A PEARL RAVAGED:

THE PARADOX OF HAITI AND ITS SOCIOECONOMIC ORIGINS

by

ISABEL ISHIBE EXEL

A master's thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2024

© 2024

ISABEL ISHIBE EXEL

All Rights Reserved

APPROVAL

A Pearl Ravaged:
The Paradox of Haiti and Its Socioeconomic Origins

by

Isabel Ishibe Exel

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Approved: January 2024

Anthony Alessandrini, Advisor

David T. Humphries, Acting Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ABSTRACT

A Pearl Ravaged:
The Paradox of Haiti and Its Socioeconomic Origins

by

Isabel Ishibe Exel

Advisor: Anthony Alessandrini

Saint-Domingue was once the most profitable colony of the Caribbean, the so-called pearl of the Antilles. Nowadays, Haiti is known for being the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, a dramatic shift that raises the question of the factors contributing to Haiti's current state, marked by persistent violence, natural disasters, and political instability. Various discourses have framed Haiti as a country doomed for failure. However, relying on binary concepts such as success and failure is counterproductive to a refined analysis. How, then, should we structure this conversation? My ultimate goal for this work is to provide a nuanced analysis of the effects of colonization and decolonization on Haitian economic and societal independence.

This thesis employs a straightforward historical analysis paired with theoretical contributions, in particular the works of C. L. R. James and Frantz Fanon, to attempt a careful interpretation of Haiti's rich history, looking for the origins of the inability to overcome certain colonial socio-economic structures. The overarching objective of this thesis is to provide a nuanced analysis of the repercussions of colonization and decolonization on Haiti's economic and societal autonomy. By avoiding simplistic dichotomies and embracing a more intricate approach, this work aims to unravel the multifaceted factors influencing Haiti's contemporary

challenges, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of its historical trajectory.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my advisor, Anthony Alessandrini, for his patience, guidance, and inspiration. While my previous research and writing centered around Haiti, it was Prof. Alessandrini's class that ignited my interest in moving my work on Haiti past just historical analysis and towards an interdisciplinary approach. I am thankful to him, as well as all members of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York faculty and students with whom I have engaged in meaningful discussions in classes, in the hallways, and at various events. Their comments, insights, and questions fill the margins of my notebooks and countless annotations on my digital notes. Numerous ideas in this thesis have originated from passing comments made during these academic conversations. Inspiration comes easy in such a fertile academic environment.

I am thankful to the Mina Rees Library, in particular to the InterLibrary Loan Department for providing students with access to a multitude of academic resources. ILL books have piled up in my apartment for the past months of research, and it is truly exquisite to have access to so many academic materials free of charge. Drawing from my own past experience working in the ILL department, I can attest to their meticulous attention and commitment to resource-sharing practices, which significantly enhance and optimize the academic potential of our campus. Thank you to Silvia, Beth, Mert, Amour, and Diana.

Thank you to my parents, Emily and Otavio, who have raised me to be curious, imaginative, and ask questions. I was brought up to believe in my ability and responsibility to make contributions to the world around me, and these values permeate the essence of this project. Thank you to Lola for providing companionship during the countless revisions of this thesis; her warmth has been a grounding force throughout this endeavor. Thank you to Mateusz

for reading and commenting on every draft of this project and encouraging me to think beyond conventional scholarly perspectives. His multidisciplinary knowledge and ability to engage with my research have allowed me to envision historical possibilities beyond the narratives found in traditional history books, greatly influencing the underlying sensibility of this thesis.

CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: Plantations of Blood: French Colonial Administration on Saint-Domingue 9

Chapter 2: Not by Steel but by Gold: The Price of Haitian Sovereignty...................................... 16

Chapter 3: Revolutions Colliding: The Black Jacobins and C. L. R. James................................. 32

Chapter 4: Echoes of Revolution: Freedom, Violence and Frantz Fanon 44

Conclusion 62

Works cited 65

INTRODUCTION

Saint-Domingue was once the most profitable colony of the Caribbean and the Americas as a whole. Nowadays, Haiti is known for being the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, plagued by continuous violence, natural disasters, and political unrest. What happened? There have been many discourses that frame Haiti as a country doomed for failure: back in 1880 lawyer and journalist Victor Cochinat travelled to Haiti and described it as a hopelessly backward land, a “fantasmagorie de civilisation” (Janvier 56), whose decay he blamed on the inherent personality of the country and its people. In the 1907 publication *Haiti: Her History and Her Detractors*, author Jacques Nicolas Léger, a Haitian envoy to the United States, mentions how the “prejudice against Haiti is so universal that [...] Powers who [...] have never owned slaves [...] have nevertheless fallen under the influence of this prejudice” (Léger 305). He goes on to mention how there are “assertions so frequently made, that the Haitians are relapsing into barbarism and falling back into a state almost of savagery” (Léger 372), a recurring theme in the discourse of those who benefit from portraying Haiti as a dependent nation. Some Evangelicals will even go as far as to justify Haiti’s misfortunes as the natural consequences of a supposed blood pact with Satan (McAlister). In reality, origins of the cycles of poverty and tragedy in Haiti are not inherent or obscure at all, their root causes being fairly easy to trace through a careful examination and critical analysis of the country’s history.

In the following pages, I will explore this history and try to identify who is actually the devil that plagued Haiti and set it up for “failure”—a term that is itself complicated and worthy of further discussion. In the chapters that follow, I will attempt to recall the narrative of the Haitian Revolution and then work backwards to explain what gaps led to such a history of

resistance and freedom ending up popularized as a simplistic narrative of national "failure." I would like to push back against a tendency in popular discourse to essentialize the Haitian situation without looking at the full historical context that set it up for social, economic, and political "failure." The tendency of silencing of key aspects of Haitian history—as explained by Michel-Rolph Trouillot—is essential for the misconception of the origins of the Haitian tragedy, as the silencing allows countries like France and the United States to escape their responsibilities.

I cannot claim, however, that there is a silencing in the retellings of Haitian history without providing accounts of these gaps and erasures I am about to criticize. This is complicated by the fact that this is a history of a country both celebrated for its radical revolutionary past and depreciated for its subsequent extreme poverty and political distress—a dichotomy too simplistic to truly encapsulate the Haitian narrative. On top of that, as Trouillot puts it, "effective silencing does not require a conspiracy, not even a political consensus. Its roots are structural" (Trouillot 106). There are many absences of the Haitian Revolution in historical accounts and analyses, a good example being the minor, footnote-level mention of Haiti in Eric Hobsbawm's *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848*. This book opens with the claim to be a work that "traces the transformations of the world between 1789 and 1848" (Hobsbawm xv) in relation to the French and Industrial Revolutions. To have "Haiti" mentioned only a three times en passant throughout this volume of three hundred pages would suggest that the Haitian revolution is not deserving of a mention in the history of Western revolutions in this time period. This is made even more alarming when we take into consideration that Hobsbawm was himself a Marxist and therefore we can assume that he would have been sympathetic to the Haitian revolutionary cause, not to the colonizers. This makes his silence even more deafening.

While we must further discuss the silencing, it is also important to note that silencing or erasure must not necessarily mean total absence. Part of the notable erasures of Haitian historical complexity is also present in discussions regarding the country. As Raj Chetty notes in his review of Jeremy Glick's book *The Black Radical Tragic: Performance, Aesthetics, and the Unfinished Haitian Revolution*, varied voices—religious, academic, journalistic—that do publicly discuss Haiti have a tendency to "to conflate the tragedies that the country experiences with Haiti and its people itself" (Chetty 182). According to Glick himself, general discourse about Haiti often equates tragic events to a tragedy in the nature of the nation. This is harmful because it can undermine the historical strength and significance of the country's revolution, as well as of its people (Glick 3). A lot of silencing can still be present in discussions that are overtly about Haiti.

For academic voices that have noticed such silencing, we can turn to the splendid book *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*, in which Susan Buck-Morss brings Georg Hegel's iconic theories into dialogue with the history of Haiti, and posits the question "to what degree is Hegel himself accountable for the effective silencing of the Haitian Revolution?" (Buck-Morss 17). Buck-Morss raises this question as a matter of degree of accountability, not of possibility; we will revisit this in more depth in chapter three. In "An Unthinkable History: The Haitian Revolution as a Non-Event," Trouillot explores the Haitian Revolution for its major historical significance and uniqueness, as well as its curious absence from many historical records and discussions. Trouillot provides a comprehensive analysis of the world setting at the time of the Haitian Revolution, explaining the ways in which those in positions of power in Europe and in the Caribbean plantations considered the idea of a properly organized revolution by the enslaved to be, simply put, an impossibility.

How then, in this context of imagined impossibility of personal agency to revolt, would the colonists interpret the unavoidable episodes of resistance and defiance by the enslaved? They simply treated them as isolated singular cases, "drained of its political content" in which the individual personalities and circumstances would cause certain individuals to rebel (Trouillot 83). It was never conceptualized, however, that the enslaved as a group could have the humanity, agency and courage needed to organize politically and rise up.

From that inability to imagine what was coming was born a practice that shaped the future discussions about Haiti, Caribbean history, colonialism, and racism. That practice is erasure—"formulas of erasure"—and its variation of trivialization—"formulas of banalization" (Trouillot 96). This lack of both imagination and discourse about the revolution in Haiti allowed for certain erasures in the retellings of this event as a proper historical event. When those in control of the generation and distribution of knowledge make prejudiced edits in how history will be told, this produces what can be called epistemic violence. The term refers to the ways in which knowledge itself can be a tool for violence, weaponizing it to play a fundamental role as "one of the key elements in any process of domination" (Galván-Álvarez 12). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak takes this concept to its ultimate conclusion, relating it directly and unmistakably to colonial violence as "clearest available example of such [...] violence" (Spivak 280).

Being critical of the violences enacted by knowledge production is extremely important in general, as well as in the colonial context specifically. An inherent issue with formal knowledge is that its generators are usually the very people who get critically questioned the least: academics. My favorite words on epistemic violence are that "the phenomenon in question would not ordinarily be thought of as violence: it is too respectable, too academic, too genteel for

that. It is violence all the same, and deserves to be seen for what it is" (Norman 353). Part of the aim of this thesis is to be inquisitive and question both historical accounts and academic analyses for their sources and motivations. This question of epistemic violence will be further explored later in this work, with additional discussion on colonial and anticolonial violence, particularly in relation to the theories of Frantz Fanon.

Trouillot describes the history of the Haitian revolution and highlights how unique of a historical moment it was. To his frustration, he then notes what the above mentioned scholars would call epistemic violence: that the very fact that the revolution happened remained unimaginable to the rest of the world long after it had already happened (Trouillot 90). Haiti thus had a hard time getting its political independence recognized by other countries, for "diplomatic rejection was one symptom of an underlying denial" (Trouillot 95). This passage led me to reconsider the question of the true meaning of political independence—did Haiti become independent when it declared itself independent, or when other countries officially recognized its independence? Is true independence a self-determining act, one which the nation-state decides for itself, or is it an invitation for other countries—including the former colonizer—to decide one's status? Who is the actor of independence, the element that could prevent independence by withholding approval—was it Haiti that decided itself independent, or other countries that allowed for it? How can self-determination not be determined by the self but, instead, by the other? As I will discuss more in a later chapter, Fanon's work on decolonization and freedom addresses some of these complexities in the relationship between nominal freedom and real freedom; this is one of the key points we will explore. I invite the reader to keep these concepts in mind when reading the historical sections of this work.

A variation of this difficulty to imagine the revolution, Trouillot explains, is still present in modern academia and popular discourse. An event so rich and powerful that resulted in a dramatic political power-shift should be of great academic interest for different areas of study, but is willfully forgotten about, or ignored, by modern discussions about revolutionary social movements, racism, and colonialism. Trouillot ends the chapter with a focus on the concept of archival power, and its ability to not just decide what gets recorded, but also how it is recorded and therefore what future potential it has as a serious topic of research and discussion. The Haitian Revolution and its central role in the collapse of the whole system of slavery in the Americas are effectively silenced without need for some major secret conspiracy or government induced censorship, simply by the power of archival control. This is a valuable reminder that the archive—which sits quietly in the background of every historiographic writing—is not a passive receptacle of knowledge but a powerful tool that actively reshapes those to whom it refers. In this case, the archive performs epistemic violence in its erasure of a certain history—as Marlene Manoff explains it, the sources that exist of colonial practices are often of absence and negation, representative only of the perspective of the colonial powers who generated such documents in the first place. In that way, these sources need extra attention for proper contextualization; otherwise they may end up repeating past discursive violence, even if unintentionally (Manoff 74).

As the reader may have noticed, in the early pages of this work I have used the word "failure" in quotation marks. This is not due to lack of belief in the concept of failure, but because I do not believe it is the most apt one to describe Haiti's complex situation. If one is to talk about failure, one would need to first define success. We would also have to ask ourselves: who gets to define failure? If Haiti is a failed state, what country would exemplify a successful

one? To many in the West, it may seem fair to say countries who have exploited Haiti, such as France and the United States, are more successful countries. This invites us to consider and question the ways in which their national narratives and revolutionary histories have been understood and deployed, in comparison to that of Haiti.

France, for example, has its own revolutionary past; and the French Revolution is considered in popular discourse as a stirring example of an oppressed people organizing and rising up to overthrow a tyrannical regime, always anchored in its ideals of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, culminating in the 1793 execution of Louis XVI. This glorious story of "success," however, is soon turned upside down when we remember that only eleven years later, in 1805, Napoleon Bonaparte placed a crown upon his own head and became Napoleon I, Emperor of the French. Is it fair, then, to say that the French Revolution was a successful one, if its revolutionary overthrow of the system lasted for such a short time? Beyond that, how can we evaluate the implementation of the values of such a revolution? The same Napoleon who was crowned not unlike the kings of his past, was also the First Consul who, in 1802, ordered the French military intervention in the Caribbean with the purpose of putting down the slave uprising that eventually led to Haitian independence. What about Liberty for the enslaved, Equality for the Haitian Jacobins, and Fraternity for the Black colonized? If the values did not apply to those outside of Europe, then what was really the level of integrity and commitment of the French revolutionaries to Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity?

Is Haiti a failure because it continued to be exploited at the mercy of France long after its independence? Is Haiti a success because it achieved something monumental, with a successful system overthrown and the founding of the world's first Black Republic? The Haitian Revolution is a textbook example of a classic notion of revolution, a project that systematically replaced one

regime with another. Could it have, however, overthrown an international system of slavery and colonization? It could not, and history went on, showing that France still had many cards to play. History is nuanced and dichotomies such as failure/success are unlikely to be useful language for a refined analysis.

How, then, should we structure this conversation? My ultimate goal for this work is to provide a nuanced analysis of the effects of colonization and decolonization in Haitian economic and societal independence—not to organize a historical account of Haiti. However, I find it necessary to familiarize the reader with the specific research I have conducted, so as to contextualize and make sense of my later analysis.

The history of revolutions is often told in socio-political terms, and such analyses certainly belong in this project, as well as in larger conversations about Haiti. My aim here, however, is to discuss revolution through the lens of economic decolonization. This focus on economics and its ability to color the dynamics of Haiti's journey from colony to sovereign is relevant, as it highlights the manner in which class structures the social world, and in that way, how one of the languages of colonial and racial subjugation is economic. How can a colony become free without decolonizing its economy? It is not because money is more important than freedom, but because economic development is often the provider of freedom. In the words of Walter Rodney, development "has always meant the increase in the ability to guard the independence of the social group and indeed to infringe upon the freedom of others" (Rodney 2). This ability to guard one's independence is foundational for the understanding of freedom upon which this project rests. When discussing the "failure" or "success" of the Haitian Revolution, a lot of my focus will be on Haiti's ability to safeguard itself and its people from those who would harm and exploit it.

CHAPTER 1

Plantations of Blood: French Colonial Administration on Saint-Domingue

To understand the "failure" of Haiti's economic freedom, we must center our gaze not merely at the revolution, but at the pre- and post-revolutionary times, where economic decisions were made that forever shaped the dynamics of Haiti's agricultural production, as well as its trading practices. The French administration implemented in Saint-Domingue a colonial system that already set up structures of failure impossible for any single revolution to overcome. In a similar manner, some of the administrative decisions made by the political elites of a newly independent Haiti were also to blame for the poor state of Haitian society and economy. In this chapter I will make larger structural points regarding the colonial administration and its legacy, but in the second chapter I also wish to explore the choices and actions by the Haitian elites—or, as Fanon would call them, the "national bourgeoisie"—following the declaration of political independence. This post-revolutionary administration is part of the barrier to Haitian true freedom, since they further complicate the impact of the colonial administration.

I am not a historian and this is not a historical essay; however, the following chapters will look at some of the history of Haitian administration, first by the French and then by the newly independent Haitian elites. The purpose of this analysis is not to be complete or exhaustive, but to provide the reader with key points of my research which shaped my understanding of Haitian economic history. If we refuse to be simplistic and call Haiti a failed state, then we have to be inquisitive and find other ways to explain how the "Pearl of the Antilles" became the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. In the following pages, I hope to provide historical background to support my theorization.

It is of utmost importance to look at the history of both French colonial management as well as Black national freedom in Haiti in a holistic manner, which calls for a need to zoom out the timeline and examine how different degrees of freedom were or were not achieved and allowed in Haiti both before and after 1 January 1804. This brings us to a challengingly multi-layered—but necessary—conversation on the absolute idea of freedom. This is not a philosophical essay on the meaning of freedom as a concept, but I do want to explore the relationship between independence and freedom—particularly because the concepts of freedom and "freemen" emerged precisely from the existence of slavery. This is essential because colonialism is not just political domination for economic exploitation, but a system in which the freedom of people gets co-opted. In a properly executed decolonization process, the freedom of people therefore needs to be decolonized.

The Haitian case can be read as a laboratory, a litmus test for colonial abuses against the national and personal freedom of a nation and its people. It is valuable to trace the origins of the behavior that took place during and after the revolution. In a later chapter I will bring in the work of Frantz Fanon and discuss the violence that is often used to delegitimize the Haitian struggle. The insurrection can be analyzed as an extreme but necessarily desperate community response to feeling unregarded, unsafe, and exploited from systemic mechanisms of oppression created by the colonial power. In accordance with the Fanonian frame, we can see the systems of oppression of colonial Saint-Domingue as agents that created rising levels of pressure in a closed environment—literally an island—producing a social atmosphere like that of the inside of a pressure cooker. As the pressure rises, the circumstances approach a dangerous point of explosion.

This pressure cooker metaphor relates to what Anders Strindberg and Mats Wärn theorize in their book *Islamism: Religion, Radicalization, and Resistance*, which argues that such manifestations are always reactive—desperate responses to harmful external factors. Based on Fanon's anticolonial theories, they call this phenomenon the "Fanonian Impulse," in reference to how actions of a historically oppressed group can be read as reactive social responses to systemic injury enacted against them by a harmful government.

In a later chapter, I will make use of the lens of the Fanonian Impulse to understand how violences committed in the Haitian Revolution were responses to a situation of systemic oppression that needed violence to be terminated and overcome. In preparation for this upcoming analysis, I will now provide a historical overview of, as I would call it, the "pressure cooker" of social oppression that was Saint-Domingue. This background is necessary for understanding what happened when the Fanonian Impulse raised the pressure cooker's inner tension so high that it imploded a whole political system.

Saint-Domingue was, without a shadow of a doubt, a terrible and cruel place for its enslaved population to live in. It was, however, also harsh and unpleasant for the freemen and whites—even the richest French colonists. This may seem unintuitive and not self-evident, but being set up to be completely dependent on the metropole, Saint-Domingue society was—however deeply stratified—not one that promoted good standards of living for even its richest minority. As C. L. R. James tells us, "planters hated the life and sought only to make enough money to retire to France or at least spend a few months in Paris" (James 29) . That is not to say, however, that Saint-Domingue was not, in its own way, a prosperous place. Prosperity was the very "justification of San Domingo" (James 45).

Its prosperity—of both resources and the riches they promoted—was, however, not for itself but for France. The colony was bound to the metropole due to the economic formula of the exclusive trade system which was developed by Jean-Baptiste Colbert in the seventeenth-century. As explained by Molly M. Herrmann, the trade formula "called for all manufactured goods consumed by the colonists in the French colonies to be imported from France while all the raw goods, cultivated in the colonies, were sold exclusively to France" (Herrmann 4). This meant France alone had full control over the colony's trade, and "in 1789 [...] San Domingo supplied two thirds of the overseas trade of France and was the greatest individual market for the European slave-trade" (James ix). The authors of *La révolution de Saint-Domingue, 1789-1804* write about this trade agreement in explaining in detail how the system "created a true exploitation of colonial labor by the metropolitan capital" (Rameau and Ambroise 6).

Something interesting to point out about this case-study is the extreme population disproportion in Haiti—the most extreme one in the Caribbean. The enslaved population was extremely dominant in numbers, especially in comparison to the free whites. For example, at a point during the governorship of Marie-Charles du Chilleau—by my calculations, this date would likely be from the year of 1789, since his administration started late in 1788 and did not last to see the end of 1789—the total population of Saint-Domingue amounted to 812,308 people, while the enslaved population numbered at 709,642 individuals (Madiou 41). This means over 87% of the colony's population was enslaved, illustrating a system where a few colonists ruled over plantations surrounded by enslaved workers multiple times their numbers. Therefore, it is clear that it was not through numerical superiority that the colonialists kept control over the plantation system. How, then, was this system effectively enacted for so long, with colonial masters being at such enormous numerical disadvantage?

The historical explanation is fascinating and mostly circles back to France's ability to stage and promote an immensely inhumane and incredibly efficient project of legal and economic control. For illustrative purposes, I would like to offer a few examples of the manner in which the French administration, from the start, set in its colony a legal system focused on profit maximization. When legislation was passed in Saint-Domingue that required slave owners to provide their slaves with basic food and clothing, it was not proposed as a matter of providing a dignified life to the workers, but "as a means of halting the diminishing white population in the islands. The drafters' notes argued that when slaves were not properly fed, they had a tendency to run away in search of food and steal from the petit blancs, causing these whites to sell their lands and leave the island" (Palmer 374). This law ultimately did benefit the enslaved in a practical way, but it was originally conceptualized around the benefit for the French themselves. This was the sort of legislation one would put in effect to protect one's property, not for preservation of human welfare.

Another example worth citing is quite morbid and capitalistic in its nature, regarding the "scheme of mutual insurance, whereby owners whose slaves the justice system condemned to death would be reimbursed for their market value." This reimbursement was necessary for crimes perpetrated by slaves to be actually reported to authorities, since masters would rather "hide the crimes of their slaves out of fear of losing them to capital punishment" (Palmer 377). However bizarre, I believe this example really illustrates how oriented towards monetary profit the colonists were from the start of their administration in the island. Their financial skills were indeed impressive, and under French management Saint-Domingue was the richest colony of the Caribbean, in 1789, reaching the status of "the most profitable colony the world had ever known" (James 53). This is in stark contrast to the fact that nowadays, Haiti is the poorest

country in the Western Hemisphere. This reminds us of what I discussed in the introduction, and highlights how effective the French administration was in its money making operation of colonial abuse. It is valuable to point out that the whole architecture of the economy of exploitation was designed and set in place long before the revolution even started.

If we are to talk about the scars that the French colonial administration left in the economy and society of what was to become Haiti, we must also look at agriculture. The ways in which colonial action through history prevented Haitian economic independence are multiple, varied, and creative. As a colony, Haiti's agriculture was composed of a small number of effective monocultures (mostly indigo, coffee, tobacco, cotton, and its most famous commodity, sugarcane—of which it became the world's largest exporter by the late eighteenth century (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 19). The consequences of this proved to be disastrous and long lasting, and add to the ways in which the exploitation of the agricultural laborer can be even deeper under a previously colonial economic administration than in a non-colonized land.

Independent Haiti did not have an agricultural system prepared for blossoming its own self-reliant economy, and starting in 1804 it did not have the ability to export its economic flagship commodities nor interest to continue farming it (Franklin). In Haiti, sugarcane was the ultimate symbol of the most cruel plantations, an icon of the worst side of the colonial administration that the revolutionaries fought to eliminate. This history of colonial abuse promoted the eventual refusal of Haitian freemen to work on sugar cane production post-revolution (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 106), which highlights another way in which French intervention set up the post-independence Haitian economy for failure.

Another aspect relates to the effects of plantations on the Haitian natural landscape and resources. In *Scars on the Land: An Environmental History of Slavery in the American South*,

author David Silkenat examines the effects of slavery to the U.S. South and how plantation owners sought to maximize the amount of labor they could extract from their enslaved workforce as well as how many resources they could extract from the local nature, which they understood to be a disposable resource. This system came to deplete the soil to the point that it rendered it infertile (Silkenat 7). This analysis of the agricultural effects of slavery in the Southern U.S. can very organically be translated to the Haitian territory, where for around one hundred and twenty years (Madiou 27) most of the territory became occupied by monoculture plantations, and where only one type of crop—be it sugarcane, indigo, coffee, cotton, or whatever else—would be planted and replanted, depleting the soil of its natural richness of nutrients. This meant that by the time Haiti became independent, not only were the people exhausted and traumatized by the plantation system, but the natural resources as well. The colonial administration extracted all it could from Haiti and Haitians, not only abusing them during colonization but also leaving them set up for a bad situation post-independence.

CHAPTER 2

Not by Steel but by Gold: The Price of Haitian Sovereignty

The previous chapter explored the systems set in place during the French colonial administration of Saint-Domingue and the ways in which it set a foundation for further impossibilities of true freedom for Haiti. In 1804 Haiti declared itself an officially independent nation, marking the beginning of a new era for the country. This new age, however, was not a simple one, and from a combination of strong colonial legacies, as well as economic and political decisions by the new country's elites, was born a new set of combined, complex difficulties.

This chapter will look at what happened after the colonial administration was put to an end. We will examine the ways in which France has continually refused to acknowledge Haiti as an independent country, as well as subsequent economic interventions by the United States, ultimately culminating in the United States occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. As the reader will notice, the occupations and projects for economic exploitation of Haiti executed by France and later by the U.S. are remarkably similar in their dynamic, illustrating the borders of Haitian freedom and the limits of nominal political independence. This chapter is not intended to be an exhaustive coverage of Haiti's complex post-independence history, but an analysis of historical events that are most relevant for the purposes of this work. As I hope to illustrate to the reader, the reason for my focus on these particular historic events is their enormous significance for the narrative of the successes and failures of Haiti's journey to establish itself as a free, self-governing nation state.

In 1804 the revolutionary fathers of Haiti looked back into the land's history when deciding what to name their newly independent nation. While the Caribbean islands around it were mostly named for Christian elements, they chose a name that was explicitly non-Christian

to emphasize their national cultural break with Europe and its traditions. In a decision that may have been fueled by nostalgia for the last time the land had been free, they named it in echo of Ayiti—meaning “land of mountains” in the Taino Arawak language—the land's original name by its native indigenous population, which the enslaved African unintentionally replaced. Historian David Patrick Geggus argues that the leadership who “wished to emphasize symbolically their break with Europe” (Geggus 207) made an intentional decision to semantically link their struggle for liberation to that of the island’s native inhabitants, who fought for their freedom against the Spanish—the history of battling European colonization repeating itself and finally resulting in victory for Ayiti.

What did this victory and renaming mean, in practice, for the newly independent nation? Did it—or could it, even—mean true freedom for its people? Frantz Fanon’s theories would argue that pure political independence without significant change in the economic and social framework only means a new set of people get to take over the plantations (figuratively or literally), and that is a reform but is not the achievement of real freedom. Freedom for the people of a previously colonized country would require the whole system to change, and that may not be something that one single revolutionary movement can achieve on its own.

As students of this history, we must not close our eyes to the fact that part of the hardships of free Haiti were installed by those who freed it. Some heroes of the revolution had the same exploitative economic vision for the land as that of the white colonists they fought to replace. Toussaint Louverture himself revived the slave trade and used physical punishment to prevent workers from leaving the plantations to become farmers (Geggus 38). Some may find the seeds for this in Toussaint’s pre-revolutionary past as a freed man who owned property and even owned at least one slave himself.

Haiti’s colonial past left deep marks on the first decades of the fledgling nation. Henri Christophe, first King of Haiti, in his *Code Henri* regulates servitude and ties farmers with bonds akin to slavery where workers were essentially bound to the land through the legislation of *Loi sur la Procédure Civil*, similar to the indentured labor system prevalent during the colonial era (Anonymous 79). It entrenched a quasi-feudal system where individuals were obligated to work the land, often under harsh conditions, and their movement and opportunities for advancement were severely limited. The regulations enforced by the *Code Henri* perpetuated a social structure that favored the elite ruling class and imposed significant restrictions on the freedoms of the common people.

Jean-Jacques Dessalines himself, a former slave and a man who is often perceived as perhaps the most dedicated enemy of the French—however complicated their relation really was—worked to retain the system Louverture established for the sake of the new state’s economy. As Philippe R. Girard puts it, Dessalines “strove to keep Haiti’s economic structure intact, albeit in the hands of black and mixed-race leaders and without the formal slavery that France had abolished in 1794” (Girard 581). Dessalines aimed to sustain the economic mechanisms set up for Haiti's stability and prosperity while reshaping the power dynamics within the system (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 47). This approach was a crucial step in reinforcing the mechanisms already present in Haiti as a crude method of grappling with the challenges and complexities of economic sustainability in the aftermath of the revolution. Despite the aspirations for freedom and equality that were fundamental to the Haitian Revolution, the implementation of the *Code Henri* and similar measures highlighted the struggle to break free from the socio-economic structures and power dynamics inherited from the colonial period.

The whole French colonial system was built for economic abuse, and that only adds to the point that France never treated Haiti as a nation in its own right—only ever as a backyard to exploit. Modern day France has a sophisticated and extremely functional system set up to profit from Haitian suffering, and the foundations for this system have been there from the start. Coming out of this history of colonial abuse, France and Haiti met again as politically independent republics. After this past of exploitation, patronization, and denial of Haitians' humanity and right for economic self-reliance, it is hardly a surprise that France would not address its past colony with diplomatic fairness. After all, following over a century of treating the enslaved as property, a lot would have to change for the French to see Haitians as people and citizens in their own rights. On top of that, France and Europe as a whole—still holders of colonial possessions and promoters of slavery elsewhere—would not want Haiti to be a successful, strong free country and therefore an example of the rewards of revolution by the colonized.

After obtaining independence, Haiti's struggle moved to the battlefield of diplomacy. The French government had previously offered restitutions to French citizens who had lost property during the French Revolution, and therefore later concluded that those who lost material goods—and they understood slave labor as material goods and not people—during the Haitian Revolution were deserving of the same benefit. Based on this, the French government announced former plantation owners of Saint-Domingue to be entitled to monetary restitutions for the loss of their profitable properties and lands (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 97). As history shows, a declaration of political independence was not enough to free Haiti from the economic tyranny of its past overlords. In 1825, while Haiti was ruled by Jean-Pierre Boyer, its second president and one of the leaders of the Haitian Revolution, Charles X, king of France, demanded that its

previous colony pay reparations for the "property" it was deprived of when Haiti became independent in 1804. In return, France would agree to recognize Haiti as an independent nation.

This proposal was quite revealing, for, as Laurent Dubois explains, "if France admitted that Haiti was an independent nation, then it would have no rights to impose financial demands on it." However, if France refused to recognize Haiti as an independent country but only as an unruly and rogue colony, then it could not present the treaty with the agreement's conditions to Boyer's government, since "treaties could be negotiated only between independent states." In the end, Charles X decided to issue the demand as a royal ordinance, traditionally used only to address "internal matters within a kingdom" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 98), which was worded carefully to avoid the use of the word "Haiti," addressing it instead as "the French part of Saint-Domingue." This illustrates the complicated diplomatic knot that France created to demand payment from Haiti.

Diplomacy, in the end, did not matter much, for ultimately the "royal ordinance" was delivered in a manner that did not leave much space open for true honest diplomacy. It was brought to the Caribbean by Ange René Armand, Baron de Mackau, who was sent to Haiti with royal orders to get Jean-Pierre Boyer's government to accept the conditions. Baron de Mackau was also instructed by his king to inform the Haitians of the possibility of turning to France for loans for the needed money. The ordinance also came accompanied by threats of interruption of maritime commerce, military invasion, and the re-establishment of slavery. As Dubois puts it, simply, "either the Haitian government accepted the ordinance as written or it went to war with France" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 99). This is the story of how Haiti was, essentially, made to pay reparations to France for what the colonizer lost in the revolution of the colonized. This

brings us back to the questions asked previously: To what extent was the Haitian Revolution a true victory?

This history makes us rethink the very meaning of reparations. Let us scan another example of from the time period: ten years earlier, in 1815, the combined powers of the Seventh Coalition demanded an indemnity of seven hundred million francs at the end of the Napoleonic Wars (Great Britain Parliament 254). This historical example shows us that in the event of the end of a war, demands for compensation are the right of the winner. What does the fact that France—officially the defeated colonial power—demanded and actualized that Haiti—the official winner—should pay reparations to the metropolis illuminate to us regarding the true dynamics of the end of French colonial control of Haiti?

Facing the threat of military invasion—the ultimate embodiment of a reversion to the dreadful dynamics of colonial times—Boyer agreed to pay the reparations as a measure of self-defense, which was deeply criticized by many Haitian citizens. As one can imagine, the ex-colony did not have one hundred fifty million francs in liquid assets to pay what France demanded; in reality, this amount at that moment represented thirty times Haiti's annual revenue. Boyer, though, had utopian visions for Haitian agriculture and trade, therefore believing in the country's ability to pay the indemnity (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 102). This is fascinating because knowing everything that France had already done to exploit and impoverished Haiti until that point, I would argue that the French were interested not only in the demanded compensation, but also in the possibility of the loans—a self-evident fact when one considers that Baron de Mackau received royal orders to "insist" that the Haitians should "not look anywhere else for such a loan" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 99). France could have asked for any sum of money, since this was, in practice, an ultimatum based on arbitrary numbers. Since France asked for one hundred fifty

million francs I argue that it was because France knew that to produce one hundred fifty million francs Haiti would have no alternative but to take out loans.

And so it did. In November of the same year, Boyer "took out a loan from a French bank in order to pay for the first installment of the indemnity," with terms deeply disadvantageous to the borrower, as Haiti was therefore obliged to agree to "repay 30 million francs over 25 years at an annual interest rate of 6 percent, but the bank charged an additional 20 percent fee" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 102). This meant that in the end, only 24 million francs went towards the payment of the indemnity. In this way, the original amount Haiti was supposed to pay increased dramatically over the years, due to the payment of interest rates and loan fees. This financial trap in which Haiti got caught came to be referred to as the "double debt," changing Haiti's position from that of a poor but free and proudly independent nation to that of a debtor state.

For many, this became an uncomfortable reality to accept. If we keep in mind that the royal ordinance was understood as a document that can only address internal matters inside a kingdom, what does it mean, then, that Haiti accepted and complied with a royal ordinance from the king of France? Would accepting the royal ordinance as a valid document not mean accepting the overlordship of the French king? By that time, Haiti had spent twenty-one proud years as a self-declared independent republic free of colonization. Did Boyer's decision undermine or, even worse, resignify these years of independence? These are painful and complex questions, and I cannot offer a simple answer to an complex matter. I argue, however, for the importance of these questions to get, if not answered, at least further discussed by the students of this history and by international relation specialists from then to now. Once again, we are forced to face the difference between nominal independence and true decolonization and freedom.

This matters not just for the sake of Haitian history. It matters because it foreshadows an upcoming world system that supposedly consists of equally free states that acknowledge and respect each other's sovereignty but in practice consists of a completely unequal system of colonial/former colonial powers and colonized/formally colonized "independent" nations. While we supposedly live in a setting of independent, sovereign countries, the system actually enables some empires, like the U.S., to repeatedly disregard the sovereignty of other states—those that do not have either the military apparatus to defend itself, or the international alliances to intervene in its favor. As the world powers transitioned to a politics of empire, Haiti's situation set the mold for how this would evolve for other "independent" postcolonial nations a century and a half later.

On the matter of what kind of man this decision revealed Jean-Pierre Boyer to be, Dubois describes him as "a pliant and cooperative elite, ready to work with France to create a new form of external control" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 103)—exactly the type of leader the French would be delighted to find in Haiti. For the sake of a fair analysis, let's give Boyer the benefit of the doubt: we must consider if this could have been a desperate decision to save his country and his people from another destructive occupation. He did, after all, face a squadron of French ships—then one of the strongest naval powers in the world—which were anchored by the Haitian coast. I wonder, though, as Dubois did, if it would not have been better for Haiti to refuse and, if needed, fight. They had, after all, fought and won against the French army in the past. While engaging them proactively and directly in naval combat would have been extremely risky, refusing and resisting French invasion by land would be safer. This becomes even more glaringly a valid option when we consider Haiti's previous military victory over France: resistance and fighting had served Haiti well in the past.

On top of that, we must also consider what would have been the real cost of resistance, and evaluate how worthy it was in comparison to the known cost of the "double debt." Naturally, we cannot know how France would have responded to a refusal of the royal ordinance, but I will risk a guess: I would argue that France could have been bluffing, and would not have actually reoccupied the difficult-to-hold lands of Haiti. I am not sure if the Haitians realized how unpopular Charles X was in France, and I do wonder if the king would have dared to get France into a second war with Haiti, risking the chance of another defeat at the hands of what the French saw as an inferior people and army. When we look back at the historical circumstances, it is valuable to suggest that France could have been merely bluffing—in which case this would be a true testament of how strong and articulate the French were at diplomacy.

The acceptance of the royal ordinance debuted a new chapter in the seemingly endless history of abuse that keeps generating profit for the French and poverty for the Haitians (Democracy Now!). As the debt led Haiti to become one of the poorest nations in the world, the banker class in France profited from it. Only later Boyer came to realize that "many considered what he had done a crime" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 101).

In addition to France, the United States also had deep influence in Haiti's fate as an independent nation. In moving from the age of France as the settler colonial power to exploit Haiti to the era of the U.S. as the neo-colonial power to assume that role, we can see a continuum in the way these imperial forces tinted Haiti's future. Against the wishes of France, North American merchants kept up commercial ties with independent Haiti, buying large amounts of lumber, meat, and flour—a commercial relationship which benefited both sides, since it was from the U.S. that Toussaint Louverture bought most of his weaponry (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 137). Whatever were the personal feelings or fears of the American slave-owners, in the end,

many were happy to make a profit by arming the Haitian Revolution.

In the first year following the declaration of Haitian independence "no fewer than forty ships sailed between Haiti and the United States" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 138), and the Americans celebrated the opportunity for trade—even though their government refused to officially recognize the Caribbean nation as a legitimate state. In a symbolic way, Haiti at the same time embodied a great comrade and a looming threat to the U.S., being both the protagonist of a story of popular resistance to colonization by Europeans, as well as a symbol of what the U.S. (whose economy was still deeply dependent on plantation and slavery) would fear the most: a land where black slaves organized politically and conquered their own freedom. Having an example of such a complete overthrow of the system based on a slave rebellion and death to the whites so close to their border must have been scary for the North American elites. Nonetheless, money speaks for itself and whenever high profit could be made out of trading with Haitians, many North American merchants would happily do so, even as French envoys attempted to pressure the U.S. into prohibiting all commerce with Haiti (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 138).

It was only in 1862, almost six decades after Haiti declared its independence, that the United States officially accepted and recognized the nation's existence as rightful (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 153). The US gave little (and quite late) and gained much, for Haiti finally allowed Union warships to use its ports, which were strategically strong bases in the battle against the Confederacy. Later on, Haitian ports would once again prove to be valuable assets to the U.S. In the mid-nineteenth century, the navies of the world's great empires were dominated by steamships, creating a dependency on stations for stocking up the coal that powered them. The great European nations had colonies sprinkled around the globe, where depots for the steamships' coal were promptly constructed. To stand on equal-ground with its rivals, the United

States needed to own strategic coal stations as well. While most of the Caribbean locations were under European occupation, Haiti and the Dominican Republic were not, and were therefore available to serve this much needed purpose. This is how the famous American abolitionist Frederick Douglass was picked by the U.S. government to guide his nation in the dream of the "Caribbean Annexation." In a speech, he made sure to highlight how "almost every great maritime nation in the world has some footing in the Caribbean Sea but our own." Douglass saw this project as a "matter of U.S. national prominence, situating the North American republic as a world power by strengthening its naval possessions" (Polyne 35).

In the end, the annexation project failed to fulfill its promise: the Dominican and Haitian governments eventually signed an agreement to maintain the integrity of their respective territories, therefore officially rejecting any possibility of serving as a coal depot for the U.S. Many in Haiti felt the need for a strong partner and allies in the international environment, and while some advocated for France's qualifications to fulfill this role, many others believed the U.S. to be best suited (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 181). In 1914, North American forces waltzed back into the core of Haiti, in what Dubois describes as "an international armed robbery." The gunboat USS *Machias* landed in Port-au-Prince and the detachment of U.S. marines inside marched right into the Banque Nationale d'Haiti, from whose vaults they removed $500,000 worth of the Haitian government's gold, and then marched right out back onto their ship (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 204). Pressed to explain this raid, the U.S. government explained this mercenary attack by simply saying that was the only way to guarantee the repayment of loans Haiti had previously taken from American banks. It is indeed true that Haiti owed money to many, having taken multiple loans to be able to finally, in 1833, pay France the final parcel of the "double debt."

This is just one of many ways in which the U.S. had been interfering in Haiti's economy in the 1900s. A few years later, encouraged by the State Department, American banks bought a majority stake in Haiti's national bank and took control of all its main operations. The vice president of the National City Bank in New York was, fantastically, made vice president of the Banque Nationale d'Haiti as well. A figurative ribbon was tied around this shift in power when, in January of 1915, the Banque Nationale took down the tricolor flag of France, its previous patron, and replaced it with the stars and stripes of the American flag—"signifying it would henceforth be under the protection of the United States" (Schmidt 61). As the US established itself as Haiti's main trading partner, Haitians were left wondering how much control it would have not only over their economy, but over their nation as a whole.

With the national bank under foreign control, Haiti's economy was figuratively occupied. The administration refused to allocate funds for the local government, which therefore went bankrupt. While many agreed that the US involvement would support local economic development, there was also great resistance, in all sectors of society, against surrendering the government to a foreign power. The memory of the French was still very much alive in popular sentiments.

As North American economic influence destabilized the already precarious situation of Haiti, the country was immersed by a wave of political distress; in Port-au-Prince "presidents followed each other in rapid succession" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 209). Over the course of four years, no fewer than seven Haitian presidents had their terms terminated, many in dramatic manner. Divergent opinions on what to prioritize—economic opportunity or national sovereignty—led to civil conflict resulting in bloody days in the Haitian capital, culminating in the violent mob killing of Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, the country's 24th president. This was the

perfect excuse for a long and well-planned US occupation, as the bloodshed "cemented the idea that Haiti was in desperate need of foreign control" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 210). As this developed, the US government made no acknowledgement of the manner in which its financial class pressured Haiti towards this chaotic situation in the first place. Unlike France, the U.S. had some care in making it appear as if its profiting from Haitian suffering was not premeditated, but a fortunate coincidence. So as the sun rose on the morning of July 28, 1915, the USS *Washington*, a twenty-cannon battleship, steamed straight into the harbor of Port-au-Prince.

Under the guise of putting the political and social distress under control, North American bankers convinced the State Department to open Haiti's doors for American companies. To become economically useful to the U.S., Haiti needed strong corporate investment, and "such investment required political stability; and stability, U.S. officials concluded, could come only through a military occupation" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 212). These arguments would often come accompanied by paternalistic claims that painted Haitians as incapable of self-governance, and the U.S. as a rigid but benevolent protector.

One of the reasons why the U.S. got away with treating Haitians as incapable of self-government was the grounds laid out previously by the French, who engaged in this dynamically as a heavy argument in defense of its colonization of the Caribbean. This is meaningful because the U.S. was later able to benefit from this made up idea that Haitians needed foreign intervention: there was always an imperial interest behind painting Haitians as dependent, and therefore, the revolution and independence as failures. In *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940*, Mary Renda explores in depth the patronizing character of this North American attitude about Haiti, claiming that "Paternalist discourse was one of the primary cultural mechanisms by which the occupation conscripted men into the

project of carrying out U.S. rule." Renda traces the histories of all sorts of anecdotal evidence of this cultural and social paternalism during the occupation, often translated into openly infantilizing language, such as "minors," "wards," or "son" (Renda 3). This echoes French discourse of the past, in a new manner of doing the same thing: delegitimizing Haitians' right to self-governance to justify a takeover of its peoples and resources.

Once established in Haiti, U.S. representatives quickly mobilized to draft a convention between the two countries which gave North Americans control of Haitian customs houses and the state treasury, and the Haitian government was to promise to not cede or rent any portion of its territory to another foreign power. Additionally, U.S. marines set up a new military structure to replace the Haitian army, and from that day on Haiti's state officers would be "subject to approval by the president of the United States" (Dubois, *The Aftershocks* 218). After much debate, on November 11, the convention was ratified, formally declaring Haiti—the world's first Black Republic and the second country in the Americans to fight for and win its political independence—incapable of addressing its own economic, political, and military troubles. The U.S. was now taking on the hypocritically dual role previously occupied by France.

U.S. profit from Haiti's misery has masterfully extended through the years. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti's first democratically elected president, was ousted in a 2004 coup d'état. France's former ambassador to Haiti confessed to the *New York Times* that the U.S. government orchestrated the 2004 coup as a mechanism to abort Aristide's campaign, which demanded that France itself pay financial reparations to Haiti for the devastation of the colonial past (Democracy Now!). History indicates that France and the U.S. always come up with all sorts of creative ways to justify oppression, invasion, occupation, and exploitation.

From a perspective of simple self-serving economic greed, the use and abuse of Haiti by both the French as the colonial power and by the U.S. as the new neo-colonial power is commendable in its efficiency. At every step of the way, they found ingenious ways to abuse and profit from Haiti, and the end of colonialism or occupation was not able to put an end to this economic project. In reality, I would argue that the end of the colonial project only further enabled France to profit from Haiti. As the global order transitioned to a liberal capitalist economy, slavery as a main system of labor force for any given economy became obsolete and from a profitability point of view, slaves became a low-profit machine. Whatever France's intentions at the time, with the benefit of history we can see how Haiti as an independent republic could be more profitable for France than Saint-Domingue as an enslaved colony. There is ultimately an inherent financial gain for France to exploit Haiti as a free black republic. In a capitalistic world economy, there would be an ultimate net loss in maintaining a colonial administration supported by a labor force of slave work, since slaves do not get paid and therefore cannot join the cycles of capitalistic consumerism.

While the history of Haitian revolution and independence is one of agency and freedom, the narrative of what happened after is one of the ways in which France and the U.S. prevented that freedom from being efficiently enacted. The “double debt” reparation payments were set up as a cage that keeps the Haitian economy paralyzed, trapping the country inside a self-fulfilling cycle of poverty. I strongly argue that political freedom cannot be a goal in itself, and in the Haitian case it was not aligned with realistic projects to maintain economic freedom. French abuse of Haiti did not end with the end of slavery; the reparation payment and the debt scheme were set up as a way to keep the Haitian people dependent and impoverished. While the history of Haitian independence begins with the epistemics, ideologies, and psychology of freedom, it

ends with French economics: there was an impossibility of freedom for Haiti set up by the French that was not truly overcome by the revolution. I would argue that Haiti is not truly an independent country if it cannot fund its own independence; it continued, sadly, to serve France and later the U.S. similar to how a colony would.

It is clear that political decolonization was not enough for Haiti; there is also a need for economic decolonization. Ultimately, Haiti never asked to be part of this world economy or was ever prepared to play this game—and it was purposefully made unprepared by French intervention. There is clear evidence of French and American fingerprints in the political and economic disaster that is Haiti. It is also important to keep in mind that when a country is politically unstable, that cheapens whatever goods they export: even the mess in Haiti's local political history works well for the U.S. and France. France did politically recognize Haitian independence—only after Haiti paid for it—but economically it has since then treated Haiti as if it was still Saint-Domingue. And so, through Fanon's framing of colonialism as a mental disorder (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 182), Haiti remains afflicted and will continue ill until true decolonization, freedom, and self-determination are achieved. Haiti will only be rid of the neo-imperial pathology once both the internal and external conditions allow it.

The history of Haiti is too complex and multi-layered to cover fully in a short chapter such as this one. I hope, however, to have been able to illuminate to the reader some core aspects of this narrative, in particular the devastating effects of French intervention. While I understand that literature will not solve Haiti's disastrous economic situation, I hope this essay may have value in undoing some of the silencing pointed out by Trouillot. Most of the world outside of Haiti still claims ignorance of this history, and it is the role of research to fill this epistemic gap.

CHAPTER 3

Revolutions Colliding: The Black Jacobins and C. L. R. James

The previous chapters aimed to furnish a historical foundation to support the analysis I hope to present. In this upcoming section, I will utilize the work of C. L. R. James, especially as articulated in his 1938 book *The Black Jacobins*, to explore the significance inherent in such a historical narrative. As Charles Forsdick and Christian Høgsbjerg state in the introduction to *The Black Jacobins Reader*, *The Black Jacobins* is more than a book; it is the "centerpiece of the set of reflections on revolution, history, culture, personality" as well as "a site in which struggles over the relationship between theory and praxis play themselves out" (Forsdick and Høgsbjerg 4). In my own research process, the greatest contribution of *The Black Jacobins* has been that of unraveling the intricate layers of the Haitian revolutionary narrative, deepening and complicating the story. It is dangerously easy for the unattentive reader to assume that the simplest rendition of a certain narrative reflects the truth. In the case of colonial studies, this trap becomes particularly easy to fall into, and is therefore deserving of our caution.

The construction of the imperialistic colonial project isn't merely a practical venture, but also a storytelling project. As previously discussed, Haiti's history suffers from the erosion of its integrity by epistemic violence—and violence itself begs to be discussed in more depth, a discussion I ask the reader to wait for until the next chapter. Through a fundamentally epistemologically violent way of retelling the story of Haiti, contemporary narratives exhibit a fragility rooted in oversimplification. The inclination to silence nuanced historical explorations persists, reducing Haiti's complex tale to a simplistic narrative of black slaves fighting for freedom against white masters, and finally emerging victorious. This story is believed and repeated not only by the mass media, but even by political and academic elites.

C. L. R. James, a historian by trade, performed a vital historiographical intervention by consolidating a nuanced and descriptive account of the chaotic, unstable, and non-linear narrative of the Haitian revolution into a single book. The capacity to present a complex history in an understandable manner enables a profoundly human depiction of the historical figures that shaped this era. This approach removes individuals like Toussaint Louverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Charles Leclerc, and Vicomte de Rochambeau from the traditional hero-villain dichotomy. Instead, their lives, endeavors, and even deaths are portrayed as those of multifaceted human beings who lived through a time of great change.

The Black Jacobins also staged a significant intervention into the previous historiographic traditions of Marxism. While the foundations of James' theoretical framework were based on those of previous Leftist political thinkers, he was able to conceptualize Marx and Engels's economic explanation for revolutionary potential of the working class away from the European understanding of capital origins and class stratification. This is of fundamental necessity, since the colonizer-colonized dynamic is largely non-existent in the Marxist model. He was also able to see beyond Lenin and Trotsky's historical materialism and structures of revolution based on a class of professional revolutionaries; James saw the revolution as an endeavor of the people (Robinson 274-278). In his ability to bring Marxist theory outside of the industrial urban structure, James departed from a more orthodox Marxism, approaching a conceptualization of revolution by an abused agrarian labor class like that of Fanon's writing from Algeria during its Revolution in the 1950s and 1960s.

The analogous conceptualization of the agrarian revolution is evident as well in more recent historical events, like the 1994 uprising led by the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional. This revolt, characterized as a poignant reaction from the Mexican campesino class,

was prompted by the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Subsequently, the uprising has been characterized as the inaugural manifestation of a postmodern revolution (Villegas). Other analogous examples can illustrate how the value of works such as *The Black Jacobins* goes beyond just Haitian history, for the history of the revolutionary organization of enslaved Haitian is a variation of the history of the explored agricultural masses of the Global South.

The setting for the Haitian case was agricultural, but in a very specific colonial manner. As Dubois puts it, the revolution "emerged from the institution that defined much of Caribbean society and economy in the 18th century: the plantation" (Dubois, "The Haitian Revolution" 273). The enslaved workers lived in the intersection of disadvantaged identities that placed them in an urgent political position full of possibility for stepping into potentially greatly revolutionary activity. I would push against the body of Marxist thought that remains orthodox in its belief that the agrarian question and the labor question are not of the same fundamental nature. James' book helps refute the suggestion that the urban proletarian class is the only one with potential for true Marxist class consciousness and therefore the only one truly suited to host revolutionary action. This has a close affinity with Fanon's work, which will be discussed later in more detail.

Another aspect of James' book which may be less explicit, but that cannot be ignored by the attentive reader, would be its paralleling of the Haitian and French revolutionary movements. This thesis argues for placing the Haitian revolutionary history into the broader picture of the world at the time—which should also support and enlighten our understanding of Haiti's place in the world of today. In the early pages of *Maroon Nation: A History of Revolutionary Haiti*, Johnhenry Gonzalez invites the reader to "connect the growing world of Haitian Revolutionary studies with the study of the crises and complexities of contemporary Haiti" (Gonzalez xi); to

understand this “growing world of Haitian Revolutionary studies” we must as well place it in dialogue with French Revolutionary studies.

The very title of James’ work invites this comparison, semantically defining the Haitian revolution in terms of the French one, instead of naming the Black revolutionaries in their own Afro-Caribbean tradition. According to Laurent Dubois the book’s title suggests that there is “no way to think of the history of the French Revolution without knowing—and knowing well—the history of the Haitian Revolution. There is no history of France, or of republican democracy, that is not also a history of empire” (“Reading *The Black Jacobins*: Historical Perspectives” 92). Africana Studies scholar Anthony Bogues similarly claims that the title suggests James’ certainty that the “slave revolutionaries of Saint-Domingue belonged to the left wing of the French Revolution” (Bogues 200).

The term “Jacobins” historically refers to the political group which “consciously set themselves up as the moral guardians of revolutionary principles” and by the later stages of the French Revolution was known for their radical views and commitment to political equality for French citizens, while at the same time acting in the interests of the upper bourgeoisie, an elite social class from which many of its members originated. It is important to note, first, that “their militancy was of a purely political rather than social kind” (Schama 529), and secondly that this same group was not primarily concerned with equality for the colonial subject. To some of them it was a matter of lesser import than the benefits of the colonial money-making enterprise to the metropole, which Antoine Barnave, a Jacobin and a member of Club Massiac, referred to as “an incontestable truth” (Archives Parlementaires de la Révolution Française 68).

The Jacobins occupied a very particular social role in revolutionary France, as they “claimed to speak for the people, but were not of the people” (Shusterman 83), particularly since

their “high subscription fee meant that only men of significant means could be members” (Shusterman 83) (Schama 529), unlike other political clubs of the era. In the context of C. L. R. James' book, the shared title emphasizes the revolutionary nature of the enslaved people of Haiti who, inspired by the ideals of liberty and equality from the French Revolution, fought for their own freedom and the establishment of the first independent Black-led nation in the Americas. The book title reflects both the revolutionary spirit of the historical events and the agency of the black population in shaping their destiny, taking control of their lives and lands back into their own hands. To what extent, then, is James taking this parallel?

What is often forgotten in simplified retellings of the Haitian Revolution is the domination of the Mulattoes and free men of color classes in the politics of revolutionary and independent Haiti. Their social role thus parallels those of the French Jacobins, an elite political class which claimed to—and sometimes did—represent the interests of the masses. A prime example of a representative of this local elite class in revolutionary politics would be Toussaint L'Ouverture himself. James describes him, as well as Henry Christophe, as belonging to a “small privileged caste” of former slaves, which allowed them comforts, education, and social standing usually accessible only to white men (James 19). This was the first step for their later change in status, as both L'Ouverture and Christophe were free by the time revolution came to Saint-Domingue. In many places in France—particularly in commercial centers—the “lines between nobility and vulgar wealth had long been indistinct” (Schama 517). This resulted in a fluid continuation of politics and social arrangements in these urban enclaves dominated by the combined nobility and bourgeoisie, with little practical social change. Similarly, in Haiti, free men of color were able to acquire meaningful levels of standing in society, accumulate money, and seek further upwards social mobility. Some freed blacks would purchase lands, rule

plantations, and command their own slave labor force, while Mulatto sons of white colonists would be sent to receive formal elite education in France, allowing them the opportunity to circulate in progressive spaces such as the "egalitarian lodges of the radical French Freemasons" (Buck-Morss 63). In denominating the Haitian revolutionaries as Jacobins, is James portraying the Haitian Revolution as an overseas, black extension of the French Revolution, or as its distant, unintentionally mirrored cousin? I argue that chooses the former.

In "The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness" Frantz Fanon discusses the national need for a political party that represents not the policy of the government, but the policy of the people. In the chapter, Fanon discusses the disastrous consequences of having an inappropriate party, explaining that this party "which claimed to be the servant of the people, which claimed to work for the people's happiness, quickly dispatches the people back to their caves as soon as the colonial authorities hand over the country" ("The Trials and Tribulations" 126). This is a passage that resonates with the role of the Haitian national elites in the history described by James. Fanon criticizes these kinds of political parties for using the power acquired during the independence project to promote "genuine ethnic dictatorship" or "regimes based on the family unit." James' work, while sometimes read as biased, still carries much weight in illustrating the moral and practical imperfections of Haiti's revolutionary leaders. He often refers to how Toussaint was overtly paternalistic when addressing his followers (James 150, 196, 225, 303, 313, 325). As Fanon explains, leaders can end up fulfilling detrimental roles that further harm the independence of the people. Fanon urges revolutionary thinkers to rid themselves of the idea that the masses cannot govern themselves, and that the intellectuals and elites must be not only in touch with but in service of the masses ("The Trials and Tribulations" 130).

Throughout *The Black Jacobins*, James intimately braids the politics of revolutionary France with the white, colonial administration of Saint-Domingue. His narrative shows how most of the ruling classes of the colony were not rulers of much beyond the Caribbean nation: they were themselves being passively affected by the developments of the dynamic political situation in Europe. There were royalists defending the Ancien Régime on both sides of the Atlantic, and each land had its own version of local bourgeoisie: the Haitian one was eventually formed by that French-educated Mulatto class, which dynamically assumed different characters and allegiances at distinct phases of the revolution, further complicating the narrative of a united black Haiti against a united white France. Revolution in France gradually shook up the system of colonial governance and created certain possibilities for Haitians by undermining the very central, monarchical structure of authority in the colony. On top of that, it also produced the sort of language and symbolism to understand and discuss freedom which ended up resonating with the enslaved Haitians even more integrally than with the French themselves.

James' book reveals the parallels between the behaviors of the Haitian and French local elites in the midst of revolution. In France, the disturbance of the status quo created opportunities for monetary and social advancement, which the established elites "who had already been able to define their economic interests in terms of property and capital, rather than privilege" were more than ready and able to benefit from. While "this is not the same thing as saying that the Revolution was necessary for their prosperity, much less for the advancement of capitalism" (Schama 518), history reflects the manners in which the Mulatto class was able to acquire great economic and political power through strategic action during the years of social unrest. It is no surprise to attentive students of history that the profit-oriented bourgeoisie was able to exploit this situation for financial gain, as the bourgeois class had done since its historical origins.

Another way James' book portrays complexities previously and often forgotten about is in the representation of race and its role in Caribbean society at the apex of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Before James, many had discussed and written about the Haitian Revolution, and most political philosophers had spoken of it merely through that Marxist lens of class, as previously mentioned. In *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*, Susan Buck-Morss explored Hegel, a classical and influential name in political philosophy who lived through and was influenced by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Buck-Morss urges her reader to rethink Hegel's work while keeping Haiti in mind, refusing to think of one without the other and therefore understanding their conceptual interdependence. Hegel is relevant to this topic in a multiplicity of manners—his ideas about freedom belong on the top of the list. According to Ulrike Kistner, Hegel's "thinking on freedom realized through a dialectical process of attaining self-consciousness in history became formative for decolonial theorizing" (Ulrike vii). Hegel's silencing on the role of race in the structuring of freedom in the Western world is massively amplified in the light of his dialectic of master and slave. In Hegel's dialectic, the master is, at first consideration, seen as the one who is independent, and the slave as dependent on the master. However, as Hegel develops the theory, the dynamic gets turned on its head and he concludes that the slave is the one who gets to determine oneself, through labor and its ability to transform the world. In the end, "mastery turned out to be in essence the reverse of what it means to be" (Hegel 96). How can one passionately write in defense of freedom, while closing one's eyes to the racial inequality—and all of its consequences—that held so many as slaves? Could this be described as a coloniality of knowledge itself?

Buck-Morss invites the reader to question not the presence, but the justification for Hegel's silence. If we assume that Hegel was aware of the Haitian Revolution, as Buck-Morss

gathers enough evidence to prove, then we must decide if he did not mention it because he did not consider it, or because he saw the connection as so natural for the reader that it did not need to be explicitly stated to be effective: some have considered the references "direct enough for anyone living at the time to understand" (Buck-Morss 17). While the truth behind his silence might be lost in the annals of history, Buck-Morss ultimately points to intentional erasure founded on his connections to the Freemasonry and personal situation in the face of certain levels of political persecution.

To further understand the significance of James' work we must understand how others have seen and addressed the Haitian question. In his controversial work *Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington explored the "political structures" of civilizations and defines Haiti as a "lone country" (Huntington 136) that does not identify culturally with any civilization, and does not share cultural commonalities with any other nation. The author blames this isolation in the prevalence of the Creole language and Voodoo religion, paired with its revolutionary past. Why, though, would a revolutionary past marginalize Haiti from the history of civilizations around it? France has a revolutionary past and is described by Huntington as part of the core of civilization in Europe, and I would argue that it is placed there partially because of, and not in spite of, its revolutionary history. Where would this differentiation come from, then, when the Haitian case exemplifies a revolution which expanded the meanings of freedom, equality, and civil and human rights far beyond the revolutions in France or in the U.S.? Without its revolutionary past, what civilization would Huntington consider Haiti as being a part of?

All of this is further complicated when so much of the conversation goes back to Western European and Western European-educated thinkers and writers, from a civilization whose wealth rests on a foundation of stolen bodies and stolen labor, as the transatlantic slave trade deeply

contributed to the industrial wealth of Europe. The triangular trade between Africa, the Americas, and Europe was created to connect well with early stages of capitalism, as slavery stopped being a state's enterprise and its market became a competition between private investors. In this way, slavery changed power dynamics in Europe, bringing even the states and monarchies of the Old Continent into the wanton market of free trade. A simplistic but effective illustration of the results can be drawn in conceptualizing how coffee, sugar, and chocolate used to be luxury products for Europeans, but became part of popular diet only through the colonization of the Americas and the enslavement of its people as well as of Africans. It was through its exploitation of African labor forces and American natural resources that Europe became rich.

An additional noteworthy point to consider in reading *The Black Jacobins* is the absence of any discussion regarding the repercussions of the Thermidorian Reaction of 1794-1795. This event marked a significant turning point in French politics and had a profound impact on France's stance towards its colonies. It is particularly interesting to note that many members of the Amis des noirs—the most impactful French abolitionist group—were aligned with the Jacobins. Some of these people held substantial influence in their own right, including figures like Brissot, Gregoire, and the Lameth brothers (La Société instituée à Paris pour l'abolition de la traite des Nègres 123, 155): it was Charles de Lameth who delivered a passionate speech in support of the liberation of blacks on December 4th, 1794 (James 64). The Thermidorian Reaction effectively wiped out the Jacobin Club, putting an end to any efforts of furthering the liberation, and it brought about the execution of key Jacobin figures, including Maximilien Robespierre, thereby ending the dominance of radical factions in the French political landscape.

It is crucial to recognize that the decline of Jacobin rule coincided with a resurgence of reactionary attitudes and policies towards the colonies. This shift in power dynamics and

ideological influences played a pivotal role in shaping the course of events during this period. In *The Black Jacobins*, James is silent on that shift, focusing rather on the transition to Imperial France as an important shift of attitudes, given the animosity towards the blacks espoused by Napoleon (James 269). This omission raises questions about the author's intentions, whether it was a deliberate choice to focus on other aspects of the narrative or an oversight that might warrant further examination and analysis in understanding the full scope of historical events during this meaningful period.

These omissions are somewhat of a recurring theme in James' work, such as the aforementioned before Bonaparte's hatred of blacks, or what follows Lameth's speech: "How could they know that these words were merely spoken in a Pickwickian sense, that Lameth, a right-wing Liberal, would be one of the most tenacious enemies of both political rights for the Mulattoes and abolition" (James 64). This creates a narrative that is incomplete, and if I may reach that far, biased. James' work, despite its depth, crafts a narrative that appears multifaceted but that at certain points is actually one-sided, favoring select aspects that align with a particular perspective. By deliberately excluding or sidelining critical information, James' portrayal of history undermines a more comprehensive understanding of the historical events.

The work of James contains a number of explicit errors, on the level of willful misrepresentation and misinformation. One of the most puzzling cases is the portrayal of the address to the Convention by the deputies of Saint-Domingue on February 4, 1794. James narrates it this way: "Next day, Bellay, the Negro, delivered a long and fiery oration, pledging the blacks to the cause of the revolution and asking the Convention to declare slavery abolished. It was fitting that a Negro and an ex-slave should make the speech which introduced one of the most important legislative acts ever passed by any political assembly. No one spoke after Bellay"

(James 140). Other sources, including contemporary ones, however, tell a different story: the speaker was Dufay (Benzaken 61), and after him spoke Danton (Danton et al. 17). The wording used by James and references made to the "fraternal kiss" (James 140) makes it clear that the author had access to the original text of the speech, effectively dispelling any defense *ex ignorantia*, leaving a conclusion of deliberate misrepresentation of the event in order to support a certain world view. The fact that examples of misinformation exist puts into question the validity and legitimacy of unsubstantiated claims that James makes in *The Black Jacobins.*

The omissions—and even explicitly incorrect portrayal of the historical facts, such as the above mentioned erroneous attribution of Dufay's quote—in James' work have attracted criticism of many historians of the Haitian Revolution, such as Thomas O. Ott, who attributed his mistakes to ideological bias, claiming that James' Marxist leanings led to a "stumbling attempt to connect the Haitian and French revolutions through some sort of common mass movement"(Ott 199), considering it a "good example of 'fact trimming' to fit a particular thesis or ideology." While this critique seems harsh, as I argue that the process through which James builds a net of connections between the two revolutions makes it more than self-evident that the relation does indeed exist, it highlights the fact that *The Black Jacobins* contains imperfections that can be interpreted in a plethora of ways. The absence of some major historical events in the retelling, together with the absence of basic citation practices for some of the boldest claims of the book, is puzzling, and brings to mind the idea of fact trimming mentioned by Ott. While a wonderfully written narrative and a powerful expression of the ardor of revolutionary times, *The Black Jacobins* is also a book best read paired with attentiveness and historical critical thinking.

CHAPTER 4

Echoes of Revolution: Freedom, Violence and Frantz Fanon

For this final chapter, it is my goal to incorporate the work of Frantz Fanon, enriching this analysis with his theories on colonization as a form of psychopathology and the psychological, social, and cultural consequences of the processes of colonization and decolonization. While this may seem somewhat tangential to the previously explored themes of economic, and therefore, political, decolonization and freedom, it is important to keep in mind that the politics and economy of a country are made by its people. In that way, the lens provided by Fanon allows for a deeper understanding of the society of a colonized and/or previously colonized country, a framework we can use to further understand the complicated relationship between independence, freedom, and economic and political self-determination. Fanon provides us with a useful framework for understanding the dehumanizing dynamics of racism and colonialism in the Algerian context, and most of it organically parallels the Haitian case.

Fanon's life and work are indirectly related to the history of Haiti in more ways than one: born in Martinique, a former French slave colony not far away from Haiti, Fanon grew up in a culture that embraced a prevailing myth of the civilizing mission, as he explains in detail in his earlier works, in particular *Black Skin, White Masks*: the notion that colonial subjects "were fully French" (Haleh Davis). His conviction in the commendable attributes of the French Republic led him to travel to enlist in the Free French Forces. During his formative years, Fanon came to know great disappointment. As he developed a more complex political understanding of racism and imperialism, Fanon came to see France as the institution responsible for the exploitation of his country and his people, as well as those of other colonies. As historian Muriam Haleh Davis

puts it, “political developments in Martinique also failed to offer the kind of emancipatory horizons that Fanon so desperately sought out” (Haleh Davis).

Married to his disillusion with France came his disappointment with Martinique: in becoming critical of France, he couldn’t avoid being equally critical of the Martinican attitude towards this French imperialism. As Martinique’s status changed from that of a French colony to that of an overseas French department, the country may have gained more representation, but no more actual freedom. Disillusioned, Fanon returned to France, where he studied psychiatry and got involved in the world of leftist student activism. During this time in Europe, he developed his understanding of French racism and its consequences for the colonial subjects. Upon completing his studies, Fanon found work as chef de service at the Blida-Joinville psychiatric hospital in Algeria.

Fanon lived a life of great contradictions, a characteristic also prevalent in his work. He left his country of origin thinking of himself as French due to his citizenship, only to find that those in France did not consider him French, as their understanding of Frenchness was unequivocally tied to whiteness. In the end, Fanon found in France the same racism and stagnant politics he abhorred about Martinique. In one of the great ironies of his life, Fanon first stepped into Algeria on the side of the very colonizer French forces he eventually dedicated his life to fighting, both ideologically and militarily. Back in Europe he wrote the autoethnographic *Black Skin, White Masks* as a medical thesis which was strongly rejected by his academic environment, only to later become a linchpin of anti-colonial studies. As his health declined from leukemia, Fanon eventually traveled to the U.S., being admitted into an American hospital under his nom de guerre, Ibrahim Omar Fanon. The final days of 1961 were Fanon’s final days as well, and he passed away in Maryland only months before the realization of Algerian independence. While

Fanon did not live to see the completion of the independence project he fought for, his body now rests in the free land of an independent Algeria.

Fanon did not write about Haiti, and after leaving Martinique he seemed little interested in the Caribbean as a whole. Even so, his name and work are silently in the background of every page of this thesis. This is a paper about the effects of imperialism on Haiti's economy, but on a deeper level, it is about the suffering of the Haitian people whose economic means of self-determination and self-defense were taken away. This suffering of the people, I believe, was what Fanon was most concerned with, over politics or even ideology. He might as well have remained a clinician and an academic, and left his politics to be expressed only in his writing, which was brilliant in more ways than one. As a doctor, though, Fanon was trained and sworn to alleviate human suffering—his most politically engaged book is, after all, named *The Wretched of the Earth*, highlighting his concern for the wretched and unfortunate. Once in Algeria it became self-evident that the people suffered under colonization like a patient suffers from an invading virus, and that revolutionary resistance was his best tool for alleviating the human pathology he witnessed. While Fanon's many facets (doctor, theorist, political thinker, politician) may seem discombobulated, they ultimately all led him towards engaged political action. This background led Fanon to a need for engaged revolutionary action, as his many vocations called him to do more than to just reproduce the world as he saw it. Human suffering is a concept that must be kept central in any nuanced analysis of Fanonian politics.

Fanon cemented his place in this thesis from the moment I first read "On Violence," the inaugural chapter of his famous and almost impossibly ambitious work, *The Wretched of the Earth*, which opens with the author stating that decolonization cannot take place without violence, as it is "quite simply the substitution of one "species" of mankind by another" (Fanon

1). This chapter changed the way readers perceived him, as his supposed glorification of violence made him into its prophet in the eyes of many. Did Fanon truly glorify violence, or was the "image of Fanon as a bloodthirsty philosopher [...] clearly exaggerated" (Castelli 325)?

In discussions about Fanon and violence, many focus on answering this very question: was he in favor of it, did he glorify it? Something that is less debated is the way that different deliberations about Fanon and violence often circle back to the idea of *legitimization*. Legitimate refers to that which is in alignment with the law—but whose law? In a scenario of colonialism, there is an unavoidable clash between the law of the colonized and the law of the colonizer, and they are mutually contradictory since each side's legislation claims domain over the land in question. With this in mind, how and why would we discuss the legitimacy of violence in an anticolonial struggle? When Fanon wrote about violence, it does not seem to have been to defend its legitimacy in the literal sense of the word, but to simply explain its fundamental role in politically revolutionary movements. He signals to the reader the immense role played by violence in the colonial setting, not to question or evaluate it, but to point out its existence. Since colonialism "is a regime instituted by violence" (Fanon, *Alienation and Freedom* 654), Fanon's writings aren't debates on the morality or legitimacy of violence, but on what can be done by those who live under an oppressive system of violence.

Affectivity of the colonized psyche

Another way in which *The Wretched of the Earth* explains ideas that so directly apply to the Haitian case would be Fanon's discussion of the affectivity of the colonized psyche—and this ultimately does relate to a main topic of this chapter, violence and its alternative legitimization. As Fanon is not concerned with assessing the legitimacy of violence, he focuses on analyzing the revolutionary need for psychological decolonization, and explains how violence can perform this

role for the colonized due to its effect on the psychic level. Fanon does not seem to argue that violence is legitimized because it helps the colonized overcome the psychological wounds of colonialism. He simply explains that to be a role that violence can perform—independently of its legitimacy.

In *The Wretched of the Earth* our author details how the colonized affectivity is kept on edge, and is drained off by the expanse of dance and possession rituals, in which the colonized's "way of relaxing is precisely this muscular orgy during which the most brutal aggressiveness and impulse violence are channeled , transformed, and spirited away" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 19). One of the most apt examples of this is the ceremony that inaugurated the Haitian uprising: the Bois Caïman ceremony, which frequently served as a wellspring of motivation for Haitian nationalism and has been regarded as a powerful symbol of resistance to oppression. In the context of the colonial plantations in the Americas, spirituality was often the only space where the colonizers were not around and the oppressed had space to exercise and experience some form of existential freedom. In such a context, politics and spirituality were deeply connected (not unlike white European projects such as Manifest Destiny) and, in Haiti, the white, Catholic phantom of colonization was eventually put to flight by the affective power of Black, enslaved spirituality.

Bois Caïman was the site of the first major meeting of enslaved men who would soon become leaders of the Haitian revolutionary war—in a Fanonian sense, it was the site of the founding of the revolution. The meeting was "both a political rally and a religious ceremony" (McAlister 187) and is still seen as the foundational event for Haitian nationalism and treated like the foundational myth of Haiti as a free Black Republic. The Bois Caïman gathering, however, was not a myth, but a real historical event, and in that way it serves more than just the

function of bringing Haitians together into unity around a story of national foundation. This event, rooted in rituals of physical spirituality, can be a valuable example of the "extremely ritualized pantomime where the exorcism, liberation, and expression of a community are grandiosely and spontaneously played out through shaking" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 20) as explained by Fanon. The Bois Caïman ceremony can be understood, through a Fanonian lens, as an event of national culture. This can be seen simultaneously as a political, spiritual, and affective event, which set the stage for the upcoming launching of the revolution—and revolutionary violence—through the Fanonian Impulse. As noted earlier, Anders Strindberg and Mats Wärn coined the term Fanonian Impulse to describe the community response to situations of long-term social oppression.

Violence

Fanon did not recommend violence out of personal sadism, but commitment to the decolonial struggle. Precisely because of the radical and violent character of any colonial occupation, its destruction can only be achieved through mobilization equally committed to radicalism and violence. Violence is not something to be liked or disliked, it is a tool, and Fanon urged to see this tool employed, powerfully, by the colonized in their fight for freedom. Understanding violent resistance as a fundamental step of revolutionary organizing and overthrowing of the system is not a new idea; it rests on the somewhat agreed upon understanding that those who are victims of violence can employ it in self-defense and as a mechanism to achieve their political objectives. Fanon, however, "recommended violence for reasons surpassing the necessity of self-defence or the removal of a rotten social system" (Kebede 539). From his deep entrenchment in a profoundly bloody period of Algerian history,

Fanon understood violence to be able to play the generally accepted goal of freeing the oppressed, but also a powerfully political goal of building a new societal system without said oppression, as “violence guided with a skilful hand could reshape a society toward an enduring state freedom and justice” (Castelli 326). Fanon understood violence as a freeing practice that could figuratively cleanse, not just the country from occupation, but the colonized psyche from the psychopathology of colonization.

In an address to the Accra Positive Action Conference in 1960, Fanon spoke about “a three-dimensional violence,” an understanding of the practice as the “meeting point of multiple, diverse, repeated, cumulative violences” (Fanon, *Alienation and Freedom* 654). In an effort to organize my own writing, I have also theorized violence as a three-dimensional practice. First, there is colonialism, as an undeniable form of violent socialization which is the setting for any colonial occupation. Secondly, there is the taking up of violence in a conscious and purposeful way, as a strategy. The military launching of a revolution is an action that carries the collective social statement of intention to use violence in this manner. Thirdly, there is violence as a freeing practice on an individual level, which is a great focus of Fanon’s most sophisticated writings on the subject.

It could be argued that the most ambitious systemic overthrow of the Haitian case was not even the achievement of political independence but of the independence of mindset, as we saw in analyzing the Bois Caïman ceremony, which goes from a collective religious gathering to a political launching of a revolution. Achieved through an utopian revolutionary imagination—as I would argue that a grounded utopian thought to be not only favorable but needed for the execution of any revolutionary project—it allowed enslaved Haitians to imagine themselves free within a very specific colonial framework that did not acknowledge any degree of their

humanity. An ability to decolonize and free their own self-awareness and self-image must have been a first step without which no revolution could have happened. The second step, as Fanon would argue, was violence—and these two abilities walk hand-in-hand, in fulfillment of the dimension of violence which serves a psychological purpose, as a freeing practice for the individual. In *Black Skin, White Masks* the author describes the effects of colonization in the mindset and understanding of the world of those oppressed by it. The ability to imagine oneself free from such effects is the first hurdle to be overcome. The subsequent step for revolution and decolonization is to fight to overthrow the system, and a system of violence cannot fall without strategic employment of equal or greater violence.

Fanon saw the potential of anticolonial violence to be a cleansing force—or, in his own apt metaphor, a "tabula rasa which from the outset defines any decolonization" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 1), one which could reset the system. He also saw it as deeply destructive in its cleansing potential, and in the final chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth*, "Colonial War and Mental Disorders," our author shifts the tone and style of his political writing into a clinical one, to "deal with the problem of mental disorders born out of the national war of liberation" (Fanon 181). In this section, he details his medical experience working with patients who were themselves both victims and actors of violence during the Algerian Revolution. It is difficult to understand how anyone who has read *The Wretched of the Earth* until its last page, not just an isolated reading of "On Violence," would think Fanon a prophet of violence. He was, more than most, aware of the ways in which performing violence could be destructive for the Algerian colonized, even if he believed it necessary for the achievement of a grander political goal.

As Adam Shatz explains in his article "The Doctor Prescribed Violence," Fanon argues for the necessary role of violence as a material realization of freedom, since the performance of

violence against one's oppressors carries the potential of not only getting rid of the colonizer as an actor of oppression but to get rid of the image of the self as a passive colonial subject (Shatz). In "On Violence," Fanon identifies the origin of the dynamic of violence in the specific context of colonial violence, which denies the colonized their own humanity, creating a dynamic that is socially unhealthy and unsustainable, and so "at the very moment when [the colonized] discover their humanity, they begin to sharpen their weapons to secure its victory" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 8). Fanon discusses this without passing moral judgements—it is not a matter of righteousness or morality, it is a matter of human nature, and the colonized psyche is programmed by its nature to seek freedom in the same way a positively phototropic plant's nature is to seek the sunlight.

Fanon seems to see violence in medical terms, and a healthy, stable society in harmonious equilibrium would not be violent. Violence is manifested when something pathological is taking place, and colonialism and colonial violence are, at their essence, socially pathological. In that way, not unlike a fever as a natural reaction of the body to a disease, anti-colonial violence also comes through as a cleansing symptom of this unhealthy state of being. Fever comes as a natural bodily reaction to an unhealthy state, an attempt to burn off the sickness. If, however, it lasts for too long or reaches too high temperatures, it can end up killing the very organism it is trying to protect. Fanon's training as a doctor must be kept in mind at all times when we work to understand and analyze his theories, because, as previously said, the very foundation of his militancy and political theorizing come from the medical responsibility to ameliorate the pain of those who suffer in pathological conditions. Throughout *The Wretched of the Earth*, our author theorized on how the political revolution is to develop, and how to interpret it. In its final chapter, "Colonial War and Mental Disorders," Fanon then shows us his deeply

close personal experience with how the hospital looks—and how the suffering of the people looks—at the end of a revolutionary war, and his pungent writing clarifies how he is very much aware of the immense cost that is paid by the colonized in their fight for freedom. Being aware of this tragic cost does not, however, cause him to indicate it should not be paid. Fanon, as a doctor and as a revolutionary, welcomes the work that is to be done for the revolution, and the price to be paid by the time it is over.

In that way, what may at first seem like unfortunate sadistic brutality that accompanied most historical rebellions, for example, those by serfs in Europe and enslaved people in European colonies was, while brutal and merciless, not violence for the sake of itself. The Haitian revolutionary project was bloody to no end, and it was not just about the killing of the colonizers but about elimination of the image of the masters and everything it represented. Ultimately, it seems that what needed to die for the sake of freedom was not really the French, but the figure of the colonizer as an icon in the pathological dynamic of colonialism. There is nothing inherently pathological about the French; the pathology is in taking up the anti-social role and behavior of colonization.

The Haitian case can be read as a laboratory, a litmus test for colonial abuse. Through the previously explained lens of the Fanonian Impulse, we can understand how even the worst violence committed in the Haitian Revolution were responses to a situation of systemic oppression that needed violence to be terminated and overcome. Ultimately, as Adam Shatz explained, the violence served a purpose, and this is a valuable framework of analysis for many kinds of scenarios, not just for Haiti and not just for national liberation movements. Most often, for communities that exist in an overlap of intersectional disadvantaged identities of class, race and ethnicity, social vulnerability can only be addressed by external intervention. Where no

social structures exist, only engaged social action can create them. It is also important to keep in mind that the enslaved were not the ones who initiated cruel practices. Their violence was not spontaneous or out of sadism; it was a response to an intentional, planned out, and highly effective project of systemic violence enacted by the French colonial administration. In that way, as humans we may mourn the suffering and death of settlers, but as critical thinkers we must keep in mind that every settler to die in occupied land has their blood in the hands of the colonizer who initiated these violent practices, not of the colonized.

It is important to acknowledge the crucial difference between formal decolonization—that is, achievement of political independence by the former colony—and actual decolonization, true liberation of the people of the former colony. Haiti is a living example of a formal decolonization being achieved and defended for a very long time, with actual decolonization never being fully realized. Since the earliest days of independence, as mentioned in earlier chapters, Haitian leadership was more than keen to follow the examples set previously by the French, beginning with the lavish coronation of Dessalines as Emperor—the same title as Bonaparte—adorned with a crown made in Europe, to the modern day, where until recently the only language of education was French, despite the fact that it is a second language to most of the population. The decolonization of the mind, in the Fanonian sense, did not occur—and therefore, the Metropole remained in the minds of Haitians as a colonial idol, as a beacon of civilization, making Haiti a ripe target for continued exploitation by its former masters, as well as new arrivals such as the United States.

In this discussion, it is important to consider what violence can and cannot do, as well as what violence did and did not achieve historically in the Haitian case. Fanon does not claim that violence alone will achieve decolonization of national culture, political organization, or

economic practices; he merely explains violence as one of the tools that are essential to this project. Something important about Fanon's meandering descriptions of the national revolution in *The Wretched of the Earth* is not just that it is violent, but that it is a popular movement: an uprising of the people. Fanon indicates that those who participate in anticolonial violence gain ownership of the revolution and its values.

Why then has this been of limited success in the case of the Haitian Revolution? There was plenty of violence, and yet the phenomenon described by Fanon as an ideal result of violent revolution did not happen to its full extent. One answer for this question could circle back to Fanon's assertion that decolonial violence promotes a social tabula rasa, where the "social fabric" gets "changed inside out" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 1). In Haiti, this tabula rasa was not achieved on an economic, material level. The leadership of independent Haiti inherited a country in debt, dissipated by war, originally set up as a cash crop for France, and with essentially no capital of its own. In a way, many of the decisions made by the local elites were a form of selling out Haiti: the need to pursue a viable economy overpowered political independence. One of the main reasons Fanon is resistant to the takeover of power of an independent nation by its national bourgeoisie is because of its most essential characteristic, that of finding ways to profit and make money by whatever means necessary: as Fanon says, "the national bourgeoisie assumes the role of manager for the companies of the West and turns its country virtually into a bordello for Europe" (Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* 101). The danger posed by the national bourgeoisie is that it is, by essence, a bourgeoisie, and "capitalism therefore objectively colludes with the forces of violence that erupt in colonial territories" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 27). In this way, it may be unfair to state that the decolonization of mind never truly occurred: it may have occurred, and then been trumped by the

realities of a country economically and socially mismanaged by the greedy local bourgeoisie, a social class that was in itself a product of colonization, raised and educated to admire and emulate France and Frenchness.

As we discuss the use of revolutionary violence, we must keep in mind that colonialism is, itself, a system of violence—one enacted by the French settlers, not by the enslaved Haitians. Violence is the context in which the whole of colonial history takes place, as well as the history of the revolution. To argue that the practice of revolutionary violence for the sake of ending colonial violence is justified is not synonymous to saying that every single act of brutality is equally justified, or justified at all. With that in mind, it is also valuable to remember that the revolutionaries were incredibly restrained, compared to violent circumstances they existed in for multiple decades. The violence of the revolution pales in comparison when contrasted with the centuries of abuse and cruelty of the colonial system.

Rural Uprising: Marxism Stretched

As Fanon tells us, the story of the revolution can easily go astray and if taken over by the middle class, the local bourgeoisie that will readily "turn its country virtually into a bordello for Europe" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 101). In this project we have been looking at the history of Haitian colonization and decolonization and trying to interpret what happened. One thing that happened was that the economic colonial structures were not fully overcome by the revolution, and in some ways were accepted and reproduced by the new leadership. We can return to Fanon's theorizing on the peasant revolution and see what could have happened if independent Haiti was inherited not by its local elites who aim to rule the economy, but by the peasant masses interested in freedom. In this last section of the chapter we will diverge from Fanonian theories

to explore Marxism through a Fanonian lens. This may seem unrelated to the main topics of Fanon and Haiti, but it is deeply connected to larger arguments about freedom.

As discussed in the previous chapters, C. L. R. James both drew from and broke with traditional Marxist thought in his conceptualizations of the agrarian enslaved labor class' revolutionary potential, a fundamental aspect of the Haitian Revolution. Frantz Fanon wrote about this as well, stating that "a Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched when it comes to addressing the colonial issue" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 5)—claiming that classical Marxism was not set in a world where the "classes" are understood as basically "different species." As colonialism strips the colonized of their humanity, it socially turns the colonized into a different species; that is why the orthodox Marxist frame does not fit the colonial scenario perfectly, and is in need of a "slight stretch." It is, however, difficult to figure out what this would look like for Fanon. The author excels in critiquing the shortcomings of traditional Marxism as a framework for understanding and addressing the colonial context, while offering comparatively less detailed insights into the formulation of a realistic alternative.

In my own reading of Marx as well as James and Fanon, I have come to develop great resistance to dismissing the agrarian laborer's potential to become a revolutionary subject. Fanon and James each present a framework of the agrarian laborers' potential for revolution that is quite convincing and promote the power of a political consciousness of the peasant laborer. To the student of anticolonial movements, it is hard to disagree with them, as their theories on the revolutionary potential of the peasantry is particularly pronounced in the context of an agricultural system inherited from colonialism—Haiti being a powerful example of this potential. The figure of the laborer as described by Marx as he who "sells" his "labour-power" (Marx, *Capital* 588) must not need to be universally homogenous—or urban—to be universally

compelling. The character of work must not need to be separated from Marxist conceptualization of labor by arbitrary categorizations such as "skilled work" as urban, factory labor.

I propose that if oppression is what eventually generates rebellion, as explained by the theory of the Fanonian Impulse, then it is necessary to consider the layers of systemic oppression the enslaved agrarian laborer operates under. Marx argues that the union between the laborers is "helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes" (Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto* 25). For Marx, the industrialized modern country and the factory floor are an environment that forces varied people to collect in the same place and that allows for the birth of a political class conscience, through the very specific manner in which diverse laborers are compelled to engage with each other. While Marx's analysis certainly is apt that this is an immensely valuable social process for political awareness, is it fair to see it as a necessary one? In a rural setting of oppression, laborers would most likely also revolt, but Marx seems to indicate that revolts in rural settings would not have the political focus inherent to organizing in an urban, factory setting.

Just as the urban proletariat, I argue that the agrarian enslaved laborer in a colonial context is in a position allowing for potential hyper-awareness that their work in the land exists to serve someone else's profit. In the context of colonialism, a whole country and its people get reoriented in service of the colonial enterprise. In that way, the viability of a self-reliant economy becomes even further removed from real possibilities from the moment when plantation systems are set up, like corn in Mexico and coffee and sugar cane in Brazil, as well as Haiti. However powerful and high-profit these products can be as commodities in the world market, they would

not perform well if their function was to nurture the local population and keep the local economy running self-sufficiently once political independence is achieved.

The colonial project results in such levels of harm to the local agriculture that even long after the legal end of colonialism the population will still be suffering from the damage of the system's potential to serve its own people. In that way, in comparison to the peasant laborer of a non-colonized nation, the enslaved worker of a colonized country has their freedom, autonomy, and land even further stolen from their present hands by their colonial circumstances. Their closeness to the land—which, contrary to the factory, would still be there to be worked by the laborers even if the oppressing class was removed—is a major weight in favor of the agricultural worker's potential for political consciousness. Without the boss, the factory worker initially becomes unemployed and returns to their urban homes. Without the colonial masters, the agricultural slaves in Haiti finally owned the land they worked in, and began to work it for their own subsistence, instead of for the master's profit. If the revolutionary apparatus performs well on the ability to successfully bring to the agrarian masses an awareness of the mechanisms that prevent their own freedom, the unleashed potential can be immensely transformative. *Potential* is a keyword. What did not happen in Haiti was the full realization of that potential for the post-revolution timeline, and Haiti ended up with a largely urban elite ruling the country.

While I do believe in the point expanded upon in the previous paragraph, I understand it could be argued that it also creates a setting that makes this very potential more difficult to be fulfilled. I can think against myself and suppose that the colonial dynamic might as well promote a more ingrained feeling of inferiority—the "inferiority complex" discussed by Fanon, in his assertion that such complex is not latent, but a result of the colonial circumstances (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* 66)—and a normalization of participation in a system that serves the

oppressor. The exposure to such a system can cause the enslaved to integrate the "inferiority complex" as a result of a carefully studied, planned, and intentional process of violence enacted by the colonizer. This scheme of planned efforts was known as "the Seasoning," an inhumane process of acclimatization of the newly brought slaves to the harsh realities of their new life—both physical and mental—to render them as unlikely to revolt as possible (Collins 66). This practice has been justified through multiple reasons, from preserving the commercial interests of the planters to alleged concerns about humane treatment of the enslaved, as it was claimed that "so great a waste of the species for a purpose merely commercial [...] is certainly not very reconcilable to humanity." (Collins 51).

The internalization of this cruel practice is evident in the work of a planter known as Dr. Collins. In his *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies*, he points out that "in general, children and young people are very easily seasoned; negroes beyond five-and-twenty, with great difficulty, many of them never making so great a progress in the language as to speak it intelligibly" (Collins 82). The passage shows that the Seasoning was a form of grooming the enslaved into the pathological dynamics of plantation life, obedient and subservient to their masters. It is only logical that as a consequence, the internalization of inferiority would only deepen with generational trauma of enslaved families, for as James puts it "the creole Negro was more docile than the slave who had been born in Africa" (James 17).

It is important to note a parallel between master-slave dynamic in this context, and the relations of the capitalist society, as Collins notes that a "prudent man […] regards his ease, and is free from the embarrassment of compassion," putting profit and comfort above compassion for a fellow man. It may be noted that *Practical Rules* serves as a chilling monument to the machine

of dehumanization fuelled by profit—not stemming from hate or fear, but motivated by what seems to be endless greed, unrestricted by any boundaries of cruelty. Taking this machine of dehumanization and installation of inferiority complex into account, it can be argued for hurdles in motivating—igniting that Fanonian Impulse into action—the masses in such a context of carefully manufactured subservience. What I propose is, still, that under the right motivation, and with the right execution, such as the Haitian case exemplifies, the power that could be harnessed would have great revolutionary potential. The Haitian enslaved laborers were a class primed by the historical circumstances and ready for revolution. That, coupled with the talents of their leadership, allowed for one of the most revolutionary turns of modern history.

CONCLUSION

The history revised and analyzed in this project is a product of the uneven power relations between the Haitian people and the groups who have historically controlled Haiti's government and economic practices. Rather than reducing the narrative of Haiti's history to a dichotomy of either a tragic saga of shortcomings or a triumphant chronicle of revolution, it can be beneficial to future scholars and students of Haitian history to face the uncomfortable turn and details of the country's past. This project has been a response to observed oversimplifications, as well as an attempt at a nuanced, multidisciplinary analysis.

The dynamics explored in this paper possess broader relevance beyond the confines of Haiti, for they represent recurring patterns that have plagued colonized and occupied territories throughout history, as well as today. Through a detailed analysis of key points of Haitian history we can evaluate the mechanisms set in place to subjugate and oppress the Haitian population by the French colonial and the American imperial administrations and understand their immense damage and profound repercussions. Pairing the historical framework of James with Fanon's psychiatric theories on the dehumanizing dynamics of colonialism we can understand the ways in which the Haitian people organized and fought for their freedom. This paints a picture of the harm done to Haiti by foreign intervention, of the ways in which political consciousness rooted in psychological liberation and executed through military means of violence allowed for immense achievements during the Haitian Revolution, as well as the manners in which the enduring legacy of colonial practices paired up with a local leadership rooted in the values of colonial bourgeoisie have limited the levels of true freedom that a nominally independent Haiti could reach.

Many have analyzed the history of freedom in Haiti through social, political, and even cultural lenses. The aim of this project in addressing this history from an economic perspective is to understand the ways in which a country must be able to finance its revolution to maintain its true political freedom. This is because a country's economy is also its ability to afford resources for self-defense as well as self-determination—as discussed in the Introduction, economic development is often the provider of freedom. Moreover, the economic dimension is underscored by its significance in the contemporary global power landscape: it is the new language through which the game of international power is played. From the dawn of time, nations have established themselves as superior to others, in a dynamic that used to be set by supposedly essential traits, therefore justifying racism or slavery. In modern times nations no longer proclaim their superiority and dominance over others based on race, culture, or religion—in a capitalistic world, money is the new currency of power, for "the bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country" (Marx and Engels 17). The history of the Haitian economy is important because it is the history of how Haiti was kept from achieving the true, full freedom promised by its immense revolutionary potential.

Haiti has come a long way from its past as an enslaved colony and its journey is not just a historical narrative; it is a testament to the spirit of a people yearning for genuine emancipation. The aim of this research is to highlight how the previously mentioned immense potential of the Haitian Revolution was not lost, but severely limited by the decisions of those who have ruled the country, as both a colony and a republic—and inspire attention to the actors responsible for the economic failures of Haiti's past and present. Through understanding the achievements and

failures of this potential, the vision of an alternate Haiti reveals itself: the vision of a free, self-governing nation state.

WORKS CITED

Anonymous. *Loi Sur La Procédure Civile*. P. Roux, 1812.

Archives Parlementaires de la Révolution Française. *Archives Parlementaires de 1787 à 1860.* 1881.

Benzaken, Jean-Charles. "Louis-Pierre Dufay, Député Abolitionniste et homme d'affaires Avisé. Esquisse Biographique." *Annales Historiques de La Révolution Française*, vol. 368, 2012, pp. 61–85.

Bogues, Anthony. *The Black Jacobins and the Long Haitian Revolution: Archives, History, and the Writing of Revolution.* Duke University Press, 2017.

Buck-Morss, Susan. *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History.* University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009.

Castelli, Alberto. "Liberation through Violence in Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth: Historical and Contemporary Criticisms." *Peace and Change*, vol. 47, no. 4, 2022, pp. 325–40.

Chakravorty Spivak, Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, University of Illinois Press, 1988.

Chetty, Raj. "The Black Radical Tragic: Performance, Aesthetics, and the Unfinished Haitian Revolution." *Journal of Haitian Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2021, pp. 182–85.

Danton, Georges Jacques, et al. *Lançons La Liberté Dans Les Colonies : Discours de Danton et Dufay, 4 Février 1794,*. Points, Points, 2009.

Democracy Now! *Debt, Coups & Colonialism in Haiti: France & U.S. Urged to Pay Reparations for Destroying Nation*. 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2q98odZz2U.

Dr. Collins. *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies*. Vernor & Hood, 1803.

Dubois, Laurent. *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. 1st Picador ed, Picador, 2013.

Dubois, Laurent. "Reading The Black Jacobins: Historical Perspectives." *The Black Jacobins Reader*, Duke University Press, 2017.

Dubois, Laurent. "The Haitian Revolution." *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its Peoples*, 2011, pp. 273–88.

Fanon, Frantz. *Alienation and Freedom*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2015.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Grove Press, 1952.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth.* Grove Press, 1961.

Forsdick, Charles, and Christian Høgsbjerg. *The Black Jacobins Reader*. Duke University Press, 2017.

Franklin, James. *The Present State of Hayti, (Saint Domingo,) With Remarks on Its Agriculture, Commerce, Laws, Religion, Finances, and Population*. Routledge, 1972.

Galván-Álvarez. "Epistemic Violence and Retaliation: The Issue of Knowledges in Mother India,." *Atlantis Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2010.

Geggus, David Patrick. *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*. Indiana University Press, 2002.

Girard, Philippe R. "Jean-Jacques Dessalines and the Atlantic System: A Reappraisal." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 69, no. 3, July 2012, pp. 549–82.

Glick, Jeremy. *The Black Radical Tragic : Performance, Aesthetics, and the Unfinished Haitian Revolution.* New York University Press, 2016.

Gonzalez, Johnhenry. *Maroon Nation : A History of Revolutionary Haiti.* Yale University Press, 2019.

Great Britain Parliament. *The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803 to the Present Time*. 1816.

Haleh Davis, Muriam. "The US Academy and the Provincialization of Fanon." *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 2022.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2019.

Herrmann, Molly M. *The French Colonial Question and the Disintegration of White Supremacy in the Colony of Saint Domingue, 1789-1792*. 2005. University of North Carolina Wilmington.

Hobsbawm, Eric J. *The Age Of Revolution 1789-1848*. Shenval Press, 1962.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Simon & Schuster, 1996.

James, C. L. R. *The Black Jacobins; Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution.* 2nd ed., Vintage Books, 1963.

Janvier, Louis-Joseph. *La République d'Haïti et Ses Visiteurs (1840-1882).* Marpon et Flammarion, 1883.

Kebede, Messay. "The Rehabilitation of Violence and the Violence of Rehabilitation: Fanon and Colonialism." *Journal of Black Studies,* vol. 31, no. 5, 2001, pp. 539–62.

La Société instituée à Paris pour l'abolition de la traite des Nègres. *Registre de La Société Instituée à Paris Pour l'abolition de La Traite Des Nègres.* 1789.

Léger, Jacques Nicolas. *Haiti: Her History and Her Detractors.* The Neale Publishing Company, 1907.

Madiou, Thomas. *Histoire d'Haïti.* Editions Henri Deschamps, 1989.

Manoff, Marlene. “Mapping Archival Silence: Technology and the Historical Record.” *Engaging with Records and Archives: Histories and Theories*, Facet Publishing, 2016.

Marx, Karl. *Capital—A Critique of Political Economy*. Charles H. Kerr Publishing Co., 1906.

Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Charles H. Kerr Publishing Co., 1910.

McAlister, Elizabeth. “From Slave Revolt to a Blood Pact with Satan: The Evangelical Rewriting of Haitian History.” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, 2012.

Norman, Andrew. “Epistemological Violence.” *Institutional Violence*, Rodopi, 1999.

Ott, Thomas O. *The Haitian Revolution 1789-1804*. University of Tennessee Press, 1973.

Polyne, Millery. *From Douglass to Duvalier: U.S. African Americans, Haiti, and Pan Americanism, 1870 1964*. University Press of Florida, 2011.

Rameau, Mario, and Jean-Jacques-Dessalines Ambroise. *La Révolution de Saint-Domingue, 1789-1804*. Société Häitienne d’Histoire et de Géographie, 1990.

Renda, Mary. *Taking Haiti : Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Robinson, Credic. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition.* University of North Carolina Press, 1983.

Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Bogle-L’Ouverture Publications, 1972.

Schama, Simon. *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. 1989.

Schmidt, Hans. *The United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934*. Rutgers University Press, 1995.

Shatz, Adam. “The Doctor Prescribed Violence.” *The New York Times*, 2001, https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/02/books/the-doctor-prescribed-violence.html?mtrref=www.google.com.

Shusterman, Noah. *The French Revolution : Faith, Desire, and Politics*. 2014.

Silkenat, David. *Scars on the Land: An Environmental History of Slavery in the American South.* Oxford University Press, 2022.

Strindberg, Anders, and Mats Wärn. *Islamism: Religion, Radicalization, and Resistance*. Polity Press, 2012.

The New York Times. “The Ransom: Haiti’s Reparations to France.” *The New York Times*, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/23/world/haiti-france-ransom.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. “An Unthinkable History: The Haitian Revolution as a Non-Event.” *Silencing the Past*, 1995.

Ulrike, Kistner. *Violence, Slavery and Freedom between Hegel and Fanon*. Wits University Press, 2020.

Valentine Palmer, Vernon. *The Origins and Authors of the Code Noir*. 1996.

Villegas, Paulina. “In a Mexico ‘Tired of Violence,’ Zapatista Rebels Venture Into Politics.” *The New York Times*, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/26/world/americas/mexico-zapatista-subcommander-marcos.html.