

The Children of San Souci, Dessalines/Toussaint, and Pétion

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Abstract

This work, using a structurationist, structural Marxist understanding of consciousness constitution, i.e., phenomenological structuralism, explores the origins of the contemporary Haitian oppositional protest cry, “the children of Pétion v. the children of Dessalines.” Although viewed within racial terms in regards to the ideological position of Pétion representing the neoliberal views of the mulatto elites, and economic reform and social justice representing the ideological position of Dessalines as articulated by the African masses, this article suggests that the metaphors, contemporarily, have come to represent Marxist categories for class struggle on the island of Haiti within the capitalist world-system under American hegemony at the expense of the African majority, i.e., the Children of Sans Souci.

Keywords: African-Americanization, Vodou Ethic and the Spirit of Communism, Religiosity, Black Diaspora, Dialectical, Anti-dialectical, Phenomenological Structuralism

Introduction

Since 1986 with the toppling of the Haitian dictator, Jean-Claude “Baby-Doc” Duvalier (1951-2014), whose family ruled Haiti for almost thirty-years, the rallying cry of Haitian protest movements against dictatorship and American neoliberal policies on the island has been, “the children of Dessalines are fighting or stand against the children of Pétion.” The politically charged moniker is an allusion to the continuous struggles over control of the Haitian nation-state and its ideological apparatuses between the Africans who are deemed the descendants of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the father of the Haitian nation-state; and the mulatto elites (and more recently the Syrian class) who are deemed heirs of the mulatto first President of the Haitian Republic, Alexandre Pétion.

Since his assassination in 1806, Jean-Jacques Dessalines's (1758-1806) name has been invoked by the Black, educated, Haitian grandon (landowning merchants) class whenever Haiti is threatened by outside forces or during the American occupation (1915-1934) when the name, La Dessalinienne, of the national anthem, written by elitist liberal Justin Lhérisson in 1903, was adopted and the myth, also penned by Lhérisson, surrounding the Haitian flag was reinforced. In the case of the flag, the myth, which is now taken to be an historical fact, is that Dessalines tore out the white of the French tri-colors and had Catherine Flon, a mulattress, sew the blue and red vertically together with her hair. Both the myth, which were part of Haitian history texts penned by Lhérisson and Windsor Bellegarde, surrounding the flag and the composition of the national anthem named after Dessalines were reinforced to foster nationalism amongst the masses in the face of the American occupation (1915-1934).

Contemporarily, in the age of globalization under American hegemony, Dessalines's name is invoked by the Black grandon and petit-bourgeois classes once again as they fight against United Nations (UN) occupation and American imperialism. The ideological moniker, children of Pétion v. children of Dessalines, has been made famous, more recently, by former Haitian Senator Jean-Charles Moïse and Assad Volcy, the coordinator of the political movement, *Platfòm Pitit Desalin*, who were waging a political struggle against the American backed Michel Joseph Martelly right-winged government (2011-2016) and his political party, *Pati Ayisyen Tet Kale* (PHTK). This work, using a structurationist (phenomenological structuralism), structural Marxist understanding of practical consciousness constitution, explores the origins and basis of this Haitian protest cry, "the children of Pétion v. the children of Dessalines."

Although viewed within racial terms, with Pétion representing the practical consciousness of the mulatto elites and Dessalines the African masses, for a long time, this work suggests that the moniker, contemporarily, as utilized by the educated Black grandon and petit-bourgeois classes, has come to represent Marxist ideological categories for racial-class (nationalistic) struggles on the island of Haiti against dictatorship, the Haitian oligarchs, and American neoliberal policies: the ideological position of Pétion representing the neoliberal capitalist views of the Arab minorities, mulatto elites, and petit-bourgeois Blacks of merchants, hotel and factory owners, and executives; and Haitian nationalism, economic reform, and social justice representing the ideological position of Dessalines as articulated by the *grandons*, the landowning, professional, and drug-dealing Black classes of Haiti, claiming to speak for the African masses, i.e., the children of Sans Souci, the Congolese-born revolutionary leader of the Haitian Revolution. In this work, I conclude, however, that the moniker, as currently utilized, neither represents the position of Dessalines, nor that of the African majority, i.e., the children of Sans Souci. It is simply political rhetoric utilized by the children of Toussaint Louverture, the petit-bourgeois Black *grandon* class, seeking to integrate into the class structure of the capitalist world-system via their control of the Haitian nation-state and its ideological apparatuses at the expense of the Arab, mulatto, and petit-bourgeois Black oligarchs, i.e., the children of Pétion, and the African majority, the children of Sans Souci.

The moniker in the final analysis is a truncated understanding of Haitian identity constitution and their oppositions. Supplemented with the metaphor, the children of Sans Souci, I conclude that the moniker becomes an allusion to the practical consciousnesses that would come to constitute the Haitian nation-state following the Haitian Revolution: the children of Sans Souci representing the African majority and their practical consciousness (the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism) and the children of Dessalines/Toussaint representing the embourgeoisied practical consciousness (the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism) of the free and creole Blacks, which is no different from the practical consciousness of the children of Pétion, the mulattoes, whites, and Arabs of the island.

Background of the Problem

If the African and diasporic experience as encapsulated in slavery, colonization, abolitionism, and decolonization dialectically represents the intent of formerly enslaved African people to be like their masters amidst racism, slavery, colonization, and their structural differentiation, the Africans of Haiti who met at Bois Caïman, August 14th, 1791, and other congresses to commence the Haitian Revolution attempted to do the contrary (Mocombe, 2009, 2016, 2017). That is, they, anti-dialectically, rejected not only their enslaved status, racism, and colonization, but the very practical consciousness of their former enslavers for their own structuring structure or form of system and social integration, i.e., the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism social class language game (Mocombe, 2016, 2017). Their discourse and discursive practices would eventually be supplanted by the practical consciousness or language game of the *Affranchis*, free (creole) Blacks and mulatto, *gens de couleur*, bourgeoisies, seeking, like their liberal bourgeois Black counterparts in America and the diaspora (the Black Atlantic), equality of opportunity, distribution, and recognition with their *blanc* counterparts within the capitalist world-system via the Haitian state and its ideological apparatuses. Prior to this usurpation, however, the Vodou and Kreyol ceremony or congress at Bois Caïman under the leadership of Dutty Boukman, Edaïse, and Cecile Fatima, the Vodou manbo priestess, is a rejection of both enslaved status and European civilization, and cannot be, contrary to Susan Buck-Morss's (2009) work, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*, and others, conceptualized within the framework of Hegel's master/slave dialectic or within postmodern, post-structural, or postcolonial theories. Whereas the purposive-rationality of the two bourgeoisies, free landowning Blacks and mulatto elites, can be conceptualized within a Hegelian dialectical, postmodern, post-structural, and postcolonial struggle, that of *oungan yo* (Vodou Priests), *manbo yo* (priestesses), *gangan yo* (herbal healers), and *granmoun yo* (elders) of Bois Caïman, who would assume the leadership of the masses of the provinces and mountains, cannot. The purposive-rationality of the latter was not a structurally differentiated identity as found amongst the creole Blacks and mulatto elites.

Oungan yo, manbo yo, gangan yo, and granmoun yo of Bois Caiman offered an alternative structuring structure (form of system and social integration) for organizing the material resource framework and the agential initiatives of social actors, and must not be enframed within the structurally differentiating dialectical, postmodern, post-structural, and postcolonial logic of the West and the Affranchis (today's Haitian mulatto, Arab oligarchy, and petit-bourgeois Blacks) (Du Bois, 2012; Mocombe, 2016, 2017).

Essentially, when the Haitian Revolution commences in 1791, there are three distinct groups vying for control of the island: the whites (*blancs*), free people of color and mulattoes (*Affranchis*), and the enslaved and escaped (maroon) Africans of the island. The latter, over sixty-seven percent of the population, were not a structurally differentiated other. They had their own practical consciousness, what Paul C. Mocombe (2016, 2017) calls the “Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism,” by which they went about recursively (re)organizing and reproducing the material resource framework. The former two, free Blacks and *gens de couleur* (*Affranchis*), were interpellated, embourgeoisied, and differentiated by the language, communicative discourse, mode of production, ideology, and ideological apparatuses of the West and shared the same European practical consciousness, the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism social class language game, as the whites. The latter social class language game stood against the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism social class language game of the majority of the Africans who were interpellated and ounganified/manboified by the language, communicative discourse, mode of production, ideology, and ideological apparatuses of *oungan yo, manbo yo, gangan yo, and granmoun yo* (James, 1986; Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Ramsey, 2014; Mocombe, 2016, 2017).¹

The whites were divided between large plantation owners, *grand blanc*, and *petit-blancs*, i.e., managers, drivers, artisans, merchants, and teachers. The former, *grand blanc*, were independent-minded and like the American colonists, wanted political and economic independence from their mother-country, France, where their rights and economic interests were not represented in the National Assembly. The *petit-blancs* were more racist and feared the alliance between the larger landowners and the *Affranchis*. The *Affranchis* were free people of color and mulatto, *gens de couleur*, property and enslavers on the island who shared the religion, culture, language, and ideology of their white counterparts and wanted then Saint-Domingue to remain a French colony. Although internal antagonism based on race (color) and class existed between the free (creole) Blacks and *gens de couleur*, I group them together under the nomenclature, *Affranchis*, to highlight the fact that their interpellation and embourgeoisement via the ideological apparatuses of the West rendered their practical consciousnesses identical even though there were racial/color (based on phenotype, not ideology) tensions between them (racial tensions, which still plaques Haiti today). Unlike the majority of white large plantation owners, however, the *Affranchis*, like Vincent Ogé, André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion, Pierre Pinchinat, and Toussaint Louverture, for example, did not want independence from France.

In the case of the mulattoes, who after independence would come to be referred to as the children of Alexandre Pétion, the first president of the Haitian Republic, they simply wanted their social, political, and economic rights recognized by France within the colony, not an independent nation-state or the end to slavery. In regards to the children of Dessalines/Toussaint, creole slave drivers and free Blacks, they sought equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution vis-à-vis the whites and mulattoes. The enslaved and escaped Africans of the island, the children of Sans Souci, were divided between field slaves, domestic slaves, and maroons. The domestic slaves, like their African-American counterparts, house slaves, more so identified with their enslavers. However, for the most part, the field slaves and maroons, because of their relative isolation from whites, domestic slaves, *gens de couleur*, and free Blacks, were interpellated and ounganified/manboified by the modes of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse of the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism, and many sought to reproduce their African ways of life in a national position of their own. In the end, the Revolution would come down to a struggle between the *Affranchis* and the enslaved and maroon Africans of the island, the latter of whom commenced the Haitian Revolution on August 14th, 1791 at Bois Caiman and other congresses (Genovese, 1979; James, 1986; Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Mocombe, 2016, 2017).

Following the Revolution, between 1804 and 1806, the purposive-rationality of the enslaved and maroon Africans would become a part of the *modus operandi* of the Haitian nation-state until October 17, 1806 when Jean-Jacques Dessalines was assassinated by Alexandre Pétion and Henri Christophe. At which point, the purposive-rationality of the *Affranchis* with their emphasis on integration into the global capitalist world-system, capitalist wealth, French culture, religion, and language became dominant at the expense of the African linguistic system, Kreyol; Vodou ideology, its ideological apparatuses; and modes of production, subsistence agriculture, husbandry, and *komes* of the African masses on the island who took to the mountains and provinces following the death of Dessalines (Fick, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2004, 2012). This is not to say that Dessalines completely sided with the purposive-rationality or practical consciousness of the African masses who sought to recursively reproduce their Vodou Ethic and spirit of communism, i.e., subsistence agriculture, husbandry, *komes* (commerce), and practical consciousness on the island. The argument here is that he attempted to balance the purposive-rationality of his *grandon* class of former generals and slave drivers, i.e., the creole Blacks, who yearned to become wealthy landowners and masters like the whites and racist mulatto elites amidst the desires of the African masses seeking to reproduce their subsistence agriculture, husbandry, and *komes*. Be that as it may, the internal struggles between the two bourgeoisies within the *Affranchis*, the mulatto elites who controlled the export/import trade and the free Blacks who controlled the land and agribusinesses where the African masses toiled as cultivators, over control of the state and its ideological apparatuses would dominate the political and economic conditions of post-revolution Haiti to the present at the expense of the practical consciousness of the African masses (James, 1986; Dupuy, 1989; Fick, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Buck-Morss, 2009).

Both groups would arm the youth and peasants of the island to achieve their initiatives, i.e., control of the state and its ideological apparatuses. Today, the latter, *grandon* class, composed of educated professionals, former drug dealers, entertainers, and police officers, attack the former Affranchis class, which is now a comprador bourgeoisie seeking to build, own, and manage hotels and assembly factories producing electronics and clothing for the US market, under the moniker the children of Jean-Jacques Dessalines against the children of Alexandre Pétion in the name of the African masses of the island, the majority of whom are peasant farmers (the children of Sans Souci and Macaya, i.e., Congolese leaders of the Revolution who wanted no part of the capitalist world-system). In this work, I argue that both the children of Pétion and those evoking Dessalines's name desire the same thing, i.e., economic gain, status, and upward mobility within the capitalist world-system under American hegemony at the expense of the masses (the Children of Sans Souci and Macaya) seeking to reproduce their subsistence agriculture in the provinces and mountains of the island. As such, the moniker should really be the children of Toussaint v. the children of Pétion. The latter represent the mulatto elites and the former the Black educated grandon class seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the latter at the expense of the African masses. However, Dessalines's name is invoked by the petit-bourgeois Blacks to simply rally the African masses, who I refer to here as the children of Sans Souci because of their African origins, in a false sense of Haitian (racial) nationalism. Hence, by no means are their (the children of Toussaint or Pétion) plans in line with either the interests of the African masses or the initiatives of Dessalines who sought to balance the class interest of the children of Pétion, who desired the wealth of their fathers and further integration into the capitalist world-system of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the children of Toussaint, creole Blacks seeking to ascertain wealth and land in order to integrate into the capitalist world-system; and the children of Sans Souci, the African majority seeking to constitute a counter-plantation system based on Vodou, subsistence agriculture, and komes.

Pre-Revolutionary Haiti

Contemporarily, the island which Haiti occupies in the Caribbean is inhabited by two independent nation-states: The Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Initially, the island was occupied by the Taino indigenous people. In 1492 Christopher Columbus, seeking a Western passage to the East Indies, claimed the island for Spain. The Spanish occupied the island and renamed it *La Española* (written in English as Hispaniola). They exploited the island's gold mines and reduced the Taino natives to slavery. After fifty-years of Spanish rule the Taino natives, who numbered between 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 prior to the advent of the Spanish, were decimated through the hardship of their condition of enslavement, organized massacres, and diseases they contracted from the Spaniards (James, 1986; Fick, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2004, 2012; Buck-Morss, 2009).

The genocide of the Taino natives on the island was one of the most brutal in recorded history. As a result, Bartholomew de Las Casas, a Spanish priest, protested against the massacre of the so-called “Indians” and demanded the cessation of the injustices committed against them. He advocated for the importation of Blacks from Africa to work in the mines and on the plantations as a means of ending Indian slavery on the island. Thus, in 1503, the first Africans landed on the island. These initial Africans were indentured servants from Spain. Eventually, by 1697 Africans and the French would subsequently displace the Spanish on the western side of the island of Hispaniola.

In 1625, the first French adventurers landed on the island of La Tortue (Tortuga Island) in the northern coast of what is today the Republic of Haiti. Later, they began exploring and settling on the main land to eventually displace the Spanish from the western part of the island through warfare. Tired of French attack, and also because of the results of war in Europe, Spain signed with France the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, ceding to the latter the western part of the island. The French renamed their possession Saint-Domingue. The French developed Saint-Domingue/Haiti into the richest colony in the world through an export-oriented agricultural (plantation) economy based on enslaved Africans imported from West and Central Africa (Senegambia, Bight of Benin, and the Kongo). To build this wealth, France imported thousands of slaves from Africa who, under France’s *Code Noir*, or Black Code, were submitted to virtually the same abuses and mistreatments imposed on the Taino natives by the Spanish.

Subsequently, the importation of Africans in large numbers would change the demographics of Saint-Domingue/Haiti. Under French rule, Saint-Domingue's population, as previously mentioned, was divided into three main social groups or racial-classes, the whites or "Blancs", the "Affranchis", a group composed of free Blacks and mulattoes, and the great masses of imported enslaved Africans who constituted 75 percent of the population. By 1789, the colony's population comprised between 400,000 and 500,000 Africans, compared to about 40,000 whites and 30,000 mulattoes and free Blacks or Affranchis (Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2012). A great number of mulattoes were the offsprings of the union between “Blancs” and African women who were raped by their enslavers. In many instances, enslavers married the women, adopted these children, and provided them with the necessities of life. These offsprings, mulattoes, would in-turn inherit the wealth of their fathers and serve in the colony's police force, *maréchaussée*, which was in place to protect the colony against the enslaved Africans. Thus, by the end of the 18th century, the mulattoes would own around 25 to 30 percent of the colony's plantations and wealth, while most of them went to France to get a higher education (Fick, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2004). Yet, despite their wealth and Western interpellation, subjectification, and embourgeoisement via the Catholic Church and French education, the mulattoes, because of their color, were considered inferior to the blancs or whites by law and were discriminated against.

For example, they could not enter certain professions, i.e., law, medicine, etc., wear European clothes, or sit among the whites in church. They were reduced to a landowning and enslaving, educated, merchant class who exported indigo, coffee, and other cash crops while simultaneously serving as the police force, *maréchaussée*, of the colony against insurrection among the enslaved (Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2004).

Because of these discriminatory practices under the *Code Noir* of the colony, conflict arose between the *Affranchis*, particularly the *gens de couleur*, and the whites throughout the 18th century with the former claiming civil and political equality with the latter who wanted to maintain the status quo. Simultaneously, the whites on the island were demanding from France the right to participate in the running of the colony. They wanted to make of Saint-Domingue a country that would be autonomous from France. Both groups would voice their grievances at the time of the French revolution in 1789, which proclaimed the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity (James, 1986; Dupuy, 1989; Fick, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2004, 2012). In many instances, the *gens de couleur*, through their French supporters in Paris, *Société des Amis des Noirs*, did so at the expense of the free Blacks, a majority of creole Black enslavers seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the mulattoes and whites, whom they looked down upon on account of their race (color).

The enslaved Africans and maroon communities of Africans in the mountainsides, contrary to popular beliefs, were neither a part of the dialectical conflict between the *Affranchis* and the whites, nor this claim for liberty, equality, and fraternity proclaimed by them. The Africans of Saint-Domingue/Haiti, for the most part, came from three regions of Africa: The Congo, Dahomey/Benin, and the Nago regions of the continent (James, 1986; Fick, 1990; Desmangles, 1992; Du Bois, 2004, 2012). Although from different ethnicities of Africa what united the Africans together was the Vodou worldview, its ideological apparatuses, Lakous, peristyles, etc., and modes of production, husbandry, subsistence agriculture, and *komes*. Unlike the British and Spanish colonies where Africans were bred like animals upon their arrival to the Americas, the French did not breed their enslaved Africans. Instead, upon illness, disability, and or death, they simply imported more Africans to replace the labor supply in the colonies. In the mind of the White landowners, it was actually less expensive to import enslaved Africans than to breed them (Du Bois, 2004). Be that as it may, given the importation policy of the French planters coupled with the relative isolation of the newly arrived Africans on the island from the whites and *Affranchis*, the Africans imported to Saint-Domingue by the French were able to maintain and recursively reorganize and reproduce their African Vodou ideology, ideological apparatuses, practical consciousnesses, and social relations of production without any discontinuity in spite of the orders of the *Code Noirs*, which they tirelessly fought against.

The enslaved Africans who were imported to the French colonies manifested their rejection of their condition through different forms of resistance. Enslaved Africans poisoned their masters; others committed infanticide to save their offspring from the hellish conditions of slavery (Genovese, 1979; Fick, 1990; Karenga, 1993; Du Bois, 2004).

The most successful and persistent form of resistance to enslavement was marronage. Marronage consisted of enslaved African people running away from plantations to hide in the mountains of the island or in its forests where they reconstituted their African ways of life (Genovese, 1979; Fick, 1990; Desmangles, 1992; Karenga, 1993). From their retreat, the maroons also conducted raids on the plantations and often would come out at night to poison or kill their enslavers. One of the most famous Haitian maroons was François Makandal. Makandal was an *oungan*, or Vodou priest, from Guinea. At night, he would attack plantations, burning them and killing their owners. During his six-year rebellion, he and his followers poisoned and killed as many as 6000 whites. In 1758, however, the French captured him and publicly executed him on the public square of Cap Francais, present-day Cap-Haitian (Fick, 1990; Desmangles, 1992). So in essence, unlike the *Affranchis*, who sought equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with whites within the Protestant/Catholic capitalist world-system, the majority of Africans sought simply freedom and liberty to recursively organize and reproduce their Vodou form of system and social integration in a national position of their own (Fick, 1990; Mocombe, 2016, 2017).

Race and Class in Revolutionary Haiti

Hence, given the Africans' desires to reproduce their form of system and social integration amidst the desires of the creole Blacks, mulattoes, and whites to enslave them within the emerging Protestant capitalist world-system, the French Revolution of 1789 in France was not the spark that lit the Haitian Revolution of 1791 as many theorists propose (James, 1986; Du Bois, 2004, 2012). It sparked the Revolution for the mulatto and petit-bourgeois Black classes seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts, not the mass of Africans and their leadership imported into the colony. As previously highlighted, the revolution began the minute the Africans arrived on the island. However, the interests of the Africans were not the same as the interests of the other economic racial groups on the island, which created some very strange alliances and movements. Within the emerging Protestant capitalist world-system, France enforced a system called the "exclusif" on Saint-Domingue/Haiti. Similar to the capitalist world-system in globalization under American hegemony, this "exclusive" system required that Saint-Domingue sell 100 percent of her agricultural and raw material exports to France, and purchase 100 percent of her manufactured imports from them as well. The French merchants and crown set the prices for both imports and exports, and the prices were extraordinarily favorable to France and in no way competitive with world markets. This "exclusive" system was virtually the same as the one which England had forced on its North American colonies. Like the North Americans, the white and landowning *Affranchis* Saint-Domingueans did not abide strictly by this system. A contraband trade grew with the British in Jamaica and North America, and after its successful revolution, the United States. The Americans wanted molasses from Saint-Domingue for their burgeoning rum distilleries, and Saint-Domingue imported huge quantities of low quality dried fish to feed the enslaved.

The planters (both white and free people of color) chafed under the oppression of France's "exclusif." There was a growing independence movement, and in this movement the white planters were united with the free people of color. It was a curious alliance, since the whites continued to oppress the free people of color in their social life but formed a coalition with them on the political and economic front (Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2004). Conversely, the petit-blancs remained outside of this coalition, primarily because they were unwilling to form any sort of alliance with any persons of color, free or not. The petit-blancs were avowed racists and were especially offended and threatened by the elevated economic status of most of the free people of color. It is important to note that this economic independence movement did not include the majority of the enslaved Africans, *bossales*, in any way whatsoever, who were enslaved by both the *Affranchis* and whites. Those who were a party to the movement were avowed enslavers and their vision of a free Saint-Domingue was liked that of the United States, a slave owning nation, i.e., a slavocracy.

As such, the Africans, such as Armand, Martial, Macaya, Sans Souci, and others on the island, fought against the whites, mulattoes, and free persons of color, i.e., creoles (Fick, 1990). The enslavers both white and people of color, i.e., free Blacks and mulattoes, feared the Africans and knew that the incredible concentration of enslaved Africans (the enslaved outnumbered the free people 10-1) required exceptional control. The owners tried to keep enslaved of the same ethnic groups apart; they forbade any meetings among the enslaved; and they tied enslaved rigorously to their own plantations under the *Code Noir*. The Africans rebelled against these conditions. The African slave rebellions were without allies among the whites, mulattoes, or free people of color. They were not even fully united among themselves, and the domestic enslaved, like their American counterparts, especially tended to be more loyal to their masters than the field enslaved or maroon Africans. The maroons, in the meantime, were in contact with rebellious slaves, but they had few firm alliances. Nonetheless, their hatred of slavery, their fear of being re-enslaved, and their desire to be free and safe in their own country, made them ready allies were a serious revolution of the enslaved to begin. In the mountains they practiced their Vodou religions, reproduced its ideological apparatuses, and modes of production, i.e., subsistence agriculture, husbandry, and *komes*, in order to reconstitute their societies in the Americas (Genovese, 1979; Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2012).

So by 1790 one year before the official commencement of the Revolution, the colony was divided between French bureaucrats, white planters, petit-blancs, mulatto elites, free (creole) people of color, enslaved Africans, and maroons, each with their own agendas, alliances, and worldviews or structuring structures (Genovese, 1979; Fick, 1990; Du Bois, 2004). The split between the two colonial white groups gave strength to the French government officials who had lost effective control of the colony. The mulatto elites despised the free persons of color based solely on race and class, while at the same time forming a strange alliance with the white elites, who in alliance with the petit-blancs discriminated against them. Meanwhile, the maroons distrusted all the groups including the enslaved (house and field) Africans who were left to their own devices on the plantations.

Each of these forces were poised to strike against the other. Yet, in the crazy contradictions of this whole situation, the petit-blancs and white planters each carried on their own private war of terror against the mulattoes, free people of color, and the enslaved Africans. These divisions among maroons, enslaved Africans, enslavers, in addition to the divisions among the whites, free persons of color, and mulattoes, were not only racial and economic, they were sociocultural as well, European (an emerging Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism) on the one hand, and African (The Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism) on the other (Genovese, 1979; Mocombe, 2016, 2017). Many scholars (James, 1986; Dupuy, 1989; DuBois, 2012) overlook this sociocultural component or sweep it in the literature by referring to the Africans as masses, peasants, maroons, or Blacks. As though, outside of the dominant European worldview and practical consciousness, the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, which the Affranchis internalized and sought to reproduce, the Africans had no other worldview to recursively reorganize or reproduce in the material world (Genovese, 1979; Mocombe, 2016, 2017).

Revolutionary Haiti

Typically, historians date the beginnings of the Haitian Revolution with the uprising of the enslaved on the night of August 14th, 1791. On August 14th, 1791, as the whites and the Affranchis continued on their war for greater participation in the running of the colony and for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution, the African maroons entered into a full-fledged rebellion that would ultimately result in the creation of the nation-state of Haiti and the abolition of slavery on the island. Boukman Dutty, another oungan following the path of Makandal, organized a meeting with the diverse African ethnic groups of the island in the mountains of the Northern corridors of the island. This meeting, referred to as *minokan* in the Vodou tradition, took the form of a spiritual Petwo Vodou ceremony. According to Haitian folklore and oral history, it was raining and the sky was raging with clouds. The elders and representatives of the African ethnicities began the ceremony by confessing their resentment for their condition. A woman, Cecile Fatiman, a Vodou manbo priestess, started dancing languorously in the crowd, taken by the spirits of the lwa, African lunar Goddess, Erzulie Danthor. With a knife in her hand, she cut the throat of a black pig (according to Max Beauvoir, the late *ATI-oungan* of Vodou today, an actual person was sacrificed that night. Black pig, *Kochon noir*, refers to the nomenclature given to maroon Africans by the French.), a sacrifice to Danthor, and distributed the blood to all the participants of the meeting who swore to unite, kill all of the whites and mulattoes on the island with the aid of Manbo Danthor, and constitute a new equitable society based on the principles of Bon-dye. Manbo Fatima/Danthor proceeded to layout the leadership of the rebellion, naming Georges Biassou, Jeannot, Jean Francois, Macaya, etc. On August 22, 1791, the Blacks of the North entered into a rebellion, killing all the whites and mulattoes they met and setting the plantations of the colony on fire.

The French quickly captured the leader of the enslaved Africans, Boukman, and beheaded him, bringing the rebellion under control. Just like Francois Makandal, however, Boukman had managed to instill in the Africans the idea of his invincibility. Thus, the French exposed his head on Cap's (present-day Cap-Haitian) square to convince the enslaved that their leader was really dead. The death of Boukman had temporarily stopped the rebellion of the North, but it failed, however, to restrain the rest of the Africans from revolting against their condition. Toussaint Louverture, a free literate Black *Affranchis*, and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, an enslaved first-generation Saint-Dominguean/Haitian (creole field slave) whose parents were directly from Africa, among many others (George Biassou, Jean Francois, etc.), would assume the leadership of the revolt after the death of Boukman.

Unlike Boukman, who was a charismatic leader that incorporated the maroon West African population's, sixty-seven percent of whom were directly from Africa when the Revolution commenced, Vodou spiritualism and culture to organize the rebellion at Bois Caïman and other places against the *blancs* and *Affranchis*, Toussaint Louverture, a creole Black excluded from the African Vodou leadership, proved to be a military genius and a formidable leader in the tradition of the West. Toussaint, a literate free creole Black who was treated well by his enslaver and interpellated and embourgeoisied by the church and his enslaver, (who taught him to read), did not exclude the *Affranchis* from the revolution. He organized the maroons, masses of enslaved, and a few *Affranchis* free Blacks and mulattoes into an organized army. With political manipulation, and military campaigns, he would gain notoriety in the colony. During the period of 1791 to 1800, Toussaint outmaneuvered the French, the Spaniards, and the English. He managed to eliminate all his enemies on the island until he was the only power left in Saint-Domingue/Haiti. By 1801, he governed the entire island and proclaimed himself governor-general of the colony. A constitution was soon drawn-up that same year declaring Saint-Domingue an autonomous French Black possession where slavery was abolished.

Although Toussaint abolished slavery on the island, he maintained the export-oriented agricultural system of slavery under a new share-cropping partnership, *corvée* system, between the Africans and their former enslavers who became cultivators. Many of the maroons and mulatto elites (Andre Rigaud, Alexander Pétion, Jean-Pierre Boyer, etc.) rebelled against Toussaint's position and continued their fight against his army of free Blacks, whites, and mulattoes. The former, maroon Africans, did so because they were against anything that resembled slavery, and the latter, mulatto elites, did so due to the emergence of the new free Black *grandon* property classes composed of the Black generals in Toussaint's army and the continuing economic role of the white planters. Defeated in what is famously referred to as "the war of knives" by Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the mulattoes André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion, and Jean-Pierre Boyer would leave for France, while Macaya, Sans Souci, and many of the African maroons either became landowners or returned to the mountains, leaving Toussaint in control of the plantation system. Hence, the pre-1791 status-quo was re-instituted under Toussaint without slavery.

Following his European campaign, Napoleon Bonaparte, wary of Toussaint's great power in the colony, sent 82,000 of his battle-proven troops commanded by the mulattoes Alexandre Pétion, Jean-Pierre Boyer, and his brother-in-law, General Charles Leclerc, a fleet of warships, canons, munitions and dogs in order to quell the rebellion and recapture Haiti as a slave colony. Whereas many of the *Affranchis* surrendered, the Africans under the leadership of Sans Souci and Macaya continued their warfare against the French and *Affranchis* from the mountains. Two years of war ended in a stalemate; however, the French treacherously arrested Toussaint Louverture during a meeting in June 1802. He was exiled to France and died in the *Fort de Joux* prison high in the cold Alpine mountains of Jura in April 1803.

With the arrest, and eventual death, of Toussaint, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a trained oungan in the traditions of Makandal and Boukman, whose dislike for the whites and mulatto *Affranchis* was not shared by Louverture, formed a shaky alliance with the maroon Africans, free Blacks, and mulattoes (under the leadership of Alexandre Pétion, who was sent back under Leclerc's army to reclaim the island for France) and emerged as the new leader of the Haitian Revolution, bringing it, with the aid of Henri Christophe, Francois Capois-la-Mort, and the maroon Africans to its ultimate climax, the first Black independent nation in the world on January 1, 1804, and the only successful slave rebellion in recorded history.

Unlike Toussaint, Dessalines was a creole field slave interpellated and ounganified/manboified by the Vodou ideology and ideological apparatuses of the Africans. He had no formal Western education and disagreed with Toussaint over the roles of the mulattoes and whites in the revolution. Nonetheless, in his eventual move to liberate Haiti, he united with the maroon Africans (Macaya, Sans Souci, etc.), free Blacks, and mulatto elites led by Alexandre Pétion. Haiti's revolution against colonialism and slavery was the first successful black movement resulting in an independent state headed by so-called Blacks. On January 1, 1804, Dessalines, to honor the Taino natives who had been massacred by the Spanish, renamed the island its original Tainoian name, Haiti or Ayi-ti (mountainous land). Since these glorious events, Haiti has been the pariah of the West bearing the mark of the poorest country in the Hemisphere. This distinction is a product of the racial-class divisions and struggle for power between the mulattoes, free Blacks, and the Africans, which would continue in Haiti during and following the Revolution and the death of Jean-Jacques Dessalines.

Following the Revolution, Haiti was marginalized by all the European powers of the time, and fighting amongst the three remaining groups, the mulatto elites, the free Black generals and creole Blacks, and the African maroons, emerged over the constitution of the new nation-state. The mulatto elites desired the land of their white fathers, the free Black generals wanted to maintain their land they had obtained from Toussaint during the early parts of the war, and the African maroons wanted no parts of anything that resembled the old system of slavery or Toussaint's *corvée* system.

The former two, interpellated, subjectified, and embourgeoised by the ideology and ideological apparatuses of the West, sought to reproduce the same export-oriented colonial system as their former colonial enslavers, while the latter and the majority of the population interpellated and ounganified/manboified by the leadership of the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism did not. Instead, they went about practicing their religion, husbandry, subsistence agriculture, and *komes* as enframed by the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism via the *lakou* system in order to reconstitute the society in a national position of their own. Dessalines, who essentially sided with the *grandons*, sought to constitute the new nation-state within these two opposing structuring structures. As such in his 1805 constitution he proceeded to divide the land equitably among all those who fought in the Revolution; renounced everything that was French for systems grounded in the experiences of the African people of the island; and renounced white supremacy for a Pan-African discourse that would have Haiti become the land for and of Blacks (Fick, 1990; Nicholls, 1979; Du Bois, 2012).

This constitution of Haiti did not sit well with the *Affranchis* who desired their pre-war status and wealth, which tied them to the global capitalist world-system. Instead of focusing on fortification of the island, national production, food security, and agricultural production for local consumption as Dessalines attempted to do with his equitable redistribution of land among the population, the *Affranchis* assassinated him over his land reform, and the masses of Africans fled to the mountainsides and provinces of the island. With the death of Dessalines, the majority of the productive land was divided among the mulatto elites, who took over their fathers' land and estates, and the Black commanding officers of the revolution. They kept intact the export-based economic arrangements which existed under colonialism and Toussaint's regime with the mulatto elites—because of their status as mulattoes—serving as the middle persons between the nation-state and outside merchants. What emerged in Haiti, following the Revolution, was the same colonial class structure under the leadership of the *Affranchis* and their adversarial partnership with an emerging foreign white merchant class, which assisted in the acquisition of manufactured goods, petit-bourgeois Blacks who converted their plantations into agribusinesses, and the Africans in the provinces and mountains whose products were heavily taxed by the emerging nation-state under the leadership of the *Affranchis* (Pierre-Louis, 2000; Du Bois, 2012).

Haiti Since 1804

Following the Haitian Revolution, the majority of the Africans, given their refusal to work on plantations or agribusinesses (*corvée system*), migrated to the provinces and the mountains, abodes of formerly established “maroon republics,” and established a “counter-plantation system” (Jean Casimir's term) via the *lakou* system of the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism based on husbandry, subsistence agriculture, and *komes*, i.e., the trade and sell of agricultural goods for income to purchase manufactured products and services (Mocombe, 2016, 2017).

The mulatto elites and petit-bourgeois free Blacks, a Francophile neocolonial oligarchy, countered this counter-plantation/lakou system through their control of the ports, export trade, and the political apparatuses of the state, which increased their wealth through the taxation of the goods of the African peasants. As Laurent Du Bois (2012) observed of the process, the former enslaved Africans,

[t]ook over the land they had once worked as slaves, creating small farms where they raised livestock and grew crops to feed themselves and sell in local markets. On these small farms, they did all the things that had been denied to them under slavery: they built families, practiced their religion, and worked for themselves.... Haiti's rural population effectively undid the plantation model. By combining subsistence agriculture with the production of some crops for export, [*komes*,] they created a system that guaranteed them a better life, materially and socially, than that available to most other people of African descent in the Americas throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But they did not succeed in establishing that system in the country as a whole. In the face of most Haitians' unwillingness to work the plantations, Haiti's ruling groups retreated but did not surrender. Ceding, to some extent, control of the land, they took charge of the ports and the export trade. And they took control of the state, heavily taxing the goods produced by the small-scale farmers and thereby reinforcing the economic divisions between the haves and the have-nots (pg. 6).

This counter-plantation/lakou system the African majority established against the spirit of capitalism social class language game, i.e., economic gain for its own sake, individualism, personal wealth, private property, labor exploitation, etc., of the *Affranchis*, mulatto elites and petit-bourgeois free Blacks, who were interpellated, embourgeoised, and differentiated by the mode of production, ideology, and ideological apparatuses of the West, was not a reaction to slavery or the material resource framework of the island as presented by Du Bois and Casimir. Instead, it was and is a product of the ideology (*konesans*) of Vodou and its Ethic of communal living or social collectivism, democracy, individuality, egalitarianism, cosmopolitanism, spirit of social justice, xenophilia, balance, harmony, and gentleness, which united all of the African ethnicities shipped to the island during the period of enslavement (Mocombe, 2016, 2017). What I am calling the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism social class language game, which emerges out of the metaphysics and epistemology of Vodou, Haitian/Vilokan Idealism, of the Africans was, and is, reified and recursively reorganized and reproduced via the ideology of Vodou; its modes of production, *komes*, husbandry, and subsistence agriculture; and ideological apparatuses, lakous or *lakou yo* in Kreyol (*yo* in Kreyol is used to pluralize terms and concepts), *lwa yo*, *ounfo* (temples) peristyles, *sosyete sekré* (secret societies), *vévés*, herbal medicine, proverbs, songs, dances, musical instruments, Vodou magic and rituals, and ancestor worship (Mocombe, 2016, 2017).

Haiti, since 1804, has been marked by this struggle between agents of these two forms of system and social integration, the Protestant/Catholic Ethic and the spirit of capitalism and the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism, with the merchant and landowning classes (agents of the former) constantly seeking to supplant the Vodou Ethic and spirit of communism of the African majority via what Karl Polanyi calls the fictitious commodities (land, labor, and money) of capitalism: the commodification of the land of the island, the labor of the African masses, and money, which ties Haiti to the global Protestant capitalist world-system of the Europeans and Americans.

Whereas Dessalines, unlike Toussaint, via his nation-building process, attempted to constitute the Haitian-nation by reconciling these two forms of system and social integrations, the agents of the Affranchis class, since independence, have sought to integrate Haiti into the capitalist world-system while serving as a comprador political bourgeoisie for its hegemonic powers, i.e., Canada, France, and the United States. This attempt by the children of Pétion and Dessalines/Toussaint to integrate Haiti into the global Protestant capitalist world-system has undermined the revolutionary and independence movement of the Haitian Revolution as commenced by the African majority, the children of Sans Souci, and embroiled the country into a perpetual civil war.

Conclusions: Perpetual Civil War in Haiti

At the time of the writing of this work, Haiti, under a United Nations force (MINUSTAH), continues to be under occupation within the capitalist world-system under American hegemony. The continuous struggle between the mulatto merchant/professional class and the Black landowning managerial classes for control of the state and its apparatuses, at the expense of the African masses in the provinces and mountains whose children they arm and use against each other as they migrate to Port-au-Prince amidst American neoliberal policies seeking to displace the masses off their land for tourism, agro and textile industries, and athletics (basketball and soccer), continues to be a hindrance for the constitution of a sovereign Haitian nation-state. The former two, interpellated and embourgeoisied in Western ideological apparatuses, seek to constitute Haiti, with the aid of whites (France, Canada, and America), as an export-oriented periphery state within the capitalist world-system under American hegemony against the desires of the masses of Africans in the provinces and mountains seeking to maintain their *komes*, subsistence agriculture, and husbandry, which are deemed informal. The *grandon* class, composed of educated professionals, former drug dealers, entertainers, and police officers, attack the former Affranchis class, which is now a comprador bourgeoisie (composed of Arab merchants) seeking to build, own, and manage hotels and assembly factories producing electronics and clothing for the US market, under the moniker the children of Dessalines against the children of Pétion in the name of the African masses of the island, the majority of whom are peasant farmers interpellated and ounganified by the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism.

Instead of focusing on vertically integrating the lakou system and infrastructure (artificial lakes, potable water, food security, mache—modern market spaces for *komes*, universities, and state-owned companies for the peasant class to sell, etc.) to augment national agriculture and the productive forces of the latter group, who constitute eighty-five percent of the population, the mulatto elites and petit-bourgeois Blacks emphasize job creation through foreign direct investment in tourism, agro and textile industries, privatization of public services, infrastructure for an export-oriented economy similar to the one they had under slavery, and the constitution of a political bourgeoisie in control of the state apparatuses. However, their inabilities—given the voting power of the majority—to constitute two dominant rotating political parties to implement the desires of their former colonial enslavers, leaves Haiti in perpetual turmoil. As in slavery, the African masses continue to fight, against their interpellation, embourgeoisement, and differentiation as wage-earners (commodities) in the tourism trade and textile factories of the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and spirit of capitalism of these two power elites, seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with whites at their expense and for the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism of *oungan yo*, *manbo yo*, and *granmoun yo* of Bois Caiman and Jean-Jacques Dessalines. As the current historical conjuncture parallels the conjuncture of 1791, either a unifying national conference that parallels Bois Caiman or a second war of independence will determine the outcome of this perpetual economic and cultural civil war in Haiti. As for now, the masses of Port-au-Prince, galvanized by the grandon class, protest against the neoliberal capitalist world-system under American hegemony under the moniker, the children of Pétion v. the children of Dessalines. Although viewed within racial terms, Pétion representing the mulatto elites and Dessalines the African masses, this work suggests that the metaphor, contemporarily, has come to represent Marxist ideological categories for racial-class (nationalistic) struggles on the island of Haiti against dictatorship, the Haitian oligarchs, and American neoliberal policies on the island: the ideological position of Pétion representing the neoliberal views of the mulatto elites and petit-bourgeois Blacks; and Haitian nationalism, economic reform, and social justice representing the ideological position of Dessalines as articulated by educated segments of the petit-bourgeois class claiming to speak for the African masses, the majority of whom are more so the descendants of Macaya and Sans Souci than Pétion or Dessalines. However, in the final analysis, both positions stand against the interest of the African masses as they seek to maintain their subsistence agriculture, *komes*, and well-being amidst the desires of the two bourgeoisies for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with whites within the global capitalist world-system under American hegemony. In essence, the moniker in the final analysis is a truncated understanding of Haitian identity constitution and their oppositions. Supplemented with the metaphor, the children of Sans Souci, the moniker becomes an allusion to the practical consciousnesses that would come to constitute the Haitian nation-state following the Haitian Revolution: the children of Sans Souci representing the African majority and their practical consciousness (the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism); the children of Dessalines/Toussaint, representing the embourgeoisied practical consciousness (the Catholic/Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism) of the free and creole Blacks, which is no different from the practical consciousness of the children of Pétion, the mulattoes, whites, and Arabs of the island.

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Notes:

¹ The term marronage fails to capture the practical consciousness by which the Africans of Haiti went about recursively reorganizing and reproducing their world. Eugene Genovese, in his usage of the term, is one scholar who does.