaves*, and one that will help expand the Dialogues in the Humanities project to new audiences.