

THE PEARL OF THE ANTILLES: A SERIAL HISTORY OF HAITI



PART I

DISCOVERY TO DOMINATION

Michael S. VanHook
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A division of International Strategic Alliances, Inc.
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INTRODUCTION

“Haiti is the hardest country in the world to help.” –Gerald A. Drew¹

On a starlit night, Jean, Carlos, Denis, Keryl, and I stood on the water’s edge of the Bay of Cap-Haitien. We had just returned from Port-au-Prince after spending several days assessing the earthquake’s damage and searching for possible avenues to ship humanitarian aid. Everyone’s nerves sighed a great sense of relief for having safely returned from the aftershocks to our northern point of departure. All of us were still attempting to comprehend what we had just witnessed. As we talked, laughed, and even prayed, Jean said something to me that I’ll never forget. He remarked, “I consider you Haitian because you treat us as equals.”

My heart melted. This was the greatest compliment that I had ever received from all my years of working in Haiti. It resonated with my hopes that the Haitian people would know that I loved them and desired to serve them as my brothers and sisters. It also recognized to a small degree that our successful collaborations were accomplishing our vision.

Haiti is a land of distinct contrasts. Its beauty was once renowned as the “Pearl of the Antilles.” The first European visitors were captivated by Hispaniola’s lush forests and floral vegetation. Today with only one percent of the land forested, it stands on the brink of an ecological disaster as its hills erode into the sea. The European powers once craved and bled for Haiti’s wealth as it produced nearly two-thirds of France’s commercial interests and 40 percent of its foreign trade. Today, the lonely western half of Hispaniola is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with 80 percent of its people living in abject poverty, and one of the poorest anywhere in the world. Haiti’s independence was snatched from the cruelest forms of slavery instituted in the New World, by a bloody revolution where unimagined atrocities were employed, and it yielded a government that has oppressed and brutalized its people for over 200 years. Yet the Haitian people are some of the most hospitable and kind people despite their suffering. They hold a deep place in my heart.

¹ R. D. Heinl, N. G. Heinl, & M. Heinl, *Written in Blood: The Story of the Haitian People 1492-1995* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1996, revised and expanded edition), 586.

I am constantly asked, “Why is Haiti like this and what can be done?” I am convinced that the deep roots of many of these problems and some of the plausible solutions can best be understood by probing their historical lines into the present. Haiti’s history teaches us to appreciate its resilient heritage and its distinct culture. It also helps to recognize some of the “why’s” and the “what’s.”

John Chandler, a visiting Englishman, wrote in 1842 that. “The history of Hayti has yet to be written.”² Until *Written in Blood* was penned by Robert and Nancy Heinl (1978), no complete history of Haiti existed in any language. As noted in the revised introduction to their book, “The rebel slaves who founded Haiti were largely illiterate or semiliterate. They kept no public records.”³ Most of the national historical documents have been destroyed, dispersed, or stolen. Therefore, “documentation of Haitian history in the conventional way from internal primary sources and national archives is an impossibility.”⁴

Penning a history of Haiti presents unique challenges. I have written this historical text to educate individuals or groups who are traveling to Haiti with the International Strategic Alliances or other organizations serving the Haitian people. It is my hope that an overview of their history will facilitate greater understanding, compassion, and solution-building.

I have attempted to provide a document that is both readable and accurate. The content is presented in smaller narrative vignettes with accompanying images so that one can navigate easily through the various stages. Every attempt has been made to present data that has stood the test of time and historical scrutiny; though as previously noted, primary sources are in short supply.

This project comes from a deep place in my heart for Haitian people. They live inside of me every day; and because of them, I’ve changed. They have my sincerest gratitude for their years of friendship and service. Particular distinction goes to **Pastor Bruno Cherenfant**, my constant companion, advocate, and on-the-ground instructor. Without him, my work would not be as effective or joyful.

In addition, I appreciate those who have raised me for this work. Special recognition goes to **Gregg Shaffer**, who planted the seed and guided me on those initial, extraordinary journeys; **David Michel**, “my Jimo,” who continuously grows the vision and gently corrects my paths; and **Wendell Mettey**, who mentored me in non-profit leadership. The **International Strategic Alliances Board of Directors** has been

² Heinl, Heinl, and Heinl, 7.

³ Heinl, Heinl, and Heinl, 7.

⁴ Heinl, Heinl, and Heinl, 8.

faithful to me even when they didn't have a clue where I was taking them—thanks to David, Mark, Deb, Doug, Gregg, Keryl, and Jerry. All of this would not be possible without the financial contributions, encouragement, and prayers of our partners. Thank you for making my dreams come true.

Last of all to my wife, Luciana (“*eu te amo*”) and my daughters, Megan, Lauren, and Chelsea, I hope one day you'll better understand my obsessions and join me in watching the sunset on the Bay of Fort-Liberte.

Michael S. VanHook, March 2017



Bay of Fort-Liberte

PART I

DISCOVERY TO DOMINATION



Chapter 1

SPANISH CONQUEST

1492–1697

America was not discovered. America was conquered. –Gerhard Masur

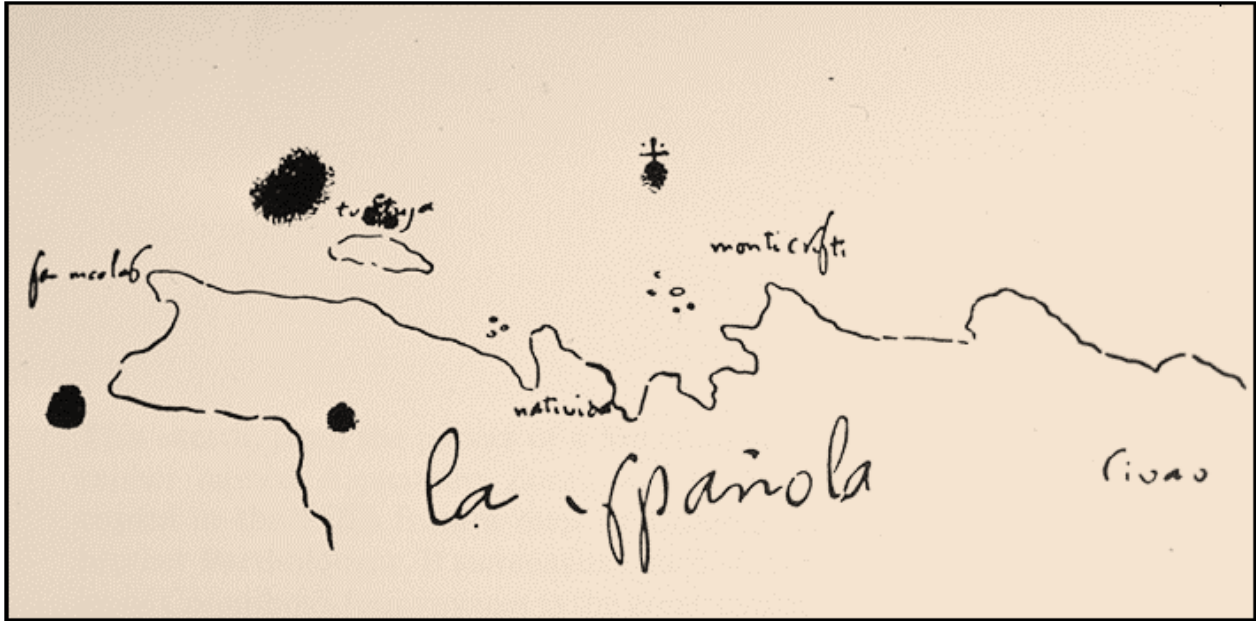




As the sun ascended over the Caribbean horizon on a fateful December morning, a new age was dawning in a New World. An approaching alien power was appearing, poised to establish complete dominance over the sleepy island paradise. Their eyes fantasized about gold in the distant hills. Peering behind the trees, the native inhabitants stared in stunned bewilderment as their eyes caught the first glimpses of three peculiar marine vessels anchored beyond the shore. Never could they have imagined how their peaceful tropical existence was on the brink of extinction as they would be the first in a long succession of victims to feel the lashes of slavery.

The indigenous people were known as the **Taino Indians** (or Arawak). Tainos, meaning “good” or “noble,” lived throughout the greater islands of Cuba, Haiti, and Puerto Rico, having migrated from South America centuries earlier. They were a gentle, calm, and very hospitable people, and those on this island were known to have been the most advanced of the Tainos. They developed a flourishing civilization with the cultivation of yucca, sweet potatoes, corn, beans, and other crops. The Tainos called the island **Ayti**, or **Hayti**, meaning “mountainous.”





Map of Haiti's north coast by Christopher Columbus, 1492

Christopher Columbus landed in northern Haiti, near present-day Limonade on December 6, 1492, and called the land “the most beautiful in the world.” He claimed the island for Spain and renamed it Española (Hispaniola in English), meaning “little Spain.”

The Tainos presented Columbus parrots, balls of cotton, spears, and many other gifts. He observed, “They should be fine servants.”⁵ When his flagship *Santa Marie* ran aground on a coral reef, the local Tainos helped him salvage the ship’s stores and guns. He established a makeshift fort called La Navidad and left behind thirty-nine men to launch the first settlement in the New World.

When Columbus returned in 1493, he found the ruins of his fortifications and the dead carcasses of his men. Initially, the Tainos were hospitable toward the Spaniards, but later they responded violently to the settlers' abuse.

The Spaniards unleashed a wave of terror and enslaved Tainos seeking to exploit expectant gold mines in Hispaniola’s interior. “It was a general rule among the Spaniards to be cruel; not just cruel, but extraordinarily cruel so that harsh and bitter

⁵ Anne Greene, “Haiti: Historical Setting”, Haiti: A Country Study.

treatment would prevent Indians from daring to think of themselves as human beings or having a minute to think at all.”⁶

Approximately fifty years after the arrival of Columbus, most of the Tainos were exterminated through the hardship conditions of slavery, organized massacres, and diseases they contracted from the Spaniards. The exact number of the island's indigenous population in 1492 has never been accurately determined, though most modern scholars estimate a number between 500,000 and 750,000. By 1514, “only 29,000 were left,”⁷ and “by 1550, only 150 Indians lived on the island.”⁸

The genocide of the Tainos in Hispaniola was one of the most brutal annihilations committed on indigenous peoples in the New World. In 1796, one of the island's first historians, Moreau de Saint-Méry, published *Description of Spanish Santo Domingo*. He lamented, “The regret of the philosopher is awakened . . . when he thinks about the fact that from a people so numerous, there is not one left to enlighten us about its history.”⁹ Sidney Lintz noted in James Leyburn's *The Haitian People*, that not only did the natives die out, but nearly all cultural traces did too—a very unusual phenomenon. Haiti's culture is almost entirely African and European.¹⁰



⁶ Laurent, Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 14. Quoting Bartolomé de Las Casas, *History of the Indies*.

⁷ Dubois, 14.

⁸ Greene.

⁹ Dubois, 14.

¹⁰ James G. Leyburn, *The Haitian People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), 3. An insightful analysis of the origins and culture of the Haitian people. Unfortunately, this volume is out-of-print.

Spanish Bishop Bartolomé Las Casas was appalled by the massacre and extermination of the indigenous people in Hispaniola and advocated for the cessation of the injustices committed against them. He chronicled the profuse atrocities in his vast writings and argued on their behalf before King Charles I of Spain. As an alternative, he favored the importation of blacks from Africa to work in the mines as a means of ending the natives' suffering. In 1503, the first blacks landed on Hispaniola.

As the gateway to the Caribbean, Hispaniola was strategically important for several European powers in their ventures to dominate the New World. Britain, France, and the Netherlands used the island to attack Spanish galleons crammed with gold and to establish their own foothold in the New World, which had been parceled by a papal decree between the Roman Catholic kingdoms of Spain and Portugal. This fierce encroachment gradually diminished Spain's dominance.¹¹



¹¹ NOTES: See APPENDIX B: LETTER FROM COLUMBUS TO THE KING AND QUEEN OF SPAIN and APPENDIX C: KING FERDINAND'S LETTER TO THE TAINO INDIANS.

Chapter 2

FRENCH COLONIAL RULE

1697—1804

The donkey sweats so the horse can be decorated with lace. -Haitian proverb





Europe's insatiable lust for gold was rivaled only by its lust for sugar. Sugar was that rare, luxurious, and health-giving commodity that could make men rich—quick. Men seeking their fortune transformed the colony into the “Wild West Indies.”

In 1697, Spain ceded the western part of the island to France. The French renamed their possession **Saint-Domingue**, a translation of Santo Domingo, the Spanish name for the eastern part of the island. They transformed Saint-Domingue into the richest, most coveted colony in the Western Hemisphere, the “Pearl of the Antilles.” Its cosmopolitan capital, Cap Français,¹² shined as the “Paris of the New World.” The city boasted of rich commercial and cultural enterprises, including a 1,500-seat capacity theater that presented the latest musicals after their premieres in Paris. There were cabarets, a wax museum, and public bathhouses, and most houses were constructed of stone with eloquent surrounding gardens and trellises. Every day, Cap Français' thriving harbor was filled with hundreds of large vessels whose imports fed the thriving plantations in the north. Its population was the same as Boston.

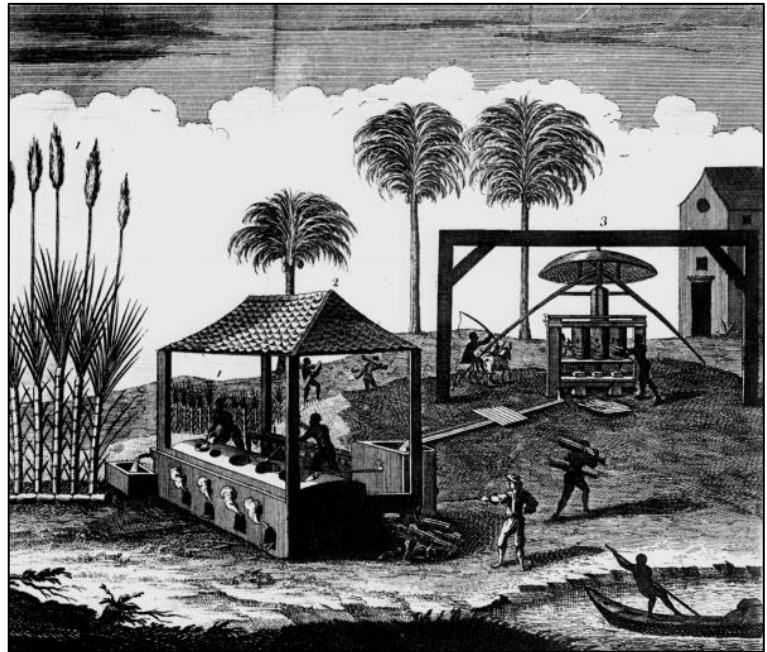


¹² Present day Cap-Haitien

The colony's role in the French economy was pivotal, accounting for almost two-thirds of French commercial interests abroad and about forty percent of foreign trade.¹³ Saint-Domingue produced approximately sixty percent of the world's coffee and forty percent of the sugar imported by France and Britain. It was more valuable to France than the thirteen colonies were to England. "The livelihood of as many as a million of the 25 million inhabitants of France depended directly on the colonial trade."¹⁴ Fortunes made in the colony were a crucial contributing factor to the French Revolution. In the National Assembly, fifteen percent of the one thousand members owned colonial property.

To build this wealth, France imported thousands of slaves from Africa. Estimates range from 850,000 to a million, perhaps ten percent of the entire Atlantic slave trade.¹⁵ They were treated with unimaginable cruelty, virtually the same abuses and mistreatments imposed on the Tainos but on a larger scale.

Saint-Domingue's plantations differed from other North American ones because of a single key element—the sugar and coffee plantations were large scale manufacturing operations requiring massive amounts of human labor toiling in dangerous, backbreaking work. Slaves died in appalling numbers; five to ten percent perished from overwork or disease each year. Deaths outpaced births. The business model was to systematically work the slaves to death in order to replace them with newly bought captives.¹⁶ Half of the slaves died within a few years of arrival.



¹³ Richard A. Haggerty, ed., "Haiti 1804-2010," December 1989, Kreyol.com, <http://www.kreyol.com/history.html>.

¹⁴ Dubois, 21.

¹⁵ Dubois, 39.

¹⁶ Tom Reiss, *The Black Count: Glory, Revolution, Betrayal, and the Real Count of Monte Cristo* (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2012), 29.

The logic of this policy was simple and based entirely on mathematical calculations. After four to seven years, the statistics proved, a planter could amortize his initial investment in his slave workforce. At the same time, the plantation would also provide a respectable eight to twelve percent return. It was not economically sound to keep them alive for more than four to seven years. . . . In one hundred years, Haitian slavery killed nearly one million Africans, often after the briefest sojourn there.”¹⁷



The French imposed some of the most brutal bondage that African slaves ever suffered. Every African who survived the horrors of the middle passage was branded with the initials of their master. The process was repeated every time a slave was sold.

One-third of all French slaves died after only a few years on the plantation. Violence and terror maintained order. The punishment for working too slowly or stealing a piece of sugar or sip of rum, not to mention trying to escape, was limited to the overseer’s imagination. Gothic sadism became commonplace in the atmosphere of tropic mechanization: overseers interrupted whippings to pour burning wax—or boiling sugar or hot ashes and salt—onto the arms and

¹⁷ Elizabeth Abbott, *Haiti: The Duvaliers and Their Legacy* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1988), 11.

shoulders and heads of recalcitrant workers. The cheapness of life brushed against the exorbitant value of the crop they produced. . . . The sugar planter counted on an average of ten to fifteen years' work from a slave before he was driven to death, to be replaced by another fresh off the boat.¹⁸

In a widely circulated account, written by Vastey, Henri Christophe's secretary and privy counselor, who lived half his life as a slave; he cried out against the crimes perpetrated against the slaves of Saint-Dominique by French masters:

Have they not hung up men with heads downward, drowned them in sacks, crucified them on planks, buried them alive, crushed them with mortars? Have they not forced them to eat shit? And, after having flayed them with the lash, have they not cast them alive to be devoured by worms, or onto anthills, or lashed them to stakes in the swamp to be devoured by mosquitoes? Have they not thrown them into boiling cauldrons of cane syrup? Have they not put men and women inside barrels studded with spikes and rolled them down mountainsides into the abyss? Have they not consigned these miserable blacks to man-eating dogs until the latter, sated by human flesh, left mangled victims to be finished off with bayonet and poniard?¹⁹

"There is no indication that the supply of blacks ever equaled the demand for them."²⁰

The importation of the blacks in large numbers dramatically changed the demographic face of Saint-Domingue. As a result, the slave population dominated in terrifying numbers all other classes and races. By the late eighteenth century, the majority of slaves were African born.

"In Saint-Domingue in 1687, whites outnumbered slaves 4,411 to 3,358. . . . by 1700, the population of slaves had grown to 9,082, while the population of whites had decreased by several hundred. . . . by midcentury there were nearly 150,000 slaves and fewer than 14,000 whites, and on the eve of the revolution, 90 percent of the colony's population was enslaved."²¹

An official estimate of the colony's population in 1789 reported Saint-Domingue contained 55,000 free people and 450,000 slaves. But because slaves were taxed, they were broadly undercounted; in all likelihood there were at least half a

¹⁸ Reiss, 29.

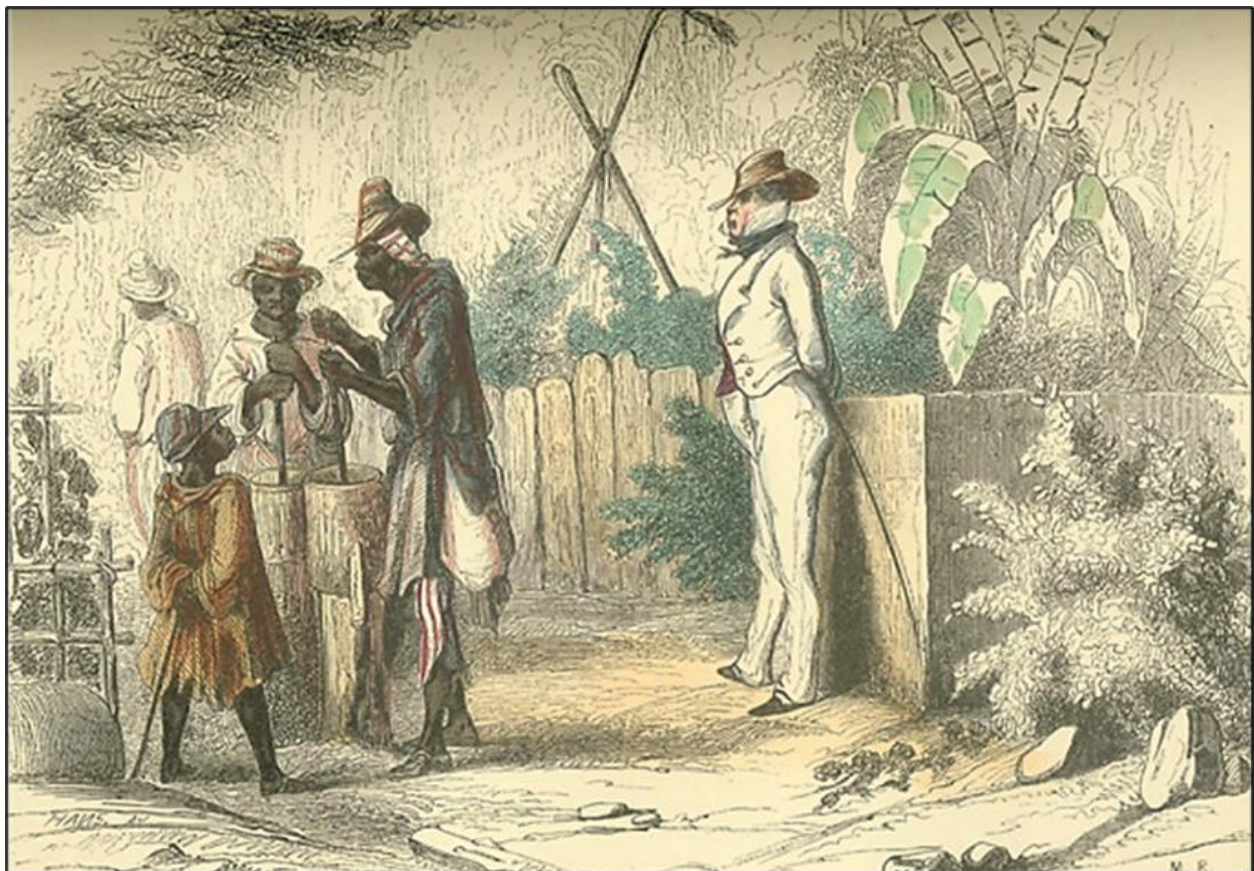
¹⁹ Heintz, Heintz, and Heintz, 23-24.

²⁰ Leyburn, 14-15.

²¹ Dubois, 19.

million of them. The slaves outnumbered the free population by ten to one in the colony overall, and by a much higher proportion on many of the plantations. In the parish of Acul, where the 1791 insurrection began, there were 3,500 slaves surrounding 130 free people.²²

As the slaves suffered through the ordeal of plantation survival, they formed a new culture and covert network. Planters did not see any advantages in assimilating a disposable workforce into colonial society, so they allowed them to retain their African languages, religions, and values. The amalgamation of numerous African tribal languages with French created a new lingua franca, **Kreyol**. To find comfort, meaning, and escape from their daily trauma, ancestral religious practices were intermixed with Catholicism to form a new religion with a West African name, **Vodou**.²³ Recognizing its familiarity and openness, new arrivals embraced it. Though expressly forbidden, the development of Kreyol and Vodou facilitated a clandestine social network that linked slaves from several plantations together in what would prove to be fateful.



²² Laurent, Dubois, *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. (New York: Picador), 2012.

²³ This is my first use of the term “Vodou.” It has a variety of spellings. See APPENDIX D: SPELLINGS OF VODOU regarding why I use this spelling instead of other renderings.

The French slave owners unhesitatingly indulged their wildest whims without any legal or moral restraints. Plantation owners pursued depraved luxuries and engaged in dangerous excesses and debauchery that radically altered the colony's social structure and resulted in explosive consequences. With reckless abandon, planters engaged in sexual overindulgences with their slave women. White slave owners taking black mistresses were commonplace. Within a few generations, a new, influential race was created.

“A stay on Saint-Dominique is not at all deadly; it is our vices, our devouring vexations that kill us,’ wrote a young Frenchman returning after an eleven-year stay.”²⁴
“As the eighteenth century drew to a close, Saint-Domingue, for all its opulence, was a very sick society at war with itself.”²⁵

²⁴ Reiss, 31.

²⁵ Heintz, Heintz, and Heintz, 35.

Chapter 3

PRELUDE TO REVOLUTION

1696—1791

You know what you've got, but you don't know what's coming. -Haitian proverb





Saint-Dominique was a powder keg waiting for a spark. Turmoil erupted across the Atlantic with the advent of the French Revolution in 1789. The prosperous colony was deeply divided into five distinct racial castes, each with their own diverse interests and motives regarding slavery and independence.

The **whites** (*blancs*) were comprised of two classes who could never resolve their prejudices. The **grand blancs** (big whites) were the wealthy and powerful French plantation owners who owned many slaves. Since their riches were built by the importation of slaves, they were united in their support and exploitation of the blacks. The royal economic policies forced an enterprise monopoly that required the colony to trade exclusively with France, but the grand blancs defied French law and traded with the United States and British Jamaica. Saint-Domingue's economy was sustained by contraband trade. Most grand blancs desired independence from France.

The second group of whites was the **petit blancs** (little whites) who did not own land. They were of a lower class and less powerful than the planters. They were comprised of the port and plantation overseers, artisans, merchants, shopkeepers, and teachers. Petit blancs were staunchly committed to slavery but loyal to France. The whites numbered about twenty thousand on the eve of the revolution.

The third group was the **Free Persons-of-Color** (*hommes de couleur, mulatres, mulattos*). They were children of white Frenchmen and slave women who were freed by their fathers or masters for reasons of paternal guilt or concern. As generations passed, large numbers of them owned plantations and slaves, and they accumulated enormous wealth. They regarded the black slaves as their enemies and treated them with as much brutality as the whites. Denying their roots, they dressed as Frenchmen, spoke French, sent their children to be educated in France, practiced Catholicism, and denounced Vodou. The petit blancs and the blacks abhorred and reviled mulattos. The discriminatory 1685 Le Code Noir²⁶ restricted the activities of Free Persons-of-Color. It forbade them to eat at the same table with whites, and they did not possess the rights of French citizens; therefore, they desired the rights of equality and the status of citizenship. They numbered approximately thirty thousand.

The fourth group was the **Black Slaves** (*noirs*). "There were some 500,000 slaves on the eve of the French Revolution. This meant the slaves outnumbered the whites and mulattos by about ten-to-one. In the cruel pecking order of slavery, one of the most frightening threats to recalcitrant slaves in the rest of the Americas was to threaten to sell them to Saint-Domingue. . . . French slave owners found it much easier to replace

²⁶ See APPENDIX E: LE CODE NOIR.

slaves by purchasing new ones than in worrying much to preserve the lives of existing slaves.”²⁷

“On the eve of the revolution, . . . two-thirds of Saint-Domingue’s slaves—and therefore half of the colony’s population—had been born in Africa. The relationship between these African-born slaves and the creoles²⁸ was complex. . . . the particular life histories of members of these two groups would shape their participation in the revolution.”²⁹

The final group was known as the **Marrons** (*marron*). These were comprised of thousands of runaway slaves who had escaped into the mountains and forests where they lived in small hamlets or entrenched camps away from the control of the blancs and mulatto masters. Marron is a French word that means “wild, untamed,” like domesticated animals that turn feral. The Code Noir stipulated that runaway slaves were to have their ears cut off and branded with the fleur-de-lis on their shoulder, but the thick, mountainous wildernesses made their capture nearly impossible. They existed by subsistence farming and often conducted violent raids on the plantations. In seclusion, the marrons kept alive their African cultures and religions. Their estimated numbers were in the tens of thousands.

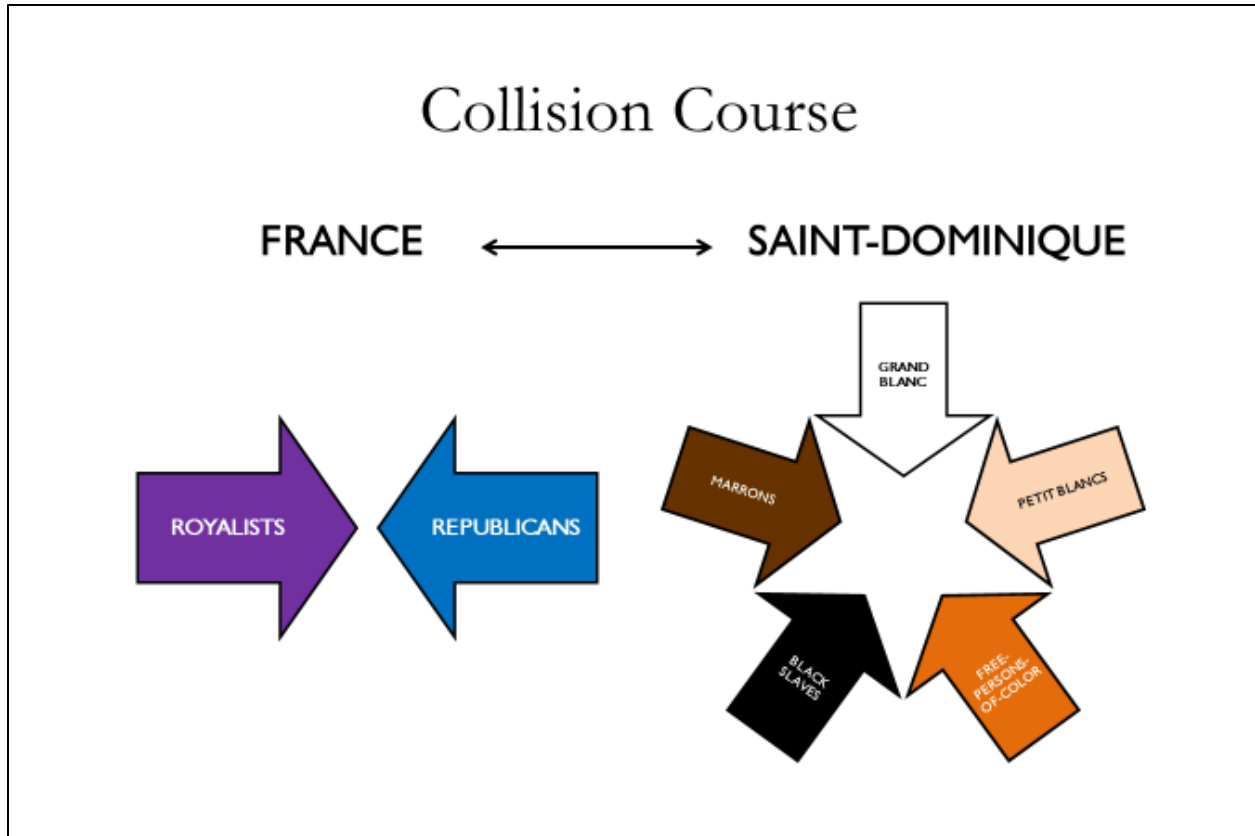
Marron communities incited open, armed conflict with the plantations and established an insurgent network that united the slaves across the plantations as a precursor to the revolution.

Saint-Domingue was a colony on a collision course. The society seethed with hatred—everyone loathed everyone else. The aristocratic white planters scorned the lower-class whites, the poorer whites were jealous and detested the rich whites, French-born whites mocked the locally born whites,³⁰ and all whites abhorred the mulattoes. While the mulattoes envied the whites, they reviled and brutalized the blacks. Hated by all classes and suffering in their misery, the blacks boiled with anger and waited to take their revenge. In this society built on hatred and dehumanization, everyone lived in terror.

²⁷ Robert Corbett, *The Haitian Revolution of 1791-1803: An Historical Essay in Four Parts*. <http://www.websteruniv.edu/~corbetre/haiti/history/revolution/revolution1.htm>, 3.

²⁸ “Creole” became the describing term to refer to someone who was born in the Americas.

²⁹ Dubois, 42.



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By the late eighteenth century, the stage for a class collision was set. The United States was in its initial years as a nation, and Europe was in disarray as the French Revolution burned across its landscape. On the island of Hispaniola, far from anybody's eyes, planters, craftsmen, soldiers, and administrators closely watched the events unfold across the Atlantic. The explosive mixture of bitter racial hatreds and numerous miscalculations by the French monarchy, National Assembly, and colonial Council ignited endless insurrections without great success or strategic alliances. It was an uncertain time as loyalties were deeply divided between royalist and republican political persuasions.

Inspired by the French **Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen**,³¹ which declared universal human rights of liberty and equality as the basis of all legitimate government and social systems, the free persons-of-color sought full French citizenship while the petit blancs vehemently fought to preserve the status quo. As the grand blancs were maneuvering toward complete separation from France's trading monopoly,

³¹ See APPENDIX F: DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN (1789).

everyone watched the events overseas. The plantation owners were unaware that upheaval was fomenting beneath their very feet.

“It was not the resentment of slaves against their masters which caused the final explosion; the slaves were tinder used by others to keep the conflagration burning. . . . As the free colored people flourished, so also did the jealousy of the petit blancs against them.”³²



By the time of the revolution, many free persons-of-color had never known slavery since their families had been free for two or three generations. The petit blancs not only resented the mulattos' wealth and better education but also, their inclusion in higher society with the grand blancs.

The colony so notorious for its treatment of black slaves was producing a mulatto cultural elite. Beyond the arts and entertainment, it also produced mixed-race businesspeople, plantation owners, lawyers, philosophers, and orators. In the 1780s, one of these men, Julien Raimond, moved to Paris and became a leading advocate for the rights of free blacks of the era, despite being the owner of hundreds of slaves.³³

³² Leyburn, 15, 17.

³³ Reiss, 43-44

Beginning in 1758, the colonial Council enacted a series of blatant discriminatory laws establishing distinct color lines that were not to be crossed. It forbade persons-of-color from holding public office in the courts and militia that would elevate them over whites; barred them from the professions of law or religion; prohibited them from carrying swords (a symbol of prominence) and bearing firearms, and limited their travels to France. In 1779, laws designed to publicly humiliate the mulattos were passed stipulating that their clothes must be of a different material and cut from whites, they had to be indoors by nine o'clock in the evening, and they must sit in separate sections in churches and the theatre. Mulattos were deprived of basic civil liberties. If they arrived in church with the same clothes as whites, constables tore the garments from their backs, male and female alike. They were barred from defending their wives from sexual assaults by any white man.

A majority of planters and officials believed that maintaining racial distinctions toward freed-coloreds was vital to preserving slavery in Saint-Dominique. A 1767 ministerial directive declared that, for those whose ancestors had come from Africa, the “first stain” of slavery extended to “all their descendants” and could not be “erased by the gift of freedom.” In 1771, administrators in Saint-Domingue argued that in order to maintain a feeling of inferiority in the “hearts of the slaves” it was necessary to maintain racial distinctions “even after liberty is granted,” so that they would understand that their “color is condemned to servitude,” and that nothing could make them equal with their masters.³⁴

Raimond argued, “What earthly power can give itself the right to create unjust laws, when the Eternal itself has abstained from doing so?”³⁵

Far from the Caribbean shores, debates raged in Revolutionary France over the interpretation and application of the universal principles from the Declaration of The Rights of Man. The first article of the Declaration proclaimed, “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.” Arguments ensued whether the new reformative laws would be applicable in the colonies.

On October 22, 1789, the French National Assembly accepted the petition of rights from the free people-of-color and seated their delegation. This acceptance granted states’ rights and citizenship to all the colonists who owned property on Saint-Domingue. The Assembly president announced, “Never shall any citizen ask in vain for his rights from this Assembly.”³⁶

³⁴ Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*, 68.

³⁵ Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*, 60.

³⁶ Heintz, Heintz, and Heintz, 39.

The whites on Saint-Domingue repudiated the National Assembly's declaration and refused to accept the seating of a free persons-of-color delegation. Undeterred, the free persons-of-color pressed their rights by taking up arms. They had long comprised the majority of the colonial militia and police force and therefore had access to weapons. Wealthy planters **Vincent Ogé** and **Jean-Baptist Chavannes** led an armed but unsuccessful people-of-color revolt against Cap-Francois in 1790. Their soldiers were captured and hanged, including a French priest. To send a strong, unmistakable message, the whites publicly tortured Ogé and Chavannes to death.

They are to be taken . . . to have their arms, legs, and ribs broken, while alive, upon a scaffold erected for the purpose, and placed by the executioner upon the wheel; with their faces turned toward Heaven, there to remain as long as it shall please God to let them live; after this, their heads are to be severed from their bodies and exposed on stakes.³⁷

Ogé and Chavannes were transformed into martyrs for liberty.



Vincent Ogé

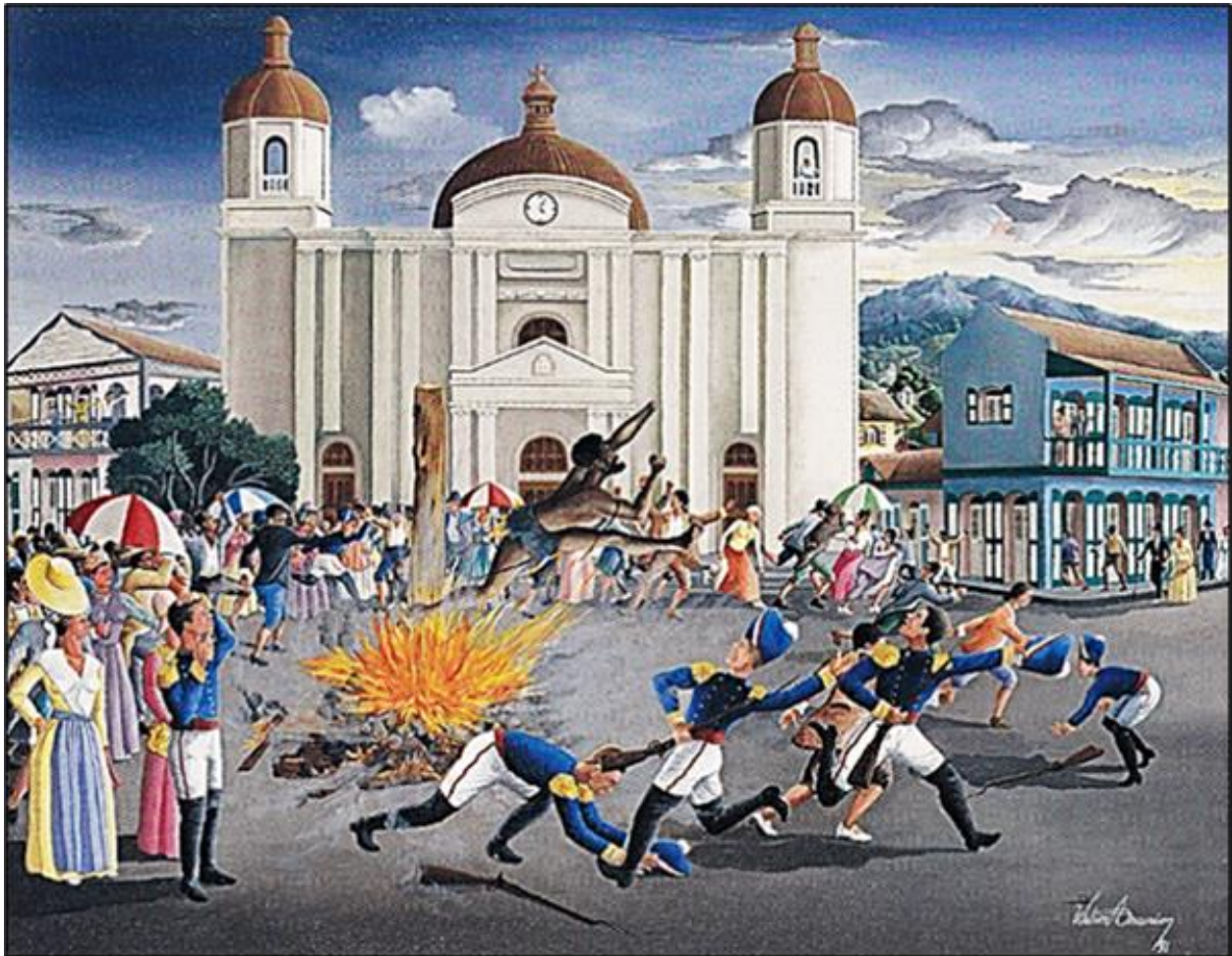


Jean-Baptist Chavannes

³⁷ Heintl, Heintl, and Heintl, 40.

Other than small maroon raids, most conflicts were between whites and free persons-of-color. In silence but with attentiveness, the blacks carefully witnessed these factions.

An early slave rebellion was organized in 1751 by Mackandal, a *houngan* (witchdoctor), knowledgeable in poisons. Drawing on African traditions, he united maroon bands with plantation slaves into secret organizations that poisoned the water supplies and animals. He spread great terror and killed 6,000 until he was captured and burned at the stake. Before his death, Mackandal said that he would be reincarnated as a deadly mosquito. As his body writhed in convulsions in the flames, the stake snapped and the blacks watching let out a great shout celebrating his free soul.³⁸



Mackandal

³⁸ Heinl, Heinl, and Heinl, 27.

“Of the half-million slaves in Saint-Domingue on the eve of the 1791 revolt, about 330,000 had been born and raised in Africa. Most of them were quite recent arrivals; more than 40,000 had stepped off the slave ships just the previous year.”³⁹ “The slaves who arrived in Saint-Domingue from central Africa in the late eighteenth century came from a region torn apart by civil wars. Many were former soldiers, sold to European slavers after being captured in battle. They were well versed in the use of firearms and experienced in military tactics involving small, mobile, autonomous units. The governors and masters of Saint-Domingue had seen only living merchandise stepping off the African ships docked in their harbors. . . . What the masters didn’t see was that the boats had brought literally thousands of soldiers to their shores. The new arrivals carried in their minds all the tactics and experience required to start—and win—a war. All they needed were weapons and an opportunity.”⁴⁰

Leading 18th-century French writer Count Mirabeau said Saint-Domingue whites “slept at the foot of Vesuvius.”⁴¹

³⁹ Dubois, *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*, 21.

⁴⁰ Dubois, *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*, 23.

⁴¹ Adam Hochschild. *Bury the Chains: The British Struggle to Abolish Slavery*. ((Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005).

Chapter 4

REVERBERATIONS

Tell me who you love, and I'll tell you who you are. – Haitian proverb



Cap-Haitien market



“*Shut up and sit down!*” Abruptly, viciously, my friend was cut off in mid-sentence and publicly shamed. I had no idea what had just happened. I had asked him to translate a word of gratitude to our hotel host.

The severe rebuke was delivered by our hotel proprietor, a former diplomat and law professor, and a Haitian American pastor. What offense had he committed that provoked this jarring condemnation? Simply stated, my friend was considered unworthy to address this man. At that moment, the caste lines of Haiti were revealed to me.

Later that evening, one of the hotel servants returned to me a dress shirt that I had given the proprietor as a gift. I gave several dress shirts as gifts to gracious men who served us during our trip. He returned it because he could not be seen wearing a shirt like everyone else.

The caste lines constructed during the colonial period still exist in Haiti. Unconsciously, I breached this line, and my friend paid dearly. There are two distinct social classes in Haitian society—the *elites* and the *masses*. The delineating criteria are skin color, education, language, religion, profession, places of residence, and cultural variations. The elites comprise less than five percent of the population. Generally, they are of mixed color, well-educated, fluent in French, Roman Catholic, and work in selected professions, but not with their hands. They control the powerful institutions of government, commerce, and the military. Typically, the elites treat those beneath them with a degree of impatience and contempt.

Commonly, the masses are of African heritage; their skin color is very dark, almost black; they speak Haitian Creole; practice Vodou or have some connection to it, are less educated, and have limited employment options.

Whites (*blancs*) are considered another distinct race.

There has been only one historic period when these two classes set aside their differences and collaborated for a common purpose. In 1803, after the abduction of Toussaint Louverture, the blacks, led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines, and the mixed-raced people, led by Alexandre Pétion, united to overthrow the French. This alliance lasted less than two years. In two centuries, Haiti has never had a stable government because these classes refuse to work together for a common purpose or good.

Today, the castes exist because one class has structured society to subjugate the other by denying equal access to education, employment, and services, while the other has submitted to the oppression.

In Haiti, the shade of one’s skin defines class. They freely talk about skin color. After someone we worked with committed a crime, my friend remarked, “I am ashamed

that a man of my color could do something like that.” When a Haitian friend came to the United States for his first visit, we were greeted by a female security guard as we entered a building. My friend blurted out, “Look at her; look at her; her skin is as black as mine; she’s as black as me!”—much to the woman’s astonishment and embarrassment.

In any culture, race and skin color are always challenging to comprehend and sensitive to discuss. In Haiti, the perceptions and expectations are very different. When the United States occupied the island in the early twentieth century, the mission was ill-fated because the Americans failed to recognize the racial and social distinctions, ultimately polarizing both classes. Soldiers regarded the elites and the masses as one—negroes. They delivered the same condescending treatment that was administered to blacks in the southern U.S. during the late nineteenth century, though the elites were probably better educated, wealthier, and more cultured.

Visitors and workers must consider how the Haitian classes view themselves and decide how one’s words and actions could impact them, constructively or harmfully. The greatest compliment I have ever received came from a black man who said, “I consider you Haitian because you treat us like equals.” I attribute this honor to servant leadership. Throughout our week of travels and tense encounters, I made certain that every team member, Haitian and American, received the same benefits and accepted the same difficulties. We rode together in the same vehicles; we ate the same foods at a common table; we shared equal accommodations. We listened to one another with egalitarian respect. On one occasion, we accepted the same disdain that they suffered and abandoned our lodgings to endure the same discomforts. I know this surprised them because it was not the norm. It is my firm conviction that breaking through Haiti’s racial polarization will require similar conduct.

APPENDIX B: A LETTER FROM CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS TO THE KING AND QUEEN OF SPAIN (1490's)

Most High and Mighty Sovereigns,

In obedience to your Highnesses' commands, and with submission to superior judgment, I will say whatever occurs to me in reference to the colonization and commerce of the Island of Espanola, and of the other islands, both those already discovered and those that may be discovered hereafter.

In the first place, as regards the Island of Espanola: Inasmuch as the number of colonists who desire to go thither amounts to two thousand, owing to the land being safer and better for farming and trading, and because it will serve as a place to which they can return and from which they can carry on trade with the neighboring islands:

1. That in the said island there shall be founded three or four towns, situated in the most convenient places, and that the settlers who are there be assigned to the aforesaid places and towns.
2. That for the better and more speedy colonization of the said island, no one shall have liberty to collect gold in it except those who have taken out colonists' papers, and have built houses for their abode, in the town in which they are, that they may live united and in greater safety.
3. That each town shall have its alcalde [Mayor] ... and its notary public, as is the use and custom in Castile.
4. That there shall be a church, and parish priests or friars to administer the sacraments, to perform divine worship, and for the conversion of the Indians.
5. That none of the colonists shall go to seek gold without a license from the governor or alcalde of the town where he lives; and that he must first take oath to return to the place whence he sets out, for the purpose of registering faithfully all the gold he may have found, and to return once a month, or once a week, as the time may have been set for him, to render account and show the quantity of said gold; and that this shall be written down by the notary before the alcalde, or, if it seems better, that a friar or priest, deputed for the purpose, shall be also present.
6. That all the gold thus brought in shall be smelted immediately, and stamped with some mark that shall distinguish each town; and that the portion which belongs to your Highnesses shall be weighed, and given and consigned to each alcalde in his own town, and registered by the above-mentioned priest or friar, so that it shall not pass through the hands of only one person, and there shall be no opportunity to conceal the truth.
7. That all gold that may be found without the mark of one of the said towns in the possession of anyone who has once registered in accordance with the above order shall be taken as forfeited, and that the accuser shall have one portion of it and your Highnesses the other.
8. That one per centum of all the gold that may be found shall be set aside for building churches and adorning the same, and for the support of the priests or friars belonging to them; and, if it should be thought proper to pay anything to the alcaldes or notaries for their services, or for ensuring the faithful perforce of their duties, that this amount shall be sent to the governor or treasurer who may be appointed there by your Highnesses.
9. As regards the division of the gold, and the share that ought to be reserved for your Highnesses, this, in my opinion, must be left to the aforesaid governor and treasurer, because it will have to be greater or less according to the quantity of gold that may be found. Or, should it seem preferable, your Highnesses might, for the space of one year, take one half, and the collector the other and a better arrangement for the division be made afterward.
10. That if the said alcaldes or notaries shall commit or be privy to any fraud, punishment shall be provided, and the same for the colonists who shall not have declared all the gold they have.
11. That in the said island there shall be a treasurer, with a clerk to assist him, who shall receive all the gold belonging to your Highnesses, and the alcaldes and notaries of the towns shall each keep a record of what they deliver to the said treasurer.

12. As, in the eagerness to get gold, everyone will wish, naturally, to engage in its search in preference to any other employment, it seems to me that the privilege of going to look for gold ought to be withheld during some portion of each year, that there may be opportunity to have the other business necessary for the island performed.
13. In regard to the discovery of new countries, I think permission should be granted to all that wish to go, and more liberality used in the matter of the fifth, making the tax easier, in some fair way, in order that many may be disposed to go on voyages.

I will now give my opinion about ships going to the said Island of Espanola, and the order that should be maintained; and that is, that the said ships should only be allowed to discharge in one or two ports designated for the purpose, and should register there whatever cargo they bring or unload; and when the time for their departure comes, that they should sail from these same ports, and register all the cargo they take in, that nothing may be concealed.

1. In reference to the transportation of gold from the island to Castile, that all of it should be taken on board the ship, both that belonging to your Highnesses and the property of everyone else; that it should all be placed in one chest with two locks, with their keys, and that the master of the vessel keep one key and some person selected by the governor and treasurer the other; that there should come with the gold, for a testimony, a list of all that has been put into the said chest, properly marked, so that each owner may receive his own; and that, for the faithful performance of this duty, if any gold whatsoever is found outside of the said chest in any way, be it little or much, it shall be forfeited to your Highnesses.
2. That all the ships that come from the said island shall be obliged to make their proper discharge in the port of Cadiz, and that no person shall disembark or other person be permitted to go on board until the ship has been visited by the person or persons deputed for that purpose, in the said city, by your Highnesses, to whom the master shall show all that he carries, and exhibit the manifest of all the cargo, it may be seen and examined if the said ship brings anything hidden and not known at the time of lading.
3. That the chest in which the said gold has been carried shall be opened in the presence of the magistrates of the said city of Cadiz, and of the person deputed for that purpose by your Highnesses, and his own property be given to each owner.

I beg your Highnesses to hold me in your protection; and I remain, praying our Lord God for your Highnesses' lives and the increase of much greater States.

SOURCE: Bob Corbett, corbetre@webster.edu. August 22, 2012. From: leiderman@mindspring.com

RESOURCE: <http://www.law.ou.edu/ushistory/columlet.shtml>

APPENDIX C: KING FERDINAND'S LETTER TO THE TAINO INDIANS

NOTE: Below is a letter King Ferdinand sent to the governor of Hispaniola. It was to be communicated to the Taino/Arawak Indians. This letter was preserved by Bartolomé de las Casas and in his introduction, he writes:

The King gave instructions to Governor Pedrarias [Davila] regarding his conduct in the New World and included an injunction requiring the allegiance of the Indians to the King of Castile, the text of which was later used through the Indies. The King's council once more showed grave and hateful ignorance in this for whatever is founded on injustice is doomed to fall apart at the seams and cause a thousand ills that will corrupt and unnerve the moral and political edifice of a nation, replacing it with consummate malice.

THE INJUNCTION READS:

In the name of King Ferdinand and Juana, his daughter, Queen of Castile and Leon, etc., conquerors of barbarian nations, we notify you as best we can that our Lord God Eternal created Heaven and earth and a man and woman from whom we all descend for all times and all over the world. In the 5,000 years since creation the multitude of these generations caused men to divide and establish kingdoms in various parts of the world, among whom God chose St. Peter as leader of mankind, regardless of their law, sect or belief. He seated St. Peter in Rome as the best place from which to rule the world but he allowed him to establish his seat in all parts of the world and rule all people, whether Christians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles or any other sect. He was named Pope, which means admirable and greatest father, governor of all men. Those who lived at that time obeyed St. Peter as Lord and superior King of the universe, and so did their descendants obey his successors and so on to the end of time.

The late Pope gave these islands and mainland of the ocean and the contents hereof to the above-mentioned King and Queen, as is certified in writing and you may see the documents if you should so desire. Therefore, Their Highnesses are lords and masters of this land; they were acknowledged as such when this notice was posted, and were and are being served willingly and without resistance; then, their religious envoys were acknowledged and obeyed without delay, and all subjects unconditionally and of their own free will became Christians and thus they remain. Their Highnesses received their allegiance with joy and benignity and decreed that they be treated in this spirit like good and loyal vassals and you are under the obligation to do the same.

Therefore, we request that you understand this text, deliberate on its contents within a reasonable time, and recognize the Church and its highest priest, the Pope, as rulers of the universe, and in their name the King and Queen of Spain as rulers of this land, allowing the religious fathers to preach our holy Faith to you. Your own compliance as a duty to the King and we in his name will receive you with love and charity, respecting your freedom and that of your wives and sons and your rights of possession and we shall not compel you to baptism unless you, informed of the Truth, wish to convert to our holy Catholic Faith as almost all your neighbors have done in other islands, in exchange for which Their Highnesses bestow many privileges and exemptions upon you.

Should you fail to comply, or delay maliciously in so doing, we assure you that with the help of God we shall use force against you, declaring war upon you from all sides and with all possible means, and we shall bind you to the yoke of the Church and of Their Highnesses; we shall enslave your persons, wives and

sons, sell you or dispose of you as the King sees fit; we shall seize your possessions and harm you as much as we can as disobedient and resisting vassals. And we declare you guilty of resulting deaths and injuries, exempting Their Highnesses of such guilt as well as ourselves and the gentlemen who accompany us. We hereby request that legal signatures be affixed to this text and pray those present to bear witness for us, etc.

Resource: De Las Casas, Bartolomé (1971). *History of the Indies*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, Book Three, Section 57, pp. 192-193. (This book was begun by Las Casas in 1527 and finished before 1565. He does say that the events of book three occurred between 1511 and 1520, and the letter is very early in the book.)

Source: Bob Corbett, corbetre@webster.edu. August 21, 2012

APPENDIX D: SPELLINGS OF VODOU

Haitian Vodou captures everybody's attention and curiosity. I receive many queries regarding it. There's no denying that Vodou has played a central role in determining Haiti's consciousness and history, past and present. I will elaborate more in the later chapters of this document. At this place, I will address its many spellings and my selection.

I have made the personal choice to use the “**Vodou**” spelling for this history, to distance the record from sensational interpretations and to distinguish Haitian Vodou from other varieties. The most common, English spelling in literature and media is Voodoo. This is a generalized spelling referring to all forms of the religion, whether in Haitian Creole, Louisiana French Creole, African Dahomean, or its other incarnations. In recent years, popular culture in movies and media has sensationalized the religion with outlandish and false stereotypes; therefore, many Haitian anthropologists and scholars have moved away from this spelling to other forms. No standard has ever been established. In conformance with the Haitian pronunciation, the word is pronounced /'vu:du:/.

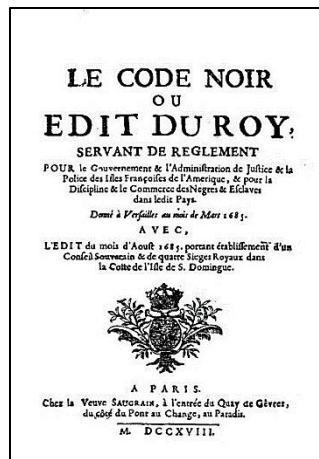
There are many other spellings that have been used in the literature: including *Vodun*, *Voudou*, *Vodoun*, *Vaudou*, *Vaudoux*, to name a few. Dr. Price-Mars, Haiti's leading ethnologist on African roots, in the early twentieth century, uses “*Vaudou*,” to distinguish the Haitian variant from similar African beliefs and practices. Mars was instrumental in influencing Francois Duvalier and *Négritude*, a critical and literary theory developed by intellectuals, writers, and politicians of the African diaspora who advanced the self-affirmation of black peoples. It produced the *noiriste* movement (black pride).

I also capitalize the word when I write, as other religions are rendered, but you will find certain instances in this document in lowercase forms when I am citing other sources.

Michael S. VanHook, ISA, 2021

APPENDIX E: LE CODE NOIR

Le Code Noir was a decree passed by France's King Louis XIV in 1685. The Code Noir forbade the exercise of any religion other than the Roman Catholicism, ordered all Jews out of the colony, restricted the activities of free Blacks (*affranchis*), and defined the brutal conditions of slavery in the French colonial empire. This law was in effect for over a century, although the slave-masters often ignored all provisions dealing with the rights of slaves and continued their cruel exploitation with impunity.



Edict of the King

On the Subject of the Policy Regarding the Islands of French America

March 1685

Recorded at the Sovereign Council of Saint-Domingue, 6 May 1687.

Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre: to all those here present and to those to come, GREETINGS. In that we must also care for all people that Divine Providence has put under our tutelage, we have agreed to have the reports of the officers we have sent to our American islands studied in our presence. These reports inform us of their need for our authority and our justice in order to maintain the discipline of the Roman Catholic, and Apostolic Faith in the islands. Our authority is also required to settle issues dealing with the condition and quality of the slaves in said islands. We desire to settle these issues and inform them that, even though they reside infinitely far from our normal abode, we are always present for them, not only through the reach of our power but also by the promptness of our help toward their needs. For these reasons, and on the advice of our council and of our certain knowledge, absolute power and royal authority, we have declared, ruled, and ordered, and declare, rule, and order, that the following pleases us:

Article I. We desire and we expect that the Edict of 23 April 1615 of the late King, our most honored lord and father who remains glorious in our memory, be executed in our islands. This accomplished, we enjoin all of our officers to chase from our islands all the Jews who have established residence there. As with all declared enemies of Christianity, we command them to be gone within three months of the day of issuance of the present [order], at the risk of confiscation of their persons and their goods.

Article II. All slaves that shall be in our islands shall be baptized and instructed in the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith. We enjoin the inhabitants who shall purchase newly-arrived Negroes to inform the Governor and Intendant of said islands of this fact within no more that eight days, or risk being fined an arbitrary amount. They shall give the necessary orders to have them instructed and baptized within a suitable amount of time.

Article III. We forbid any religion other than the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith from being practiced in public. We desire that offenders be punished as rebels disobedient of our orders. We forbid any gathering to that end, which we declare to be conventicle, illegal, and seditious, and subject to the same punishment as would be applicable to the masters who permit it or accept it from their slaves.

Article IV. No persons assigned to positions of authority over Negroes shall be other than a member of the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith, and the master who assigned these persons shall risk having said Negroes confiscated, and arbitrary punishment levied against the persons who accepted said position of authority.

Article V. We forbid our subjects who belong to the so-called "reformed" religion from causing any trouble or unforeseen difficulties for our other subjects or even for their own slaves in the free exercise of the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith, at the risk of exemplary punishment.

Article VI. We enjoin all our subjects, of whatever religion and social status they may be, to observe Sundays and the holidays that are observed by our subjects of the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith. We forbid them to work, nor make their slaves work, on said days, from midnight until the following midnight. They shall neither cultivate the earth, manufacture sugar, nor perform any other work, at the risk of a fine and an arbitrary punishment against the masters, and of confiscation by our officers of as much sugar worked by said slaves before being caught.

Article VII. We forbid them also to hold slave markets or any other market on said days at the risk of similar punishments and of confiscation of the merchandise that shall be discovered at the market, and an arbitrary fine against the sellers.

Article VIII. We declare that our subjects who are not of the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith, are incapable of contracting a valid marriage in the future. We declare any child born from such unions to be bastards, and we desire that said marriages be held and reputed, and to hold and reputed, as actual concubinage.

Article IX. Free men who shall have one or more children during concubinage with their slaves, together with their masters who accepted it, shall each be fined two thousand pounds of sugar. If they are the masters of the slave who produced said children, we desire, in addition to the fine, that the slave and the children be removed and that she and they be sent to work at the hospital, never to gain their freedom. We do not expect however for the present article to be applied when the man was not married to another person during his concubinage with this slave, who he should then marry according to the accepted rites of the Church. In this way she shall then be freed, the children becoming free and legitimate. . . .

Article XI. We forbid priests from conducting weddings between slaves if it appears that they do not have their masters' permission. We also forbid masters from using any constraints on their slaves to marry them without their wishes.

Article XII. Children born from marriages between slaves shall be slaves, and if the husband and wife have different masters, they shall belong to the masters of the female slave, not to the master of her husband.

Article XIII. We desire that if a male slave has married a free woman, their children, either male or female, shall be free as is their mother, regardless of their father's condition of slavery. And if the father is free and the mother a slave, the children shall also be slaves. . . .

Article XV. We forbid slaves from carrying any offensive weapons or large sticks, at the risk of being whipped and having the weapons confiscated. The weapons shall then belong to he who confiscated them. The sole exception shall be made for those who have been sent by their masters to hunt and who are carrying either a letter from their masters or his known mark.

Article XVI. We also forbid slaves who belong to different masters from gathering, either during the day or at night, under the pretext of a wedding or other excuse, either at one of the master's houses or elsewhere, and especially not in major roads or isolated locations. They shall risk corporal punishment that shall not be less than the whip and the fleur de lys, and for frequent recidivists and in other aggravating circumstances, they may be punished with death, a decision we leave to their judge. We enjoin all our subjects, even if they are not officers, to rush to the offenders, arrest them, and take them to prison, and that there be no decree against them. . . .

Article XVIII. We forbid slaves from selling sugar cane, for whatever reason or occasion, even with the permission of their master, at the risk of a whipping for the slaves and a fine of ten pounds for the masters who gave them permission, and an equal fine for the buyer.

Article XIX. We also forbid slaves from selling any type of commodities, even fruit, vegetables, firewood, herbs for cooking and animals either at the market, or at individual houses, without a letter or a known mark from their masters granting express permission. Slaves shall risk the confiscation of goods sold in this way, without their masters receiving restitution for the loss, and a fine of six pounds shall be levied against the buyers. . . .

Article XXVII. Slaves who are infirm due to age, sickness or other reason, whether the sickness is curable or not, shall be nourished and cared for by their masters. In the case that they be abandoned, said slaves shall be awarded to the hospital, to which their master shall be required to pay six sols per day for the care and feeding of each slave. . . .

Article XXXI. Slaves shall not be a party, either in court or in a civil matter, either as a litigant or as a defendant, or as a civil party in a criminal matter. And compensation shall be pursued in criminal matters for insults and excesses that have been committed against slaves. . . .

Article XXXIII. The slave who has struck his master in the face or has drawn blood, or has similarly struck the wife of his master, his mistress, or their children, shall be punished by death. . . .

Article XXXVIII. The fugitive slave who has been on the run for one month from the day his master reported him to the police, shall have his ears cut off and shall be branded with a fleur de lys on one shoulder. If he commits the same infraction for another month, again counting from the day he is reported, he shall have his hamstring cut and be branded with a fleur de lys on the other shoulder. The third time, he shall be put to death.

Article XXXIX. The masters of freed slaves who have given refuge to fugitive slaves in their homes shall be punished by a fine of three hundred pounds of sugar for each day of refuge.

Article XL. The slave who has been punished with death based on denunciation by his master, and who is not a party to the crime for which he was condemned, shall be assessed prior to his execution by two of the principal citizens of the island named by a judge. The assessment price shall be paid by the master, and in order to satisfy this requirement, the Intendant shall impose said sum on the head of each Negro. The

amount levied in the estimation shall be paid for each of the said Negroes and levied by the [Tax] Farmer of the Royal Western lands to avoid costs. . . .

Article XLII. The masters may also, when they believe that their slaves so deserve, chain them and have them beaten with rods or straps. They shall be forbidden however from torturing them or mutilating any limb, at the risk of having the slaves confiscated and having extraordinary charges brought against them.

Article XLIII. We enjoin our officers to criminally prosecute the masters, or their foremen, who have killed a slave under their auspices or control, and to punish the master according to the circumstances of the atrocity. In the case where there is absolution, we allow our officers to return the absolved master or foreman, without them needing our pardon.

Article XLIV. We declare slaves to be charges, and as such enter into community property. They are not to be mortgaged, and shall be shared equally between the co-inheritors without benefit to the wife or one particular inheritor, nor subject to the right of primogeniture, the usual customs duties, feudal or lineage charges, or feudal or seigneurial taxes. They shall not be affected by the details of decrees, nor from the imposition of the four-fifths, in case of disposal by death or bequeathing. . . .

Article XLVII. Husband, wife and prepubescent children, if they are all under the same master, may not be taken and sold separately. We declare the seizing and sales that shall be done as such to be void. For slaves who have been separated, we desire that the seller shall risk their loss, and that the slaves he kept shall be awarded to the buyer, without him having to pay any supplement. . . .

Article LV. Masters twenty years of age may free their slaves by any act toward the living or due to death, without their having to give just cause for their actions, nor do they require parental advice as long as they are minors of 25 years of age.

Article LVI. The children who are declared to be sole legatees by their masters, or named as executors of their wills, or tutors of their children, shall be held and considered as freed slaves. . . .

Article LVIII. We declare their freedom is granted in our islands if their place of birth was in our islands. We declare also that freed slaves shall not require our letters of naturalization to enjoy the advantages of our natural subjects in our kingdom, lands or country of obedience, even when they are born in foreign countries.

Article LIX. We grant to freed slaves the same rights, privileges and immunities that are enjoyed by freeborn persons. We desire that they are deserving of this acquired freedom, and that this freedom gives them, as much for their person as for their property, the same happiness that natural liberty has on our other subjects.

Versailles, March 1685, the forty second year of our reign.

Signed LOUIS,

and below the King.

Colbert, visa, Le Tellier.

Read, posted and recorded at the sovereign council of the coast of Saint Domingue, kept at Petit Goave, 6 May 1687, Signed Moriceau.

APPENDIX F: DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN (1789)

Approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power, may be compared at any moment with the objects and purposes of all political institutions and may thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grievances of the citizens, based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution and redound to the happiness of all. Therefore, the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:

Articles:

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.
4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.
5. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.
6. Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative, in its foundation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all dignities and to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents.
7. No person shall be accused, arrested, or imprisoned except in the cases and according to the forms prescribed by law. Anyone soliciting, transmitting, executing, or causing to be executed, any arbitrary order, shall be punished. But any citizen summoned or arrested in virtue of the law shall submit without delay, as resistance constitutes an offense.
8. The law shall provide for such punishments only as are strictly and obviously necessary, and no one shall suffer punishment except it be legally inflicted in virtue of a law passed and promulgated before the commission of the offense.

9. As all persons are held innocent until they shall have been declared guilty, if arrest shall be deemed indispensable, all harshness not essential to the securing of the prisoner's person shall be severely repressed by law.
10. No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law.
11. The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.
12. The security of the rights of man and of the citizen requires public military forces. These forces are, therefore, established for the good of all and not for the personal advantage of those to whom they shall be entrusted.
13. A common contribution is essential for the maintenance of the public forces and for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distributed among all the citizens in proportion to their means.
14. All the citizens have a right to decide, either personally or by their representatives, as to the necessity of the public contribution; to grant this freely; to know to what uses it is put; and to fix the proportion, the mode of assessment and of collection and the duration of the taxes.
15. Society has the right to require of every public agent an account of his administration.
16. A society in which the observance of the law is not assured, nor the separation of powers defined, has no constitution at all.
17. Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one shall be deprived thereof except where public necessity, legally determined, shall clearly demand it, and then only on condition that the owner shall have been previously and equitably indemnified.

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Cap-Haitien market- Owen Brock © 2009, International Strategic Alliances

AUTHOR

“The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.”

-Frederick Buechner

Michael VanHook is the founder and Executive Director International Strategic Alliances (ISA), a mission outreach to Haiti, and the MSV Educational Network, an English language and cultural institute in Brazil. ISA exists to make a significant and enduring difference in the lives of the Haitian people by helping them to rise above their present circumstances, reach the highest potential of their intended design, and become catalysts for change in their spheres of influence. ISA accomplishes this by strategically and collaboratively aligning themselves with leaders and groups to mutually design and implement sustainable humanitarian, educational, and leadership initiatives.

Michael has worn many hats throughout his life—educator, businessman, pastor, and advocate. His personal journey has been a passionate pursuit to discover how his life, transformed by God’s grace, can make a difference in the lives of others. Any success that he has achieved, he attributes to the faithful support of family and friends. Michael holds degrees from Northern Kentucky University, Asbury Seminary, and Morehead State University.

His improbable journey with Hispaniola has transformed his life as much as theirs—“I can’t explain why or how, but their love has profoundly changed me.” The spark was lit when he made a trip to Haiti as an 18-year-old high school senior. His deep, abiding love for the Haitian people motivated him to found the International Strategic Alliances as a response to their stated dreams and needs. He considers the greatest compliment that he has ever received, was when a Haitian man told him, “I consider you a Haitian because you treat us as equals.”

Michael and his wife Luciana live in the Greater Cincinnati area. He has three adult daughters and two granddaughters.

