

There are men who are representatives of their race, of their nation, and of their generation. They are exceptional beings who are samples of their society or they are at the forefront of humanity. Not only did they leave their mark on their time, but they left their mark on the universal history of peoples and nations. They have the greatness and quality of eternal life. They belong to any time and any time. They are people who have accomplished unique facts and changed the course of history through their actions. At one point in their lives, they stood up, and they defied a system. They led the fight that opens the narrow path of justice, freedom, and equality for all. These men are called heroes, having a power of thought and a strength of unusual souls. God created them to make them forgers of conscience, revolutionaries, leaders of men, leaders. They are the true kings of this world! Dessalines is one of those men: a genius of his race. A giant in the history of humanity.

Jean-Jacques Dessalines



Jean Sénat Fleury

Jean-Jacques Dessalines Words from beyond the grave



Career judge, teacher, writer, **Jean Sénat Fleury** was born in Haiti. His wide knowledge of Haitian law and his great skill in the art of teaching helped him to play a trainer role at the National Police Academy in 1995 and Director of Studies at the School of the magistracy of Pétiion-Ville, in 2004. Author of several books.

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Sénat Fleury



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JEAN-JACQUES DESSALINES

WORDS
FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

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JEAN SENAT FLEURY

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COMMENTS AND TESTIMONIALS

With *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave*, Mr. Jean Sénat Fleury makes a remarkable entry into the gallery of Haitian writers who place Dessalines at the center of their patriotic concerns at the cost of a research work visibly intense. Master Fleury seizes Dessalines and Haiti in a grandiose, rich, and diverse panoramic painting. Through this work, the author has produced a true story of Haiti.

His historiographical approach seems to us very ambitious and audacious. Ambitious, the author has gleaned through a rich and varied documentation. He has been eager to capture and present Haiti and all its complexity, wealth, glorious past, resilience, and even aspirations for a bright future. That is why, in the book, the message in the mouth of the emperor presents the historical fact of Haiti through a multiplicity of facets: politics, history, geography, painting, music, literature, religion, voodoo, diplomatic relations, sport, dance, finance, the economy, and I do not know what else.

It goes without saying that Fleury conceives the historical narrative not as a place of exclusive presentation of battles or great men but as a whole. Audacious, Fleury has striven to reconcile fiction and historical facts without ever putting the reader in the embarrassment of not being able to distinguish the true from the false, the imaginary from the real. By the fiction, Fleury practices simply intelligent prosopopoeia. He brings in the emperor from the Hall of Initiates, who tells the factual, authentic, and verifiable history of Haiti, from the colonial era to the present day. In fact, through the play of fiction, it is, in a way, the author who hides behind the great insider and who dictates to the Haitian nation how they

can be free from poverty while motivating them to follow redemptive recommendations.

Clearly, Fleury provides in this book abundant historical materials—some of which are not very well known—that will help us better know and understand Haiti and the liberator of the Haitian people and founding father of our state. It does so by discarding myths, perceptions, beliefs, and alienated and alienating discourses that have, up to now, neglected or even ignored the true humanistic dimensions of Dessalines as well as the true spiritual, cultural, and material assets in this country he has founded. Then the author contributes by his effort to reconnect with Africa, the *alma mater*, so often neglected, forgotten, and sometimes even rejected by many Haitians. Now he points out that it is Dessalines and such assets fought against us that are, in essence, capable of consolidating our freedom and our independence and of protecting ourselves from liberticidal attacks of external or internal origin.

Ultimately, *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave* is a work with encyclopedic aims, a reference work, and an ideological, intellectual, spiritual, religious, and cultural rupture. It is also a serum and a historical elixir designed to awaken, multiply, and put on the springboard for the dormant energies of the Haitian nation. However, this nation sighs after such ferments and aims to be a good leaven, eager to get back on the path of its historical vocation of breaking slavery, colonialist and imperialist yokes, foreign domination, and shameless exploitation of the masses and also forge economic and social justice and humanity. Indeed, Fleury also seeks, through this work, to contribute to our moral and patriotic rearmament by stating to us the conscious and obligatory choice to make. And this choice lies in refocusing our individual and collective frame of reference around the spiritual and material support base of the Haitian nation: the leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines le Grand.

In this regard, it is important to note that, with *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave*, more than three major books have already appeared on Jean-Jacques Dessalines in less than fifteen years in the twenty-first century. At the same time, it is a whole bloom of political, artistic, cultural, economic, and other ideas and activities that focus today on Dessalines. With such indicators, I take the optimistic risk of saying that the twenty-first-century Haitian is and will be Dessalinian. The book *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave* of Mr. Fleury pushes me to another prognosis, more daring, more promising, and even

more grandiose: the time of the Dessalinian Renaissance is underway. The Renaissance of Haiti, like that of Africa, is announced—coming soon. The emperor has spoken through Jean Sénat Fleury: “The genius of Haiti takes us to the heights of humanity. Let us simply guide [it].”

Luc Rémy, professor, writer

Having reviewed the work of Mr. Jean Sénat Fleury, I have had the privilege of being able to read it before everyone else. This story has touched me greatly not only by the story that is told, in this case that of Haiti, but also by the way the author gives way to the narrator par excellence in this story, the emperor Jean-Jacques Dessalines. And I remain immersed, since this reading, in a deep reflection on life and freedom. The need for a revolution has already been anchored in me for a long time so that the world can become a different place, in which everyone can express himself and will not feel like a slave to a reality that does not suit him, a revolution that must first be individual and then become collective. I have Haitian friends, but we have never explored the sad history of their country in such an explanatory and concrete way, perhaps because they have been in exile for a number of years in the foreign country where they live. I learned a lot from reading Fleury’s work. It remains to be hoped that the impact created will be as important for Haitians who will understand the importance of taking action to make their country the space that will finally be theirs after so many years of slavery, pain and suffering, and misery under the yoke of the world powers. This book is meant to be a lesson in history, but above all, it presents avenues of solution for a better future, ways to follow for the creation of a new Haiti. I wish you all the best of success in this epic so that your country can become what it wants to be: the pearl of the West Indies.

Guy Jacques

At a time when great confusion is trying to invade the Haitian collective conscience in the twenty-first century, the book *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave* of Mr. Jean Sénat Fleury comes at the right moment to shake taboos and disenchantment heard at the gates of the casual to update the flagship speeches of the founding father of the

nation, whose universal reach continues to arouse today the curiosity of knowledgeable humanists from all corners of the planet.

Written in a new style, this book offers us an atmosphere conducive to reading where narration and argumentation form a symbiosis to make the reader receptive to each new page. Mr. Jean Sénat Fleury, a Haitian intellectual convinced of the evils that overwhelm his country, opens this page of history through imaginative monologues to awaken sleepy consciences by making Jean-Jacques Dessalines the man who has defied the status of Western barbarism toward the black peoples, leading to the foundation of the first independent black republic of the world on January 1, 1804. Times have changed, and cultures and civilizations are transformed and intertwined to adapt to the new norms imposed by the prince's effect, but history will never change because there are no guns powerful enough to erase memoirs worthy of the virtue of great men like Jean-Jacques Dessalines that universal history cannot ignore.

Frantz Jean-Baptiste

The whole world is indignant about slavery in Libya as if slavery is a new fact formed only in the twenty-first century with the forced kidnapping of brave people from sub-Saharan Africa whom slave traders—Arabs—captured to place in servitude. It's as if slavery is a trade that is done only within African countries without the participation of too puritanical European countries to endorse this heinous trade of man by man. It's as if African societies have not been for centuries ransacked, exploited, eagerly abused by colonial powers—France, Spain, England, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, etc.—without measuring at the time the service of a hand of work on their own, *corvéable* to thank you. Indeed, the cradle of humanity has experienced three centuries of slave trade and a century of colonization.

The Code Noir, the agreements signed between the papacy and the European leaders formalizing slavery, and the various expeditions in America to fight the revolt of the blacks, particularly the French expedition to Santo Domingo in 1801, are irrefutable proof that European nations and the Catholic Church have—between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries—paved the way for slavery. The Vatican approved the Portuguese, Spanish, French, and Belgian expeditions, seeing it as an opportunity to

convert to Christianity all those African populations considered pagans by the Catholic Church.

Written at a time when slavery, racism, and discrimination constitute the most serious scourge that modern society faces today, the book *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave* comes at the right moment to awaken the conscience on the tides of slavery and the need to combat this scourge that threatens to reappear in its hideous form in the sixteenth century. France has abolished slavery on April 27, 1848, nearly fifty-nine years after adopting the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789. How can one claim to respect human rights when one continues to reduce human beings to slavery?

By making Dessalines speak, the man who has changed the history of the world after forcing the colonial powers to abolish slavery on their territories, Jean Sénat Fleury carries a powerful message stating that the will to restore dignity must become a human passion. It is an obligation of world leaders to focus on fundamental priorities—education, housing, work, safety, health and food—to give hope to the poor who live in poor countries and, at the same time, to eradicate misery on our planet.

Jean Sénat Fleury

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FOREWORD

The literary inventory on the history of the emperor Jean-Jacques Dessalines does not reveal much, unlike that on Toussaint-Louverture, where the books do not fail to report the genius and prowess of this great leader. Here, it is not a question of conducting any debate on the two main pillars on which the history of Haiti is based since everyone has had his mission. They are like Moses and Joshua—that is, like Moses, Toussaint is a liberator, whereas like Joshua, Dessalines has the mission to conquer Haiti. The only difference is that there is no lack of literature on Moses and Joshua, who are revered for their actions. But as for Toussaint and Dessalines, the difference is very clear. There are lots of writings on Toussaint, while very few books have been published on Dessalines.

This silence on the contribution of the emperor is ambiguous, considering his leadership in the fight for the equality of human rights. Even if the world's popular conscience attributes to France the credit for the Declaration of Human Rights, history allows us to see that these rights have been for a very specific category of men.

In the sociopolitical context of the time, France and its allies practiced slavery and human trade. Thus, if Jean-Jacques Dessalines was the first to abolish slavery by defining what the human being is, why was he never recognized as the forerunner of the human rights defender? From there, one can clearly understand that the Dessalinian vision went in the opposite direction taken by Westerners who had a clannish vision of man.

Thus, the universal scope of the Dessalinian vision has only restored the human being so that he sees himself as egalitarian. The first constitution of the new state—that of 1805, mentioned by the author—perfectly resumes

the idea of this egalitarian society, which the emperor also has wanted to cooperate.

Now one may wonder why Dessalines has never been the dominant subject among historians. The answer seems to be historical since the victims have never written the history; moreover, the inheritance of the Haitian intellectual elite is metropolitan, patterned on the Cartesian model in place of the communitarian.

This identity deficit of the Haitian elite is the result of this incessant contradiction operating in their psyche, that is to say, the dilemma of imitating their fathers or their mothers or, in other words, being Cartesian or communitarian. Pétion has a town bearing his name, Pétion-Ville. The one attributed to the emperor is preceded by the prefix “merchant,” Marchand-Dessalines. For a long time after the death of the emperor, his name has been erased in both national and world history. It was only thirty-eight years after his assassination that his comrade in arms, Jean-Louis Pierrot, has issued a presidential decree instituting October 17 each year as a day of national mourning to remember the tragedy at Pont-Rouge. Such facts and indices represent only a small sample of the lack of interest in Dessalines. But they clearly show that the mostly mulatto Haitian elite has taken a stand alongside their fathers.

Thus, since the Haitian elite has made this choice, we can see from afar why the country is crammed into misery. It is a communitarian-dominated people who self-destruct involuntarily by Cartesian thinking, which is based on the dilemma of God/Satan, good/evil, master/slave, mistress/servant, saved/sinner. Although the Hebrew people share these dilemmas, it should be noted that, unlike Westerners, the Hebrews have been communitarians. The idea behind all this is to make people understand how the future of a people depends on their way of thinking. That is to say, for the people to progress, they must be consistent with themselves and with their thought. This explains why, in a specific historical moment, Europeans have been in need to be reborn, and this rebirth has lasted more than 150 years. In our Haitian reality, we cannot progress without knowing ourselves and being in harmony with our thought or vision of the world. The extreme individualism that is currently raging in Haiti does not accommodate the Haitian being as Cartesian thinking is outside the model of Haitian thought.

This individualistic idea deriving from Cartesian thought is destroying the Haitian communitarian construct. This differentiation is fundamental

in the development of the thought of a people since everything starts from the construct of thought. That said, in Western thought, everything is diversified and separated, whereas in the model of thought of Africans or Haitians, everything is bound by the principle of uniqueness. Thus, the imposition of the Cartesian model of thought on our parents will trigger an incessant destabilization in the Haitian psyche. Although the vast majority has resisted this model of thought, it has ended up completely succumbing them after the fall of the Duvalier regime in 1986. From that date, we can admit that *lakous*, chores, eating together, or sharing meals between neighbors, all this no longer exists.

This battle against Cartesian thought has been well understood by the emperor. This is why the whole Dessalinian vision is based on communitarianism, that is, the idea of unicity or the whole. The example of the practices of the chores by the Haitians proves how much this nation is communitarian in essence, and that is why the emperor has taken the initiative to verify the titles of property while initiating at once the second phase of 1804, that is, the social revolution. This revolution in the country, until now, is only a dream, and it is still waiting to be realized. This act of integration of all undertaken by the emperor expresses his radical position on the domination of man by man or extreme social disparity between the dominant and the dominated. But one wonders why this vision of integration of all has been initiated in the south, the stronghold of Rigaud, not to say mulattoes.

In this book, the author has taken care to shed light on the site of the launching of the Dessalinian vision. The south, under the leadership of Rigaud, has always been hostile to the Louvre or Dessalinian vision. After the southern war, the vanquished Rigaud and Pétion have fled to France and returned to the country alongside Leclerc in the 1801 expedition to help the metropolis restore slavery.

The arrest of Toussaint has allowed Rigaud, Pétion, and Boyer—previously with Leclerc—to turn around; their historical course proves how much they have done everything to satisfy their fathers. This bias is particularly evident in Boyer, who has decided to pay the debt of independence. To this, we can understand why we want to make believe that the Dessalinian vision has been badly received in the south. In Haitian communitarian thought, this discourse is false but valid only for the followers of those who do not see themselves as Haitian mentally but rather want to be like their fathers.

Thus say the words “After what I have done in the south, if the citizens do not rise, is that they are not men?” This thought attributed to the emperor after the verification of title deeds does not reflect his egalitarian and integrationist vision, but it is much more like a speech made by the dissidents for the sole purpose of justifying the assassination of the emperor. On this point, one may wonder who could have constructed this speech, which presents the emperor as a tyrant. And any thorough analysis of this discourse will undoubtedly lead to the same conclusion: the emperor is very arrogant. If the tone of these words has painted an arrogant emperor who deserves to pay for his arrogance, to which Haitians nowadays must turn to demand their integration and the improvement of their well-being? What is more, the emperor has never considered Pétion, Rigaud, and Boyer as enemies, but his leadership has rather favored the economic agreement of Arcahaie.

It has been a long time since we have been forced to believe in this false speech, which does not reflect any of the emperor's works. If one recognizes the tree by its fruits, the seed of the one considered as the founding father of the nation cannot give birth to such a speech. Even though Dessalines has been assassinated for his communitarian vision, reading this book will give the reader the opportunity to find the additional elements necessary to reevaluate the validity of this denigrating speech toward the first protector of human rights and then discover the glorious past of the Haitian people for a redefinition of the country's history. It must be said that the result of this work proves how timeless the thought of man is and how small the idea as it will live, no doubt, much longer than ourselves. And in fact, this book is, in a way, the beginnings of our oral history told in the tone of the victims. I have been at the author's side when he has established this idea in a historic march not only to plant trees but also to inspire all of those able to produce good fruits for the betterment of the Haitian being.

By reading this book, the reader will have the opportunity to trace the communitarian aspect of the Haitian ancestors and to understand the Dessalinian vision. From one chapter to another, the author presents a new facet of Haitian grandeur, knowing that progress is inconceivable without a good mastery of its past, and that makes this book a classic in Haitian literature.

To all who are interested in learning more about the history of Haiti, read this book, and you will conclude for yourself that the history of this country is far from written or at least has not been written yet. And to

paraphrase the late Jolibois Jean-Baptiste—the great-grandson of Jean-Jacques Dessalines’s only sister, known as Elisabeth Danois—the story of Haiti is not yet written because the direct descendants of the emperor’s assassins are still alive. And for those who will tend to counterargue with the story of Haiti’s Thomas Madiou, it must be said that the work of Madiou is simply another version of the French history of Haiti written by a Haitian because how can the author, who has left the country for France at the age of five to return to Haiti thirty-five years later, write the history of the country when we know that he has grown up outside the Haitian culture? His case is identical to the story of a man who has disconnected from the customs of the country as described by Maurice Sixto in his play entitled *Depestre*.

This book is, in fact, a plea for a redefinition of the Haitian being, a direct message from the emperor delivered to the Haitian people to motivate him based on his glorious past, just as the book presents the necessary elements to confront the denigrating speech about Haitians. Using the tone of the victims, the author shows how much the emperor intercedes for Haiti, which is being crushed by the tricks of the international community, which has held an embargo since 1804. In my opinion, much more concerning is the contempt of the leaders of the time who have done nothing to do justice to Dessalines. But reading this book, I have found enough evidence for a virtual or simulationist judgment of his assassination. Although throughout the work the emperor, in his greatness of soul, forgave his assassins, in case of a virtual or simulationist judgment, one can retain as presumed guilty Pétion, who in his speech of investiture has declared, “I killed the tyrant.” Here, the reader does not need to break his head to deduce from me that this qualifier of “tyrant” refers to the emperor, knowing that his immediate competitor, Henri Christophe, is still alive at that time. Moreover, during the administrations of Alexandre Pétion and Jean-Pierre Boyer, the name of Dessalines has been forbidden to be quoted.

Dessalines was assassinated for the following reasons: The social justice policy he advocated went against the desiderata of the old free who wanted to grab two-thirds of the arable land. For Dessalines, the blacks should have had their share. Joining word and action, the emperor had stopped a series of measures that had not failed to make him bitter enemies. The nationalization of the land he had decided and that had made the state the only real landowner caused the mulatto to growl. Indeed, the verification

of the titles of ownership allowed the Haitian state to dispossess several old free of lands of which they claimed ownership. The latter became the main instigators of the conspiracy against Dessalines. The direct and strict control that Dessalines exercised over foreign trade also brought him Haitian and foreign enemies. His refusal to create a nobility attracted the animosity of most of his principal generals who, eager for power and privilege, did not hesitate to join the conspirators.

The story *Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave*, beyond a work of imagination, has a historical background in which the words take the meaning of a discourse of awareness and hope. The founder of the Haitian nation, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, speaks to the Haitian people. In his speech, the emperor addresses several topics, including the Dessalinian ideal, national reconciliation, the question of cultural identity, the concept of “learning to live together,” and most importantly how to build Haiti. This leadership message is delivered to awaken awareness among all Haitians.

To explain Haiti’s capacity for self-sufficiency, the emperor made a historic return to the colonial period marked by the exploitation of the island’s wealth to arrive after independence. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Santo Doming—through the slave trade—became the richest colony in the world, with the nickname “Pearl of the West Indies.” On August 22, 1791, there was the general uprising of slaves that led to the Haitian Revolution in 1803. On January 1, 1804, Haiti declared its independence.

Despite its isolation for much of the nineteenth century, Haiti was still able to build an economy based on the production and export of agricultural products, including bananas, coffee, cocoa, cotton, sugar, and sisal. Until the mid-twentieth century, Haiti had a level of GDP comparable to other Caribbean countries. In 1986, after the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier, the Haitian economy totally deteriorated to such an extent that Haiti was called the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with an income of nearly \$700 per capita, far behind the Dominican Republic, whose income reached US\$6,373 per capita (World Bank, 2016).

Despite his decay, the emperor makes the prediction that Haiti will find its prosperity of yesteryear. In a message of hope and hope, he calls the Haitian people to reconciliation, following the example of their ancestors at the Congress of Arcahaie on May 18, 1803. That said, we hope that the

words of the emperor in this book will help all readers better understand the history of Haiti, particularly the contribution of this country to the emergence and implementation of human rights throughout the world. As the author says, Haiti—the first independent black republic in the world—is becoming the first nation to develop an antislavery and anticolonialist policy. Thanks to the Haitian Revolution, a historic movement of international importance has led to complete abolition of slavery in the world. Thus, this book offers irrefutable proof that Haiti is a great nation and that its contribution to humanity is considerable.

Jacques Arnaud Démézier

I was born into slavery, but I was never a slave because I refused to obey the orders of a master.

—Jean-Jacques Dessalines

There are men who are representatives of their race, of their nation, and of their generation. They are exceptional beings who are samples of their society, or they are at the forefront of humanity. They leave their mark not only on their time but also on the universal history of peoples and nations. They have the greatness and quality of eternal life. They belong to any time. They are people who have accomplished unique facts and changed the course of history through their actions. At one point in their lives, they have stood up, and they have defied a system. They have led the fight that opens the narrow path of justice, freedom, and equality for all. These men are called heroes, having the power of thought and the strength of unusual souls. God created them to make them forgers of conscience, revolutionaries, leaders of men. They are the true kings of this world. Dessalines is one of those men—a genius of his race, a giant in the history of humanity.

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THE DECLINE

From underdevelopment to envelopment, Haiti's socioeconomic situation is getting worse day by day. It is true that Haiti has received many donations, yet the contribution made to the country during the last thirty years has had no real impact on the improvement of the Haitian being. Hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign assistance are administered and managed by NGOs as channels through which aid is returned to donor countries. This situation, which some describe as camouflage, creates a condition of conflict between the state and the citizen's expectations, which are often crushed by these relatively exorbitant amounts.

Game theory means that the United Nations, under the cover of institutional strengthening and security assistance, is there to legitimize NGO action. In reality, the UN missions only diminish or weaken the real action of the state in terms of initiatives that can lead to the real improvement of the Haitian being. That is why the expected effect of aid and the contribution of the United Nations are stalled. All we can see is that Haiti is becoming poorer and more vulnerable from day to day.

The question that must be asked is, how a country—after three hundred years of exploitation of its territory by colonial powers—with a resource-rich subsoil (gold, copper, bauxite, aluminum, oil, uranium, cement, marble, sulfate) can be the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere? This question has tormented my mind, and I have begun to read books to find an answer on the nature of the underdevelopment of Haiti: is it infrastructural or cultural? David Landes, a professor at Harvard University, published a book in 1998 entitled *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor*. Daron Acemoglu of MIT and James Collin of Harvard University identify the problem culturally, socioeconomically, politically, and institutionally. Yet despite all

my reading, the case of Haiti remains an enigma. Why, unlike neighboring countries in the Caribbean, does Haiti persist in underdevelopment?

By dint of thinking about the problem, I end up telling myself that, undoubtedly, there is a hidden truth through all this, like a Machiavellian agreement between the old colonial powers and the allies to leave Haiti in misery.

Columbus landed in Haiti in 1492. After the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, Spain ceded the western part of the island to France. The French colonized Santo Domingo for over a century, from 1697 to 1803. On January 1, 1804, Haiti became the first independent black republic in the world. The attitude displayed by the colonial powers of the time was the quarantine of the new state.

France, England, the United States, Spain, and continental countries had promised to keep Haiti out of international life and hinder its rise. Isolated politically and economically for nearly sixty years, from 1804 to 1862, an international embargo was decreed on the country by the colonial powers and the allies. In addition, the new state was forced to pay a ransom of ninety million gold francs to France for the recognition of its independence. The consequences of these two decisions had hindered and mortgaged the future of the nation.

Admittedly, according to the emperor, Haitians can blame the imperialist countries—the colonial powers—as accomplices in the degradation of the socioeconomic situation of their country, but they must accept that the responsibility of the situation is first and foremost. Therefore, while asking the imperialist powers to end the embargo, the emperor concludes by saying, “It is time for the Haitian to take their destiny in hand.” To dictate the road to the nation, he delivers his message, the first part of which focuses on the decay of the nation and the awakening of a national consciousness. The second part focuses on the Dessalinian vision, and the third part talks about the rebirth.

It is a message of hope in which the emperor makes the prediction that Haiti will regain its prosperity of yesteryear. “That day arrived, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, will go down on the land of Haiti with my sword. And sitting on my horse, I will say to the prisoners who are locked up for years in their cells without ever seeing a judge, ‘Get out!’ To those who are in the *bateyes*, I will say, ‘Leave!’ I will go all over the land to help the needy and to punish the foolish. In all the cities, the plains, and the Haitian countryside, I will brandish the sword of justice. I will do the same

tour that I have undertaken in the south, and with the same equity, I will distribute the state property. Blacks and mulattoes, literate and illiterate, townspeople and peasants, all Haitians will inherit part of the wealth of the nation.

“For, behold, in those days, when I come down to the land of Haiti, I will enter into judgment with all the imperialist nations concerning my people, whom they have scattered over the four corners of the earth. These nations have not only continued to plunder the resources of the country that I founded at the cost of enormous sacrifices and much bloodshed during the war of independence, especially at Vertières, but also occupied the territory by defiling the territory’s hotel of the fatherland. They have destroyed all the national production to force my people to import their products and, even worse, to starve. They have drawn my people by lot, and they have used virgin girls as prostitutes.

“What do you want, French, English, and Spanish? I cite all of you, the allies of these colonial powers. Do you want to take revenge on me by giving a hard life to the Haitian nation? You took all the gold and the riches of Haiti. And what the country had most precious and beautiful, you have brought them in your territories to beautify your castles and your palaces. You have killed hundreds of millions of natives and black Africans to establish your dominance. You bought Negroes on the coasts of Africa to keep them away from their territory.

“Haitian people, sacred word of your emperor, know well one day I will chastise all the enemies who caused the fall of the Haitian nation, and I will return their revenge on their heads. I will come back to put an end to the groans, to the complaints, and to fight—as I did in Vertières—as the head of the Haitian people. I will come out of the bowels of the earth, and it will be the day of vengeance, the day of justice, the day of the rebirth of the Haitian nation. O people, this day has come. You will find the way of development. Then my mission accomplished, I will resume my astral body to return to the Hall of Initiates.”

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CHAPTER I

THE MESSAGE

A special correspondence from the founding father of the nation:

Haitian people, hear this message well. It comes from the bottom of the soul of the one who built this nation, the emperor Jean-Jacques Dessalines. To the bottom of my grave, I hear your cry of despair. In the afterlife where I am since my assassination, I hear your cry of pain and the pangs of calamities you have endured. Your suffering goes through the gates of eternity to reach the Hall of Initiates. You cry day and night, and you are so weak that you are no longer able to dry the tears that flow from your eyes. Your life has become so difficult that you have to eat tree bark to fight famine. Sometimes you are content with the black earth as food, and you drink the feces-infected water of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) soldiers to quench your thirst. Water, source of life, has become for you, O people, a source of disease. An epidemic of cholera and diseases at the base of viruses

transmitted by mosquitoes such as Zika, dengue, or chikungunya have killed thousands of your brothers and sisters.

Continuous victims of abuses of the great ones on the earth, your children have been repeatedly raped by peacekeepers deployed for more than two decades in your country. There are far too many cases of sexual abuse by United Nations troops deployed in Haiti. Indeed, an internal UN investigation, published in June 2015, states the case of two hundred Haitian women who have had “transactional” relations with peacekeepers. These women—mostly from rural areas, including one-third minors—have sex with UN soldiers in exchange for food, cell phones, computers, money, medicine, or other care items for their babies.

The scandal that shakes this month about the British NGO Oxfam is another proof of the shameless exploitation of the people in Haiti by foreigners. The NGO, which has released its internal investigation report, confirms that Oxfam’s former director in Haiti, Roland van Hauwermeiren, has admitted to having sex with prostitutes at his Haitian home funded by Oxfam.

UNCONSCIOUS PEOPLE!

I have sworn that there will never be slavery on the land of Haiti. You have put in bondage your brother, engaged as a servant at your service. You give him the same name that I have heard in the plantation. Without any embarrassment, you return to slavery that I have abolished. In the Dominican *bateyes*, you indulge in cane cutting. Acculturated from head to foot, you despise the spirits who have liberated you from servitude. You have torn apart what you have inherited with enormous sacrifices. I have recommended that no armed white crowd on this earth should impose on you their dictate. You have been occupied many times by foreign troops, first by the American troops (1915–1934) and then by the UN troops. This global organization, since the end of the dictatorship of the Duvaliers in 1986, has sent seven missions, military, police, and civilians in Haiti. The last, the MINUSTAH, began in 2004 after the second exile of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In thirteen years, this mission has cost Haiti more than \$8 billion.

O people, Haiti is technically under the occupation of the international community. Under the guise of a seemingly independent Haitian state, the international community has the effectiveness of control, decision, and action over the entire state apparatus: the justice system, the police, the

presidency, the parliament, the electoral council, etc. Haiti, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, according to the White Guard still its status as a threat to peace and international security.

Haitian people, I want to give “the sea for border” to Haiti, which I declared in 1804, to protect the nation against a possible return of the French. Today national borders have become porous and permeable to all sorts of criminal and destabilizing activities. Inside the country, insecurity has triumphed, fueled by drug trafficking, unemployment, corruption, the deportation of offenders to the United States, and the weakness of justice. And this insecurity takes various forms: theft, rape, kidnapping, assassination, etc.

On the economic front, the country is forced to import at a high price the basic goods of traditional national production: lemon, coconut, rice, flour, ground corn, banana, eggs, chicken, cement, etc. The majority of Haitians still live, on average, with only about \$250.00 a year and \$0.70 a day. Haiti's GDP per capita is one-fifth the average for Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole and 40 percent lower than Nicaragua, which is considered the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. The infant mortality and illiteracy rates are the highest in the Americas. Drinking water continues to be a scarce resource for about 60 percent of Haitians, who are forced to use contaminated water that tragically contributes to chronic malnutrition and mortality for a large majority of the population.

CORRUPTED PEOPLE!

From being the first independent black republic in the world, you have the reputation of the most corrupt country, the poorest on the planet, with a label of offspring. You have become involved in all the financial scandals that debase your nation: the consolidation scandal, the Audubon stamp affair, the embezzlement of Petrocaribe funds. In total, 8 companies and 229 people from Haiti are involved in the massive Panama Papers financial scandal. These people have set up secret offshore companies to hide the money spent shamefully on the backs of the masses. Such practices are carried out by criminals, drug traffickers, corrupt rulers, and dishonest business leaders who abound in your country. O people, where are the seven billion gourdes disbursed under the state of emergency decreed nine months after the passage of Hurricane Matthew?

A rodent and devastating plague of society in the daily life of Haitians, corruption is in all sectors of activity, going through business, commerce, health, education, diplomacy, and politics. The Transparency International report on the perception of corruption index mentions Haiti first on the list of Caribbean countries that are very affected by corruption, which hampers the construction of the rule of law.

Public administration has become a real cash cow and, because of the way in which employees are recruited, is invaded by incompetents and thieves. The mismanagement of finances, of which many Haitian and foreign specialists have been complaining for years, has arrived today in total and arbitrary dysfunction. The promotion of corrupt leaders has become such a living reality that three of the convicts in the consolidation trial have come to the helm of the state's judiciary. In this case, we cite Cincinnatus Leconte, Tancredi Auguste, and Vilbrun Guillaume Sam.

O people, the scourge of corruption that is plaguing your country and its institutions is currently the biggest challenge in building a democratic society. It is certainly true that Haiti, since my empire, has always been a corrupt country; however, it must be admitted that the degree of corruption, even under the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier in the '70s, has never reached such a level. The earthquake of January 12, 2010, provided a golden opportunity for offenders to transfer significant domestic financial flows out of the country. The public authorities are thus deprived of the direct and indirect tax revenues they need to solve the basic problems of the population. We have also seen, after the earthquake, an increase in tenders, which are not always the most competitive but the most corruptive.

O people, those considerable sums have been diverted under cover of social works while the majority lives in filth and misery. The source of many ills in the country, corruption often takes the form of overcharging, especially in the field of construction. The natural disasters that have hit Haiti in recent years—hurricanes, floods, earthquakes—give Haitian ministers and directors general the opportunity to resort to this ploy more than once. Foreign NGOs have also contributed to the corruption in the country as demonstrated in 2015 in a survey of US media NPR. The American Red Cross would have spent less than a tenth of the \$500 million in donations collected to help Haitians after the 2010 earthquake.

O people, where is the money from the sale of state equipment that are often sold at a low price by a minister who ignores the investigation report of the Superior Court of Accounts and Administrative Disputes? More

unbelieving than the apostle Thomas in the Bible, you will not believe in the resurrection of the truth that you have buried by burning the records. You have rubbed your hands to express your pleasure by saying that the earthquake has destroyed all the archives. For the record, I want to draw your attention to the shenanigans related in particular to the sale of six aircraft belonging to the Armed Forces of Haiti, the distribution of \$20 million from Taiwan, and the liquidation of heavy equipment of public works during the military coup (1991–1994).

With respect to the six aircraft, by letter addressed to the Superior Court of Auditors on April 29, 1995, at DND/BN/Ex: 94-95 #185, Defense Minister Wilthan Lhérisson wrote as follows:

Mister President,

I am pleased to inform you that, according to the instructions of the Government, the Department of National Defense is authorized to proceed with the sale of certain boats, planes and a laundry, all to the services of the Armed Forces of Haiti.

On June 26, 1995, Mr. Smack Michel, Prime Minister of the Government, in a letter to No. PM/SM/868, asked to make the necessary arrangements to sell all the equipment available for this purpose under the best conditions. Proceeds from this sale could support the Presidency's Youth and Literacy projects during the summer months.

On August 10, 1995, Mr. Lhérisson, in a letter to no. DND/DA/Ex: 94-95 #256, renewed its request. A copy of this letter was sent to Prime Minister Smack Michel and the Minister of Justice, Jean-Joseph Exumé.

On April 27, 1995, the President of the Court of Accounts, Duty Mackenzie, arranged for the valuation of the assets. He appointed a commission in which he added a military aviation expert, Joseph L. Dumas.

According to the description, five of the six SIAI MARCHETTI branded aircraft each cost \$150,000 and were made in 1983. The sixth cost the same amount and was made in 1968. After the expertise, the file was sent to the General Directorate. taxes for the sale. On May 17, 1995, Mr. Jean

Ernest Milord, an auctioneer near the Court, prepared the closet by showing that, on Wednesday, May 24, 1995, the sale of the six used state-owned aircraft will proceed. Bailiff Maxi Alexander affixed the closet that was targeted by the justice of the peace on May 23.

On the morning of May 24, auctioneer Jean Ernest Milord, assisted by two witnesses, Jean Raymond Eliancy and Maxi Alexandre, open the auction operations of the six aircraft. The sale took place as follows:

- 1) The apparatus identified in No. 1271 was awarded for the amount of 1,066,000 gourdes to Mr. Ralph Serrano.
- 2) The apparatus identified in No. 1272 was awarded for the amount of 1,066,000 gourdes to Mr. Ralph Serrano.
- 3) The device identified in No. 1273, damaged in accordance with the CSC/CA Technical Service Report, was awarded in the amount of 387,000 gourdes to Mr. Ralph Serrano.
- 4) The apparatus identified in No. 1274 was awarded for the amount of 1,064,325 to Mr. Ralph Serrano.
- 5) The apparatus identified in No. 1275 was awarded for the amount of 1,064,325 gourdes to Mr. Gérald Robert.
- 6) The apparatus identified in No. 1227 was awarded for the amount of 1,092,325 gourdes to Mr. Josie Mercier, representative of Baman Air.

RECESSING PEOPLE!

Who in Haiti did not know that the auction procedure for the six army planes had been planned and concocted between the various heads of state institutions to profit from their sale? As for the Petrocaribe scandal where the 656 pages of the Beauplan report pointed to the mismanagement or corruption of some fifteen former ministers, including two former heads of government, as well as a dozen Haitian and Dominican companies, who in Haiti did not know that Petrocaribe funds only served a small minority of businessmen and ministers? Who in Haiti also did not know that the public procurement procedures are opaque and not respected?

Here are some examples to corroborate these facts. In the analysis of the forty-one contracts signed in 2010 by the government of Jean-Max Bellerive, six were awarded in accordance with the tender procedure. The

others were signed with people close to power. The firm awarded the public works contract for the Legislative Building, for \$33 million, was created on July 28, 2010 (*Le Moniteur* of September 13, 2010). At the time of the signing of the contract, November 8, 2010, it therefore had only three months of existence, while the law required five years of existence and experience. A newly founded Dominican company, after two months of existence, had a contract for the construction of eight kilometers of road, already drawn, for \$33 million. The intention to cheat the state still seems flagrant, considering that the international average is around \$1 million per kilometer of road. Another Dominican firm obtained a contract for \$135 million in November 2010, when it was created in May 2006. A third firm owned by the same Dominican owner, which won the contract for the construction of the eight-kilometer highway, won a \$178 million contract.

As for the over-the-counter contracts amounting to US\$83 million, a single firm, in six months, won nine for a value of \$33 million; another got sixteen for \$6 million. Of these thirty-five OTC contracts, sixteen were signed in a single day on May 12, 2010. In addition to these contracts signed with Dominican firms for more than \$380 million, the lease of two helicopters for \$1.5 million per year is a clear example of poor governance of the country.

O people, who in Haiti do not know that ministers, directors general, parliamentarians, and even heads of state have always, exploiting the weakness of the judicial system, enlarged their patrimonies during their years of service? Who in Haiti do not know that, since the Duvalier regime to date, trillions of dollars are squandered in Haitian public funds and diverted to foreign banks? Haitian businessmen and politicians are often convicted of violating the principles of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). In Haiti, apart from the consolidation trial, has there ever been a public verdict against corrupt officials and citizens?

In addition to plundering public funds, O people, you use every means in the competition for power. Extreme violence as a strategy against political opponents is the weapon of choice in your arsenal. Your excessive preoccupation with the presidency has become an illness. The methodical sacking of public funds is a business that you handle with such dexterity and finesse that it is sometimes impossible to discover your shenanigans.

Haitian people, you lie in your shame, and your humiliation continues to pursue you here and elsewhere because it is the ideals of the ancestors that you have trampled on. That's why I, your emperor, and the other

heroes struggled; you totally lost it after independence. You disobeyed the way traced by the ancestors—"a people, a nation." You have not listened to my words, so you walk on the surface of the earth like a fugitive. I have given my life for an equitable sharing of property between citizens; in your selfishness, you have left the majority in filth and misery, while you enjoy opulence. I have had a vision of greatness and prosperity for this nation; your country has become a beggar on the international scene.

AMNESIAC PEOPLE!

O people, do you remember the experience of the last earthquake that devastated half of Port-au-Prince and severely damaged several other cities in the west and southeast? It had a record of about 300,000 dead, 500,000 injured, and 1.2 million homeless. This earthquake caused many casualties, deaths, injuries, amputees, and the departure of thousands of Haitians who sought refuge elsewhere, particularly in the United States, with temporary protected status (TPS).

I saw my children, during the first weeks of the disaster, sleeping under the stars, around corpses piled on every street corner in the capital. More than 120,000 bodies were buried in mass graves three weeks after the earthquake. I heard the cries of thousands of people trapped under the rubble. I saw patients who had been amputated or operated without the use of anesthesia to calm their suffering. I saw the distress of an entire people begging for international assistance to at least meet their basic needs.

I saw people running, covered with dust, just escaping from their collapsed houses. I saw a little girl who was struggling to free the little legs trapped under the rubble that had died under the shock of pain. I can still hear the groan of her frail voice in my ears. I saw dump trucks filled with corpses that were going to be thrown at Titanyen. I saw refugee camps in the Champ de Mars and several other places in the capital. Thousands of victims found refuge in these difficult living conditions. Nevertheless, I saw the same courage in many of these victims, which reminded me of the determination of the native soldiers in Vertières. O people, far from drawing lessons from the earthquake, you became more careless in your relationship with nature. You became more selfish in your relationship with your brother.

How can you sleep quietly in a castle in the heights of Pétion-Ville, while the majority sleeps in tents or in slums in popular neighborhoods? These left-behinders have no drinking water, no canteen, no latrines, no

electricity. How can you be proud of being rich in a country devoid of any infrastructure—no roads, no hospitals, no electricity, no firefighters, no ambulances, no transportation, no movie theaters to entertain people? A country that only has the name of country? How can you be comfortable in a country where the majority lives in filth and misery and where a girl prostitutes herself for a bowl of rice, while you, using stolen money, enjoy beautiful moments on the coast of Arcadins every weekend?

PEOPLE WITHOUT VISION!

I have fought to the end to respect your pride and your freedom. You have shamefully accepted funds from the French government through its embassy in Port-au-Prince to spoil the celebration of the bicentennial of independence. O people, where is your dignity? The request made to France to return the 90 million gold francs paid for the debt of independence is just and well founded. The Quai d'Orsay has a legal and moral obligation to return this sum because it is a known fact that this degrading repair forcefully demanded by Charles X for French settlers has caused irreparable damage for about two centuries on the Haitian economy. This ransom has made the Haitian state chronically insolvent and contributed to the creation of all the evils that undermine the country's development.

Haitian people, you are the first independent black republic in the world. Why is it so shameful to be a Haitian nowadays? You no longer work the land; the word "peasant" becomes an insult to you. You want to be a city dweller and walk around with two mobile phones just to show others that you live in modern times. Today you are flouting all your values by putting aside everything that is your strength as a nation. By denying what makes you what you are, it is with horror that I hear you say with pride that it is better if the white occupies Haiti.

TAKE BACK, O RENEGADE PEOPLE!

O people hunted by unemployment and misery, by thousands, you flee every day abroad to become a stateless people, crossing borders without destination. We look at you with contempt, and we insult you with racist words to depersonalize you. You walk with your head down; you're too ashamed of your neighbors' criticism. "Boat people" is the name you wear when you cross the Florida coast on makeshift boats to Miami. Hundreds of thousands have begun this journey of death in the 1980s in search of

betterment elsewhere, to escape misery, hunger, unemployment, and poor living conditions.

But do you remember, Haitian people, how you had your freedom? Do you remember the suffering endured by your ancestors who built this nation? Do you remember your past? A century and more of slavery in the hell of Santo Domingo? The forced labor in the fields, the whip of the commander, and the fury of the white colonist? Do you remember Cayman Wood from the epic of Vertières? Do you remember the names of Toussaint, Boukman, Christophe, Pétion, Gabard, Lamartinière, Capois? The names of Marie-Jeanne, Fatima, Claire-Heureuse? Trapped by the French who did everything to block the bicentenary of independence, you fought a fierce battle on the eve of January 1, 2004. The official delegation was greeted with automatic weapons and stones on the Gonaïves Square.

For several decades, the elite—corrupted to the bone marrow—is pleased to sell the territory to foreigners by accepting without fail, as good accomplices of the system, the dictatorship of the international financial institutions. Without a vision of greatness, the Haitian bourgeois are described as the most repugnant elite in the world because they have despised the social side, giving priority to their interests; they have abandoned the population to daily misery. These rich people prefer to import rice and other utilities instead of investing in the national economy.

Shamelessly, do you see what you have done with Haiti? And I, from the Hall of Initiates, witness all the acts of oppression that are committed in the country, and I see the tears of the oppressed, who have no comforter. I see all the misery in the daily life of the humble in the shantytowns and in the Haitian countryside. The greedy crosses his hands and leads a sweet life on the back of his brother. I've seen children starve and orphans who have no chance of going to school when the state's money is pocketed by dishonest authorities who devise the nation's descent into hell. More than \$3 billion of Petrocaribe funds have been squandered shamefully under the respective governments of Préval and Martelly.

When I see all the abuses in Haiti, I remember my affliction and my condition as a slave in the cane fields in Santo Domingo. O people, your soul, more than ever, hardens and gives itself to more iniquities. This is why you are the victim of the fury of nature—cyclones, hurricanes, flood, erosion, drought, diseases, earthquakes.

PEOPLE WITHOUT IDEAL!

Haitian people, are not you tired of your stupidities, your baseness, and your errors? You always speak of being the first independent black republic of the world, but what have you done, O people, with this freedom? Two hundred years or more of distractions, of fraternal hatreds in the midst of incessant vanities, displaying to the whole world the grimacing spectacle of your triple moral, social, and political impotence. What did you do with your independence?

As the convener and the champion of national unity, I left present and future generations a legacy with the story of my life. First was the courage to be free: “We have dared to be free, dare to be free, by ourselves and for ourselves.” This phrase drawn in the Proclamation of Independence, January 1, 1804, was my request to the nation to look after itself even on his freedom.

Another phrase in the same declaration of independence is an oath to the sovereign equality of the Haitian nation.

It is necessary, by a last act of national authority, to assure forever the empire of liberty in the country which has seen us born; we must delight the inhuman government, which has long held our minds in the most humiliating torpor, all hope of re-enslaving us; you have to live independently or die.

O people, do you remember my solemn address to the nation during the celebration of independence?

Indigenes of Hayti, my happy destiny reserved for me to be one day the sentinel who had to watch over the guard of the idol to which you sacrificed. I have watched, fought, sometimes alone, and, if I have been happy enough to put in your hands the sacred deposit which you have entrusted to me, consider that it is yours now to preserve it. By fighting for your freedom, I worked for my own happiness.

Alas! Haiti, which was the land of liberty, has now become the land of Negro slavery by the Negro to offer the example of all that can be most odious within a group of men. “Unity is strength” is your motto. From the point of view of the common thing, you behave like a primitive group with

different interests, not being able to count on the social and political forces since the country does not exist. The consequence is the humiliation of the Haitian nation by those I have conquered and driven out of the territory after the victory of Vertières. The result is the decay of the country mired in mediocrity and corruption. A little shameless, Haitian people, for lack of moral greatness at least cultivates the habit of walking on both feet to stop crawling.

How can you witness the state of your brother reduced to begging, while you are the sole beneficiary of all the wealth that constitutes the common good of the family? You have blocked the path of progress in your country, and you tirelessly pursue the vile task of compromising the future of young people. You made Haiti a waste and a rubbish among other nations. You reject all the principles so that there is no peace in your nation. You say all the time, “My interests above all, and I do not care about the community.”

O people, look into slums—Jalousie, Ravine Guineafowl, Cité Soleil, Delmas 32, Grand Ravine, La Saline, Cité Descot, Martissant, Green Sofa, Cité Carton, Chechnya, Desermithé, Morne Lazarre, La Fossette, Raboteau—and see the misery of people who live in these places of promiscuity; you will admit to me that something must change in this country. These people who eat in garbage cans; who perish in the streets; who have no drinking water, no medical services, no school, no job; and who sleep under the stars or in makeshift shelters, are they not also Haitians? Do they not also have the right to the legacies I have left after hundreds of thousands of freemen and slaves, before and after 1804, have given their lives to build this nation?

Haitian people, you are so disloyal that I want to turn my back on your misfortune. However, despite your ingratitude, I extend my hand. Know that hope is not lost. Your emperor has heard your cry. You will be released one day. This day has arrived; you will regain your splendor of past times. You will resume your title of Pearl of the West Indies to become a jewel in the eyes of other nations. For that, you have to listen to my message and follow my recommendations, and you will find your way.

FIND YOUR WAY

Haitian people plunged to the neck in the swamp, you ask how to get out of the quagmire? Lost in a labyrinth, you are looking for a way out of the crisis ravaging your country. But how can your emperor lead you if you do not know your destination? You become a nomadic people, wandering on the face of the earth in search of survival. Since I have given you independence more than two hundred years ago, you walk without a map or a compass in your hand. How, in this case, do you hope to find your way?

O people, I do not blame your appearance, but you must have suffered a lot to be in such a state. Barefoot with a mud-covered face and skeletal body covered with infected wounds, wearing ragged clothes, you cross South America on foot to Brazil to reach Mexico in the hope of reaching the US border—a route of 4,700 miles or 7,680 kilometers by plane. Armed with a passport and some personal belongings, you try the path of death—the qualification that the Brazilian press gives to this traffic. O people, do you remember the distance traveled and the dangers to reach the American border?

For history and knowledge of the world, here is the description of your trip: You leave Brazil by air to go to Bolivia. This trip lasts about two hours. Then you cross Bolivia by bus for a week to get to the border of Peru. You travel Peru for about four weeks to reach Ecuador. From Ecuador, you reach Colombia's border by bus. This trip lasts two days. Upon arrival in Colombia, you walk for five to ten days to reach the border. You face dangers of all kinds through the Amazonian forests, and many die on the way because they cannot withstand hardship. From the Colombian border, on a small sailboat, you go to Panama. This crossing lasts eight hours.

Then you cross Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala to finally touch the border separating Mexico and the United States. Stopped by American immigration, you call a relative or a friend who takes steps to

obtain a temporary pass. You spend about \$5,500 to \$6,000 to reach your goal. After three months and a few days of pilgrimage, you cross eleven countries to reach the United States with the risk of being deported by an American judge.

Haitian people, how can you cross your arms to witness as a silent spectator from the youth to Chile? These young people represent the future of Haiti. They are simply victims of a delinquent and retrograde society. The corruptors involved in the Petrocaribe scandal lead a smooth life, while the Haitian masses to which the state imposes excess taxes allow the government to pay the oil debt in Venezuela.

O people, where does your deliverance come from? Your skin becomes dehydrated because of the heat, hunger, and thirst. You run out of steam under a burning sun, and you drink muddy waters to quench your thirst. Stung by snakes in the Amazon jungles, your body is abandoned in the woods at the mercy of birds of prey. The nations whose borders you cross are chasing you the way you run behind wild animals. The guide you pay for the crossing exploits you avidly, and sometimes he abandons you to your fate in the jungle. You cry for help. Nobody hears your voice. Wherever you go, there are contempt, discrimination, and injustice.

It takes thirty-eight hours for a Cessna plane moving at 200 kph to travel the distance between Rio and Mexico City. An Airbus A320 traveling at 800 kph covers the distance in ten hours, and an Airbus A380 that travels at 945 kph crosses the same distance in about eight hours. You put at least three months, O people, to do the same distance, carrying as baggage some clothes in a bag hanging on your back. The road to Mexico has become too complicated; you now take the destination to Chile.

Haitian people, you fled because of misery, but know that Haiti was not born in misery. Nature had gratified her on the day of her birth with extraordinary beauty. She was called the Pearl of the West Indies. She was flirtatious, charming, and haunting. She was a jewel in the eyes of all who approached her. She was so rich that she was the envy of all the other islands in the region. The first children with copper skin born of her marriage—Marien, Magua, Maguana, Xaragua, and Higüey—cherished it. They pampered her. She was like a goddess. The whole world was kneeling at his feet.

In 1492, her misfortune began. Violated by the Spaniards, the English, and the French, she lost much of her charm. She lived in silence about the decimation of her children with copper skin. Spain looted and took away

all the riches of her basement. Since then, she had fallen into servitude. She had no one to share her pain, loneliness, and despair. Her eyes filled with tears; her entrails shuddered, for without mercy, these looters ransacked her home, eagerly exploited her territory. And finally, after decimating a whole population, Spain signed the Treaty of Ryswick and granted France the western part of the island. For more than a century, French settlers exploited Santo Domingo, which was the richest colony in the world.

Santo Domingo, the ancient name of Haiti, was a jewel at that time. In 1767, it was the pearl of the Antilles, the pride of France in the New World. Because of its wealth, the island exported seventy-two million pounds of raw sugar and fifty-one million pounds of refined sugar or 40 percent of all sugar consumed throughout Europe, one million pounds of indigo, two million pounds of cotton, and 60 percent of all coffee consumed worldwide.

The colony employed 1,587 ships and 24,000 sailors—a greater number than Marseille. At any given time, there were more than 600 ships in the port of Cap-Haïtien. In fact, in 1788, Santo Domingo became a flourishing economy, surpassing Canada's economy. Its exports reached 214 billion francs. In today's money, this represents \$1.084, \$440,000, a value greater than that of the United States at the time. Haiti's exports were worth far more than Brazil's gold or Mexico's money, and Santo Domingo kept all of France's navy in business.

It became the jewel of the French colonial empire, and it supplied France with more than half the wealth from all its colonies combined. The livelihoods of at least twenty-five million people in France relied directly on the colonial trade centered in Santo Domingo. This extraordinary productivity depended on some eight hundred thousand slaves, ruled by thirty-two thousand French settlers. C. L. R. James, in his remarkable book *Les Jacobins noirs* written in 1938, explains the richness of Santo Domingo: "If there was not one point of the globe that carried as much misery as a slave ship, no part of the world, given its surface, harbored so much wealth than the colony of Santo Domingo."

Haitian people, I teach you this history lesson to make you aware of the potential of your country and make you believe in your recovery. Awaken your sleeping consciousness—that's the order I give you.

DEAR COUNTRY, WAKE UP YOUR SLEEPY CONSCIOUSNESS

Haitian people, become aware of the degradation of your environment—this is another essential advice in my message. How do you get out of your lamentable situation, if you are not aware, O people, that you are touching the bottom of the abyss? How do you come out of this giant hole if you continue to dig your pit, knowing that one day you will be engulfed in a chasm that will transport you to millions of kilometers in the womb of the earth? You cry for your release, but how do you free yourself if you take no action for change? You continue to cultivate corruption, which is the greatest evil and the root cause of your decay.

Unconscious people, instead of cultivating charity, generosity, justice, and peace around you, you are giving your body to spoliation, corruption, stupidity, and prostitution. You let your children be sexually exploited by foreign criminals who profit from your misery and push you to do shady things. The last example is the case of Oxfam's director in Haiti, Mr. Roland van Hauwermeiren, who has been involved with his team in a sex scandal—a sad story updated after an investigation by the British daily the *Times*. Indeed, the prestigious newspaper ensures that the NGO has hidden the use of prostitutes by executives working for the organization after the earthquake of January 12, 2010. The investigation has also revealed that minor children have been paid for organized orgies at a rented villa from the funds granted in Haiti.

O people, instead of cultivating honesty, you wade through theft, crime, and kidnapping. You become such a rebellious people that you do not respect any divine law. "You shall not kill," says the Bible. You kill your brother daily for nothing by treating him like a rascal. You shall not steal, but you eagerly plunder the coffers of the state to build castles abroad. According to divine law, it is wrong to monopolize funds that belong to

the community. Ignoring this recommendation, with money stolen from public funds, you open several bank accounts in Switzerland, France, the United States, and elsewhere. You are involved in all the scandals such as the squandering of Petrocaribe funds and the overinvoicing of school kits.

The theft of state property is one of the biggest crimes, diverting funds from education, health, agriculture, infrastructure, housing, and many other things. Someone who is capable of such a package must be sentenced to life in a prison because he has no place in society. That is why I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, have punished all those whom I have found guilty of theft in my empire to the utmost severity. I have given the last example during my tour in the south for the verification of title deeds.

This decision has caused my assassination; however, I have no regrets. If I had to repeat the same tour, I would do it with the same determination, accepting the same fate. To die for one's country is not to die.

Let me continue with the biblical principles that you have trampled on. You shall love your neighbor as yourself, but you become a wolf that devours mercilessly every sheep on your way. You are so depraved that you have set up your own criminal gang to sow violence and mourn the life around you. You become such a recalcitrant people that you despise the simplest laws of nature. You shall not cut trees, but you completely destroy the fauna and flora to the point that even the birds have disappeared to find refuge elsewhere. These birds, unable to survive in this earthly hell that is Haiti, build their habitats especially in your Dominican neighbor. The rivers have dried up, and erosion brings the arable land to the bottom of the ocean. Instead of becoming aware of this reality, you continue to build in the gullies and search the sand mines to build castles.

Carefree people, when I left you this country, forests covered almost 80 percent of its landscape. Today the vegetation cover is less than 30 percent. The extent of deforestation is such that we speak of ecological disaster. Do you sometimes ask yourself, Where are the malfinis, the madan sara, the ortolans, the flamingos? Have you wondered about the fruit trees that gave you succulent fruits in the past—quenepas, ciruelas, lemons, sapodillas, caimitos, guavas, cachimans, soursop, papayas, grapes, tamarinds, apricots, mangoes, avocados, melons, tomatoes?

Instead of asking questions and deciding to plant, you prefer to eat spoiled products bought from your Dominican neighbor. Instead of working for the progress of the country, you only think of your personal success. A minority that I call "Conze" is ready to destroy everything to

satisfy petty ambitions. This group persists in destroying all institutions. The laws on which I have built the frame of the nation are for you, O people, sheets of paper that have their place in the garbage. To control the system, your elite is playing all the cards to his advantage: corrupt the authorities and executives of the state, prostitute the people of the press, finance bogus elections, and monopolize the import-export trade.

Today you have lost faith not only in policies or institutions but also in yourself and in the ability of your society to cope with and overcome problems. You do not see any way out. All is desperation. You are a figure of eternal resignation. You think the white man who exploits your ignorance has the solution to the problem.

A psychologically worn society in which feelings of aggression and violence take precedence over respect for others, your country is totally fractured, and never has the division between classes been so acute. In the absence of social cohesion, discourses of violence and hate take the place left vacant by rules and standards of civility that govern the normal life of a society of law and justice.

There is a collapse of collective beliefs and benchmarks in all areas. And the worst, you miss especially, O people, the reason to hope to get out of this crisis. To believe in the geniuses who have flattened you the way is my advice if you seek the path of development.

CHAPTER II

BELIEVE IN THE GENIUSES WHO HAVE FLATTENED YOU THE WAY

Haitian people, I am incarnated in the person of several great poets, writers, playwrights, musicians, and painters who, through their works, have taught you the way to follow. Unfortunately, you have always despised their advice.

The list is long. In the category of writers and poets, there are Anténor Firmin, Jacques Roumain, Jacques Stephen Alexis, Jean Price Mars, Justin Lhérisson, Lorimer Denis, Dantes Bellegarde, Felix Morisseau-Leroy, Louis-Joseph Janvier, Roussan Camille, Émile Ollivier, Massillon Coicou, Etzer Vilaire, Oswald Durand, Anthony Phelps, Demesvar Delorme, Ida Faubert, Pradel Pompilus, Émile Roumer, Carl Brouard, Paulette Poujol-Oriol, Roger Dorsainvil, Roger Gaillard, Georges Corvington, René Depestre, Léon Laleau, Jean-Claude Fignole, Jacques Roche, Luc Rémy, Frantz Jean-Baptiste, and Leslie Manigat. The younger generation is just as prolific: Dany Laferrière, Edwidge Danticat, Lyonel Trouillot,

Gary Victor, Yanick Lahens, Marguerite Laurent, Dominique Batrville, Magloire-Saint-Aude, Kettly Mars, Rodney Saint-Éloi, and Michel Soukar.

These teachers of thought have written important works for posterity. Classical novels include *Masters of the Dew* of Jacques Roumain, *Compère Général Soleil* by Jacques Stephen Alexis, and *La famille des Pitite-Caille* and *Zoune chez sa ninnaine* of Justin Lhérisson. There are philosophical and historical works in which, O people, you must draw for your rebirth such as *The Equality of the Human Races* of Joseph Anténor Firmin, *So Spoke the Uncle* of Jean Price Mars, and *Dessalines: A Model of Revolutionary Leadership in Human Rights and Strategic Reflections on Haiti* by Luc Rémy. Poetic works include Morisseau-Leroy's "Djakout," Oswald Durand's "Choucouné" and "Laughter and Tears," Etzer Vilairé's "Buccaneer" and "Poèmes de la mort," and Émile Roumer's "Despair" and "Marabout of My Heart."

In the category of journalists, there are Jean Léopold Dominique, Bob Lemoine, Jacques Roche, Léon Laleau, Michèle Montas, Colette Lespinasse, Aubelin Jolicoeur, Gasner Raymond, Liliane Pierre-Paul, Hérold Jean-François, Marcus Garcia, Nancy Roc, Georges Michel, Dominique Levanti, Herby Widmaier, Michel Soukar, Rulx Léon, Frantz Exantus, Marvel Dandin, Marc Elie Pierre, Lesly Jacques, Raoul Peck, Ady Jean-Gardy, Pierre Emmanuel, Robenson Geffrard, Fred Brutus, Clarens Renois, and Marie-Anna Murat. All the younger generation of the press is grouped within the National Association of Haitian Media (ANMH), the SOS journalists, the Association of Independent Haitian Media (AMH), and the Network of Haitian Journalists for Training and Development (REJHAFP).

Theater also played an important role as the bearer of my message to the Haitian community. This role began even before independence. During the colonization, the slaves created their theater to denounce the faults of the colonial system. One of the most beautiful books written on this period, which perfectly relates theater in Santo Domingo, was that of the novelist Marie Chauvet, *Dance on the Volcano*. According to Jean Fouchard, "The theater was the most popular entertainment" instituted in Santo Domingo.

How many comedies, dramas, and tragedies have come up to glorify the heroes of independence? The verse drama *Toussaint-Louverture* by Lamartine, *Ogé and Chavannes* by Pierre Faubert, *The Daughter of the Emperor* of Liautaud Ethéart, without forgetting the considerable works

of Massillon Coicou and all the playwrights of the La Ronde generation, have carried a message of glorification on Haiti.

This tradition has continued throughout the history of the country. The theatrical songs will be at every difficult moment of the Haitian people against cultural violence to denounce dictatorship and other forms of barriers. Clubs and associations have led this fight for two centuries, like Caraco Bleu, Club Lambi, and finally the movement Saint-Soleil, which brought the great man of the Polish theater Jerzy Grotowski in Haiti.

In 1945, it was the modern and contemporary period of Haitian theater with inspirations from popular theater and inferences of voodoo. Roger Dorsainvil's *Barrière* was presented at the Rex Theater. The novel *Masters of the Dew* of Jacques Roumain was adapted and directed by A. C. Abélard.

From 1948, several establishments and troops were created, and it was the moment of great development in the Haitian theater. The Theater of Greenery, the National Society of Dramatic Art (SNAD), the Haitian National Theater (TNH), the Conservatory of Dramatic Art, the National Institute for the Training of Dramatic Art (INFA), the Messengers of Art, and the Little Theater of the Institut Haïtien-Américain allowed a theoretical and practical training of actors.

Founded on November 25, 1948, the National Society of Dramatic Art—with the participation of a group of intellectuals, artists, and authors—had done an extraordinary job in the dramatic world. Among them were Jean Briere, Leonid Coicou-Madiou, Charles Catalonia, Simon Desvarieux, Alix Diambois, Luc Grimard, Pradel Pompilus, Jeanne Sylvain, Wilner Sylvera, and Leone Valenti. Pres. Dumarsais Estimé attended the first evening of the SNAD. *The Cyclone*, a three-act play by the English playwright Somerset Maugham, was performed on this occasion on May 8, 1949.

Two other great dramatic representations had marked the life of this era, the play *The Torrent* written by Dominique Hyppolite and the play *The Fishability* written by Jacques Stephen Alexis. *The Torrent* was played on the stage of the Rex Theater on May 18, 1940. Pres. Sténio Vincent attended. In 1984, *The Torrent* was again directed by Paulette Pujol-Oriol.

In 1945, is constituted the Union of the Haitian authors of the theater. Languichatte Debordus, named the Haitian Molière, became the figurehead of the time. He presented his first comedy *The Marriage of Languichatte* at the Rex Theater on March 31, 1942.

Great artists and personalities of letters have been noticed by their actions or writings. Félix Morisseau-Leroy, in his plea for a Creole theater, adapts Sophocles's Creole *Antigone*, one of the masterpieces of the tragic Greeks. Frankétienne's play *Pèlin tèt* remains a classic in Haitian popular theater. The actors Pyram and Polidò brought to the highest level the message of awareness for young people in the room.

In the same vein, we can mention the following works: *The King* of Michel Philippe Lerebours, *Kaselezo* and *Bobomasouri* of Frankétienne, *Debafre* of Kapeka, *Kavalye polka* of Admiral Syto Cavé, and *In the Heart of the Night* by Hervé Denis.

In the category of painters, there are Hector Hyppolite, Philomé Obin, René Exumé, Préfète Duffaut, Wilson Bigaud, Salnave Philippe-Auguste, Levoy Exil, Jean-Claude Garoute (Tiga), Dieudonné Cédor, Max Pinchinat, Lucien Pierre, Bernard Séjourné, Jean-Rene Jerome, Rigaud Benoît, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Castera Bazile, LaFortune Felix, André Pierre, Jean-Claude Legagneur, Edouard Duval-Carrié, Burton Chenet, Gesner Abelard, Luckner Lazard, Stevenson Magloire, Antonio Joseph, Gesner Armand, Jacques Gabriel, Hervé Télémaque, Ernst Louizor, Jacques Valbrun, Réginald Valbrun, Mercedes Coachy, Carlo Jean-Baptiste, Ludovic Booz, Albert Mangones, Jean Menard Derenoncourt, Valcin II, Richard Barbot, Philippe Attié, Pascal Smarth, Florence Mardy, Célestin Faustin, Eric Guiraud, Louverture Poisson, Pétion Savin, Nicole Saint-Victor, Etzer Charles, Kesnel Franklin, Jean-Baptiste Bottex, Bernard Wah, George Paul Hector, Alix Roy, Eric and William Jean-Louis, Saint-Louis Blaise, Serge Moléon Blaise, Philippe Dodard, Lyonel Laurenceau, Ralph Allen, Joseph Casimir, Philippe Claude, Chavenet Carvanagh, Frank Louissaint, Valentin Iviquel, Ulrick Jean-Pierre, Raymond Lafaille, Françoise Jean, Patrick G. Wah, Ilome Joseph, Jean-Robert Brazil, Presler Constant, Albott Bonhomme, Simeon Michel, Patrick Gaspard, Jean Dauphin, and Fritz Duchene.

The younger generation include Pascale Monnin, Marie-Hélène Cauvin, Ronald Mevs, Jameson Pierre, Steven Magloire, Raphael Sagage, Jonas Exume, Duken Delpé, Jackson Day, Bitho Faustin, Jean-Ricardo and Joseph Ernst Domond, Enel Desir, Roberson Joseph, Simon Demosthene, Yves Rigaud, Samuel Luxama, Jean Dauphin, Joevanny Narcisse, Pascal Michel, and the four Tintin brothers: Jean Patrick, Jean-Rene, Gino, and Eddy.

These Haitian painters left a rich heritage to posterity, including the Northern or Cap-Haïtien School founded by Philomé Obin; the École des peintres du Sud-Ouest, with Préfète Duffaut as leader; the School of Artibonite with the great master Saintilus; the School of Beauty with Bernard Séjourné and Jean-René Jérôme; and finally the Saint-Soleil movement, founded in 1972 by Maud Robert and the painter Tiga. Established for its part in 1950, the artists gathered at the Foyer des Arts Plastiques and did a remarkable job, including Dieudonné Cédor, Roland Dorcely, Max Pinchinat, Lucien Pierre, and René Exumé.

Naive Haitian paintings have fascinated the world and intellectuals, especially André Malraux. The French poet André Breton visited Haiti in 1943 and again in 1945. Back in France, he published a text on Hector Hyppolite. Jean-Paul Sartre and other writers visited Haiti during this period, attracted by Haitian painting.

Naive Haitian art spreads around the world, thanks to the promotion made by art galleries and artists' associations such as Nader Gallery, Marassa, Monnin, Expressions, El-Saïeh, Haitian National Hall of Fame Museum, Saint-Pierre Museum, Martelly Gallery, Caribbean Arts Gallery, In Sight Art Gallery in Boston, Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts, etc. The Museum of Modern Art in New York acquires paintings by the most popular Haitian artists while *Time* magazine reproduces Haitian frescoes in its editions. A painting by Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose father is Haitian, currently has the highest value on the American art market.

In the category of musicians, there are Nemours Jean-Baptiste, Wébert Sicot, Gérard Dupervil, Dodof Legros, Guy Durosier, Issa El Saïeh, Raoul Guillaume, Joe Trouillot, Gary French, Occide Jeanty, Roger Colas, Ansy and Yole Dérose, Joe Jack, Daniel Larivière, Cinna O. Charles, Parisien Fils-Aimé, Geordany Joseph, Lumane Casimir, Martha Jean-Claude, Emerante de Pradines, Edouard Antonin Tardieu, Dessaix-Baptiste, Rodrigue Milien, Jean Gesner Henry or Coupé Cloué, Boulo Valcourt, Marc Lamarre, Joseph Fleury Senate, Jacky Ambroise, Raoul Denis, Joel and Herby Widmaier, Altieri Dorival, Cornelia Schütt or TiCorn, Antoine Rossini Jean-Baptiste or Ti Manno, Fred and Andre Dejean, Fedia Laguerre, Jean-Claude Martineau, Robert Martino, Leon Dimanche, Assad Francoeur, Marc Duverger, Isnard Douby, Raymond Cajuste, and Manno Charlemagne. The younger generation includes Carole Demesmin, Émeline Michel, Pierre-Michel Menard, Danielle Thermidor, BÉLO, Toto Laraque, Georges Loubert Chancy, Ismael Marcellus, Jacques

Arnaud Démézier, Régine Chassagne, Emmanuel Douyon, Les Frères Parents, Les Frères Deronette, Emma Achille, Jean René Charles, Lochard Rémy, Rigaud Duverne, Fredo Monplaisir, Tibob De Nazareth, Herold Christophe, Joel Theodore, Claudette and Ti Pierre, Luck Mervil, Dadou Pasquet, Beethova Obas, John Steve Brunache, Jah Nesta, Izolan, Papa K-tafalk, Black Alex, Pras, Mac Kregor, Tony Yayo, Sarah Jane Rameau, Marcien Guy-Frantz Toussaint, Will Stenford (born Williamson Lamour), Baptista Saint-Hubert or Baky, Rutshelle Guillaume, Wendy Traka, Altieri Fatima, Monvelyno Alexis, Dominique Sylvain, and Wyclef Jean. All these artists have their songs based on Haitian popular culture.

Extraordinary songs have been written all over the years by renowned artists to whom I have inspired texts, like “Ozanana and Erzulie Nen-nen” sung by Louis Lahens; “Papa Guédé” by Lumane Casimir; folk songs like “Latibonit O,” “Twa Fèy, Twa Rasin O,” “Erzuli Malad,” “Dambala Wedo,” “Minis Azaka,” and “Yo-Yo”; and also traditional songs like “Ti Zwazo,” “Peze Kafe,” “Panama-m Tonbe,” “Fèy ò,” “Haiti Chérie,” and “Fièrè Haiti.”

More sophisticated than reggae, guaracha, samba, merengue, bachata, cha-cha-chá, and salsa, Haitian compas is one of the most complete rhythms in the world. Nemours Jean-Baptiste adapted it from *tipico cubano*, a movement itself resulting from a slow interbreeding between Haitian and Dominican cultures that appeared in the border area in the mountains of Cibao. Since its creation in the 1950s until now, only great orchestras and great bands have come into being with the compas, including Les Shleu-Shleu, Magnum Band, the Ambassadors, Tabou Combo de Pétion-Ville, Les Fantaisistes de Carrefour, the Black Wolves, Les Shelberts, Shupa Shupa, Les Corvington, Ensemble Etoile du Soir, the Volcy, the Vikings of Haiti, Skah Shah, the Devils of Rhythm and the Formidables of Saint-Marc, the North, the Tropicana d’Haiti, Orchestre La Ruche de Léogâne, Bossa Combo, DP Express, Scorpio, Les Lionceaux Des Cayes, the Déjean brothers, and Accolade. It was the golden age of the compas.

The electronic wave of the new generation includes Zéklè, Top Vice, Volo Volo, Zenglen, Mizik Mizik, Djakout Mizik, Zen, Phantoms, Lakol, Fokus, Sweet Micky, T-Vice, K-In, Kreyol La, Mass Kompa, Harmonik, Gabel, Nu Look, Klass, and Disip, not to mention root groups such as Boukman Eksperyans, Tokay, Koudjay, Rèv, Kanpech, Boukan Ginen, and RAM; rap groups like Barikad Crew, Rockfam, Brimad, Master Dji, Kreyol Rap, King Posse, Original Rap Staff, and the Fugees; and finally

evangelical groups such as the Les Etincelles De L'Évangile, the Voice of Hope, Voix des Anges, the Christophiles, etc.

Louis Achille Othello Bayard—the composer of the patriotic song “Haiti Chérie,” born on September 2, 1885, in Les Cayes and died on July 1, 1971, in the same city—is a renowned compatriot. The patriotic song “Fière Haiti”—also known as “Hymn to Youth,” written in 1937 by Édouard Antonin Tardieu after a competition from the Ministry of Education, which was composed by Desaix Baptiste and sung every May 18 during the flag festival—is a source of my inspiration.

Édouard Joseph Woolley—born on March 31, 1916, in Port-au-Prince—was the founder of the National of Opera of Québec. Woolley received a musical education and studied vocal art in Port-au-Prince with Élisabeth de Pesquidoux-Mahy and Henriette Perret-Duplessis, staging with Raoul Nargys, the German repertoire with Werner Jaegerhuber, and the piano with Carmen Brouard. In 1938, he immigrated to Canada and settled in Quebec.

In 1948, after the Second World War, Woolley founded the National Opera of Quebec. For many years, he had been its director and music director. Woolley was also the director of the National Conservatory of Montreal from 1971 to 1975. He was also a professor of art history in Montreal from 1967 until his retirement in 1981.

Like literature, painting, drama, and music, folk dancing also plays an important role as the bearer of my message. O people, it is necessary before talking about the practice of folk dances to remind you a little of their origins. The traditional Haitian rhythms are classified according to the *nanchons* (nations) that represent the different ethnic groups of the peoples who have been forced to cross the Atlantic to come to work as slaves in Haiti. For example, the rhythm Congo has a The Nago rhythm refers directly to the Bantu of the Congo, and refers to the Yorubas of South-West Nigeria, where each *nanchon* has its own *lwa*, color, music, and rhythm. And in the Haitian tradition, there are 101 *nanchons*, among which are Congo, Nago, Ibo, Petro, Dahomey, Mayi, Parigol, Yanvalou, Djumba, and Banda.

Haitian people, folk dancing and traditional dance are practically based on the dances your slave ancestors practiced in the colony. Upon arrival at Santo Domingo aboard the slaver, the slave had nothing but dance to express himself. He danced to forget his misfortune, to express his anger, to feel freedom. Dance was often a means used by the Negro to

express his pain and, at the same time, to make sense of his life. Sometimes the same dancer would sing and make music by hitting his feet on the floor or clapping his hands. For the slave, dancing was a sacred ritual.

Each rhythm is associated with a dance. Some dances are associated with the general public and others with the initiates. A multifaceted dance style, folk dance is vernacular in that it is associated with a popular aspect of culture. Some of these dances show the rich cultural contribution left by your ancestors from Africa. In the coded language of the Negro, folk dance is called survival dance because it plays a big part in the community.

Do you remember the tradition in the Haitian countryside of seeing the coffin of the dying man carried on the heads of two dancers in which, as the convoy advances toward the cemetery, we dance with the corpse? It's a way of saying that the Negro is not afraid of death. For the blacks, to die means the beginning of a new life in Guinea. When they murdered me, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, stayed at a distance, and I contemplated my corpse, mutilated by my brothers-in-arms.

O people, you must encourage folk dancing so as not to lose this tradition. Rising above the critics who want to associate this dance with something satanic, especially because of its African origins, you must continue the practice of rhythms and steps because, like any artistic phenomenon, traditional dance is a social catalyst, an important aspect of individual and collective development. This dance allows the Haitian to accept his origins, to be reconciled with himself. In the colony in Santo Domingo, folk dancing is practiced in the evenings as well as in conversations, meals, card games, and music. At these gatherings, blacks perform two kinds of dances: group dances (sacred grass dance and war dance) and circle dancing couples (owl and sun dancing).

Here is a list of these dances:

- Ibo, which represents the dance of slaves
- Nago, which is the dance of war
- Yanvalou, a ritual dance with Damballah and Aida Wedo as divinity
- Congo, the dance of love, joy, and cheerfulness
- Kombit, the dance of agriculture
- Banda, the dance of the reincarnation of the Guédés
- Dahomey, dance in memory of African Negroes
- Freedman, the colonial dance of free blacks

- Petro, the ritual dance celebrated in each family at the end of the year to thank the deities of the good they brought throughout the year
- Counterdancing, a colonial dance of entertainment
- Rara, a customary dance of the holy period, that is, from Good Friday until Easter
- Parigol, a dance that expresses the movement of the waves of the sea and the crossing of slaves from the African soil

We can add *trèse riban*, *mayi*, *carabineer*—which is the favorite of your emperor—and finally *mascaron*. The whole origin of traditional Haitian dance is Beninese. The root is the same despite some peculiarities in Haitian dance that is more nostalgic and slower than African dances that are very dynamic and even violent.

There are many artists who have honored through their talents the Haitian folk dance: Hervé Maxi, Viviane Gauthier, Yonel Charles, Nicole Lumarque, Sorin Emmanuel Jules, Marguerite Laurent, Jean Rene Delsoin, Elsie Dodard, Peniel Guerrier, Julio Jean, Lynn Williams Rouzier, Jeanguy Saintus, Régine Trouillot, Brusma Daphnis, Jean Appolon, Jean-Leon Destine, Carme Dorlus, Evens Clercema, Djenane Saint Juste, Odette Wiener, Katherine Dunham, Jason Derulo, Wicky Wolf (born Johnson Style), Lavinia Williams, Dieuvela Etienne, Viviane Dénervil, and Eddy Toussaint.

Haitian people, cinema has also played a big role as a message carrier. In 1962, Edouard Guilbaud, with the help of the journalist Jean Dominique, directed the documentary *Moi, je suis belle*. In 1964, the Cuban Tomás Gutiérrez Alea presented *Cumbite*, an adaptation of the work of Jacques Roumain *Gouverneurs de la Dew*. In 1974, Maurice Failevic of the ORT Turns *Gouverneurs de la Rosée* with Jessie Alphonse, Théodore Beaubrun alias Languichatte, and Rassoul Labuchin. In 1976, Raphaël Stines, an actor, directed the film *Map pale nèt*. This film is an adaptation of the play by Jean Cocteau, with the central character played by Jessie Alphonse. In the film, Stines dealt with marital problems between a tired wife and a vagabond and indifferent husband. Five years later, the same director presented to the public *Bouki nan paradi*.

Bob Lemoine, host at Radio Métropole, presented sometime after (1977–1978) *Olivia* with Laurelle Blanchard, a story that told the story of the troubles of a girl from the province in Port-au-Prince. Arnold Antonin,

a committed filmmaker from Montreal, produced at the same time *Haiti at the Tribunal of Bertrand Russell* (1974), *Haiti: The Way to Freedom* (1975), and *Can Tonton Macoute Be a Poet?* (1981). Fayolle Jean, also of Montreal, conceived in the year 1989 *Ti lòm aletranje*, a comedy about the life of a Haitian freshly arrived in Montreal. Ten years later, Fayolle will release a new film about the aspects of dictatorship, *The Weight of Boots*. In the late '80s, Raoul Peck, who studied in Europe, directed *Haitian Corner* in New York. Willy Exumé, a former student in Brussels who took part in the production of *Haitian Corner*, shot a feature film, *Lavi Ayisyen nan Nouyòk*, starring Shirley Anilus and Bob Lapierre. The success of this film encouraged him to produce a comedy, *Kouche pa bay*, almost two years after with Tom Malè.

At the end of 1986, Jean-Gardy Bien-Aimé, together with Raynald Delorme, offered the Haitian public *Les gens de bien* (1988). Then Jean-Gardy produced during the '90s *The Investigation Continues*, *Cape Town to the Front*, *Scars I and II*, and *The Father of My Son*, while Raynald Delorme affirmed himself in the field with *My Best Friend's Wife*, *For the Love of Suzie*, *Sherico SA*, and *Infidelity*. In the early nineties, filmmaker Arnold Antonin dissected with his camera the many sociopolitical problems of Haiti—problems he exposed in his works such as *The Rights of the Child*, *The Drug Does Not Forgive*, and *Port-au-Prince: The Third World War Has Already Taken Place*. Also, Richard Sénécal, director of commercials and video clips, shot *The New Adventures*, codirected by Raoul Peck. During the 1990s, Haitian cinema enjoyed an extraordinary boom. More than one hundred films were produced from 2000 to 2008. Let's mention a few of them: *Barikad*, *Miracle of Faith*, *The Fate of Caroline*, *Protect Me*, *Vocation*, *The Colors of Dignity*, *The Rebel*, *I Love You*, *Anne*, *Millionaire by Mistake*, and *VIP*. Reginald Lubin used cinema as a medium to propagate the AIDS awareness campaign. He directed *Pouki se mwen*. The success of this short film prompted him to write a second film, *La peur d'aimer*.

Haitian people, among the carriers of my message in cinema and comedy are Arnold Antonin, Raoul Peck, Reginald Lubin, Fabienne Colas, Garcelle Beauvais, Jimmy Jean-Louis, Richard Sénécal, Raphaël Stines, Theodore Beaubrun (Languichatte), Raynald Delorme, Jean-Gardy Bien-Aimé, Mireille Métellus, Bob Lemoine, Willy Exumé, Rassoul Labuchin, Edouard Guilbaud, Billy Midi, Johny Zephirin, Fenel Valcourt, Jean Dominique, Patrick Rameau, David Milien, Anthony Kavanagh, Chelson Ermoza, Daniel Marcelin, Billy Elucien, Francesca Merantie, Sidney

Poitier, Gary Dourdan, George Wilson, Luck Mervil, Jean-Claude Eugene, Aïlo Auguste-Judith, Rolando Etienne, Gaël Jean-Baptiste, Jean-Claude Bourjolly, Keziah Jean, Fayolle Jean, Frédéric Surpris, Martha Jean-Claude, Ricardo Widmaier, Laurelle Blanchard, Paul Arcelin, Jessie Alphonse, Sylvie Auguste, Jean-Claude Joseph (Papa Pye), Jacques Edmond (Gracie), Patrick Jerome, Widmack Belot, and Daniel Fils-Aime (Tonton Bicha).

The great athletes and world champions have the blood of your emperor in their veins. I consider among them Sylvio Cator, Emmanuel Sanon, Jennifer Abel, Philippe Vorbe, Emmanuel Francillon, Jean-Claude Desir (Tom Thumb), Ernst Jean-Joseph, Pierre Bayonne, Joachim Alcine, Samuel Dalember, Dudley Dorival, Mario Antoine Elie, Wagneau Eloi, Nadine Faustin, Yves Jabouin, Olden Polynice, Bruny Surin, Jeff Louis, Johnny Placide, Jean-Jacques Pierre, Donald Guerrier, and many others. Joseph Edouard Gaetjens, born in Port-au-Prince, is a Haitian footballer who has played in the jersey of the United States team at the World Cup in 1950. Gaetjens has scored the goal of the surprising 1–0 victory against England on June 29, 1950, at Belo Horizonte.

There are also many men of science and entrepreneurs (men and women) of Haitian origin who have inherited my genius, such as Jean Metellus, Joel Des Rosiers, Jean-Robert Leonidas, Jennifer and Medgine Fleury, Carolyn Desert, Jerry Tardieu, Jacques Bourjolly, Jean Marc Estime, Guy Etienne, Mireille Perodin Jerome, and Dumarsais Siméus. I mention all the Haitian industrialists and entrepreneurs who are gathered in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti (CCIH), the Franco-Haitian Chamber of Commerce (CFHC), the Haitian-Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Haitian American Chamber of Commerce of Florida (HACCOF), the Haitian-American Chamber of Commerce of Massachusetts, the US Haitian Chamber of Commerce, the Young Haitian Chamber of Commerce (JCCH), etc.

Rodney Léon, an architect of Haitian origin, won the international competition for the permanent memorial honoring the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. The architect presented his work entitled *Ark of the Return* as an object and a symbolic spiritual space with which one can question. “From oppression to freedom, from trauma to appeasement, Rodney Leon’s permanent memorial, located in the United Nations compound in New York, is a symbol of the efforts of the international community and citizens in the world to break the silence on this story,” said UNESCO director general Irina Bokova. “It is a tribute

to the victims, to all the women and men who fight for universal human rights.” The permanent memorial, inaugurated in autumn 2014, honored those who had suffered and been victims of the brutal slavery system and was a reminder of the dangers of racism and prejudice in today’s world.

Jean-Baptist-Point Du Sable, born in Saint-Marc in the Artibonite, is an example of the genius of the race. Born in Haiti in 1745 and died on August 28, 1818, in Saint Charles, Missouri, Du Sable was the founder and first inhabitant of the city of Chicago. He was the son of a French sailor and a mother of African origin, a former slave. He built a house in around 1779 at the present location of Chicago, Illinois, and established a trading post on the north shore of the mouth of the Chicago River. It was a refueling station for trappers, merchants, loggers, and aboriginals. He married Kitihawa, the daughter of a local Potawatomi chief, with whom he would have a son, John, and a daughter, Suzanne.

Michaëlle Jean, who was the governor-general of Canada from 2005 to 2011, born in Port-au-Prince, is yet another important figure of my genius. Ms. Jean immigrated to Quebec in the 1960s, and she replaced Abdou Diouf in January 2005 to become the third secretary-general of the International Organization of La Francophonie.

Dany Laferrière, a member of the French Academy, is another genius of the breed. There are also Anténor Firmin, Jacques Stephen Alexis, Jean Price Mars, Demesvar Delorme, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. How can a nation that has given birth to such people of great value—geniuses in the eyes of humanity—be the poorest country in the planet?

O people, why did you accept to walk in stupidity? Why is division constantly knocking at your door and always welcome? Until when will your neighbors stop insulting you? Will whites and gringos treat your name without respect forever? It is you who have opened the door of freedom to all other nations in slavery; you have defeated colonialism and broken Napoleon’s plan for America. It is you who have dictated the notion of human rights and made the white man repent for the slave trade. Oh, you are a shabby man today in the concert of nations. Get up, Haitian people, and take your destiny in hand. Remember your story, which remains as the most beautiful and valiant ever written by a nation. Develop your genius because you are an exceptional nation.

YOU ARE AN EXCEPTIONAL NATION

Haiti has achieved this extraordinary marvel of launching a revolutionary movement against the backdrop of history.

—Jennifer Fleury

And now I'm going to talk about a number of things that make you, Haitian people, an exceptional nation. I will do it so that the genius that you wear does not perish.

Here, over two hundred years ago, I freed you from slavery. You defeated by arms the most powerful army of the time: the Napoleonic army. You realized what no other country on this planet had accomplished—the foundation of a Negro nation among the colonial powers who had joined forces to make your country, Haiti, disappear as an independent state and as a nation. In spite of all the attempts to choke you, oh people, you resisted. You challenged a second time the French, who had relied on the support of several other nations to reclaim your territory and restore slavery. For more than sixty years, these countries had imposed an embargo on you.

I built forts all over the territory to defend your freedom. The Citadelle Laferrière, built by Henri Christophe, was ranked among the wonders of the world. Today it is in the UNESCO World Heritage list. The standard of this freedom, I had floated throughout South America: Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, and Venezuela. You participated in the emancipation of all those countries that had been subjected for centuries to the yoke of slavery.

You are a warrior people, a martyred people for the emancipation of humanity. You are the first independent black republic in the world, the only nation that has achieved such a feat. Haitian people, know that the value of your country is not limited to its area or its material wealth but includes its contribution to make the land a world of freedom. Its value is

its ability to contribute as a giant to the heritage of humanity. In such a case, Haiti is the champion of freedom and equal rights.

O people, with such a story, why do you walk with your head down and your back bent? You must be proud, Haitian people. Your contribution to the principles of human rights is second to none. You are the mother of freedom. You are made to believe that you are a poor nation, a miserable people, and without a future; it is false! The truth is that they are so afraid of you that, to control you, they try to lower you to your simplest expression. You are a blessed people, a giant in the concert of nations.

You have fed all Europe for more than a century. Your coffee, your sugar, your indigo, your cotton, your sisal, your Campeche wood—all that has made the richness of all these powers that today despise you. The gold from your basement during the Spanish colonization (1492–1697) has built the most sumptuous palaces in the world and majestic cathedrals such as Versailles, Buckingham Palace, Royal Palace of Madrid, Buen Retiro Palace, St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, Notre-Dame Cathedral, St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, St. Stephen's Cathedral in Metz, St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and Cathedral of Saint Mary of the See in Seville, Spain.

With the force of your labor, you have paid ninety million gold francs demanded by France in 1825, under the regime of Charles X, in exchange for the emancipation of the country and to compensate the colonists. To pay this ransom, you have gotten into debt with the same French bankers who have looted your country from generation to generation. You have signed three loans: the first one is 30 million of franc in 1825, the second one is 15 million in 1874, and the third one is 50 million in 1875. This ransom will be paid until 1897, and even in 1913, you still have paid interest to the Parisian bankers. You have paid for everything, and the French, far from being ashamed of having imposed on your country the payment of this ransom, have demanded a reduction of 30 percent of the customs charges for all French flag vessels going to Port-au-Prince, Haiti. In total, more than ten missions have been sent by France between 1816 and 1823 to negotiate the recognition of the independence of Haiti. King Charles X, who has replaced Louis XVIII, has signed on April 17, 1825, a decree granting independence against the payment of compensation of 150 million gold francs payable in five years and sent a fleet of fourteen warships.

Detractors say that the Haitian Revolution of 1804 is a failed revolution. Contrary to these criticisms, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your

emperor, say that the revolution of 1804—as is the case of all the other revolutionary movements for the liberation of the peoples—has been hacked by international authorities. Had it not been for the conspiracy of the colonial powers, blocking Haiti after independence, the nation would have been proud of its beautiful and well-regulated society, its financial strength, and its highly structured institutions. Like the United States, Canada, England, Switzerland, and France, Haiti would not have had all this dirt and misery that depraves its territory, and the Haitian nation would have been able to reach the same level of civilization and even go beyond several Western nations.

Haitian people, where I am in the Hall of Initiates, I have heard the statement of the president of the United States Donald Trump in which he says some countries, among them Haiti, are “shit.” I do not want you to pay much attention to this statement. I want to draw your attention to a fundamental fact: Haiti is the true land of freedom.

O people, your country has been used since the creation of the new state on January 1, 1804, as a tool to denigrate the black race based on arguments such as “Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere,” “Haitians come with HIV,” and now “Haiti is a shitty country.” Mr. Trump is not the first to use Haiti as an example to remind the world of why blacks should remain mentally, economically, and physically enslaved. France has been doing this since their defeat in Vertières, and she uses this weapon whenever she wants to strengthen her hegemony on Martinique and Guadeloupe.

But there is one thing that needs your attention, O people. It is that Haiti is the land where freedom has triumphed over servitude at a time when the Western powers have advocated slavery and the superiority of the white race. This fight has begun since the arrival of the Spaniards in 1492 and continued throughout history. Caonabo, Cacique Henri, Boukman, Toussaint, Christophe, and I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor—we have always fought for the freedom of man whether he is black, white, or yellow. In our eyes, they are all equal in law.

Haiti is the land of true freedom, the first country to recognize blacks as equal to whites. Your ancestors have never accepted the oppression of anyone, neither Spaniards nor French nor English nor Americans. That is why I say, Haitian people, that despite all the shackles and discriminatory words, you will be reborn from your ashes because you are a warrior people.

A WARRIOR PEOPLE

Haiti therefore remains a sacred land, a place of pilgrimage, a historical memory that free and progressive men of all colors, of all origins, of all denominations and of all conditions must respect, venerate and protect their history and the inheritance.

—Luc Rémy

Haitian people, your ancestors who landed in Santo Domingo aboard the slaver were not stooges. Some of them were warriors, craftsmen, and traders, and others were musicians and philosophers. Some African kings, recognized as heroes, fought until the last minute. The settlers who arrived in Africa before falling into captivity included Hintsa, Cetshwayo, Moshoeshoe, Sekhukhune, and Makhado. Among the warriors, I also include the spiritual leaders of Zimbabwe, Ambuye Nehanda and Sekuru Kaguvi.

The first European explorers who landed in Africa, from the fourteenth century, gave us crucial information about the elegance of our African ancestors:

When they [the European navigators] arrived in the bay of Guinea and approached Vaida, recalls the German ethnologist Leo Frobenius, the captains were very surprised to find well-appointed streets, bordered on a length of several leagues by two rows trees. For a long time they crossed a country covered with magnificent fields, inhabited by men dressed in brilliant costumes, whose fabric they had woven themselves. Further south, in the kingdom of the Congo, a teeming crowd clothed with silk and velvet, large states well ordered and that in the smallest details, powerful rulers, opulent industries. Civilized

to the marrow of the bones! And all similar was the condition of countries on the east coast, Mozambique, for example. (*History of African Civilization*)

Haitian people, humanity began in Africa on the side of Ethiopia and Tanzania. Your ancestors, whom the colonists captured in the bush to pile them up like cattle in caravels bound for America, were therefore those who bequeathed to the world the fundamental bases of civilization. It was these despised and humiliated Negroes who spread civilization among other peoples of the world, first through Nubia (the current Sudan) (about 6000 BC), then Egypt (about 4000 BC), several millennia before Greece (around 2000 BC), and later Rome (around 700 BC). For a very long time, Egypt was the only intellectual center in the world and remained virtually so until its decline. The Negro race of the ancient Egyptians founded the first civilized nation of the world. The Great Mosque of Kairouan, Tunisia, was between the ninth and eleventh centuries the main center of culture and education of the world.

It was a Sudanese named Naré Mari who would complete the conquest of the Nile delta and create the first dynasty of Egypt, unified in 3300 BC before the Western era. Naré Mari, the first pharaoh of the first dynasty, was undoubtedly a black African. It was under the pharaoh Djoser, third dynasty, that all the Egyptian sciences would end up being invented, thanks to the genius of his prime minister Imhotep. Imhotep was the greatest black scholar of all time. Pharaoh Huni of the third dynasty was a Malian descendant. The fourth dynasty was that of the builders of the pyramids—namely, Khafre, Menkaure, and Khufu—and they were all indisputably black. Antef, Mentuhotep, Khakaure Senusret (Sesostris III, the legendary pharaoh of the twelfth dynasty), Kheperkare Senusret (Sesostris I), Nimaatré Imana-m-hat (Amenemhat III), Sobekneferu (third woman pharaoh), Awutibra Sare Horo of the thirteenth dynasty, Yahmesu (Ahmose I) and his wife-in-law Yahmesu Neferet-Iry (Ahmes Nefertari) (the couple who founded the most prestigious dynasty, the eighteenth), the famous woman pharaoh Hatshepsut, Menkheperre Djehuty-Mesu (Thutmose III, the most powerful black man of all time), Tutankhamun, and Ramesu Mayrimana (Ramses II) were all descendants of the black race.

The Manden Charter dating from 1222 in the very rich and powerful empire of Mali and the empire of Ghana, which corresponds to the oath

pronounced by Sundiata Keita on the occasion of his enthronement, is considered as one of the oldest human rights texts. It is an oral, “constitutional” content relating to human rights and a formal and legal organization governing relations between men.

Thus, the African civilization—well before the European civilization—is based on very specific sociological facts: belief, customs, languages, and political, social, and economic institutions. This civilization is based on tradition, with a social structure that is essentially communitarian. Each social unit forms a whole, within which man feels fully integrated. Kinship is the framework and the basis of this African social organization, divided into clans and lineages. The clan—being a group formed by all the descendants of a distant ancestor, real or mythical, aware of a common filiation—is formed from several very extended families. The clan can be divided into lineages. Every lineage gathers all descendants into a single line of one particular person. The masculine line gives patrilineal kinship. The feminine line gives matrilineal kinship. There is a strong bond of solidarity between parents, all sensitive to their common belonging. It is within a group that the black finds his balance. Isolated, he loses some of his self-confidence.

That was why, once captured, the first goal of the captain, even before embarking the black man on the slaver, was to break the family bond—to separate the father from the son, the mother from the daughter, the husband from the wife, the brother from sister, etc. This was the strategy used by the whites to captivate the slave Negro. Then they would change the name of the prisoner, which was the other phase of the spell.

O people, do you remember how your ancestors came to America? In wars fomented by European mercenaries selling arms to African countries, the winning people reduced the enemy’s people to slavery. These enslaved people came from family wars and those between the great African kingdoms. There were also those captured during raids that were organized kidnappings.

After their capture inside Africa, the Negroes were entrusted to caravaneers. The caravaneers brought them back to the coast where the captives were resold. These Africans converted into slaves were found in many parts of America—the United States, the Caribbean islands, Brazil, and so on. They came mainly from Gambia, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Tōgō, Dahomey, Nigeria, and Cape Verde.

Among them, we would find the grandparents of Toussaint-Louverture, Henri Christophe, Dutty Boukman, and myself, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor. All these ancestors were warriors—outstanding beings who had marked universal history. Toussaint-Louverture, the forerunner of independence, was a historical figure of importance in the black emancipation movement in America. His grandfather Gaou Guinou, born in Dahomey (now Benin), came from a royal family of Allada. Deported to Santo Domingo, his father Hippolyte Gaou was sold as a slave to the manager of the house of the count of Breda in the northern province near Cape French. It was in the plantation of this estate that Toussaint was born, taking the name of its owner, Breda. His master, Mr. Baillon de Libertat, was relatively human. He encouraged Toussaint to learn to read and write and made him his coachman and his commander, that is, the foreman of the house. Freed in 1776 at the age of thirty-three, he gained a reputation as an excellent rider and leaf doctor, mastering herbal medicine. Toussaint was the first black man who contributed to the cause of the black race in the world.

After landing the French troops, in a note to Toussaint, Leclerc asked to inscribe on all the flags of the National Guard “Brave blacks, remember that the French people alone recognize your freedom and the equality of your rights.”

Toussaint refused with dignity and wrote to Leclerc, “It is not a freedom of circumstance conceded to us alone, which interests us, it is the adoption of the absolute principle that any man, red, black or white, cannot be the property of his fellow man.” By this declaration, Toussaint laid the foundations of the universal principle of the Declaration of Human Rights, a tribute to him by the Trinidadian writer C. L. R. James in his remarkable book *The Black Jacobins*, written in 1938.

King Christopher, the first Negro king in America, created a stable monarchy envied by the British monarchy. The Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier made King Christopher the central protagonist of the third part of his novel published in 1949, *El reino de este mundo* (The Kingdom of This World). The poet and playwright of Saint Lucia Derek Walcott—who received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1992—published in 1949, at the age of nineteen, his first play called *Henri Christophe: A Chronicle in Seven Scenes*. Aimé Césaire made him the hero of a play, *The Tragedy of King Christopher*, written in 1963. A Franco-Haitian film by John W. Vandercook told the life of King Henry in *Black Majesty*.

Haitian people, these giants of history have written with their blood in Crête-à-Pierrot, Ravine-à-Coulevres, and Vertières. The world needs courage to recognize that Haiti has made the greatest contribution to the abolition of slavery. Your country deserves great respect for this contribution.

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CHAPTER III

HAITI'S CONTRIBUTION TO HUMANITY

Haitian people, many great African and American men have marked the history of humanity. I consider among them the Jamaican Marcus Garvey; the South African Nelson Mandela; the American Rosa Parks; the American civil rights leaders Martin Luther King and Malcolm X; Emperor Haile Selassie; Zaire leader Patrice Lumumba; the Burkinabe Thomas Sankara; the Ghanaian Kwame Nkrumah, father of Pan-Africanism; the Egyptologist Cheikh Anta Diop; the Cameroonian Ruben Um Nyobe; the Angolan Ana Nzanga Mbande; the Cuban Fidel Castro, and so on. These giants have earned their place in history, following the example of your ancestors. When the great Napoleonic army entered Moscow, Count Rostopchin—father of the Countess of Segur—set fire to the Russian capital, of which he was the governor, saying to be inspired by the words addressed by Gen. Henri Christophe to the soldiers sent by the same Napoleon, in position in front of Cap-Haïtien.

The Martinique politician and writer Aimé Césaire praised Toussaint-Louverture. “There is a good way to recognize the value of Toussaint, it is to apply to him the criterion dear to Peguy: to measure which floor he has raised the level of his country, the level of consciousness of his people. He had left an army, he had left a jacquerie, he had made a revolution, a population he had made a people, a colony he had made a state, better a Whether we like it or not, everything in this country converges on Toussaint, and again radiates from him.”

The Haitian Revolution has had an extraordinary impact on the Americas. It is the most prominent revolution in history that has created a huge impact on the struggles for independence of Latin America and the Caribbean. This revolution put an end to the practices of the slave trade and slavery. As Aimé Césaire pointed out in the Portraits of History collection, “Santo Domingo is the first country of modern times to have posed the colonial problem in reality and to have proposed to the reflection of men, and this in all its complexity, social, economic, racial, this great problem that the twentieth century is running out of steam.”

The Haitian Revolution has changed the dynamics of slavery in the world. In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1805, the year after Haiti’s independence, Brazilian slaves wore necklaces with pendants in my image, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, in tribute to the Haitian Revolution. In Jamaica, a month after the beginning of the Haitian Revolution in 1791, slaves were singing revolutionary songs. The leader of the chestnuts in Jamaica, Moses Bonn Saamp, spoke of killing all the whites and sharing the territory in the image of the slaves in Santo Domingo. The same statement was made by the brown leader of Suriname Oroonoko of Aphra Behn.

In Cuba, the emancipated black José Antonio Aponte, in his revolt in 1812, was inspired by Haiti, and he showed his troops portraits of Toussaint-Louverture; me, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor; and Henri Christophe to galvanize them. We can mention the link between the revolts in Guadeloupe (from 1794 to 1802) and those of Santo Domingo. The revolts of the Negroes in Curacao led by a French slave named André Rigaud and the revolutionary plots of Maracaibo, Venezuela, in 1799 organized by black and mulatto immigrant soldiers were inspired by the Haitian Revolution. The chiefs of most of the rebellions were former slaves who resided or stayed in Santo Domingo. Such was the case of Charles Deslondes’s uprisings in Louisiana in 1811 or of the conspirators who wanted to set Barbados on fire in 1816 as in Santo Domingo.

For the black slave masses, Haiti represents a symbol by its successful slave struggle. A symbol of the victorious exit from slavery, Haiti inspired great slave rebellions in the United States such as the revolts of Denmark Vesey in Charleston (1822) and of Nat Turner (1831) in Virginia, followed by that of Gabriel Prosser a few years earlier.

Haiti's independence has been a source of political inspiration for black Americans. In the ranks of black abolitionists, Haiti particularly inspired Frederick Douglass and the claims of David Walker. Douglass, who was the consul general sent by the American government to Haiti (1889–1891), always mentioned Haiti after independence in his speeches and in his main debates or interviews between 1841 and 1863.

Leaving the United States, nearly thirteen thousand African Americans immigrated to Haiti after the Haitian Revolution. Haiti became the refuge of all those fleeing slavery in the southern United States. The Haitian Revolution radically changed a world built on slavery and colonialism. For historian David Brion Davis, “the Haitian revolution is a turning point in history. Like the Hiroshima bomb, its meaning can be rationalized or stifled, but it cannot really be forgotten, because it shows the possible fate of all slave societies in the New World.”

The Martinican Aimé Césaire in *Toussaint-Louverture* and *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, the Trinidadian C. L. R. James in *The Black Jacobins*, the Cuban Alejo Carpentier in *The Kingdom of this World*, and the African American Frederick Douglass in several writings on Haiti point to the dimension of the Haitian Revolution. Haiti is the ideological motherland of the Caribbean, “the place where the struggle for freedom has produced a collective consciousness, a new way of thinking about the racial question and of conceiving national identity” as noted by the academic Michael Dash.

For Césaire, Haiti is the place “where the blackness is standing for the first time,” and Toussaint-Louverture is the restorer of the dignity of blacks. Yes, I, Dessalines, am the founder of humanist and internationalist Pan-Americanism. My regime and my successors have supported the liberation movements of the peoples of Latin America—Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru.

Venezuela had seen ten notable slave revolts between 1790 and 1799. All attempts had failed. In 1806, I received fraternally in the new Haiti Francisco de Miranda and all the team that accompanied him. Although he was a white man, an aristocrat who spoke on behalf of the white settlers

of South America, I was a visionary, and I knew that the consolidation of Haiti's independence lay in the continental solidarity of neighboring peoples. That was why I taught Miranda the logic, the methods, and the rules guaranteeing the triumph of the Haitian Revolution.

I also provided weapons, ammunition, and men to my prestigious visitor. It was in the bay of Jacmel on March 12, 1806, that the first flag of Venezuela was hoisted for the first time on the corvette *Leander*, and the Haitian motto "Liberty or death" was adopted by Miranda, who shared with Simón Bolívar and his revolutionary comrades my teachings, which they used to win the battle for the independence of Greater Colombia.

As a sign of gratitude to my contribution to the Bolivarian Revolution, the Ecuadorian government inaugurated Plaza Haiti in Quito. Three statues dedicated to Haiti were erected in 2015 on this square, two in memory of the Haitian heroes—me, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, founder of the Haitian homeland, and Alexandre Pétion, father of Pan-Americanism. The third statue represented a flame, with the inscription "Haiti 2004."

The benefits given to Haiti by Pres. Hugo Chávez in the framework of the Petrocaribe project were recognition of my contribution to the Bolivarian Revolution. These people of Latin America recognized me as the greatest of all Haitians.

DESSALINES: THE GREATEST MAN

Dessalines is the greatest man of all Haitians.

—Dr. Georges Michel

Slave of the colonist Duclos, I was abused, insulted, and sentenced to life scars from the whip all over my body. Being too impertinent, my first master sent me to a slave breaker. The technique was simple: make the slave work tirelessly, starting early in the morning and finishing late at night in all weathers. It was an extremely difficult time for my young age. To constantly work under the blows, to humiliate myself at every opportunity, to take away my dignity—this practice was to try to make me a beast of burden to break my will. I would quote Frederick Douglass, to whom I had the greatest admiration, having suffered the hell of slavery in the southern United States:

I was in the middle of such a whirlwind of activities that it was impossible for me to think of anything other than my immediate life; I forgot my freedom . . . I understood that to make a slave happy with his fate, it is necessary to make a slave who does not think. It is absolutely necessary to obscure one's moral sense and one's mind and, as far as possible, to kill in him all the capacity to reason. It must be impossible to detect contradictions in slavery; he must believe that slavery is just; and that he can only believe if he ceases to be a human being.

Born on September 20, 1758, on the Cormiers' home in the municipality of Grande-Rivière-du-Nord, I grew up and evolved amid the privations, the fierce racism, and all the horrible atrocities of slavery. On my body,

I bore the scars of blows received as a slave of the fields. My first master spat in my face. He deprived me of food for days to punish my rebellion.

Returning to the house after the trials, always reckless, rebellious in spirit, and impulsive, finally, my master sold me. Upon arrival at the place of my new master, Dessalines, I received a more humane treatment; and in my new environment, I became an apprentice carpenter. I was then in my thirties.

I witnessed all the abuse of man on man: removal of teeth, ears, arms, and legs; branding (*fleur-de-lis*); slapping; insults; slow death, with the head covered with syrup and exposed to ants and other insects; hanging; drowning; shooting; rape; and others. In my heart, I carried the painful and torturing memories of the humiliations suffered during my contacts with the white settlers.

Orphaned, I had not been to formal school. I had not had the privilege of receiving the regular or private education of Alexander the Great, Hannibal Barca, Genghis Khan, Musa ibn Nusayr, Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, Bismarck, Oliver Cromwell, George Washington, or Abraham Lincoln. I had not visited any foreign country. The only space I knew was Santo Domingo. Knowing how to read and write awkwardly, I did not read the great stories or the history of the ancient wars made by the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. My world was the colonial and slave hell.

However, I found in myself the moral and physical resources to revolt against the inhuman and degrading system of trafficking. As a general, I fought on several flags to gain my own experience. I lent my services to the English, to the Spaniards, and even to the French, whom I hunted in Santo Domingo in 1803. From my contacts with the men, the women, and especially the soldiers in the colony, I learned to train myself physically, mentally, and spiritually to become a humanist.

HUMANIST THAT I AM

I am a humanist. I am the inspiration of the Latin American revolutionaries, especially Francisco de Miranda and Simón Bolívar. Indeed, my mind, my thoughts, and my methods have profoundly guided these revolutionaries and guaranteed the triumph of their struggle. Also, it is not by chance that the document proclaiming Venezuela's independence on July 5, 1811, is not called the Declaration of Independence, like that of the United States, but *Acta Solemne d'Independencia* or the Solemn Act of Independence from the Dessalinian model of the Haitian act of independence of January 1, 1804. It is also true that at the Cartagena Convention of India, or Colombia, held in January 1813, after analyzing the causes of the failure of Miranda and Bolívar and his comrades decided on the proposal of Antonio Nicolás Briceño to adopt the revolutionary model that I proposed to Miranda during his stay in Jacmel in 1806. It was also in this city in southeast Haiti that Miranda had designed the flag that became that of Greater Colombia and in which were born, among others, those of Peru and Bolivia.

In application of the provisions of the convention of January 1813, Bolívar took on June 15, 1813, the decree of *guerra a muerte*, or war to the death, against all those who remained faithful to Spain. The pennants of the Bolivarian revolutionary army were struck with the motto "Libertad o muerte," literally taking the Dessalinian motto "Freedom or death." Bolívar created during his exile in Trujillo, Colombia, the flag that, according to him, corresponded to the new demands of the struggle. Was it by chance that the color of this flag created by Bolívar and that floated during this period and until the end of the second Venezuelan Republic in 1814 was red, black, and white? These Latin American revolutionaries adopted black and red and the motto "Liberty or death" according to the advice I gave to Miranda.

As a good student, Bolívar imitated to the letter my strategy of struggle—*koupe tèt, boule kay*. Thousands of pro-Spaniards were executed by the former to ensure the liberation of Latin America. In January 1814 alone, at his order, nearly fifteen thousand royalist prisoners were detained, including people hospitalized in Caracas and La Guaira, who were beheaded or shot. In some villages, whole populations of Spaniards were destroyed. The decree of *guerra a muerte* would not be suspended until November 26, 1820, when Simón Bolívar and Gen. Pablo Morillo signed an armistice treaty and the regularization of the war.

The second example of my humanism was the story about the Polish soldiers who were part of the Leclerc expedition and to whom I had granted Haitian nationality for refusing to fight against the native army. One hundred sixty of them decided to leave Haiti to live in Jamaica. I gave them permission and made arrangements with the English captain Perkins to take them to their destination. Upon arrival at Kingston, the governor of Jamaica at that time, Nugent, demanded them military service in the English troops in exchange for their residence in Jamaica. Given their refusal, the governor sent them back to Haiti, asking me to expel them from the Haitian territory. I replied that these Poles had become Haitians. Being the leader of a free people, I could not, therefore, force these nationals to leave their native land.

The third was the protection I had given to women victims after their maternity. Indeed, I had forbidden—in the imperial constitution—parents, fathers, and mothers to disinherit their children. A law passed on May 28, 1805, defined the “rights of children born out of wedlock” with a view to “reconcil[e] what nature and society owe them in the political interest of the state.” The law stated that “the child of an unmarried woman has for father the one who recognizes it.” And the recognition must be made by the father before the public officer. The father who recognized the child would give him his name and contribute, together with the mother, food, maintenance, and education of the child. If divorce was forbidden in the constitution of Toussaint in 1801 and that of Christophe in 1807, under my empire, the divorce was admitted, and marriage was—according to article 14 of the constitution of May 20, 1805—“a purely civil act authorized by the government.”

In my humanitarian vision, I was the first black general after Toussaint-Louverture to fight inequality in America. Unable to ignore under my empire the inequality generated by a concentration of wealth in the hands

of a small group, I began a tour in the south. I was convinced that an unequal distribution of land in the country was a powerful factor in the impoverishment of the masses and therefore a snag to development. My agrarian reform policy had given a full and universal meaning to the notion of human rights based on the concept of equality among all people. I had applied, before the Western nations, the great universal principles of the rights of the human person.

So aware of the importance of the land and the security of the state and the well-being of society, I opted for the maintenance of large property and the confiscation and nationalization of all the lands that belonged to the white settlers. On the second of January 1804, I issued this decree, namely, that all the farm leases of the inhabitants were and remained terminated. Article 12 of the 1805 constitution declared the confiscation of all land that belonged to the settlers. In this way, I made the state the main landowner authorized to administer the lands in the public domain, to define the methods of imposing taxes and of distributing agricultural income, and also to apply the regime of work on the plantations. Through this nationalization measure, my primary objective was to give the state the financial means to guarantee the preservation of independence.

In my policy of social justice, I took the judgment of July 24, 1805, to verify the titles of property and dispossess all those who, without title or right and without paying taxes and by resorting to all sorts of illegal processes, had taken a set of lands during the course of the revolution. Thus, the indicative broad lines of my policy of social and agrarian justice must be sought and found not only in the constitution of 1805 but also in the administrative acts of my government. I rejected any idea of establishing a dynastic power and court nobility in Haiti. I solemnly declared, "I want to be the only noble in Haiti." And the constitution was very precise in this respect: "The crown is elective and nonhereditary."

The question of the creation of the empire was laid down in articles 15, 16, 17, and 18 of the imperial constitution of May 20, 1805. The title of emperor, the first on the American continent, was that of the head of the first independent black republic in the world. This title being admitted, we had with great pomp the official coronation ceremony. The religious ceremony of the coronation was officiated by Archbishop Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Brelle. The coronation took place on October 8, 1804, at the Cap-Haïtien Cathedral. If Napoleon Bonaparte needed the consent of the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Pius VII, for his coronation,

I—Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the first emperor of Haitians, the founding father of the Haitian nation, the greatest revolutionary in the history of humanity, the breaker of the colonial system and slavery—only needed recognition. This recognition I could not receive from the hands of the generals who signed the valiant and extraordinary epic of Vertières on November 18, 1803, followed by the declaration of independence of Haiti on January 1, 1804.

As the head of state of a free and independent nation, I asked only the approval of the generals of the native army in the important decisions involving the welfare of the nation. Haiti being a sovereign country and open to the practice of all religious cults, I would never—like Bonaparte who sent Cardinal Fesch, ambassador of France to Rome—negotiate with the Vatican to obtain the blessing of the Holy See for my rite as emperor. I, Dessalines the Great, known as the greatest general of modern history, could not tolerate to receive the order of anyone in making a national decision, knowing well that my role was to be a decisive actor on the international political scene.

It was not until I was appointed head of the native army to replace General Toussaint, who was loosely deported by Napoleon's orders, that it occurred to me that I should be a decisive player on the international political scene to complete the fight for the freedom and emancipation of the black man. Then the flame of high ambition to free the black people from the yoke of slavery grew in me. I defeated the colonial powers—France, England, Spain, Belgium, Portugal—for the emergence of a free world where all men are equal before the law. This conviction was, for me, a sacred thing. I trusted in the highest sources. Unlike the French colonists who considered the black man as a thing, an object, an offshoot, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, consider man in general—whatever his color, his nationality, his degree of education, and his degree of fortune—as the most perfect creation of the Supreme Being.

I had enlightened the way of mankind in the realization of higher aspirations, that all men are born free and equal in rights. As a universal heritage, I symbolized the antislavery, antiracist movement Pan-Americanism and humanism. I wrote with the Haitian people the epic of 1804, which remains the most beautiful page of history in the world.

However, I never lost my sense of responsibility, although it was not always possible to reconcile the different aspects of who I was—a slave, an orphan, an illiterate, a carpenter, a soldier, a general, an emperor, and

finally a husband and a father. As commander in chief of the native army, I knew by name all my soldiers. Often while reviewing my troops or even on the field of battle, I stopped at the front of a regiment; and calling the officers around me, I named them by their names. I invited them to recommend those of them whom they recognized as being the most worthy of obtaining either advancement or decoration. I did the same thing for every soldier. My attitude toward my men united the bodies by the bonds of esteem and confidence and enhanced my prestige in their eyes.

At one of those military reward distributions that resembled family scenes, a mulatto NCO was designated by Potion as the most gifted to write memoirs of battles for independence. In giving the decoration to the officer, I added, "Sir, you have just received for your service this decoration, which is the highest distinction given to an officer of the native army. However, know how lucky you are because I could not do the same thing to many of my soldiers because they cannot read or write."

In my journals, I became aware of the needs of the soldier, the state of clothing and equipment, the quality of rations, and finally the execution of military regulations. Every soldier was allowed to speak to me directly to submit an application or complaint. I did not neglect any request, and if by chance it was impossible for me to reply to a recommendation at once, I had it noted by my secretary, Juste Chanlatte, who always accompanied me in my meetings. If the request was too important for its application to be delayed, I immediately called the commanding officer and ordered him to execute the request. The initiation of bills or regulations almost always came from my vision. If any regret was expressed about it, it was because I spent too much time thinking about the strategy to be used to defend the independence of a young nation instead of concentrating my actions on improvements in the finances of the young people and the state and the monitoring of the many details of execution.

In military engineering, I planned all my actions, so I was ready to face all the setbacks that could occur. Never has chance been left for anything in the design of my plans. Before arresting them, I submitted them to a long time of examination; all risks, however implausible, were discussed and planned. When I led the last battle at Vertières, for example, I knew that the battle would be tough and that the native army would lose thousands of soldiers. However, I also knew that Vertières was going to be the last sacrifice to purify humanity of the ugliness of racism and this absurd conception of the superiority of the white man over the black man.

To assure all men the full exercise and enjoyment of all their faculties was my vision when I engaged the native army in the last offensive to drive the French troops out of Santo Domingo. I had attributed this high ambition to me by converging my thoughts and my actions toward this high goal: to eliminate the colonial system advocated by the European powers, to spread among all peoples on the earth the blessing of freedom, and to provide all nations subject to slavery with the inalienable benefits of civil and political equality.

In fact, I was the pioneer of international cooperation, peaceful and antihegemonic. I approached international relations in a fraternal and egalitarian perspective. In my overall vision of relations between peoples, I conceived the solidarity between all persecuted men who were exploited and deprived of their freedom, their country, and their independence. That was why, in the imperial constitution of 1805, I considered all those who had taken the Haitian nationality as blacks, thus making the black concept not really a color but rather an ideology of resistance to oppression organized by white slavers, colonialists, and racists.

While advocating an international policy of appeasement and peaceful coexistence with the rest of the world, I had included in article 36 of the 1805 constitution “[t]he Emperor will never form any enterprise in view of making conquests nor to disturb the peace and the internal regime of the foreign colonies.” Nevertheless, I never refused, when it was possible, my help to the oppressed of the earth. This aid I offered to Germans, Jews, Spaniards, Poles, Americans, and blacks from settlements and other sources.

HAITI IS A GREAT NATION

Haitian people, you do not have to demonstrate that you are a great nation; it has been proven by a thousand actions, by your resilience, and by your courage. You know how to write in gold letters one of the most beautiful pages of universal history. Your independence has not been given by a simple treaty as is the case of several other former colonized countries. Haitian independence has been won on the battlefield with bravery, sweat, and sacrifices. Haiti is the first country and the only one in the world resulting from a slave revolt. It is also the only independent French-speaking Caribbean territory. Haiti is the only country in the Caribbean with the honor of being an observer member and permanent guest of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA).

A signatory to the charter of the United Nations before October 24, 1945, Haiti is in the list of founding members of this world organization. O people, your country has signed the charter even before the official creation of the UN, decided by the victors of the Second World War at the conferences of Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta on October 24, 1945. The country is also a member of the Organization of American States since its inception in 1948 and is one of the first countries to sign the charter of the organization in 1951.

It was thanks to the cooperation between Ambassador Antoine Bervin of the Haitian delegation to the San Francisco Conference in 1945 and Joseph Paul-Boncour, a member of the French delegation at the same conference, that French was adopted as one of the five official languages of the United Nations and became, after English, the second working language. To guarantee the vote, Ambassador Bervin (who died in 1979) lobbied many Latin American colleagues to constitute a majority of votes in favor of French.

Seventy-one years ago, in 1947, the United Nations decided to recognize a Jewish state.

Haiti participated in the two world wars (1914–1918 and 1939–1945) with troops in the fighting forces, especially during the First World War against Germany. The country had also taken part in other armed conflicts outside the national territory in the name of the ideal of freedom that your ancestors had traced to Vertières. For example, when the war broke out between France and Prussia in 1870, Haitians volunteered to fight the Germans in the French ranks. The young state did not yet have seventy years of independence and had barely emerged from an international embargo decreed by France herself and her allies (1804–1862). The war was short and the Haitians who joined the French forces few. France was defeated by Germany and lost Alsace and a good part of Lorraine. However, history would remember that Haiti had helped the former metropolis to protect its territory.

World War I was unleashed in 1914 after the Sarajevo bombing that killed the Austrian archduke Franz Ferdinand. Haiti declared war on imperial Germany on July 12, 1918, and was thus among the victorious powers of the Treaty of Versailles of 1919.

During the First World War, Haitians fought with the French forces. Among the volunteers was Mr. Léandre Daniel Sr., owner of Magic Ciné in Port-au-Prince. Mr. Daniel had his fingers burned in 1915 with mustard gas. He was wounded again on the battlefield with a bayonet that opened his stomach. He returned a few months later to fight. When he died in the 1980s, France's ambassador to Haiti came to pay homage to the mortal remains of Mr. Léandre Daniel Sr. at the funeral home of the Blue Angel Company Celcis as a veteran of the First World War.

Mr. Victor Comeau-Montasse, grandson of Gen. Morin Montasse and one of the post-Salnavé war ministers, was also a Haitian veteran of the First World War. In honor of his participation in the war, Mr. Montasse was decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honor with a red ribbon without rosette and a rank of knight, the military medal with green and yellow ribbon, and cross of the 1914–1918 war with its green ribbon striped with fine red lines with the inscription "French Republic: Honor and Fatherland."

Mr. Gaston Blanchard, who died in Port-au-Prince in 1968, was another fighter in the 1914–1918 war. His younger brother, Marcel Blanchard, was killed on the battlefield during the same war. The French Ministry of

Defense had counted in its archives thirty-three Haitians who died for France during the First World War. Five Haitians were reported missing on March 24, 1917, after the torpedoing of the French ship *Montreal* of Compagnie Générale Transatlantique. This incident served as a pretext for Pres. Sudre Dartiguenave to ask the Haitian Parliament to declare war on Germany. These victims were Joseph Jean-Baptiste, Charles Dorelus, Gabriel Hilaire, Laurent Fojuger, and Frederic Jalonton.

In 1939, during the Second World War and the persecutions of Jews by Adolf Hitler, Haiti was the rare country in the world to adopt a decree-law granting immediate Haitian naturalization to all Jews wishing to obtain it. During the Holocaust, Haiti delivered innumerable passports to Jews fleeing Nazi Europe. Already, from 1830, Jews fleeing Polish pogroms and many others (Lebanon, Syria, Egypt) found refuge in Haiti. The country received more than three hundred families who resided there to work mainly in the trade.

Under the Lend-Lease Act, during the Second World War, the Haitian Navy was reinforced by several units, and the number of its personnel increased. The artillery service of the Haitian Coast Guard was organized, and an artillery unit was installed at Môle Saint-Nicolas. Several guns had repeatedly opened fire on German submarines that crossed the Canal du Vent upon surfacing, forcing them to dive. Many airfields were built by surveyor René Lerebours across the country, including Anse-à-Pitres and Trou-Caiman, or expanded like that of Belladère to allow US aircraft to supply Allied troops. The Port-au-Prince/Malpassee/Jimani road was also built in 1943 to facilitate a reliable road link between Haiti and the Dominican Republic during the Second World War.

As for Haitian volunteers in the French armies during the Second World War, there was not enough. We must mention the presence of Dr. Pierre Clermont (1917–1973), an orthopedic surgeon who volunteered for the French Army in the last years of the war. He made the German campaign in the army of Gen. Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, and he left active service to the rank of captain after the victory to go to Canada to improve in orthopedics and finally to return to Haiti to open his clinic. There was also Frédéric Auxila, son of Pierre Auxila, who joined the French forces during the war and settled in Metz after the conflict.

We can also mention the case of the only son of Adm. Henri Laraque, half brother of Dr. Rosalvo Bobo, who fought as a pilot of the Royal Air Force. We cannot forget either the Franco-Haitian Philippe Kieffer,

who fought heroically at the landing of June 6, 1944. He was the head of the only small French unit that participated in this landing. The commander Kieffer was remembered by history as the winner of the battle of the Ouistreham Casino, which was won over the Germans who were entrenched in this casino. He was wounded twice during the action, and despite this, he refused to be evacuated, continuing to fight. Commander Kieffer was born in Port-au-Prince on October 24, 1899, of an Alsatian French father and a Haitian mother. His parents ran a large business house in Port-au-Prince, which later went bankrupt.

Philippe Kieffer had been a senior executive of the Royal Bank of Canada in Haiti before the war. He had married a young lady from the Scott family. A volunteer at age forty, on September 2, 1939, he was one of the first to respond to the call of General de Gaulle, and he joined the Free French Naval Forces on June 19, 1940. He died in France on November 20, 1962. His eighteen-year-old Haitian-born son, who had just returned to the resistance, was killed in 1944 by the Germans.

Other facts had marked Haiti's contribution to world history. In 2009, a statue was unveiled at Franklin Square, Savannah, in honor of the Haitian soldiers who had participated in the American Revolutionary War. Indeed, on October 9, 1779, a number exceeding five hundred soldiers left the port of Cap-Français to join the American revolutionary forces that fought the English army in Georgia. The presence of the fighter volunteers of Santo Domingo had had a huge contribution in the capture of Savannah. Henri Christophe was not yet sixteen when he participated as a drummer in this battle.

On September 2, 1930, there was a hurricane that devastated Santo Domingo and caused the deaths of more than twenty thousand people. The city was almost completely destroyed. Haiti was the first country to be mobilized to help the victims. President Trujillo sent three thank-you messages to Pres. Eugene Roy at that time. This did not prevent Trujillo from murdering more than fifteen thousand Haitian immigrants in 1937 on the Haitian-Dominican border.

Haitian people, Haiti is a great nation that has contributed immensely to the promotion of human rights around the world. Your country is the mother of freedom. To continue with his contribution to the free world, your emperor wants to mention two other important facts among hundreds.

Princess Marina of Greece visited Haiti in 1935 to thank the Haitian people for the help obtained from the Boyer government during the revolutionary war waged by the Greeks against the Ottoman Empire between 1821 and 1832. Indeed, Haiti was under international blockade at that time, despite giving US\$40,000, twenty thousand rifles, and twenty-five tons of coffee to the Greek revolutionaries to buy weapons and ammunition.

In 1943, when the world was in the middle of the Second World War, France was occupied, and Canada was at war with Italy. On October 6, 1943, as the head of a nine-person mission, the Haitian president Élie Lescot arrived in Canada. On October 8, the delegation was greeted warmly in Quebec by the lieutenant governor, the Quebec premier Adélarde Godbout, and the mayor of Quebec. It was the first time that the Quebec government had received a Latin American head of state, and that was a real affirmation by Quebec on the international scene. This visit by the Haitian president set a precedent by being received directly by the government of Quebec.

O people, all these openings to other nations, are they not the irrefutable proof that Haiti is a great nation?

Haitian people, French intellectuals claimed that uncultivated masses built the Haitian nation after independence. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, would answer that it was quite normal since the majority of the population under my empire was illiterate. As slaves of Santo Domingo, the colonist denied us the right to read and write. However, I asserted that Haiti's contribution to world literature began just after independence, and Haiti continued to bring its contribution to universal culture throughout the two centuries and more of the existence of the Haitian nation. The installation of a literary institution began in Haiti as soon as the threat of the French's return to restore slavery was dispelled, and the attention of the literate minority could then turn to the things of the spirit.

Indeed, theatrical performances began at the beginning of independence. In the northern kingdom, a brilliant court regularly went to the theater. The kingdom possessed a printing press, periodicals were published, and poems were declaimed. In 1817, both Milscent and Colombel, poets, founded the country's first literary magazine, the *Haitian Bee*. This review even reached France, particularly in Bordeaux, whose relations with Santo Domingo were very close. The Sudanese-born journalist Félix Darfour, who immigrated to Haiti in 1818, was welcomed by President Boyer, and

he became the first director of the *Haitian Scout*, a political and literary magazine. Thirty years after independence, a literary cénacle was founded known as the School of 1836. The Nau brothers—the poet Ignace, the journalist and economist Eugene, and the historian Emile—and the Ardouin brothers—the poets Celigny and Coriolan and the historian Beaubrun—published works strongly marked by the romantic aesthetic. The Haitian writer and man of law Linstant Pradines received, in 1840, the Grégoire prize of the French Society for the Abolition of Slavery for his essay on the means of extirpating the prejudices of the whites against the color of the Africans and blood -mêlé. This prize had an impact beyond the French borders. In 1847, Thomas Madiou published his *History of Haiti*, which he wrote mainly from the testimonies of politicians and survivors of the wars of independence.

Beaubrun Ardouin published in 1832 a geography of the island of Haiti and then, from 1853 to 1865, his monumental studies on the history of Haiti, followed by the life of Gen. J. M. Borgella. Émile Nau published in 1845 his *Histoire des caciques d'Haïti*, while Saint-Rémy published in 1839 an essay on Henri Christophe, a Haitian general. In 1850, he published *Vie de Toussaint-Louverture*, and in 1851, from the city of Les Cayes, he published, by associating a historical and critical study, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire d'Haïti* with Boisrond-Tonnerre. In 1853, Saint-Rémy published the *Memoirs of General Toussaint-Louverture*. In 1859 appeared *Stella*, posthumous book of Emeric Bergeaud, considered as the first Haitian novel.

The years 1860–1880 saw the emergence of a patriotic school whose best known representatives were Oswald Durand (1840–1906), Tertulien Guilbaud (1856–1937), and Massillon Coicou (1867–1908). In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the physician Louis Joseph Janvier and the scientist and statesman Anténor Firmin, both members of the Anthropological Society of Paris, published major works. *The Equality of the Human Races* (1885) of Firmin was a weighty answer to Gobineau's assertions. Inspired by my vision of creating a free and independent nation, Louis Joseph Janvier published in Paris, in 1884, his *Haiti to Haitians*. In 1928, Jean Price Mars released his masterpiece *So Spoke the Uncle*.

The magazine *Les Griots*, taking over from the *Revue Indigène* in 1938, posed openly as the driving force of political life the conflicts between blacks and mulattoes. In 1946, “angry young people” who edited *La Ruche* (the organ of the younger generation)—namely, Gérald Bloncourt,

Jacques Stephen Alexis, Rene Depestre, and Gerard Chenet—triggered demonstrations that led to the fall of the government. In the 1960s, the writers of the literary Haiti group—Anthony Phelps, Émile Ollivier, Frankétienne, René Philoctète, Roland Morisseau, Serge Legagneur, and Davertige, brought together under the aegis of Marie Chauvet—were conducting a very intense activity of cultural animation.

The contribution of Haitian literature to French literature is enormous, including the Haitian thinker Roussan Camille (1915–1961), the poet Jacques Roumain (1907–1944), Maurice Casséus (1909–1960), Anthony Lespès (1907–1978), Edris Saint-Amand (1918–1960), and many others. Other Haitian writers have created through their writings a social literature that has become an important part of the Francophone community. To French publicists who want to reduce the value of Haitian literature to Haitian works published in France, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the founder of the Haitian nation, say that it is a complete and real literature that exists in Haiti and that boasts all its richness and its own specificity.

In view of its contribution to humanity, it is an undeniable fact that Haiti is a great nation. However, the Haitian people must accept the truth that they have made mistakes.

To be great is to go back on one's mistakes.

—Massa Makan Diabaté

First independent black republic of the world, O people, you must admit that you made mistakes. My assassination—decided from a plot planned by my brothers-in-arms, with whom I made Vertières, and the colonial powers of the time, particularly France—was the first mistake leading to the decay of the Haitian nation. My assassination was an unbearable tragedy. This was the first serious mistake made by the nation that murdered the founder of the homeland. I took care to warn you that if one day you make the mistake of betraying me, you would be damned forever. This was clearly stated during my speech of the proclamation of independence.

As a Haitian people, my assassination represented a crucial loss for all peoples and all forces fighting for social progress and the well-being of humanity. I symbolized freedom, the equality of men of all races and colors, and the end of a system. My struggle for change was based on specific and

concrete actions. I never concealed my hostility to the interference of the colonizing countries in the internal affairs of my country. As the greatest revolutionary of all time, I knew that the black people would never be truly masters of their destiny as long as they still existed on this earth as a single nonfree, a single slave, a single oppressed, a single colonized. That was why I had put all my life in the service of humanity to defend it from the evil of the exploitation of man by man, from the contempt of the strong against the weak.

“Unfortunate Martinicans,” said I, “how can I not fly to your aid and break your chains! Alas, an invincible obstacle separates us! But perhaps the spark of fire that embraces us will spring up in your soul; that at the sound of this commotion, you will wake up with a start of your lethargy, to claim with arms in hand your sacred and prescriptible rights.”

Give attention, Haitian people, to the commercial and electoral use of the Dessalinian thought. Be careful not to trivialize my name as false prophets use the name of Christ to indoctrinate and put the masses to sleep. The Dessalinian ideal has a meaning; it is the unity of the Haitian people around the slogan of “Struggle for independence” to create all the conditions for a national liberation action. In me, the popular masses have found a guide capable of making them become an unbeatable force. O people, if you want to use my name effectively, consider your emperor as a catalyst to divorce from all bad practices and take back your own destiny by beating you fiercely for a truly socialist transformation of the Haitian society.

Let history repeat that I was murdered at Pont-Rouge, near Port-au-Prince, and that a mad lady named Défilée, Marie Sainte Dédée Bazile, picked up my remains and then buried the machete-torn body on Place Sainte-Anne. Some say I was poisoned by Pétion or a Catholic priest. Others cite the name of General Vaval as the author of the murder, but these are stories that I ask you to ignore because they are without much importance in my message. On the other hand, what I want you to remember are the actions that marked my existence as a slave, a soldier, a general, and finally an emperor.

The second mistake was the split of the country after my assassination. On October 21, 1806, the insurgent generals offered to rally to Christophe under the condition that a constitution would limit the power of the head of state. On October 23, Christophe and his staff adhered to the resolution. On October 24, Christophe wrote a letter to the Haitian Senate saying he

refused to be appointed president under the conditions. He proclaimed himself governor of the northern kingdom. But General Pétion, who commanded in the West, did not recognize the government restored in the North by Christophe and convened a constituent assembly in Port-au-Prince. On December 27, 1806, this assembly adopted a republican constitution, which gave the power of power to a senate of twenty-four members and entrusted the executive to a president elected for four years.

On December 28, the assembly appointed Christophe as the president of Haiti, and this was despite his protests against the constitution that left the head of state a very limited power. On January 1, 1807, Christophe attacked Port-au-Prince, but it was postponed. On January 27, 1807, the Senate passed a law that outlawed him; and on March 9, 1807, he elected Pétion.

Supported by his army, Christophe settled solidly in the northern part of Haiti. On February 17, 1807, he promulgated in Cap-Haïtien a constitutional act, deliberated in a private council, that gave him the presidency for life, with sovereign powers and the title of generalissimo of all the troops of Haiti. Then in 1811, not satisfied with his powers, he took the title of king of Haiti, and he was crowned as such under the name of Henry I.

The political crisis of 1806–1807, after my assassination, resulted in the division of the country. In Cap-Haïtien reigned Henri Christophe, who represented the power of the blacks; and in Port-au-Prince, there was Alexandre Pétion, who ruled the western and southern parts as the constitutional president, supported by the Métis. This policy buried the agreement signed between blacks and mulattoes during the Congress of Arcahaie. This division, which confronted blacks in one camp and the mulattoes in the other side, greatly undermined the country's development.

Contrary to the postulate of the imperial constitution of 1805, recounting in article 50 that “the law does not admit a dominant religion,” in 1860, the Haitian state signed a concordat with the Vatican that would take charge of education in the country. Not only had the Catholic Church poorly trained young Haitians by monopolizing education but the Catholic clergy, through the antisuperstition campaign, also destroyed a whole set of Haitian cultural heritage related to voodoo. The Vatican also triggered the first persecutions against temples and *lakous*. The concordat sanctioned the penalization but especially the denial of this religion among the Haitian elites.

The fourth mistake was that I was too tolerant at the beginning of my regime of those who were squandering and wasting the resources of the new state. I did not refute, despite my reservations certainly. This declaration was found ten years after my assassination in the *Royal Gazette of Haiti* of August 27, 1816: "In the short space of the reign of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, there was a general relaxation in the different branches of government; all was demoralized, and the spirit of debauchery and indiscipline we had taken in the French camps completely corrupted our manners; inhumanity, pillage, gambling, debauchery, the most frantic passions waved and shook us."

However, under my empire, history would remember that, once alerted to the corruption that plagued the new state, I quickly took exemplary measures to stop the hemorrhage. I cut the foolish expenses of my mistresses drawn from the public treasury. In the case of Euphemia Daguilh of the city of Les Cayes, who was spending a thousand gourdes a day, once aware of the scandal, I ordered the minister of finance to reduce her allocation to eight hundred gourdes a month. I gave the same treatment to the dancer Couloute, another of my mistresses, even if she was not ready to accept this measure.

In an effort to better control the administration and consolidate the achievements of 1804, despite the weaknesses and failures of my regime, I knew how to do remarkable things and take brilliant measures. To consolidate independence, forts were built and the army reorganized. To avoid a possible return of the French, I organized an army of 52,500 men, that is, 19 percent of the population, with Henry Christophe as general-in-chief, and I had built by the decree of April 9, 1804, forts throughout the country. I meant to give the country the sea for frontier. "Haiti must have the sea for border," I declared.

The fifth error was the acceptance to pay France 150 million gold francs, an agreement signed in 1825 for the recognition of independence. Haiti became the first state in modern history to repay the city such a debt. To force Haiti to sign the agreement, King Charles X imposed a maritime blockade. This debt had considerably impeded the country's development and was the cause of the many problems facing the Haitian nation at present.

To pay the debt, the new state had to borrow considerable sums from the Paris market. A loan of 30 million francs was first contracted with the French bankers Laffitte and Rothschild to pay the first annuity. In 1838,

King Louis-Philippe agreed to reduce the compensation to 90 million gold francs. To solve it, the government of Haiti had to raise heavy taxes. The debt was repaid in 1883. But Haiti would not pay the Paris banks until the middle of the twentieth century.

The repayment of the debt of independence placed Haiti in a hell of financial rout. To cope with the situation, loans were contracted on unfavorable terms and were mainly used to repay interest. The Haitian governments resorted to the issue of money and turned the gourde into zoreille-bourrique under the government of Sylvain Salnave between 1867 and 1870. The height came with the loan of 1874 from the French bank Marcuard et Cie, followed that of 1875 at the Societe Generale de Crédit Industriel et Commercial de Paris.

In 1880, Solomon's government delivered Haitian finance to the French bank Societe Generale de Crédit Industriel et Commercial de Paris. The latter created the National Bank of Haiti (BNH), which had a fifty-year mandate to provide state treasury, money creation, and customs control. The borrowings of 1896 and 1910 paved the way for systematic corruption, practices revealed during the consolidation trial, in which three future heads of state were condemned: Cincinnatus Leconte, Tancrede Auguste, and Vilbrun Guillaume Sam.

The American occupation imposed the loan of 1932 in the same premeditated logic of blocking the development of the country. From 1947, the date of the final repayment of the debt of independence, until today, the Haitian people found their resources in international assistance and remittances from the diaspora with the most glaring income inequalities in the world. In the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake, Haiti's \$8 billion debt was canceled. Since then, the Haitian public debt had doubled from \$887 million in 2011 to more than \$3 billion in 2017.

Who can deny that I was a nationalist? I was a martyr for the freedom of the human races. Having grown up in slavery, I led my people to independence and changed the course of world history based on slavery at the time. Before Vertières, for the white man, the black was born to become a slave because he was unable to rise to the human dimension. For the colonist, the Negro was a beast of burden, while for the Negro, the white had the right over his destiny. Black slaves accepted for more than a century, without a single complaint, this condition of life in the colony. They represented 70 percent of the population in Santo Domingo, yet their number did not make the difference. They were the pillar of the colonial

system based on triple domination: political, economic, and cultural. This hegemony fueled the sense of superiority of the French settlers who controlled Santo Domingo between 1697 and 1803.

On January 1, 1804, I fought this system and opened the eyes of the world to humanism, equality, and international cooperation among nations. This was what I called the Dessalinian ideal.

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CHAPTER IV

THE DESSALINIAN

Dessalines rendered services to his country; he purged the soil of Haiti from his oppressors, and proclaimed the act of our immortal independence; it was already a big step towards civilization.

—King Christopher

Implanting the abolition of slavery internationally—that was the goal of my fight. I was the first head of state on the American continent and in the world to promote human rights without distinction of race, color, religious faith, and others. For example, I promulgated on January 14, 1804, an incentive decree to encourage ship captains to bring troubled blacks back to Haiti in the United States who were unable to pay for the trip. For each person brought back, I paid forty piastres to the captain. Nearly thirteen thousand African Americans left the southern United

States to immigrate to Haiti, a nation recognized as “the land of freedom and justice.”

Here is another example to illustrate the international dimension of the Haitian Revolution. The Naturalization Act of 1790, issued by President Washington’s government, limited the right of naturalization to free white persons, thus excluding black immigrants until 1870. reserves and Asians until the 1925. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, in the aftermath of Haitian independence in 1804, offered refuge and full protection to all enslaved and oppressed men of the earth, no matter their nationality and their color, no matter if they were Polish, Canadian, American, English, Spanish, or French. For proof, among the thirty-five signatories of the Haitian Act of Independence was found a white French, an old owner-colonist in Tiburon, answering to the name of Pierre Nicolas Mallet.

Martyr for freedom, I was the champion of equality of human races. I objected to everything that was about establishing a hierarchy between men based on the color of their skin and ideologies that proclaimed inequality between races. I played my genius in Anténor Firmin to give an answer to Gobineau. Firmin’s essay *The Equality of Human Races*, published in Paris in 1885, was a refutation of the European ideology designed to justify the irremediable crime of colonization. In fact, in response to Arthur Gobineau’s essay *The Inequality of Human Races* (1853–1855), which advocated a hierarchy of human races, Firmin explained the vagueness of the concept of race as described by the French anthropologist and the lack of foundation of the theories of hierarchy of these races.

Firmin refuted the argument of brain size difference and demonstrated that intelligence cannot be determined by brain size but more by the qualities of brain tissue. He highlighted black achievements throughout history, such as the invention of mathematics by Egyptian blacks. This thesis was a reply certainly to Gobineau, but it was also my answer to Western writers who defended the superiority of the races in their writings. Indeed, there were many in the world literature and intellectuals, especially French, promoting the superiority of the white race over the black race and justifying slavery.

Here are some thoughts from their writings:

At the tribune of the Chamber of Deputies in Paris on July 28, 1885, Jules Ferry, praising the superiority of the white race, said, “There is a right for the superior races, because there is a duty for them. They have the duty of civilizing the inferior races . . . In our days, I maintain that the European

nations are acquitting themselves with breadth, grandeur and honesty of this superior duty of civilization. Can you deny, can anyone deny that there is more justice, more material and moral order, more equity, more social virtues in Africa since the France made his conquest?”

To inaugurate his term, François Hollande, the French president, paid tribute to Ferry on May 15, 2012. “Do not mix everything up, and Jules Ferry did very good things for school.”

“What would Africa be without the whites? Nothing; a block of sand; the night; paralysis; lunar landscapes. Africa exists only because the white man touched it. . . Come on, Peoples! Take hold of this earth. Take the. Whose? To no one. Take this land to God. God gives the earth to men, God offers Africa to Europe. Take the” (Victor Hugo [1802–1885], speech on Africa, May 18, 1879).

“Whites are superior to these Negroes, as Negroes are to monkeys, and as monkeys to oysters” (Voltaire [1694–1778], *Treatise on Metaphysics*).

“Nature has made a race of workers, it is the Chinese race . . . a race of workers of the earth, it is the Negro . . . a race of masters and soldiers, it is the European race” (Ernest Renan in the discourse “What Is a Nation?”).

“Colonization on the whole is a political necessity of the highest order . . . The conquest of a country of inferior race by a superior race is not shocking” (Ernest Renan [1823–1892] after the defeat of France in 1871 in the intellectual and moral reform).

“Nature has endowed the African Negro with no feeling that rises above stupidity . . . Blacks . . . are so talkative that it is necessary to separate them and disperse them with stick” (Emmanuel Kant [1724–1804] in *Essai sur les maladies de la tête*, 1990).

“In Africa girls abound, but they are all as evil and rotten as the muddy liquid of the Saharan wells” (Guy de Maupassant [1850–1893]).

“I challenge you to support your thesis, which is based on the equality, freedom, and independence of the lower races. Gentlemen, we must speak higher and more true! It must be said openly that superior races have a right to the lower races” (Jules Ferry [1832–1893], parliamentary debates of July 28, 1885).

“One can not get into the idea that God, who is a wise being, has put a soul, especially a good soul, in a black body. . . It is impossible for us to assume that these people are men, we would begin to believe that we are not ourselves Christians” (Montesquieu [1689–1755] in *The Spirit of the Laws*, 1748).

“We only buy domestic slaves from the Negroes; we are reproached for this trade. A people who traffic in their children is even more reprehensible than the buyer. This trade demonstrates our superiority; he who gives himself a master was born to have one” (Voltaire, *Essay on the Manners and the Spirit of Nations*, 1753).

“Although the Negroes generally have little wit, they do not lack feeling” (Diderot, “Encyclopedia,” 1772).

“It is only permissible for a blind man to doubt that Whites, Negroes, Albinos, Hottentots, Chinese, Americans are entirely different races” (Voltaire, *Essay on the Manners and the Spirit of Nations*, 1753).

“I suspect Negroes and in general other human species to be naturally inferior to the white race. There has never been a civilized nation of any color other than the color white, nor any individual illustrated by its actions or by its capacity for reflection . . . There is neither manufactured machinery nor art, nor science. Without mentioning our colonies, there are Slave Negroes dispersed throughout Europe, we have never discovered at their least any sign of intelligence” (David Hume [1711–1776], influential English economist at his time, in “Of National Characteristics,” vol. III).

“The black race is confined to the south of the Atlas, its complexion is black, its hair frizzy, its skull compressed and its nose crushed; its projecting muzzle and large lips clearly bring it closer to the apes: the tribes that compose it have always remained barbarous . . . the most degraded of the human races, whose forms are closer to the brute, and whose intelligence does not have nowhere gone to the point of arriving at a regular government” (Georges Cuvier [1769–1832], French anatomist, promoter of comparative anatomy and paleontology).

“Africans, on the other hand, have not yet come to this knowledge of the universal. Their nature is alienation itself. What we call religion, state, reality existing in oneself and for oneself, valid absolutely, all that does not yet exist for them. The abundant relations of the missionaries put this fact beyond doubt . . . What characterizes the Negroes is precisely that their consciousness has not reached the contemplation of a solid objectivity, as for example God, the law to which the will of man can adhere, and by which he can arrive at the intuition of his own essence and go on to say that Africa is an undeveloped ahistorical world, entirely prisoner of the natural spirit and whose place is still at the threshold of the history of the universal” (Hegel, *Reason in History*, 1965).

“The intellectual inferiority of blacks is genetic. The number of intelligence genes among blacks is lower than that of whites” (Arthur R. Jensen, geneticist in the 1970s).

“When the Negroes are heated, it emerges from their skin an oily and blackish exudation that stains the linen and spreads an unpleasant odor” (*The Great Universal Dictionary of the Nineteenth-Century*, chapter “Negro”).

“The causes of the inferiority of the Negro: The main reason for these circumstances is certainly the deprivation of light, which allowed the Evil Spirit to establish himself as master, on this disinherited land of Africa . . . Blacks are from time immemorial delivered without control to an abject sensualism, to cruelty, to lies . . . Negroes today live under the corrupting influence of so many unclean generations that it would be surprising to find them fit for a high immediate moral civilization” (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, theologian).

“The purchase of Negroes on the shores of Africa to transfer them and then sell in the possessions of America, is it a legitimate trade and can it be done in conscience? . . . The formulation of the question of which one just speaking depends on a main point of view, it consists in knowing if one can legitimately have in his possession slaves and to retain them in servitude. Indeed, once proven that we can legitimately have and use it: it remains beyond doubt, that we can buy and sell. . . . To this last question, I answer that we can lawfully have slaves and use them; this possession and service are not contrary to the natural law, nor to the written Divine law, nor even to the law of the Gospel” (Bellon de Saint-Quentin, theologian, doctor of the Sorbonne, dissertation on the trade and commerce of the Negroes, quoted by Alphonse Quenum, Beninese Catholic priest, *The Christian Churches and the Atlantic Treaty of the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century*).

“All feeling of honor and humanity is unknown to these barbarians . . . No reasoning among the Negroes, no point of mind, no aptitude for any kind of abstract study . . . Their naturalness is perverse” (Rousselot de Surgy).

“The most stupid, the most perverse, the bloodiest of human races. No progress, no invention, no desire to know, no pity, no feeling. The black color, the color of darkness, is really the sign of their depravity” (Michiels Alfred, *The Life of the Negroes in Africa*).

“To condemn a State that practices slavery would be to condemn the Holy Spirit who orders slaves by the mouth of Saint Paul to remain in their

state, and does not oblige the masters to set them free” (Bossuet, *Warning to Protestants*).

“What a land this Africa! Asia has its history, Australia itself has its history dating from the beginning in human memory: Africa has no history” (Victor Hugo, speech on May 18, 1879).

Pierre Larousse, when he tackled in one of his theses a chapter devoted to African art, affirmed in a peremptory way that “the brain of Africans knows the same development as that of the monkey, another element proving their bestial nature and their weakness.” He went on to say, “The brain of the Negroes is narrower, lighter, and less voluminous than that of the white species, and, like the whole animal series, intelligence is in direct proportion to the dimensions of the brain, the number and depth of the convolutions.”

Most Western theses, at the time, tended to justify slavery and colonization, while I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, launched the war against racism for the emergence and implementation of human rights around the world, giving a global dimension to my leadership.

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FROM NATIONAL TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Haitian people, throughout the history of humanity, no one has contributed more than me, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, to the emergence and implementation of human rights around the world. I am the first revolutionary, the first emperor to offer as a model to humanity both the abolition of slavery and the renunciation of colonialism. I have dedicated this rupture first in the Haitian Act of Independence on January 1, 1804, and then in the imperial constitution on May 20, 1805. Indeed, Haiti has become the first country to develop an antislavery and anticolonialist policy on the American continent. In favor of the Haitian Revolution, the Haitians have proved to themselves and to the whole world that the exploitation of the black by the white man, the slave by the master, through the colonial system based on the exclusive formula “The colonies are founded by and for the metropolis” is inadmissible.

Article 2 of the 1805 constitution stipulates, in a universalist formulation, the following: “Slavery is forever abolished.” That is to say, all men are equal regardless of their race; and consequently, colonization, let alone slavery, cannot be accepted in this world. Thus, by my example, I have forced all other peoples in servitude into an uprising against their oppressors. The colonial powers, one after the other, have been forced to abolish slavery legally in the occupied territories.

Thanks to the Haitian Revolution, at the end of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century, an international historical movement led to a gradual abolition of slavery in the territories controlled by Europeans. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the prohibition of slavery was applied in the main states of the planet. As the first antislavery revolution on the American continent, the Haitian Revolution was the starting point of the chain of insurrections across America, particularly Latin America. It had a decisive role in the process that led to the first French abolition

of slavery in 1793–1794. Under the pressure of the revolts of the blacks in Santo Domingo, France—who did not want Toussaint to deliver the island to the English in exchange for postage—sent Sonthonax as civilian commissioner to Santo Domingo. He arrived as the head of the Second Civil Commission on September 18, 1792. On August 29 1793, Sonthonax hypocritically abolished slavery in the northern part of Santo Domingo. On September 21, 1793, Commissioner Polverel confirmed the abolition for the west and south of the island. A maneuver from France to stop the revolutionary movement was unleashed with the ceremony of Bois Caïman.

List of International Channels for the Abolition of Western Treaties

The Danish state (then associated with the kingdom of Norway) was the first to officially abolish the slave trade in 1792. In the United Kingdom, the abandonment of the trade was obtained in 1807 and that of slavery in 1833. In France, a decree with limited application was signed in February 1794 for the abolition of slavery. However, during the Treaty of Amiens, signed in 1802 while France was engaged in a campaign to defy the revolution in Santo Domingo, the French government returned to these revolutionary achievements. In fact and in law, slavery was restored in the territories.

By the law of May 20, 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte restored slavery in the territories as a result of the Treaty of Amiens. In Guadeloupe on July 17, 1802, Richepanse published a decree that forbid people of color to carry the title of citizens. This decree placed the farmers in complete servitude and suppressed their wages. The legal reestablishment of slavery was published on May 14, 1803. On May 26, 1803, Guadeloupe returned to power before 1789.

In Guyana, Victor Hugues restored slavery by the general regulations of April 25, 1803. On May 29, 1802, colored officers were excluded from the army; on July 2, the metropolitan territory was forbidden to blacks and people of color. Then on January 8, 1803, mixed marriages between whites and Negresses and between blacks and whites were forbidden.

The prohibition of the trade in France happened only in 1815 and especially in 1817 under Louis XVIII. Slavery was definitively abolished in Paris, in the council of government, by the decree of Victor Schoelcher, who decided the abolition of slavery in France and its colonies on April 27, 1848.

In Venezuela, it was only on March 24, 1854, that Pres. José Grégoire Monagas decreed the abolition of slavery. In Colombia, slavery was abolished on May 21, 1851 by Pres. José Hilario López after a short civil war that was won by the abolitionist liberals.

In the United States, the abolition of slavery was proclaimed by Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. The text signed by Lincoln became the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution on December 13, 1865.

Brazil was the last country in America to abolish slavery. The country voted *Lei Áurea* (golden law) on May 13, 1888, in the Parliament under the regency of Isabel of Brazil, the daughter of the emperor Pedro II. This law abolished slavery without financial compensation for slave owners. It was not until the Brussels Conference of 1889–90 to obtain the first agreement of the major colonial and commercial powers of the West (plus Russia and Turkey) that the slave trade was officially abolished in Africa. It was a huge contribution from Haiti, rightly called the mother of freedom.

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HAITI IS THE MOTHER OF FREEDOM

Free Haiti is a lighthouse built on the West Indies, to which the slaves and their masters, the oppressed and the oppressors turn their eyes, those sighing, they roaring.

—Abbé Grégoire

The Battle of Vertières was not only a fight to liberate Santo Domingo; it was also a battle for freedom, a war against all forms of exploitation and discrimination throughout the world. My vision was to eliminate any kind of tyranny, whatever it may be, in Santo Domingo, in Haiti, or in any place on the earth. For example, following my actions, Henri Christophe gave weapons and ammunition to Juan Sanchez Ramirez so that he could drive the French on the territory of the Dominican Republic. Sanchez defeated the troops of Ferrand, who killed himself with a bullet to the head on November 7, 1808. Half a century later, President Geffrard gave arms and ammunition to the Dominican insurgents who fought to drive Spain out of their territory. This aid, which began in February 1863, continued until the queen of Spain signed the decree ending the annexation of the Dominican Republic on March 3, 1865.

To build a nation with rights and privileges for all was another point in my ideal. As a slave, I was an eyewitness to the injustice that blacks experienced in the colony. As a result, I understood that, after independence, Haiti must evolve on an equal footing, a stable country where true social justice prevailed.

Some of my actions have been criticized, such as the massacre of the French. This decision must be analyzed according to the circumstances of the time. It was necessary to govern and thus to manage a country according to norms and principles but especially to defend the new state against an

offensive return of France, and the priority of the moment concerned the defense of the territory and the achievements of the revolution. I was blamed for this massacre without justifying it in retrospect; the general massacre of the French—decided by virtue of the proclamation of April 28, 1804, also announced from January 1—must be placed in its social and political context.

Whites were slaughtered in the name of national security. Their presence on the soil of Haiti should provide an opportunity for Napoleon to reconquer the former colony, newly independent, which represented so much for the economy of France, at the time at war with England. Moreover, three groups of whites had been spared: the Polish soldiers who had deserted the French Army, the small group of German settlers invited to settle in northwestern Haiti before the revolution, and a group of doctors and other qualified persons. Some residents who had links with officers of the Haitian Army were also spared, as well as women who agreed to marry men of color.

In total, about 5,280 to 5,300 Polish soldiers—or 11 percent of the military personnel of the expedition—landed in Santo Domingo, of whom 4,000 died of yellow fever, 400 remained in Haiti, 700 returned to France, 20 migrated to United States, and a few landed in Cuba or Jamaica. The 400 Polish soldiers who became Haitian citizens under article 13 of the imperial constitution of May 20, 1805, settled in the new republic, mainly in the north of Casale, in the south at the Jacmel Valley, in Fonds-des-Blancs, in the village of La Baleine, in Port-Salut, and in Saint-Jean-du-Sud. They devoted themselves mainly to agriculture.

The order I gave to spare the Poles from the massacre was an irrefutable proof of my gratitude to all those who shared my dream of freedom for the Haitian people before and after independence. In fact, the Polish farmers converted into soldiers enlisted in the Napoleonic army on December 6, 1801, by the organ of Gen. Wladyslaw Franciszek Jablonowski—a mulatto, illegitimate son of Marie-Françoise Delaine, cousin of King Stanislas Leszczynski, Duke of Lorraine—only knew on May 16, 1802, that their destination was Santo Domingo.

The first 2,270 Polish soldiers who arrived in June 1802 at Cape French and the second wave dispatched on April 20, 1802, and 2,500 soldiers, who arrived in Port-au-Prince on September 2, 1802, for the most part, actually believed that they were going to Louisiana. Upon arrival at Santo Domingo, instead of fighting in the ranks of the French Army,

a hundred Polish soldiers at Port-au-Prince and Saint-Marc deserted the Napoleonic troops. Others would have preferred to die on the battlefield rather than fire on the insurgents. In November 1803, a number of 120 to 150 rallied indiscriminately to the native troops on the occasion of the Battle of Vertières.

Several Polish soldiers imprisoned after the Battle of Vertières, including Gen. Henryk Dombrowski, were released on my order after Rochambeau's signature of the capitulation of the French on November 20, 1803. This was a real fact that explained my ideal for justice and my gratitude toward the Polish soldiers engaged in the French expeditionary army.

On the other hand, when I learned afterward that some Frenchmen, after obtaining naturalization letters from Swedes or Danes, came to traffic in Haiti, to prevent them from representing themselves in the country, I brought out the following decree:

In Marchand Quarter on April 1, 1804, year 1 of independence.

The Governor-General considering that the French proscribed and banished from this island, solicit in the neutral countries letters of naturalization, for the favor of which they would like to break into the country, to bring back the discord.

Stopped:

Article 1 - Any Frenchman who has obtained letters of naturalization from a foreign power, will be required to leave the country.

Article 2 - The generals commanding the departments and districts in which French nationals who have obtained letters of naturalization from foreign powers will reside must send the letters of naturalized letters to the Governor-General before being authorized to grant them a passport.

The Governor-General (Signed) Dessalines

If these letters of naturalization had not been regularly delivered, these Frenchmen should be arrested, considered as enemies, and executed. Le Pelletier de Saint-Rémy, prosecutor of the king of France, remained after independence and served as a lawyer for the imperial courts of western and southern Haiti, another proof that all the French had not been massacred under my empire.

Haitian people, the French historians said that my war cry—*koupe tèt, boule kay*—was the order of bloodthirsty slave Negroes, the cry of cannibal Africans hungry for revenge. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, would say no. This slogan was a luminous formula to motivate my men who were rebellious victims, beasts of burden who decided to make all the sacrifices to free themselves from the yoke of servitude. This cry was an oath of rage to say no to the black flesh too often eaten by dogs, too often crucified, too often buried alive in a hole, too often had a hand or a leg amputated. *Koupe tèt boule kay* was the same method of warfare that I taught Miranda and Simon Bolivar and that they used to liberate the countries of Latin America under the domination of Spain. The same formula was applied today in modern wars in which flamethrowers of models M1 and M2 were used in almost all the armies of the world to fight the adversary.

Koupe tèt, boule kay—it was my war cry to announce that the hour of vengeance had come and that the implacable enemies of human rights should be punished for their crimes. Like an angry torrent that roared, tore, and dragged everything in its path, my vengeful spirit carried everything in its impetuous course. I destroyed every tyrant of innocence, every oppressor of the human race. I had returned to the French colonies war for war, crimes for crimes, outrages for outrages. Yes, I saved my country. I avenged Africa. My pride and my glory were in the confession I made to the faces of mortals and gods. What did the judgment of the nations of the world pronounce on me? I did my duty, my own esteem remained in me, and that was enough for me.

“War to the death of tyrants!” That was my motto. “Freedom, independence!” It was my rallying cry. The French dreamed only of a systematic extermination of the black population of the country. On October 7, 1802, General Leclerc submitted his macabre plan in a letter to his brother-in-law, Chief Bonaparte. Here is my opinion on this country: “It is necessary to destroy all the Negroes of the mountains, men and women, to keep only the children under 12 years, to destroy half of those of the plain and not to leave in the colony a single man of color that has worn the epaulette. If otherwise the colony will be quiet and at the beginning of each year, especially after the deadly seasons like these, you will have a civil war that will compromise the possession of the country.”

In view of this attitude of the enemy, I had no choice but to make an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth to those truly cruel and ruthless scoundrels

who had fattened the land of Santo Domingo with the blood of my black brothers who had been rotting for more than a century in slavery. “People too long unfortunate we dared to be free, dare to be free by ourselves and for ourselves . . . What people fought for us? What people would want to collect the fruits of our work . . . Recall—you, whom I sacrificed all to steal in your defense, parents, children, fortune, and that now I am only rich in your liberty, that my name has become a horror to all people who want slavery, and that despots and tyrants pronounce it only by cursing the day that saw me born.”

The same French detractors condemned my action to undertake the campaign of the East of 1805 without understanding that this decision was another important fact of the Pan-American Dessalinian spirit. It was part of my plan to give Haiti the sea for a border to keep away colonialists and slavers. Gen. Jean-Louis Ferrand replaced General Tabarès, a man of color and a native of Haiti who commanded on behalf of my government certain regions in the eastern part such as the Cibao. Ferrand appointed General Kerverseau in his stead and was actively engaged in recreating armed forces capable of opposing my regime. He rallied quickly the Spanish populations. Prelates from the Catholic Church came to his aid to develop propaganda against Haitians, whom they described as cannibals and heretics. They were preparing with Ferrand the return of France.

Ferrand took an unacceptable decree on January 6, 1805. In fact, this decree ordered the inhabitants of the borders of Ozama and eastern Cibao to raid the territory occupied by the rebels, to capture as personal property all minors under fourteen years of age. He allowed Haitians captured to be considered slaves and sold for export if those slaves were between ten and fourteen years old. According to the same decree, those less than ten years old should be retained to work on the plantations of the sensors. It was to defend the honor of the young Haitian people that I undertook the campaign of the East. I walked from victory to victory to the gates of Santo Domingo, which I was preparing to drive on March 27, 1805.

But two series of events the day before had brought me to lift the siege to enter the West. A dispatch from an American ship attested that the English had located a French fleet that was heading toward the western part of Haiti. There was talk of a convoy of three frigates, two brigs, and other ships heading for the country. Observed at the telescope, movements of rowboats then suggested the landing of a fleet of about four thousand men—national independence was considered threatened.

It was a false alarm. The facts were quite different. The French admiral Missiessy, who was passing through the area and was informed of the intense siege of the city of Santo Domingo, approached the mouth of the Ozama River to let General Lagrange disembark the little that was on board—money, provisions, and not more than five hundred men. Thus, believing imminently the French attack on the young Haitian homeland, I invited the people to mobilize and prepare to fight. In a proclamation on April 12, 1805, I said to the Haitian people, “At the first blow of alarm, the soil of Haiti offers to their greedy eyes only ashes, iron and soldiers; and if we must die, the victims of the most just cause, let us afterwards be remembered as honorable as the energy of a people fighting against irons, injustice and despotism.”

As the founder of the Haitian nation, my dream is simple. Wherever the blacks are oppressed, wherever freedom is threatened, I feel the duty to intervene so that freedom reigns on the earth. Freedom for the peoples of the planet to live free and equal—it is there, the Dessalinian ideal, which one has long sought to hide but which nevertheless remains alive today.

THE DESSALINIAN IDEAL IS STILL ALIVE

What does the judgment of posterity matter to me,
provided I save my country?

—Jean-Jacques Dessalines

Haitian people, you ask me for advice on how to build the country. The answer is simple: take inspiration from the Dessalinian ideal. After 1804, my dream for the new nation has been to build a free country where prosperity, equality, sovereignty, and unity reign. Murdered before I even begin my plan of action, I ask you to resurrect the Dessalinian ideal, locked up for more than two hundred years in the drawer of history.

My social project was oriented in a program of change for the masses because I did not conceive an independent Haiti without a public policy aimed at the collective well-being. I preached in my speeches the equitable sharing of property among all classes of the Haitian society because I knew that the 1804 epic of the native army was not only the work of the mulatto officers and NCOs but also the result of the effort of the valiant soldiers from the majority slave class.

I decided to undertake a tour of the south for title verification because I wanted everyone, whatever their ancestry, to have full rights to the national heritage. I was fighting the ambitions of those who, by their status as free elders, considered themselves privileged and wanted to capture more than half the land left by the settlers. In my agrarian policy, I wanted the lands of the old settlers to be bequeathed by the state to the benefit of the community. Today in the country, we must work on the same goal because it is the only way to have social peace in the homes. All Haitians must have their share in the wealth of the country.

I was a rallier. Not only did I preach unity among all Haitians but, more importantly, I also worked for this union to cross the Haitian border and be spread all over the world, especially in South America and all the other colonies still in slavery.

My ideal was perfect reconciliation between blacks and mulattoes forced, in spite of themselves, to live in the same territory. To give an example, I had surrounded myself with mulattoes who were instructed as secretaries: Boisrond-Tonnerre, Juste Chanlatte, Alexis Dupuy, and Balthazar Inginac. I even offered, without success, the hand of my daughter Célimène to Pétion, who was the leader of the mulatto camp.

I wanted a free Haiti, united with the dream of having a homeland and a nation. For that, I had article 14 included in the imperial constitution of 1805: "Any acceptance of color among the children of one and the same family, of which the head of state is the father, must necessarily cease, Haitians will now be known only under the generic name of Blacks." I wanted to reduce the class struggle in the country by my actions.

Class struggle has always existed in Haiti. Contrary to those who claim that this struggle is the projection of certain individual complexes, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, repeat that just as the question of color had been a handicap to unify the Haitians after the independence, even now, it is still a reality that hinders the progress of the country.

The revolution of 1804, despite all my efforts to bring blacks and mulattoes together, had not swept the old structure in place in Santo Domingo. This division that has existed among whites, young whites, freemen, freed slaves, and those of the fields is manifested today on another form. In the colony, there were whites, freemen, and slaves. Today in the country, the fight is among the rich, the middle class, and the poor.

In analyzing this division, some will say that there are no social classes in Haiti. It's wrong. In almost every country in the world, there are social classes. The manifesto of the Communist Party of Marx begins roughly as follows: "The history of any society is the history of the class struggle."

In each country, we speak of rich people, middle-class people, and finally proletarians. In Haiti, we find the same pattern. There are the rich, who live mostly in the heights of Pétion-Ville; the middle class, living in Turgeau, Haut Delmas, Musseau, and some other places in the capital; and finally the poor, who live in the poor neighborhoods and cities. The same pattern is found in provincial towns.

I have built this nation. To admit that there are no social classes in Haiti is to ignore the history of the country. Haiti is one of the most stratified countries on the planet. Next to the division between blacks and mulattoes, there is the division that exists over the origin, the place of birth, and education between the members of society. Before the constitution of 1987, people living in towns have been given the title of townspeople, and those who were born in the communal sections have been called peasants. In current Haitian terms, we often hear racist epithets about a specific social category. For example, peasants are called *nèg nan mòn, abitan, gwo soulye, gwo zòtèy, gwa yil*, etc.

The question of color before and after independence has always been at the heart of the political game in Haiti. The failure of Anténor Firmin in the race toward the presidency in the 1900s illustrates this phenomenon present in all the compartments of the Haitian society. Firmin was an indefatigable and intractable defender of the black race; he was the author of the book *De l'égalité des races humaines*, published in 1885. Twenty years later, in 1905, he published another equally important book, *M. Roosevelt, President of the United States and the Republic of Haiti*. He was a clairvoyant politician, a lucid thinker, and a visionary with bright ideas.

A candidate for deputation for Cap-Haïtien and then three times in the presidential race (1902, 1908, and 1911), Firmin—a lawyer by profession—was part of the intelligentsia of Haiti; but because he adopted Pan-Africanism by political choice, he failed in the battle for the conquest of power. Thus, Firmin—the most prestigious political figure that Haiti knew in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—was defeated by the forces of the status quo who supported the candidacy of Nord Alexis. Firmin's struggle against exclusion and oppression had opened the door to exile.

Another example concerning the color issue was illustrated in President Boyer's policy of taking control of the national territory in 1820. Christophe was an indigenous general who loved progress. Knowing from experience that progress is related to education, he opened several schools in the far north, where he was king. Boyer made the decision to close all these schools on the grounds that *moun pa bezwen konen li pou yo travay la te*. (It is not necessary to know how to read and write to work the land.) This decision, one of the most obscurantist in Haiti's history, had a political purpose. Boyer, in executing the mulatto plan supported by imperialism, sought

to keep the people in ignorance, knowing that education can elevate the Haitian man to a dimension of power to claim his rights and privileges.

Haitian people, what have you done with the Dessalinian ideal? Today it is no longer small or big white planters that you must fight or a class of bourgeois freemen with the privilege of owning slaves and property in the colony. Nowadays it is rather a bourgeois, antinational, backward, and imperialist class. This class pays in import-export trade instead of developing the national economy through production and modernity, which is the enemy of development. It is no longer a power-hungry metropolis exploiting a workforce of slaves in Santo Domingo that is the problem. Today imperial powers with multiple faces, more and more ambitious and subtler, penetrate the bowels of society and are the cancer. It is no longer a governor on the payroll of a metropolis whom you must fight now; you must fight against a whole state structure subjected to the blackmail of international structures.

Haitian people, your fight is to go against this policy of exploitation of the Haitian labor force, which continues through imposed multinational economic policies and destroys all the capacities of the nation to produce for the well-being of its people. The fight is how to improve the situation to prevent the escape of the Haitian brains abroad and to repatriate the executives already gone in the country. Where are the Haitian engineers? Where are the agronomists and the doctors? Where are the craftsmen, the masons, the plumbers, the carpenters, and the artists? Where are the farmers and accountants? Where are the Haitian teachers who have developed education in Montreal and in French-speaking African countries in the 1960s? The same fight that I have led to protect Haiti as a sovereign country, you must lead now. You must stand together—blacks and mulattoes, rich and poor, masses and elite—to meet another challenge: win the independence of Haiti once again.

Another revolution—you need one. It is neither elections nor changes of government that will bring a lasting and just solution to Haitian problems. In memory of Charlemagne Masséna Péralte, Benoit Batraville, Rosalvo Bobo, Joseph Jolibois, Anténor Firmin, and Jean Price Mars, O people, you must reclaim your freedom to establish a fair, just, and prosperous society. My ideal is to build a country with equal rights for all. This is what I call the Dessalinian dream.

THE DESSALINIAN DREAM

The enemies of independence always found in him a pitiless being. But without strong passions what do we do big?

—Thomas Madiou

I can be murdered and maimed. But they can never kill my dream that leaves its roots in the deepest social reality in my country. I have led the fight against semifeudalism, colonialism, and imperialism that stifle the emancipation of peoples in the poor nations of the planet. I have rejected any form of domination from one class to another. That is why I have fought with extreme severity the attitude of the mulattoes who have sought to monopolize all the property of the state.

Haitian people, it is the whole of the revolutionary works of my regime that explains that, after so many years, I crystallize in me not only the hostility of the dominant and intellectual classes in Haiti but also, in a more global way, that of the Western bourgeoisie. To punish my action in favor of the demands of the poor peasantry and the popular masses, the dominant classes of Haiti—in complicity with the Western bourgeoisie—want to erase, repress, or at least weaken the memory of the Dessalinian ideals, which are based on the idea of freedom and equality. One can certainly reproach me for my radicalism and certain aspects of my government, such as my will to repress until death all those who opposed my principle of freedom and equality. But can anyone blame me for having used the weak economic resources of the nation in the construction of fortresses for the defense of the country? Should I be condemned for having opted for the revolutionary path and for having prioritized the higher interests of the nation to the detriment of the personal interests of the elite blacks and mulattoes?

I have dreamed of Haiti in the image of the great countries of the world, endowed with a strong state where the rights of citizens are respected. A country with modern infrastructures: roads, electricity, communication, transportation. A country where the majority of people work. A country where every citizen has the right to food, housing, work, health services, education, and security.

I have dreamed of a country where every child has the chance to attend school with the hope of becoming an honest and respected citizen. A truly independent country—politically, economically, and culturally. A country like a paradise with the sea, the sun, the mountains, the birds. A structured country like the big countries of the world that open their border to millions of tourists attracted by their wonders. A socially and culturally rich country where theater, painting, literature, cinema, and music dominate everyday life.

I have dreamed of a green country with trees covering its entire area and countryside and that has bushy valleys of rice, corn, peas, coffee, cotton, cocoa, and fruit trees. A country with factories in the north, west, and south to make cement, agricultural pasta, fertilizer, mahogany and oak furniture, electronic and mechanical parts, etc. A country where rivers flow to infinity in every village. A country capable of competing commercially with other countries in the world. A country with intellectuals trained in the largest schools in the world, with technicians packed with knowledge in every field to raise Haiti to progress.

I have dreamed of a state where the rights of citizens are respected and where corruption is punished in its most extreme rigor. Finally, I have dreamed of a healthy, peaceful, rich, and safe country. A country worthy of the first independent black republic of the world. A modern country.

Tolerant at the beginning of my regime against those who pillaged brazenly the treasury because I was preoccupied with building forts to repel a possible return of the French, I became merciless against the dilapidations once assured that the territory was protected. I took a whole series of measures to combat administrative theft. The decrees of September 6, 1805, and February 1, 1806, provided for severe penalties against officials caught in the act of fraud.

In my program of change for the masses, I did not conceive of an independent Haiti without a public policy oriented toward the collective well-being. I told Fort-Liberté and Gonaïves that the 1804 epic of the native army was not only the work of the mulatto officers and noncommissioned

officers but also the effort of the valiant soldiers of the majority slave class. I struggled for Haiti, after independence, not to be a colony without the settlers. I wanted everyone, whatever their ancestry, to have full right to inheritance bequeathed by their ancestors. As head of state responsible and also in good justice, in front of those who—by their status of old free—considered themselves as privileged and who wanted to grab more than half the land left by the colonists, I had opposed their plan with all the rigor of my authority.

In my ideal as head of state, I understood that this country must evolve on an equal footing for all, to obtain a stable nation where real social justice reigned. “Attention, Negroes and mulattoes, we fought the Whites, the goods we have conquered by shedding our blood belong to all, and I want them to be distributed fairly,” I said to the attention of the rich in the West and South. My words reflected that, since the beginning of the revolution, there had been a group of men monopolizing the wealth of the nation. I repeated this sentence during my tour in the South, and the same words still have their meaning in the Haitian reality of today: “It is not the inequalities that pose the biggest problems in a society that require fixes.” Today, the gap is so wearisome and unacceptable; it cannot be otherwise when 3 percent of people hold 90 percent of national wealth.

I had a dream of freedom for the Haitian nation. This universality of the concept of freedom in my politics can be summarized as follows: One of my concerns was the integrity of the Haitian territory, the freedom of self-determination of the future of Haiti. I wanted it to be economically, socially, or politically. That was why I had a hint of rehabilitation of war-torn farms to the Haitian economy. I gave formal orders to the various generators to reorganize the plantations considered at the time as the real source of wealth for the nation.

Henri Christophe, walking in my footsteps, was best placed to know my vision. An imperial decree on July 28, 1805, named him general-in-chief of the army of Haiti. He kept his word and executed my orders given in 1805, whose main mission was to build Citadelle Laferrière as part of my defense strategy for the northwest axis. He also made the dream of Northern Ireland educating the population.

Following this idea, Christophe published the ordinance of 1818, authenticated by the Baron of Sévilinge (librarian of the king) and countersigned by Baron de Sicard (grand master of ceremonies of the king) and Baron de Vastey. These documents can be found at the Rhodes

House Library in Oxford and at the National Archives of Scotland. Public education occupied an important place in the northern kingdom. In this famous edict, Christophe resumed my thought of suppressing the French language in schools and replacing it with English. This was to make the Haitian people forget the sufferings endured under the French colonial regime. Always following in my footsteps, he had brought teachers from the United States and England to help him in the difficult task of educating an illiterate people just out of slavery.

“It is by changing, with the help of time, to the very language we speak, that we will finally succeed in undermining Haiti, the French power to its source,” Christophe declared in a proclamation on January 1, 1817.

The ordinance of 1818 released this idea: “That education will improve our race through the transformation of individuals. Education has the singular virtue of passing a people from the state of nature to the state of reason, that is to say, to raise this people to the highest perfection,” said the king. Teachers of the black elite of the United States working in Haiti under Christopher became familiar with the country, which led them to see Haiti as a viable option for black emigration. The right of emigration of blacks from the United States and all the blacks of the world who sought freedom was granted by Christopher in as early as 1812, a policy that I developed in the aftermath of independence; indeed, the decree of January 14, 1804, encouraged blacks in slavery in any part of the continent to immigrate to Haiti.

Like Toussaint-Louverture and your emperor, Henri Christophe was a genius. The articles in the constitution of 1801 and those in the imperial constitution of 1805 inspired the articles of law of Code Henry. Code Henry, written by Baron Pompée Valentin Vastey, who was the private secretary of the king, was authenticated by Baron de Lagroue (notary of the king) and promulgated on February 24, 1812. It was deposited in all courts of the kingdom from March 1, 1812. This code was reputed to be the most advanced thought project of its time. Many countries in the world had taken inspiration from Code Henry, mainly from article 4, to draft their labor laws. These included the Canada Labor Code, updated in 1985, and the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act of the United States.

How can a nation so advanced in its legislation since 1805 become a country of lawlessness today? Haitian people, be more creative and better inspired by your glorious past, and discover your genius.

CHAPTER V

BE MORE CREATIVE, MORE INVENTIVE, AND BETTER INSPIRED BY YOUR GLORIOUS PAST

Haitian people, what have you done to the lessons given by our ancestors? Is Haiti condemned to remain a bankrupt state? This nation that I have built, which has been the richest of the French colonies in the eighteenth century, is it dedicated to remain one of the poorest nations in the Western Hemisphere?

After more than two hundred years of independence, your country is one of the poorest countries in the world. Where is the genius you have inherited from your ancestors? Thousands of people are starving every year in the country. It is time to revive the politics of the land. It is necessary to plant, plant, plant in the mountains, in the valleys, and in the ten departments. Do you remember the riches of this land, which you inherit at the cost of enormous sacrifices? Do you remember the export figures from Santo Domingo to Haiti?

From 1720, Santo Domingo became the world's largest producer of sugarcane. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the island alone exported as much sugar as all the English islands combined and became the main destination for slave trade via triangular trade. Before the revolution, the colonial products of Santo Domingo represented a third of French exports. Santo Domingo was the first colony in the world, the richest and most productive, and also the most beautiful among all the colonies.

Haitian people, you inherited a great country that all the colonial powers of the time envied. France, England, Spain—all these countries were trying to put Santo Domingo under their flags.

Here are some numbers: The coffee revolution of Santo Domingo in the second half of the seventeenth century saw the island become the world's leading producer. In 1750, there were 22 million feet of coffee. Santo Domingo has become "the sugar factory" of France and Europe (7/8 of the production exported to the countries of northern Europe). In 1765, there were 100 million feet of coffee. In 1754, the island has 6.3 million cotton growers. Santo Domingo was both a demographic juggernaut and an economic giant. Described as "the most beautiful colony in the world," it produced 40 percent of the world's sugar and 60 percent of the world's coffee, as well as significant volumes of cocoa, cotton, and indigo.

The name of Santo Domingo (Haiti) had become synonymous with splendor and wealth. Everyone spoke with admiration of this piece of land, rightly called the Queen of the West Indies. The colony exported more than 1.4 million quintals of sugar annually, representing the sum of 115 million pounds, which not only sufficed for the needs of the metropolis but also supplied a part of Europe.

The production of sugar necessarily brought that of tafia. In 1788, it had been exported for a volume of 2 million pounds. In 1788, coffee was represented in exports by the figure of 52 million pounds. Indigo was grown in Santo Domingo only from 1750. However, in 1788, it was already exported for a value of 11 million pounds. As for cotton, it played a large part in the wealth of the colony. In 1788, it resulted in an export worth 18 million pounds. In 1788, Santo Domingo had 50,000 horses, 40,000 mules, 250,000 oxen and cows, 100,000 sheep and goats, and a considerable number of pigs.

The importance of Santo Domingo's Antillean possession is underscored by the famous word of Voltaire during the Treaty of Paris in 1763, where Louis XV does not hesitate to sacrifice "the few acres of

snow in Canada” to preserve the large sugar island, of which the Treaty of Ryswick of 1695, putting an end to the war of the League of Augsburg, attributed the western part of the island to France. The country has certainly lost much of its wealth of yesteryear, but contrary to what critics say, Haiti is not poor.

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HAITI IS NOT POOR

Haitian people, Haiti is not poor. The wealth of a country is not limited to its infrastructure or its material grandeur. It is the history, art, and culture of a nation that constitute its greatest wealth. On this point, Haiti is one of the richest nations in the world. No country has a history as rich as yours, and no nation has a culture as diverse as yours. Haitian art is considered the richest in the world. How, in this case, can you consider yourself a poor nation? Yes, you are rich, but simply your wealth is hidden. You are like a rough diamond that comes out of the earth with all its impurities. Once refined, it becomes the rarest and most adorable object in the eyes of all.

Without a doubt, I can say that you are much harder than diamonds. Diamond is the hardest natural material. However, we work the diamond to make the crowns of queens, diadems like those worn by the Empress Josephine de Beauharnais in around 1804, rings, and necklaces. The diamond, despite its hardness, bends under the pressure of heat.

You, Haitian people, even after several centuries in slavery, your enemies did not have the necessary strength to bend you. Sixty years of embargo after independence have not been able to annihilate your ideal of freedom. All the barriers placed by the great colonial and Allied powers to prevent you from embarking on the path of development had failed to break you. You curved certainly under the weight of their actions, but like the reed, you folded, but you never broke.

Haiti is not poor, Haitian people, your emperor swears to you. A poor country is one devoid of resources. Haiti has the sea, the sun, the plains, the mountains, the enormous resources in its seabed. Haiti has competent executives working in the four corners of the world. How can a country with a population whose average age is in their thirties and who has such a rich and varied culture be poor?

Haiti is a rich country in terms of tourism, culture, and agriculture. It is full of potentialities that can attract investment. Admittedly, the country is badly run. It needs a responsible leader who can revive patriotism among all citizens, a leader who could make the motto "Unity is strength" a permanent reality in the lives of all the sons and daughters of this nation.

Even after being devastated by the wars leading to independence, the country kept its position as the richest island in the world. The fabulous wealth accumulated in the northern kingdom and the splendor of the castles rekindled the greed of the French and ignited the greed of all other colonial powers of the time.

The country has not changed. It has the same ability to produce food to feed the population and even more to export food to other islands in the Caribbean. The Artibonite Valley has the same opportunity to produce rice as in the past. The plain of Arcahaie and the regions of Jean-Rabel can produce bananas. The plain of Leogane is rich in sugarcane. The Cul-de-Sac Plain, with land-use planning, can produce several commodities. Rivers, lakes, and ponds are everywhere in the country. They represent untapped resources.

The river Artibonite crosses the departments of Centre and Artibonite. On its route, in Haiti, along some 320 kilometers, it receives the following rivers: Boucan-Carré, L'Estère, Fer-à-Cheval, Libon, Macacia, Thomonde, and La Tombe. The Baradères River is one of the largest rivers in the department of Grand'Anse, in competition with the Baint and Belle-Anse Rivers in the Sud-Est Department. The river des Barres in the Nord-Ouest Department irrigates the plain of Port-de-Paix, Jean-Rabel, and even Môle Saint-Nicolas. The Capotille River, which has its source in the tributary of the Massacre, waters the Nord-Est Department. The Cavaillon River supplies a large part of the Sud Department. There is also the river Côtes-de-Fer, which serves as a boundary between the departments of Sud and Sud-Est, and it constitutes several tributary streams, including Berzeau, Lomond, Dieu-même, and Dubois. Courjolle, in the department of the Ouest, irrigates on its side the plain of Arcahaie.

The Dame-Marie River, which flows into the western side of the Caribbean Sea, irrigates much of Grand'Anse. La Digue, which flows into the Gulf of Gonave, near Petit-Goâve, supplies part of the department of Nippes. The river of L'Estère, the Fer à Cheval, the Cold River, the Gascony, the Gosselin, the Grande Rivière de Jacmel, the Grande Rivière de Jérémie, the Grande-Rivière-du-Nord, the Grise, the Guinaudée, the

river of the Haut du Cap, the Hinquitte, the river of Jean-Rabel, the Libon, the river of Marigot, the river of the Massacre, the Matheux, the Momance, the river of Montrouis, the river of Nippes, Pedernales, Port-à-Piment, La Quinte, Ravine du Sud, Rouyonne, Roseaux River, Saut-Mathurine, Rivière des Ténèbres, Thomonde, Tiburon, Torbeck, Trois Rivières, Voldroque, and the Riviere du Nord are streams that can be used for agricultural and electrification purposes, not to mention the benefits that the country can derive from the exploitation of Lake Azuei as a tourist attraction. In the 1950s to the 1970s, Haiti has been one of the first Caribbean destinations for foreign visitors.

Speaking of success, Barbancourt rum has the reputation of being one of the highest rated rums in the world. Haiti is the world's largest producer of vetiver, whose root is used in perfumery. The multinational company Digicel, present in thirty-two countries, today has the largest turnover in Haiti. It targeted three hundred thousand customers, and it claims more than two million currently on the Haitian market. Royal Caribbean is proud of the extraordinary view that is discovered in the eyes of its passengers when the liner arrives in the harbor of Labadee.

Haiti is not poor. If Haiti were poor, how could it have been able to pay for all the expensive foreign claims, survive the shameless plundering of its resources by imperialist powers and the theft of its assets by corrupt citizens, and make the state function and meet the needs of the population? If it is true, O people, that your country is the most behind in the American continent, it is also true that wherever you live abroad, you are noticed by your love for work as well as by your courage to work. You indulge in all kinds of work in foreign lands—public administration, education, music, health, construction, agriculture, cleaning, transport, restaurant, cinema, radio, sport, etc. In the United States, in France, in Canada, and elsewhere, it is proverbial that you are among the best workers in the world. And in Haiti or abroad, you are ready for any sacrifice to educate your children, deeply believing in the values of education and success.

Haitian people, your country, despite the mismanagement, is still a paradise. To start, you need a leader like me, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor—a visionary.

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SECOND PART

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CONSCIOUSNESS RECOVERED

Some excerpts from a speech by Louis Mercier to the members of the Patriot Youth League.

I have only begun to become aware of the mission my country is to fulfill here below, after having rid myself of all the defilements and all the reproaches that have been patiently spread over us. This work is the basis of our education. Before introducing ourselves into the sanctuary where we are going to work on a national work, let us purify ourselves, let us wash ourselves. Let us contemptuously despise those who speak of inferiority; they are traitors. Let's trust in ourselves and build that trust around us. Let us believe firmly and sincerely in the genius of our race; to those who speak of the curse, this sinister fable, contrast the facts of history with facts. Having developed this racial awareness in us, we will be worthy to tread the altar of the homeland, to cultivate one of the purest human feelings, this feeling that moves humanity and the door to the heights: patriotism . . . No civilized society has never been able to evolve without relying on the powerful lever of patriotism . . .

. . . Besides, what pride must we fill the soul to know that we live in one of the most highly historical countries, so historic that I call it the Predestined Island. Already in pre-Columbian times, Haiti enjoyed great fame in the West Indies. Is it not a cave on the island that, according to Indian legend, the sun and the moon were gone to go to the sky and this cave was not the object of a great veneration? Sometimes in my crazy dreams, I wonder if this legend is not a prophecy and if from Haiti should not come out of men who will have the great honor of leading the march of humanity in the path of love and of

justice? Who knows even if Toussaint-Louverture, liberator of a race, purifier of the human conscience defiled by slavery, is not one of those dazzling stars predicted by the Indian legend? But, however, Columbus, who embarked on a frail skiff in search of a legendary island called Antilia, when he landed with us, was convinced that he was at the end of his perilous journey, which he had reached its goal. Our country became the center of America's colonization. It was here that was placed the most powerful lighthouse which illuminated the American continent. It was here that America first confronted Europe and the first American hero was Caonabo. With us were built the first forts, the first cities, the first schools, the first churches of the New World.

It was here that the colonial system was first instituted. Our country was the flourishing colony of Santo Domingo that played such a large role in the world that it supplied and enriched. It was the city of Cap-Haitien that was the headquarters of the French forces at the time of the American Revolutionary War, and our country was already beginning to fulfill its liberating career. It was then the epic of the slave revolt and the formidable wars of independence. Haiti bore a mortal blow to slavery old as the world and the odious principle of colonization. She freed a whole human race. I challenge someone to give me a similar example in the history of humanity. It liberated a whole continent with a terrible yoke . . . I believe in the influence of the terroir. I believe in the genius of Haiti. Our soil was not created to feed human wrecks, but to give birth to heroes, men who play a leading role in humanity. Woe to us if, despite the facts of history, we do not understand it, if we want to wallow in the mud! We will deserve all the punishments of ungrateful, wicked, and small people. The genius of Haiti takes us to the heights of humanity. Let us simply guide him, instead of trying to bring down all that we have done beautiful, great, sublime, all that constitutes the substance of the strong, the directors, the gods.

We have heroes that the world envies us. It is necessary to develop in youth, in all the people, their worship. Our heroes leave glorious examples. Let's not try to analyze the

little faults of our great men to denigrate them. Let us say with Pierrefeu: "The slow transformation of historical events is in the sense of embellishment. Every morning, an idealized image is formed which citizens carry in their unconscious and which was built little by little over the centuries, this embellished image represents what the nation would want to be, the ideal it would like to achieve. In pathetic times, it sometimes strives for a noble effort to get close to it. Come and teach us to love our heroes, to admire our beautiful achievements, our monuments. Let us have enough logic to distinguish the value of beings and things and to establish it."

It is an American who has told us that, greater than Hampden in England, than La Fayette in France, than Washington in the United States, presents Toussaint-Louverture. And I was not a little surprised one day to read in a little book of reading for the use of young English and entitled *The Heroes of Humanity* that we put Toussaint-Louverture as the hero of freedom to next to Socrates, Joan of Arc. And yet, it is easy for us to discover the infinite value of Toussaint-Louverture, who, by emancipating a human race, destroyed an institution as old as the world: slavery, and thus purged the human conscience. What then is the man worthy of being compared to Toussaint-Louverture? A people with a Toussaint-Louverture, hero of freedom, emancipator of a whole race, a Dessalines, founder of our homeland, a Christophe, a brilliant builder whose grandiose achievements are admired, a Pétion, liberator of so many American colonies, is filled beyond measure and cannot desire anything more to be proud of his history, proud of his country and win the admiration of all.

It is time for this dazzling truth to enlighten us, for substantial teachings to strengthen us. We will no longer be left to take all the paces of a great people, but to love ourselves, the supreme force of patriotism. When I consider the miserable fate of so large a portion of our population, its degree of ignorance and misery, its humble place in the background of civilization, the indifference of many in the presence of a situation as appalling, I shudder and wonder if it is possible for all those whom fate has favored, to continue to maintain such a moral

aberration? One day, a few years ago, I was in the citadel's place d'armes. On a staircase, the victorious, satisfied, happy air was seated by an American officer. He watched as prisoners, some Haitians, were bent, dejected, emaciated, human wrecks. This show afflicted me deeply. In myself, I said to myself: "This is the miserable condition, our unconsciousness, our wickedness, our lack of national dignity have reduced the sons of the builders of the citadel and the Palace Sans-Souci! Forgive, Lord, forgive us this frightful crime and deign to draw the eyes of the Haitian people, because do not delude us on this subject: we are all guilty."

Blinded by the most shameful passions, driven by the pettiest selfishness, cooled by cowardice, we have not been able to understand, despite the imperative teachings of history, why we were created, what an infinitely glorious role we have to fill in the world. And yet, in the annals of history, we find a better start than that of the Haitian people! Slaves are revolting. From the seemingly amorphous mass of these rebels arise extraordinary beings before which the greatest heroes grow pale. They are as prodigious in the arts of peace as in the works of war. They write, from 1791 to 1820, on stone and with their blood, the most moving, the most beautiful epic. And suddenly their momentum is stopped and they are told: "To you ignorance, misery, to you huts and liveries of slaves."

Let it be said, as long as we have not raised the intellectual, moral, material level of the rural masses, there is no real progress to be envisaged for the Haitian people. As long as we do not bend over the wounds to heal them, until we have for our humble brothers an immense love, a beneficent feeling and builder par excellence, which leads us to support them, to protect them, to want to create a better future for them, no hope is possible for us. We will be invincibly drawn by the masses to the abyss. Our fate is indissolubly linked to their fate. Human solidarity and above all national solidarity whose imprescriptible laws we have ignored strike us with their sharp and vengeful sword.

If we want to go to the stars, we must train all our team to the stars. In a hive, what is the queen worth without the intelligent and trained worker bees? What can an army commander command to weak, helpless soldiers who are ignorant of their craft? A country whose masses are plunged into ignorance and misery cannot progress. Here, I feel comfortable to tackle such a subject. I find myself in front of an audience composed largely of Haitians whose only concern and only goal is to collaborate in the progress of the rural mass to which they are entirely devoted. I admire unreservedly the work of rural education and the scientific method that this service employs to improve the material, moral and intellectual conditions of our country brothers. I unreservedly admire those professors who often work with fanaticism, like true apostles, true pioneers. You have to be convinced in your life, a fanatic if you want to succeed. "The idea is not a force; it only becomes one when it is penetrated by passion," said Emile Farguet.

It is indispensable to put all one's heart, one's soul, all one's faculties at the service of the cause that one defends; not to say if one has not succeeded that one sowed in an ungrateful soil, but that the method which one used is bad and to change it; cannot reject on the others, on those who are led, the failures suffered, but take full responsibility, repeat, repeat satiety Chanteclerc verse I love so much: "And if the sky is gray that is that I hurt changed." Pursue the august and highly national work you have undertaken. She is sacred. In order that the most complete and rapid success reward your laudable efforts, so that it rains stars on the field that you sow, so that the sun chases the darkness that surrounds you, follow the advice that I have just given you with all my heart of Haitian suffering atrociously national evil and always remember the oath that I made one day to the members of the League of Patriot Youth: "I swear that I believe in gene benefit my race; to the immortal and glorious destinations of my country. that I will serve my race and my homeland with dedication and desireessment until sacrifice." (Cap-Haïtien, July 22, 1937)

Haitian people, I begin the second part of my message, “Conscience Retrouvée,” with these excerpts from a speech by a great Haitian intellectual, in this case, Louis Mercier, which I inspired to deliver my words. In this second part, I speak to you, O people, of my vision, of the need to reconcile the nation, and finally of the duty to return to your roots.

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CHAPTER VI

THE DESSALINIAN VISION

I was judged a tyrant. I was a visionary. A reading of the imperial constitution of May 20, 1805, would show the depth of my thoughts, what was my societal project for Haiti. Its principle was based on a policy of emancipation of the masses. I wanted real emancipation for all Haitians—blacks and mulattoes, rich and poor, peasants and townspeople. I started my agrarian reform project in the South. The revolutionary dimension of this approach showed that my vision was based on a social justice policy. It was a project aimed at the interests of the masses, who had been injured by a delirious and pretentious elite.

In terms of education, article 11 in the imperial charter of 1805 is formal: “Every citizen must possess a mechanical art.”

Article 12 enshrines the principle of Haiti as a free and sovereign republic: “No white man, whatever his nation, will set foot on this territory, as master or owner, and will not be able to acquire any property in the future.”

On the religious level, I preached tolerance. Articles 50 and 51 set out the character of my regime: liberal and tolerant.

Article 50: "The law does not admit a dominant religion."

Article 51: "Freedom of worship is tolerated."

Article 52: "The State does not provide for the maintenance of any cult or minister."

I wanted to run the country on a decentralized basis with laws to protect every citizen. I had protected the right of property with extreme severity, and I had given a formal order to the commanders of the six military divisions to execute strictly the rule of article 6 in the imperial charter: "The property is sacred; its violation will be rigorously pursued."

I gave formal orders to the various generals of the army to reorganize the plantations, considered at the time as the true source of wealth of the nation. I refused the protectorate of England to maintain the young republic free and honest. I despised compliments as I despised denigrations.

In a letter on September 16, 1802, to Bonaparte, General Leclerc had described me as "the butcher of the blacks," saying that it was under my orders, while I was a general in the French Army, that the bossy cultivators and Creoles who refused to enlist in the French troops to fight the English and the Spaniards were killed. This correspondence was an insult to my memory. The action of the commander in chief of the expeditionary army was an act of jealousy, for Bonaparte's brother-in-law did not tolerate my ascent, ready to become the first leader in Santo Domingo to replace Toussaint-Louverture. Unable to dominate me, he used defamation as a weapon of destruction to compromise my career.

I was also accused of having ordered the execution of General Biassou. It was another lie to dirty my memory. Gen. Georges Biassou, who had remained faithful to Spain when Toussaint changed sides to become a general in the French Army, entered Florida, which at that time was a Spanish colony, and there he changed his name to Jorge. Serving the Spanish crown, which fought against the revolutionaries in Central America, Biassou died in 1801 in the United States, more precisely in St. Augustine. A street in the city bore the name of Gen. Jorge Biassou in memory of the house he lived in this neighborhood.

The other case that I would elucidate would be the assassination of Sans-Souci, for which my enemies wanted to condemn my person. For history, I would say the assassination of Jean-Baptiste Sans-Souci took place during the clashes between the native soldiers and the rebel leaders,

including Petit-Noël Prieur, in the mountains of the north throughout the year 1803. As for the fate of Gen. Charles Belair, a protégé of Toussaint-Louverture, he was arrested and executed on October 5, 1802, for treason. A majority of historians blamed me for the loss of this charismatic general. I would answer that the arrest of the black general was the work of Repussart, a mulatto officer, and that a military tribunal composed mainly of mulatto officers imposed the death sentence on Belair and his wife.

Some critics also advanced my complicity in the deportation of Toussaint. It was revealed that Leclerc had obtained my support and that of Christophe before executing his plan and getting rid of Louverture. These speculations remained vain and unfounded. I also advised the general not to respond to the invitation of Brunet, knowing that it was a trap. The strategy that I adopted during this period was limited to showing patience and a clear will, knowing that the time had come to take the lead of the revolution. By promising my submission, especially by adopting a conciliatory attitude contrasting with the hardness of my character and my determination to fight the whites, I sought to lull Leclerc to sleep, who thought himself superior to a point where he seemed convinced when he wrote to the first consul, "I think I can count on Dessalines, whose spirit I have made myself master." By my way of playing the underestimated, almost foolish one, I gave a certain margin of maneuver, and I avoided the same fate as my mentor.

I gladly integrated some dissident leaders who resisted my authority, for example, Ferou, Coco Herne, and Jean-Louis François. As Rochambeau purged the ranks of his troops by dismissing the black and mulatto soldiers suspected of being in contact with the rebels, I set up a disposition to integrate all those soldiers driven into the native army. The indigenous leaders, still not submitting to my command, were thus faced with a dilemma—joining the French invader, which represented a suicide, and remaining independent of my authority, which resulted in a bloody confrontation with the dominant army of the colony. All that remained for them was to submit quickly to my command to avoid total isolation.

To those who described me as an emotional, violent, and irrational being, I would say that my actions attested to an understanding of the diplomatic and military issues of the time and an iron will to liberate my country under the yoke of slavery. I led my troops to victory against one of the most powerful armies in the world, that of Napoleon, to allow a

population of former slaves to obtain their freedom after years of revolution, civil wars, and revolts.

I reinforced the strategies developed in the fall of 1802 to keep the independence movement united, particularly with regard to the accession of black and mulatto leaders. I applied a fine combination of persuasion and threat to eliminate the last opponents, and at the same time, I added diversified political tactics to ensure the support of the people. I used effective methods to avoid repeating the awkwardness of my mentor, Lieutenant General Louverture, who did not get adequate support from the masses, a major cause of his defeat. In opposition to the image of ambiguity projected by Toussaint, I offered the masses a simple and concise position, which was a leitmotif to include all blacks and mulattoes in the fight against France: the Haitian independence with the advantage of taking possession of the country. This speech managed to put aside divisions and inconsistent contradictions and facilitated the Congress of Arcahaie. Since the allies came from different backgrounds and origins (ethnic and social), I focused my speech on the only common point of all the opponents of the French, that is, the hatred created by centuries of oppression and violence. Blacks and mulattoes in Santo Domingo realized, since the deportation of Toussaint, that the enemy to be defeated was the French community, which, supported by Napoleon, dreamed only of reinstating slavery.

Thus, I galvanized the feelings of revenge to their maximum, the card that Toussaint had refused to play. Historians criticized my aggressiveness toward the whites without realizing that this hammering of the hatred of the colonists represented a crucial aspect of the mobilization and the legitimization of my leadership. The violence and cruelty in my speech and actions aimed to target the feelings of revenge and hate that could only mobilize the population and stimulate the soldiers against the oppressors. The violence, the intolerance, and the massacres of Rochambeau contributed to justify my hate speech against the French; and without this war of extermination of the occupier with the incredible horrors toward blacks and mulattoes, I must admit that this speech would have aroused less receptivity from the masses and other revolutionary agents, mainly from mulattoes.

The soldiers of the native army were, for the most part, not fortunate to have a uniform. I used the military decorations for the officers, especially as rewards to ensure certain loyalty. The majority cannot recognize a distinctive uniform. To counter this lack, I ordered the native forces to

wear a red cap or scarf. The use of these symbols, such as the flag and the red caps, was an excellent way to maintain the motivation of the troops and to offer the masses associative images that could stimulate a feeling of belonging to the movement. It was for the same purpose that I organized dances with soldiers and farmers to win them over to the native cause. I used a simple but effective strategy to garnish the troops: conscription. I maintained the Louverturean approach of discipline and strength to form the army. Facing a wave of desertions in June 1803, I forced the young men to join the army. I combined persuasion with coercion to fill the ranks of the native army, certainly obtaining ill-trained troops but surpassing the enemy in number.

Without launching my men in direct confrontations with the French Army in ammunition, my strategy was then to isolate the enemy in the cities. By controlling the countryside, the native troops starved the troops and populations loyal to Napoleon. I asked my men to attack the French drinking water sources. In addition to preventing their supply of water and food, I launched a vast campaign to cut off their communications. Since January 1803, the native soldiers attacked the roads controlled by the French. To add to the French isolation, the insurgents went so far as to try to control the seas with artisanal barges. With patience and discipline, I kept the focus on the main objective, that of weakening the forces of Rochambeau, to prepare the final battle. The benefits of this strategy were multiple. It limited the unnecessary losses of men, which would have only weakened my grip on the global enterprise. In addition, the weather was playing against the French, who fought with incessant purges and diseases that were becoming more and more uncontrollable. The outbreak of France's war with England in May 1803, which definitely blocked the supply of the French, made my victory over Rochambeau a little easier.

While attacking the communications of the enemy, I made sure to maintain in excellent condition those with my staff. I kept my subordinates informed of the strategies to follow and kept them informed of the opponent's actions. Thus, I ensured better cohesion and more coordinated actions. Moreover, it allowed me to keep minimal control over the revolutionary organization, essential to win the final battle.

Haitian people, the armed struggle against France to achieve independence was not an easy thing. A lot of blood had flowed. Sacrifices had been made. In addition to human sacrifices, huge material losses had been recorded. The plantations in the houses were burned. The

proclamation on January 1, 1804, was made in a country half ravaged by the aftermath of the war and the guerrilla tactics used by the chestnuts to attack the plantations.

The proclamation of Haiti's independence was a shock to the colonial powers who built their economic system on slavery. This revolution provoked a total upheaval of the world order. They questioned the relationship between metropolitan France and the colony. After 1804, the freedom of the new nation must be protected. At the same time, I had to protect the country against a possible return of the French; moreover, I had to start the task of the reconstruction. The biggest challenge to realize was that of unity. Unite Haitian citizens around these words: union is strength; this was the toughest challenge at that time.

How, in such a situation, would I not have an iron fist to redress the situation? Attempts to abort the revolutionary project in the imperial constitutional act were manifold. I had fought hard battles against the generals within the army and also against mulattoes who boasted of being the direct heirs of their fathers for distribution of wealth within the population. It was for this purpose that I had traveled in person for the verification of the titles of property in the South. This decision was the main reason for my assassination by the wealthy. The reactionary plan of the mulatto authors of the plot was to remove the father-founder of the motherland and restore slavery in a veiled form to continue to lead as settlers, to return to this system that I thought I had buried in Vertières.

VERTIÈRES

This African never compromises on his freedom. The day he leaves his bonds, he presents himself before his masters, to whom he owes nothing, with the moral strength of a being to whom he has been unjust and who takes back rights he has never consented to alienate. He is the martyr of the first centuries of Christianity who, after being tortured and mutilated, remained a man—Thomas Madiou.

The Battle of Vertières unfolded in the north of the country, near Cap-Haïtien, on November 18, 1803, between the troops of Rochambeau and those of the native army. This was the last battle of the Santo Domingo expedition. The resistance of the native troops, particularly the contribution of the Ninth Brigade—commanded by François Capois, nicknamed Capois-La-Mort—forced the French to surrender.

During the fight, Capois accomplished one of the most extraordinary feats of arms on a battlefield. Vertières was the last point of retreat for the French Army. I ordered Capois to attack the fort. The latter launched a first assault, and the demi-brigade he commanded was partly decimated by firing guns from the fort. He launched a new assault, but his men were still mown at the foot of the hill by grapeshot. For the third time, he sent the troops to reinforce the assault of the fort; it was in vain, and this attack left once more many dead. During the fourth assault, Capois asked his men to follow him, shouting, “Forward! Forward!”

While he was ahead of the soldiers, his horse was struck by a cannonball; the animal fell, but the general took his sword, got up, and ran again to head his troops, always shouting, “Forward! Forward!” His cap was carried away by another ball. Capois, more determined than ever, continued to advance. Then Rochambeau interrupted the battle and sent a messenger to pay homage to the black officer who had just been filled with so much glory.

Rochambeau did not like Capois. He respected the bravery of the general as I admired the courage of Christophe, Pétion, Clerveaux, Lamartinière, Gabart, Daut, Romain, Cangé, and Vernet. They were all valiant soldiers who wrote, with their blood, the epic of 1804.

During the fighting, which lasted more than twelve hours, on November 18, the native troops lost 1,200 soldiers, among whom were the generals Paul Prompt and Dominic. On the side of the French, it was a rout. I was still burying the dead and taking care of the wounded when I received a message on the morning of November 19. Rochambeau announced his capitulation. In this correspondence, the French asked ten days to withdraw their troops on the territory. On January 1, 1804, official independence was proclaimed in Gonaïves. Haiti became the first independent black republic in the world.

The first independent black republic in the world—O people, do you remember what that meant to the world at the time? Indigenous troops ended three hundred years of slavery—the Spanish and French period—after a victory over the most powerful army in the world, the Napoleonic army. It was a slap in the face of the colonial powers of the time—England, Spain, Holland, Portugal, and Belgium—who had become as involved as France in the slave trade.

The military exploits of Napoleon Bonaparte at that time were unparalleled. The Italian campaign was one of his most famous victories. Promoted on March 2, 1796, as commander in chief of the army of Italy, he was in charge of a war of diversion and looting in Piedmont and Lombardy, while the main offensive was to go through Germany to threaten Vienna. He led a thundering campaign against the Austro-Piedmontese troops. Thanks to his military genius, he won victory after victory between 1796 and 1797 in Millesimo, Mondovi, Arcole, and Rivoli. Taking Venice, it opened the gates of Vienna and forced Austria and her allies to conclude peace by the Treaty of Campo Formio on October 17, 1797, which allowed him to found sister republics in northern Italy.

The Battle of Austerlitz, or the Battle of the Three Emperors afterward, was the occasion of another great feat of Bonaparte. In 1805, a coalition between Russians and Austrians was formed against him. Faced with this sudden offensive, he led the Grande Armée to Austria, where he won a glorious victory on December 2.

The Egyptian campaign was recorded in history as one of the greatest expeditions entrusted to a general to extend the power of France abroad.

Named as the head of the expedition of Egypt (May 1798), Bonaparte took control of the country at the Battle of the Pyramids (July 21, 1798). But the English general Nelson, destroying the French fleet at the Battle of Aboukir (August 1798), forced Bonaparte to sail to Syria. An epidemic of plague stopped him in front of Saint Jean d'Acre, and learning of the reverses of the directory in Italy and the confusion that reigned in France, he landed at Fréjus on October 8, 1799, and returned to Paris.

Haitian people, this same general who won victory over his passage in Europe and the Mediterranean to restore slavery, sent seventy thousand men to Santo Domingo, and sixty-five thousand of them left their lives. The valiant generals Christophe, Romain, Capois, Lamartinière, Gabart, Daut, Cangé, and Vernet had under my command achieved what Alexander the Great, "the gravedigger of the Persians"; Napoleon Bonaparte, "the builder of the Corsican Empire"; Guillaume, said "the Conqueror"; the emperor Charlemagne, said "the Great"; Attila, "the scourge of God"; Prince Eugene of Savoy, "the slayer of the Ottomans"; Julius Caesar, "the conqueror of Gaul"; Shaka, "the conqueror of Zulu"; Genghis Khan, the terror of the steppes; Pompey the Great; Alexander Vasilyevich Suvorov; Gen. Hannibal Barca; Louis-Nicolas Davout; George Washington; Mustafa Kemal; Dwight Eisenhower; Douglas MacArthur; Winston Churchill; Bernard Montgomery; Moshe Dayan; and General de Gaulle did not succeed on doing in a battlefield—defeat the enemy with courage and determination as the main weapon.

The difference between the Haitian Revolution and the revolutions of other nations of the world lies in the fact that Haiti is the only country in the history of humanity where slave Negroes, after a century and more in servitude, have torn their freedom after an armed struggle against the metropolis. Take for example the United States, which declared independence on July 4, 1776. The American Revolutionary War pitted the thirteen colonies of North America against the kingdom of Great Britain. The white American settlers revolted because of exorbitant taxes imposed by the English crown on products arriving in US ports, especially tea.

The claims of the American settlers were simply fiscal. They put very little emphasis on the rights and freedoms of Americans. Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, cousins Sam and John Adams, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson opened in May 1775 the Second Continental Congress in Pennsylvania, in the State House of Philadelphia, to make one last attempt at reconciliation with the English. At the beginning, the

Americans were largely in favor of reconciliation. The American colonies went into rebellion after a proclamation of King George III on August 23, 1775, condemning the intransigence of the monarch vis-à-vis a congress he considered completely illegal and illegitimate.

The American insurgents, under the command of Gen. George Washington, benefited from the material support and assistance from France, which officially joined the American Army in 1778. The indigenous army that I led gained independence from the courage and determination of my largely illiterate men without military training, and worse still, some were fighting with spades, axes, and machetes in front of an enemy with modern artillery.

General Washington had a large contingent to defeat the British. In addition to the regular army, which had twenty thousand men, the American general had by his side twenty-three thousand militia and volunteers, thirty-five thousand soldiers of the French Army engaged in the fighting, eight thousand men of the Spanish Army, and Canadian mercenaries. When I led the battle against the French to liberate Santo Domingo and create the new Haiti, unlike the Americans, I had no help from a foreign power. No mercenary soldier recruited outside the territory had engaged in my service except for a small group of Polish soldiers. The native troops led alone all the assaults against the positions of the French.

Hunted on almost three-quarters of the territory, in September 1803, the French kept some towns of the coast. In the west, they were in Saint-Marc, Croix-des-Bouquets, and Port-au-Prince. In the south, they shut themselves up in Les Cayes and in Anse-à-Veau. In the north, they occupied Cap-Haïtien, Fort-Liberté, and Môle Saint-Nicholas.

I ordered my soldiers to attack French troops wherever they were on the territory. The city of Jeremiah was occupied by Ferou. On September 4, Gabart took possession of Saint-Marc. On September 9, Toussaint Brave attacked Fort-Liberté. Jacmel passed into the hands of Cangé and Magloire Ambroise on September 17. Geffrard became master of Anse-à-Veau on the same date. On September 16, as the head of the Artibonite troops, I launched the attack on Port-au-Prince. The city was besieged to the south by the men of Cangé, who had come from Jacmel to the north by the troops of Gabart, from the Saint-Joseph gate at the Fort National, and from the Mornes Hospital by those of Pétion. On October 11, after a month of siege, the native troops returned to Port-au-Prince; and on October 17, Geffrard occupied Les Cayes.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, took responsibility for the decision of the last offensive at Vertières. My companion in arms, Alexandre Pétion, thought that if I attacked on November 18, it would amount to a collective suicide of my men; and being general-in-chief, I alone would bear all the responsibility for the attack. Pétion argued that the soldiers were too tired and ill equipped, after the siege of Port-au-Prince, to cross the country to the North and attack Rochambeau's men.

Despite Pétion's repeated disagreement, I decided to start the final battle to surprise the French. My experience as a general fighting under the Spanish, English, and even French flags and the knowledge received from my mentor, Gran Toya, gave me the foresight to understand in the art of warfare that the element of surprise has the ability to greatly reduce the effectiveness of enemy troops.

This decision to launch the last offensive was not easy to take. I was distraught when Pétion announced that he would not accompany me to the North. He was the most experienced in the art of disposing guns to strike the enemy's position. He was the only one among the native soldiers to have an academic training in the art of war. Born in Port-au-Prince, he was the son of a wealthy French settler and a mulatto girl. He was sent to France in 1778 to study at the Paris Military Academy. Back in Santo Domingo, Pétion participated in the British expulsion campaign (1798–1799). He took the party of André Rigaud, leader of the free colored people, against Toussaint-Louverture during the war of knives in June 1799. He countered my offensive during the assault that I launched on the city of Jacmel during the war between Toussaint and Rigaud.

After the fall of Jacmel in March 1800, with other colored leaders, he went to France. In February 1802, he returned to Santo Domingo with Jean-Pierre Boyer, Rigaud, and an army of seventy thousand men under the command of Charles Leclerc, brother-in-law of Napoleon Bonaparte. In consequence of the betrayal that delivered Toussaint to the French, Pétion rallied to the causes of the insurgents. In October 1802, I organized with him, in greatest secrecy, the Congress of Arcahaie. General Clerveaux was his deputy principal at that time.

Pétion was a centerpiece in the native army. Despite his absence, I ordered my soldiers to leave Port-au-Prince for Cap-Haïtien. The crossing was not easy. It was raining almost daily in a large part of Artibonite and in the North. The difficulties were innumerable. A shortage of horses was noted, so my men were forced to perform the grueling task of carrying

weapons and ammunition on their backs. One day they walked in the dust and the next day in the mud. Finally, at the beginning of November, the native soldiers arrived in Artibonite.

By the end of October 1803, the French had only control of the cities of Cap-Haïtien and Môle Saint-Nicolas. Determined to put an end to the French presence on the island, I ordered all the troops to meet at Limbé. Only Geffrard's division was absent. It was a revolt of former supporters of the band leader Lamour Desrances, who refused to recognize my authority. Pétion was also absent, held in Port-au-Prince, for health reasons.

On November 6, 1803, escorted by the Dragoons of the Artibonite, under the orders of Paul Prompt and Charlotin Marcadieu, I left Gonaïves and went to Limbé. My arrival excited a delirious enthusiasm among the soldiers who sang their contempt for death and their will to live free or die. "Grenadiers to the assault. Sa ki mouri zafê ya yo. Pa gen manman pa gen papa, sa ki mouri zafê ya yo."

To dislodge the French in Cap-Haïtien was not an easy thing. The city was naturally well defended. It was protected to the west and north by heights and, at its main entrance, by a series of fortifications: Breda, Pierre-Michel, Bel Air, Jeannot, Champlain, Vertières, d'Estaing, and the Butte Charrier.

On the tenth of November, from my headquarters, I issued the following orders: Generals Christophe and Romain, by passing Cap-Haïtien, would attack La Vigie. Capois would attack the Barrière Bouteille but slipping between the forts. I was thinking of placing gun pieces in strategic places so as to extinguish the fires of enemy forts before launching the general assault. Clerveaux would have to take Fort Breda. With this plan put in place, I launched the final attack.

Upon arrival at Cap-Haïtien at four o'clock in the morning on November 18, 1803, before daybreak, Christophe, general of division, and Romain, brigadier general, launched their troops to attack Fort d'Estaing to bomb the city of Cap-Haïtien. Clerveaux, another general of division in the native army, attacked Breda. Very surprised and disconcerted by the first shots falling on the city, Rochambeau ordered a group of French soldiers to quickly strengthen Fort Vertières. In response to this decision, I abandoned the plan to storm Vertières. I decided to concentrate the artillery on the fort of the Butte Charrier, an important strategic position from which native soldiers could effectively bombard Vertières.

After a whole day of fighting, during which almost a third of Rochambeau's men were killed, my men occupied the Butte Charrier. The war was extremely fierce on both sides. Soldiers fell and got up. I was crossing dead and wounded bodies to join the young and fiery major general Gabart and Benjamin Noel, who, in an unparalleled feat, had occupied the Butte Charrier. From this position, we threw a bolt of bullets at Vertières, forcing Rochambeau to capitulate and deliver the city of Cap-Haïtien to my command. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, became the first general to defeat Napoleon Bonaparte, considered one of the greatest generals in history.

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NAPOLEON DEFEATED IN SANTO DOMINGO

Napoleon Bonaparte had the most powerful army in the world when I commanded the native troops in Santo Domingo. As the head of an unprofessional army and poorly equipped, ragged soldiers, I defeated the men of Rochambeau at Vertières. I forced the French to eat dust before they fled to the eastern part. As far as the Dominican Republic, I pursued them and encircled the capital, Santo Domingo, for three weeks to punish General Ferrand for his impertinent statements.

Haitian people, driving the country to independence was not an easy thing. The war I won against the French was known as one of the greatest feats of history in the world. It was like David's fight against Goliath. The French expeditionary force was considered, at that time, as one of the largest deployments of troops from a European country outside its territory. It was a gigantic operation set up by Bonaparte in his ambition to occupy America.

Commander in chief of the indigenous army, after the deportation of Toussaint, I had to develop a strategy inside the country to counter the attacks of Leclerc and later those of Rochambeau. At the same time, I had to fight France's allies, composed of all the Western powers of the time that shared and applied the same policy toward Haiti—that of avoiding to recognize the independence of the new state and to establish commercial relations with it. It was then for the West, by diplomatic isolation and the commercial weapon, to put the Haitian nation on its knees and prevent it from evolving in the concert of the nations. To achieve this goal, the French counted on a powerful and formidable ally, the United States of America.

In March 1804, three months after the proclamation of Haitian independence, US president Thomas Jefferson concerted with the then-Washington-based British minister Anthony Merry to bring the US administration into an agreement with the imperialist and colonialist

powers in the West Indies “to prevent the former slaves of Santo Domingo from having some form of navigation and to deprive them of all types of weapons and equipment.”

The American Congress voted on March 3, 1805, a law that forbade the granting of authorization to sail to Santo Domingo and the West Indies. This measure was intended to take away from my empire the means to procure equipment, weapons, and ammunition. So to militarily defend the independence of the young homeland, I had to go through smuggling, which made the supply very difficult and the cost clearly prohibitive. On December 18, 1805, Pennsylvania Democrat senator George Logan renewed his expectation by reintroducing his bill to convince Congress of the commercial quarantine of Haiti. On February 20, 1806, by a vote of 21–8, the project received the approval of the Senate. After a quick vote in the Chamber of Deputies, almost without debate, on February 28, 1806, the draft was signed by the president.

It was obvious that the discriminatory policy of the Americans toward Haiti was not a new fact. From the first moments of the black revolt in Santo Domingo, the US Secretary of War, Henry Knox, provided the authorities and settlers of Santo Domingo with a substantial support of one thousand weapons and \$40,000 receivable in cash or in various supplies. Responding to the request for help against the revolutionaries of Santo Domingo made by the French minister Jean de Ternant, then stationed in Philadelphia, Pres. George Washington had written to him on September 24, 1791, “I am happy of the opportunity to assure you how much the United States is willing to give all the help in their power to our good friends and allies, the French, in order to quell the alarming insurrection of the Negroes at Hispaniola.”

During the month of July 1801, the American president Thomas Jefferson had informed the French ambassador to the United States, Louis-André Pichon, of the wishes of success of his government to Napoleon, who intended to submit Toussaint and reconquer Santo Domingo. At Bonaparte’s request for cooperation to quell the black revolution, Jefferson declared that “nothing would be simpler than to provide everything to your army and your fleet and to subjugate Toussaint by famine.” Assured of the support of Americans, the French foreign minister Charles Maurice Talleyrand and the first consul Bonaparte sent the expeditionary troops to Santo Domingo to crush the revolution under the leadership of Toussaint.

On June 23, 1803, in the middle of the campaign to drive the French out of Santo Domingo, I sent an official letter to US president Thomas Jefferson. The latter opposed total indifference to this correspondence. Thus, this attitude was another proof that the American administration at the time was far from relaunching and consolidating the inter-American cooperation that Toussaint and Adams had initiated but rather connected with France and with other colonial powers of Europe to undermine the Haitian revolutionary struggle and help Bonaparte deploy the Santo Domingo expedition.

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THE FRENCH EXPEDITION OF SANTO DOMINGO

In the implementation of his plan, the first consul sent his own brother-in-law, General Leclerc, with instructions to break the ideal of freedom of the blacks in Santo Domingo. Indeed, the French Revolution of 1789 had abolished slavery. But on May 20, 1802, Napoleon signed a decree to restore it. Thus, when the war for independence began in 1802, I had at most a few thousand men to lead the revolution. Leclerc thus received the command of seventy thousand men, coming from almost all French armies. Here is the summary of the composition of the French expeditionary army. The sending of troops was done three times.

- First shipment: February 3, 1802, composed of 33 ships of the line and 21 French and Spanish frigates; Fleet of Brest, under the command of Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse, 6,600 men
 - Twenty-Second Demi-brigade de Ligne of second formation
 - Third Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
 - Seventy-Ninth Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
 - Fifth Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
 - Eleventh Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
 - Thirtieth Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
- Lorient wing, 900 men
 - Seventy-First Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
- Rochefort wing under the command of Rear Admiral Latouche-Treville, 3,000 men

- Fifty-Sixth Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
- Sixty-Eighth Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
- Ninetieth Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
- Fifteenth Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
- Legion of the Loire
- Nineteenth Regiment of Dragons
 - artillery
- February 14, 1802: Toulon wing under the command of Rear Admiral Ganteaume, 4,200 men
 - Seventy-Fourth Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
 - Twenty-Eighth Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
 - Legion of Santo Domingo
 - artillery
- February 17, 1802: Cadiz squadron under the command of Rear Admiral Linois, 2,400 men
 - Nineteenth Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
 - German battalion
 - Tenth Regiment of Dragons
- August 12: on the ships the *Intrepid*, the *Lougre*, the *Vulture*, and some other buildings, 2,700 men
 - first part of the Eighty-Third Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation
 - Third Light Demi-Brigade of second formation
- September 11: on the *Brick*, the *Lodi*, and several other small buildings, 2,570 men
 - Polish legion

- September 20: on the *Egyptian*, the *Prudent*, the *Young Edward*, and the *Aristide*, 1,261 men
 - four coast guard batteries
 - foreign battalion
 - second part of the Eighty-Third Demi-Brigade de Ligne of second formation

To defeat this armada, I used the weak resources of the native army, relying heavily on the support of the black population aspiring freedom and the end of slavery. From the Normandy dwelling of Mézy in Limbé, five kilometers from Vertières, I revealed myself a genius prepared for guerrilla warfare and the war of resistance. Choosing the birthplace of Mackandal and Boukman to establish my headquarters was not a coincidence. I revived in the memory of my soldiers the general revolt of the slaves in the night of August 22, 1791, to motivate them to fight.

The Battle of Vertières was largely won because of this choice. My troops attacked different points and forced the enemy to disperse, while I concentrated on the main objective, which was to force the French Army to surrender. The capitulation of Rochambeau after their defeat at Vertières crowned the series of wars for Haitian independence, including Ravine-à-Couleuvres and Crête-à-Pierrot.

RAVINE-À-COULEUVRES AND CRÊTE-À-PIERROT

Haitian people, the Battle of Vertières was considered the greatest feat of arms in history. The native army buried Napoleon's ambition to occupy America. But do you remember the other two great battles of the war of independence? That of Ravine-à-Couleuvres on February 23, 1802, followed by that of Crête-à-Pierrot from March 4 to 24, 1802? During these two great battles of 1802 in Artibonite, the native troops were besieged by the French troops of Leclerc. My men, although encircled on all sides by the French soldiers, had achieved the heroic feat of getting out of the ambush with crippled losses. Here is the story of the facts for the memory of the young generation:

On the evening of February 22, 1802, the French occupied the heights of Morne Barade, and the fight began during the night. Rochambeau's troops resisted, counterattacked, and then, at dawn, threw our troops out of their throats.

Toussaint, the commander in chief, thanks to an ingenious strategy, rallied his riders on the plain of the Perisse plantation and launched a charge that dispersed the French and forced them to retreat on the Ravine-à-Couleuvres gorges. The French archives of the Ministry of War mentioned that we left eight hundred dead on the battlefield. This report was wrong. Our losses were small. We retreated because we lost all possibility of communication with the Ninth Regiment commanded by Jacques Maurepas.

Crête-à-Pierrot was another exceptional feat of arms of the native army. On February 28, 1802, our commander in chief, Toussaint-Louverture, left the fort and commanded me to repair the walls and dig trenches. The fort had six hundred to seven hundred men under my command, later reinforced by five hundred other men commanded by the brigade leader Louis Daure Lamartinière.

On March 4, we suffered the first attack of Rochambeau. The French vanguard, two thousand men strong and commanded by General Debelle, attacked our position at Crête-à-Pierrot. Our soldiers threw themselves into the trenches and bombarded the French who were routed. Four hundred of them were killed or wounded, and General Debelle himself was seriously wounded.

A second assault was launched on March 12, 1802. This new attack led by Captain General Leclerc also failed. The brigade commanded by General Boudet lost almost five hundred men killed or wounded and that of Dugua two hundred to three hundred men. The three generals were also injured. Leclerc had been hit in the crotch, Dugua had been mortally wounded by two bullets, and Boudet had been injured in the heel.

A third assault was decreed on March 22. This other attempt by Rochambeau against the fortified redoubts of the fort, defended by two hundred men commanded by Lamartinière, failed again, and three hundred French soldiers perished during the offensive.

In all history books on Haiti, one can read the bravery of Marie-Jeanne Lamartinière. She was the wife of the commander of Louis Daure Lamartinière: "Wearing a Mamluk-like costume, she carried a rifle slung over her shoulder and a boarding saber attached to a steel belt. A sort of cap imprisoned her opulent hair, whose rebellious locks overflowed with the headdress. In the rain of projectiles, Marie-Jeanne went from one end to the other of the ramparts, sometimes distributing cartridges, sometimes helping to load the guns. And when the action became more intense, she rushed bravely to the front row of the soldiers and played the rifle with a frenzied spirit."

The Blockade of the Fort

All the assaults having failed, the French resolved to blockade; and for three days and three nights, they bombarded the fort with mortar fire. Inside, the situation of our men was very difficult. Our army had five hundred men killed or wounded out of nine hundred. A witness to the fight, the French naturalist Descourtilz reported, “Men lacking water and food, with overwhelming heat, were chewing lead bullets in the hope of quenching an unbearable thirst. They caused by this trituration a muddy saliva they still found delicious to swallow.”

THE EVACUATION OF CRÊTE-À-PIERROT

Leaving the fort was another feat. On March 23, I attacked General Hardy's troops at Morne Nolo to join the besieged, but my attack was postponed. I lost one hundred men, who were killed during the operation. On March 24, the troops of the native army, at the end, decided to evacuate the fort. Led by Lamartinière, they made a night of it and managed to pierce the French lines that surrounded the Crête-à-Pierrot.

French general Pamphile de Lacroix reported, "The retreat, which dared to conceive and execute the commander of Crête-à-Pierrot, is a remarkable feat of arms. We surrounded his post with twelve thousand men; he escaped, did not lose half of his garrison, and left us only dead and wounded. This man, Brigadier Lamartinière, was a quadron to whom nature gave a soul of the strongest temper. Our losses had been so great that they greatly afflicted the captain-general; he urged us by policy to remedy them, as he himself palliated them in his official reports."

General Lacroix thus reported his memory of Crête-à-Pierrot: "While we were doing the investment of the fort, the music of the enemy made the patriotic tunes adapted to the glory of France. In spite of the indignation excited by the atrocities of the blacks, these tunes also produced a painful feeling. The looks of our soldiers questioned ours, they seemed to tell us: Would our barbarous enemies be right? Would we not be the soldiers of the Republic? Would we be the servile instruments of politics?"

Once in the fort, on the orders of General Rochambeau, the French massacred all our wounded soldiers. Our general-in-chief, Toussaint, arrived too late to join the besieged and joined me on the slopes of Morne Calvaire, and then we retreated to the plantation Chasseriau, near Grand Fond in the mountains of Petit Cahos. The French regained Port-au-Prince. General Lacroix reported the testimonies and made his men march

in square formation in the hollow center so that the inhabitants would not realize the importance of the French losses. Haitian people, I recalled these feats of arms to your memory because, like your ancestors, you can rewrite history.

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CHAPTER VII

REWRITING OUR HISTORY

Haitian people, like your ancestors, you can rewrite history. You have the capacity to repeat the exploits that I have accomplished with the native army at Vertières, Crête-à-Pierrot, and Ravine-à-Couleuvres. You also have the advantage of learning from my mistakes.

The challenges in 1804 under my empire and those of today are no different. The crisis is always societal. At the time when I was emperor, the battle was fought around the division of land among mulattoes, sons of white settlers, and those newly freed from slavery. Two hundred and fourteen years after my assassination, it's the same fight. The phenomenon is not new. The crisis remains a social one.

As in the past, manipulation is used to stifle the legitimate claims of the masses deprived of the most basic rights—the rights to life, food, work, education, housing, health, and safety. The disregard for these rights, I denounced in my speech after the verification of the titles of property in the South. Attacking the politics of exclusion, consolidating institutions,

building the rule of law—these were the great challenges of the imperial regime in 1804. These same challenges still persist today.

We are talking about a society in crisis in Haiti because, in the country, there is not really an elite composed of visionary men called patriots. To develop, Haiti needs an elite made up of people who believe in others and that they are the best and deserve respect, an elite conscious of its responsibility of leadership and that inspires society by its vision of progress, a progressive elite in search of collective well-being.

Take the country out of the crisis that has lasted for two centuries and more—the solution to this is not easy to find. It is not impossible either. The biggest problem to manage is to build the nation. I have given you independence in 1804; unfortunately, my dream of creating a nation has been stifled. The duty of this generation is to build the Haitian nation.

O people, do you remember the words of Toussaint-Louverture on the road to exile when he was preparing to go up on the *Hero*? The lieutenant general declared, “By overthrowing me, you have only cut off the tree trunk of the freedom of the blacks in Santo Domingo, it will push back again by roots because they are deep and numerous.”

Among the roots, there was me, your valiant and courageous emperor, Jean-Jacques Dessalines. I was the bravest of all. They called me the Hangman. I was the one whom even the dogs of the French settlers feared because they stopped barking when my name was mentioned. Other comrades called me the Brave. While fighting against the enemy, I stood firmly inside the fort, and I said to my soldiers, “I want to keep with me only the brave ones. Those of you who want to stay white slaves can leave the fort and those who want to live like free men come around me.” “Freedom or death”—that was my motto.

My enlistment was criticized in several foreign armies during the wars in Santo Domingo. Like Toussaint-Louverture, Jean-François, and Biassou, I was not a mercenary. I had engaged with the Spaniards because they promised freedom in exchange for help against the French. With Spain trampling on her promises, on May 18, 1794, with General Toussaint, I rallied to the French Republican camp under the authority of Governor General Laveaux. Toussaint became a military leader alongside Rigaud, Pétion, Martial Besse, and Villate. An army of forty thousand men was mounted to fight the Spaniards and the English. Haitian people, to avoid any misinterpretation, here is the detailed story of the facts:

On June 25, 1794, as the head of five thousand men, Toussaint eliminated the Spanish garrisons of Petite Rivière, Dondon, Gros Morne, and Gonaïves. The Spaniards were then beaten at Camp Bertin and Limbé, before taking over Dondon.

On June 1, 1795, Toussaint kidnapped Camp Flamin, Camp Roque, and Saint-Malo with the Spaniards.

Mid-January, Toussaint beat the British general Brisbane near the Petite Rivière.

On July 22, 1795, during the Treaty of Basel, Spain ceded the western part of the island to France. France, nevertheless, left the Spaniards the role of administrator. It was the end of the war with the Spaniards.

On July 23, 1795, by decree, the national convention appointed Brig. Gen. Toussaint-Louverture, who became the first black general of the French Army.

On September 3, 1797, was the departure of Sonthonax, forced by Toussaint.

On the twenty-seventh of March 1798, the government sent a representative to the island, General Hedouville.

On April 22, 1798, Maitland informed the French royalists of the British decision to abandon the colony and organize the evacuation of those who wished.

On April 23, 1798, Maitland announced his decision to Louverture and demanded negotiations for the surrender of Port-Républicain and the preservation of the royalists who remained.

On May 8, 1798, the British left Port-Républicain and set up their headquarters at Môle Saint-Nicolas.

On May 16, 1798, was the triumphal entry of Gen. Toussaint-Louverture and his army of ex-slaves in Port-au-Prince.

Mid-June 1798, US secretary of state Timothy Pickering confirmed that the United States would accept the resumption of trade relations if Toussaint claimed victory.

In November 1798, Toussaint-Louverture sent Joseph Brunel to meet the main merchants of Philadelphia to negotiate the resumption of business.

In December 1798, British general Maitland returned to Santo Domingo as a private individual, accompanied by Americans, to meet Louverture. Toussaint signed a commercial treaty with the Americans.

In June 1799, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, as the head of twenty thousand men, returned to Port-au-Prince. In October 1799, I was confirmed commander in chief of the western army and General Moses of the northern army.

In December 1799, after the siege of Jacmel, André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion, and Jean-Pierre Boyer left for the metropolis; they would return only with the expedition of Santo Domingo on January 29, 1802.

On January 27, 1801, Toussaint entered Santo Domingo as the head of a strong army. On July 6, Toussaint divided Santo Domingo into six departments. On July 12, the constitution of the colony was signed and promulgated by Louverture. On July 16, Toussaint transmitted the new constitution to Bonaparte.

On November 8, 1801, Bonaparte's letter to the inhabitants of Santo Domingo guaranteed them freedom and the maintenance of the abolition of slavery: "Whatever your origin and your color, you are French, you are all equal before God and the Republic." On November 18, Bonaparte entrusted the fleet for the expedition from Santo Domingo to Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse.

On January 29, 1802, was the arrival of the Santo Domingo expedition with André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion, and Jean-Pierre Boyer. It was commanded by Leclerc, assisted by Rochambeau. On January 30, aboard the flagship *Ocean*, Leclerc held a council of war to expose his generals to his plan of landing. Four main points were reported: Cap-Haïtien, Port-au-Prince, Santo Domingo, and Les Cayes. Operations would be directed against other points such as Fort-Dauphin, Port-de-Paix, Gonaïves, Santiago, Plaisance, and Croix-des-Bouquets.

On February 1, 1802, the division commanded by Rochambeau began to occupy Fort-Dauphin, defended by the Fifth Demi-Brigade of Moses. The betrayal of the commander Barthélemy facilitated the task despite the fierce resistance of the soldiers of the Fifth Demi-Brigade. The city was evacuated by the natives, but the prisoners were put to the sword by order of Rochambeau.

On the fourth of February 1802, the expeditionary army arrived at the door of Cap-Français, commanded by Christophe. Leclerc, with the title of captain general, ordered the latter to surrender the city to his command. Christophe refused to give way without Toussaint's permission. He wrote to Leclerc, "If you have the strength of which you threaten me, I will lend you all the resistance which characterizes a general; and if the

fate of arms is favorable to you, you will not enter the city of Cape until it is reduced to ashes, and even on this ashes, I will fight you again.” To avoid the fire of the Cap-Haïtien, Leclerc had troops unload at Acul Bay to surprise Christophe by land. Threatened at sea by a fleet and on land by two bodies of land enemies, one at Fort-Dauphin and the other at Acul Bay, Christophe ordered to burn the city by burning his own house.

On February 17, 1802, Leclerc issued an order putting Toussaint and Christophe as outlaw. Article IV of the same ordinance promised rewards to all those who would abandon the colonial army.

At the end of February 1802, when he was busy seizing the north, Leclerc ordered General Humbert to take possession of the city of Port-de-Paix, commanded by Gen. Jacques Maurepas. Ordered to surrender the city, Maurepas responded to the gun and ordered his evacuation after burning. Pursued by Humbert, he organized the resistance in the burned city.

In early March 1802, Leclerc dispatched General Debelle in the northwest to save Humbert. The betrayal of Christmas Mathieu facilitated the task of the French general. General Boudet, with the squadron of La Touche-Tréville, presented themselves before Port-au-Prince to ask General Age, a Frenchman engaged in the native army, to submit. The betrayal of certain officers allowed Boudet to occupy the city without having to face the native troops. In spite of the efforts of Lamartinière and an attack that I ran to retake the city, Port-au-Prince fell into the hands of the French. The attack failed, I bypassed the city by the hills, and I took the road to Artibonite.

On March 17, 1802, after several victories of the expeditionary troops, Leclerc proposed peace to Toussaint, who, isolated, felt compelled to accept it. On June 7 was the arrest of Major General Louverture. He embarked on the ship *Hero* and was led in France, accompanied by his wife and some members of his family. He would be incarcerated at the Fort de Joux, where he died of cold and starvation on April 7, 1803.

With Toussaint deported, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, became the leader, the head of the revolution.

THE HEAD OF THE REVOLUTION

We have dared to be free, dare to be free by ourselves and for ourselves.

—Jean-Jacques Dessalines

With Toussaint captured and deported in 1802, I became the leader of the revolution. I led several battles to victory by walking in the footsteps of the Battle of Crête-à-Pierrot. The Battle of Vertières, which led to independence, was undoubtedly the bloodiest of all wars for national independence. From a guerrilla and conspiracy strategy, I defeated the French troops sent by Napoleon, under the leadership of General Rochambeau, who took control after the death of Leclerc.

With the French capitulated, I declared the independence of Haiti on November 29, 1803, in the city of Fort-Dauphin, which became Fort-Liberté. On the first of January 1804, I assembled the generals, the soldiers of the native army, and the people in the Gonaïves Square and ordered Boisrond-Tonnerre to read the Act of Independence, written according to my recommendations.

“In order to write the declaration of our independence, we need the skin of a white for parchment, his skull for writing, his blood for ink and a bayonet for pen.” These words had been criticized on the pretext that they were too violent and inflamed. But did history remember the aftereffects endured by my brothers during a century and more spent in slavery in Santo Domingo? The rebellious slaves were killed in various ways. One of them was what I called dying slowly. For memory, here is the account of the execution of a slave:

The white settler forced the rebellious slave to dig a hole of his size so that his body could fit into it. The master then ordered another slave

to shave the head of the rebellious slave. The unfortunate man was then forced to enter the hole, and on his bald head, the master poured boiled syrup. The submerged body remained for days in this position, leaving the corpse to flies, cockroaches, and all kinds of insects. When the death occurred one or two days later, the head was covered with dirt.

If my actions were judged wrong because I had no mercy for the settlers, we should consult history to see who between the slaves and the masters were the most ferocious. The French responded with repressive actions to the determination of my men to access freedom. They drowned them, hanged them, shot them, and choked them in the hold of the ships before they were devoured by dogs brought from Cuba. As part of his policy of terror, Rochambeau brought pit bulls trained to hunt the brown Negro. To an officer who asked him for money for dog food, he replied, "There are enough Negroes here to feed the dogs."

In March 2003, Rochambeau organized a gruesome show for the public. A black prisoner was first led into the arena and tied to a pole. He was the servant of Gen. Pierre Boyer, the chief of staff of Rochambeau. Hungry dogs were then brought to devour him. The dogs were reluctant to start their sinister meal, so Boyer opened the victim's stomach with a sword. The presence of blood excited the dogs, which devoured their prey to the sound of a military band and the roars of the crowd.

The use of fighting dogs played a central role during the Haitian war of independence. But in the name of truth, I must say that it was not Rochambeau who decided to buy dogs but his predecessor as captain general of Santo Domingo, Charles Victoire Leclerc, the brother-in-law of Napoleon Bonaparte, and the diplomatic agent of France in Cuba, Louis de Noailles. The use of dogs was first and foremost a military decision to find a way to locate and scare the rebels. The use of dogs as eaters and hunters of men was another weapon used by the French in their policy of terror. The intensification of the extermination reached its heights when Rochambeau executed a hundred men in Jacmel. Rochambeau had them embarked on a warship; they were placed in the hold, sealing the hatches tightly after lighting up sulfur. These unfortunates were asphyxiated and their corpses thrown into the sea.

So it was to Rochambeau that we must attribute these kinds of atrocities, which he invented in his rage for extermination, a bestial cruelty that he too often used against blacks in Santo Domingo. In the conjuncture of 1803, these crimes could not stop my ideal of freedom and justice. The

atrocities of the enemy more strongly welded my soldiers, who preferred to die in combat rather than being devoured by ferocious dogs or gassed with sulfur dioxide.

Haitian people, to all those who reproach me for the bloody reprisals against the French, I answer that my actions at the time were in my political objective of erasing all the traces of French colonization on the earth of Haiti, in my vision of preserving the independence of my country, and also in my historic mission to eradicate slavery in the world. Whether we want to admit it or not, in posing the problem of freedom and independence in global terms of the natural equality of men, I have highlighted my great understanding of the importance of the revolutionary struggle in the service of freedom, justice, self-determination of peoples, and law in general.

The actions that I posed as a head of state clearly showed that I was up to my historical responsibilities. In this, I was no different from the great leaders of peoples who had made history by their way of defending their nation. This was the case when Abraham Lincoln accepted the sacrifice of nearly a million Americans to preserve the Union. Harry Truman killed tens of thousands of Japanese by the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to subdue the Japanese Empire. Winston Churchill and Charles de Gaulle accepted to sacrifice the lives of millions of their compatriots to resist Hitler during the Second World War. Finally, George Bush ordered the bombing of Iraq in response to September 11, 2001, followed by the deployment of hundreds of thousands of US troops in Afghanistan to fight al-Qaeda forces with the purpose of preventing an attack against the United States or their allies.

Those leaders who defended their country against the attacks of the enemy had no more right or more justice in their actions than I did in defending the Haitian people. However, history had venerated Napoleon Bonaparte, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Harry Truman, and Charles de Gaulle. In the eyes of many French historians, I—Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, who stood against slavery, exploitation, and oppression—am a brigand, a criminal, a barbarian. Napoleon did not fight for freedom, yet he was considered a hero. He was simply a conqueror with the vision of occupying territories to impose the hegemony of France. Washington and Lincoln fought for the well-being of the American people, just as Churchill fought for the welfare of the English people and Charles de Gaulle for the liberation

of France. All of them were considered great men in universal history. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, defended not only my country and my people; I also rose against slavery, exploitation, and oppression. I was fighting for the total liberation of all peoples subject to servitude. I fought racism, colonialism, and imperialism, and I invented the great principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by forcing the great powers—France, England, Spain, Portugal, and so on—to give up trafficking. I was a historical character of first order and of great value for Haiti and for humanity. I changed the course of the world order by crushing Napoleon's army at Vertières.

The Battle of Vertières was not only a victory of the native army over the Napoleonic troops. It was also a response to colonial violence by revolutionary violence. It was certainly a defeat for Napoleon, but even more, it was a defeat for the French institutions, the defeat of colonialism. It was a victory from the point of view of emancipation; the liberated Negro became a person and not a thing whose destiny depended on the hands of a master.

The Battle of Vertières meant the total annihilation of the French expeditionary army at Santo Domingo, that great army of seventy thousand men who had presented themselves in the colony with so much temerity and confidence. It disappeared, as Napoleon said after the debacle of the Prussian Army, like a fog of autumn before the sunrise—chief generals, officers, noncommissioned officers, soldiers. There was almost nothing left of Rochambeau's men. The debris of this army—disbanded, tracked, pursued in all directions—gave the spectacle of a gang of thugs pursued by agents of the order.

The victory of the native soldiers over the French troops in Vertières, to quote Jean-Pierre Glaunec, “cracked for the first time the foundations of a world of terror where the black body was perceived as a mere commodity.” This victory demystified France and its colonial and transatlantic dimension. It symbolized the defeat of racism, violence, and denial of rights. It revealed the mask of the colonial reality.

Indeed, the French Army was totally destroyed in Santo Domingo. Out of a total of about seventy thousand soldiers who arrived on the Santo Domingo expedition, only four hundred returned to France. These survivors of the war, once in the metropolis, were interned in Brest because Bonaparte wanted to hide the truth to the French people. The first consul, who had become emperor, feared the news that the expeditionary force

sent to Santo Domingo had been dismantled by the native army. Donatien Rochambeau—son of the commander of the French expeditionary force in the American War of Independence who commanded the French Army at Vertières—was, after his capitulation, captured by the English in the harbor of Cap-Haïtien with the four thousand surviving soldiers of the expeditionary fleet; he was released after nine years. Rochambeau reinstated the French Army with his title of general before dying in battle at age fifty-eight in Leipzig (Germany) during the Battle of the Nations on October 20, 1813.

Discouraged by the debacle of the French Army in Santo Domingo, in 1803, Napoleon organized the sale of Louisiana in the United States. The sale was made for sixty million francs, which allowed the first consul to finance part of his military campaigns. But the truth was even deeper: Bonaparte realized that with the loss of more than sixty thousand French soldiers in Santo Domingo, the American dream was a luxury he could not afford.

Haitian people, it is up to every citizen to make this story known. The French have distorted it; they have always hidden the facts since 1804 until today. Their official historians speak of diseases that have decimated the Napoleonic army. Several soldiers have certainly died, like Leclerc, after the epidemic of yellow fever. But the majority of the French soldiers perished on the battlefields. My revolutionary approach, presented as a terror by French historians, falls into the same pattern of refusal to accept the facts as they have actually happened in Santo Domingo.

For French historiography, the Battle of Vertières has never existed. Moreover, the proper names of battles and places do not exist in most dictionaries in the West. In Western memory, Vertières has never taken place. It is up to you, Haitian people, to face all this to break the silence. Is it now necessary to understand why Vertières cannot be recognized and named? Why is this historic site that have seen the defeat of an army headed by the greatest conqueror of the time not mentioned in any history book in France?

Yet Vertières is a fact that no one can deny, just as one cannot deny the black period of slavery in universal history. Indeed, the slave trade is a shame for humanity—a universal crime against the black people deported from Africa to serve in the plantations of America.

Where I was in the Hall of Initiates, I heard the French president Nicolas Sarkozy in his calamitous speech delivered in Dakar on July

26, 2007. He said, "Trafficking and slavery were the first crimes against humanity. This slavery was worse than that of antiquity because it found not only its justification in the lure of gain but also and even first in racism."

Then Sarkozy continued, "I did not come to Dakar to erase the past because the past does not go away. I did not come to deny the faults or the crimes because there were mistakes and there were crimes. There was the slave trade, there was slavery, men, women, children bought and sold as merchandise. And this crime was not only a crime against Africans, it was a crime against man, it was a crime against humanity as a whole."

On Tuesday, May 12, 2015, another French president, François Hollande, visited Haiti. Two days before this visit, he declared in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, during his inauguration address in the Memorial ACTe devoted to the abolition of slavery:

Is it sufficiently emphasized that when the abolition was acquired, the question of compensation took on proportions and especially a particularly surprising orientation since it was clamorously demanded not by the former slaves, but by the old masters who demanded to be compensated for the loss of the labor force which they had recorded in their writings as the value of their livestock. It was under the monarchy Charles X, in 1825, that France claimed compensation from Haiti of 150 million gold francs to compensate the former settlers who claimed it. Some have called this requirement the ransom of independence. Well, when I come to Haiti, I will pay that debt we have.

For the guidance of the French president, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, would say that the Royal Order of 1825 was an attempt by France to establish a neocolonial regime in the former colony that I declared independent on January 1, 1804. In article 2 of this ordinance sent by Charles X, communicated by the Baron of Mackau on July 5, 1825, to the Haitian president Jean-Pierre Boyer, it said, "The present inhabitants of the French part of Santo Domingo shall pay to the General Fund deposits and deposits of France, in five equal terms, from year to year, the first due December 31, 1825, the sum of 150 million francs, intended to compensate the former settlers who will claim compensation." The payment of the

debt of independence was not only an insult for the Haitian people but it was also a shame for the French people because the former metropolis not only did impose an indemnity by threatening the young state with its powerful war fleet; it also obliged Haiti to halve the customs duties in its favor, which represented another abuse.

As the founding father of the Haitian nation, I have always called on France to do its duty of remembrance, for the Haitian people are perfectly entitled to a refund for the harm that has been caused, during its history, by a century and more of slavery. To facilitate the task, it is necessary that the two governments have open talks to know in what form France will repay Haiti. Cooperation is the first solution, especially in the areas of education, culture, higher education and research, public health, agriculture, and sustainable development. In addition, France must help Haiti in the total revision of ultraliberal economic policies that strangle the Haitian society since the '80s—policies dictated by international institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO, in which France plays a leading role.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, say to the French that it is not by refusing to teach the epic of Vertières in schools in France or by refusing to mention my name in *Larousse* that we are going to erase the shame of the slave trade. On the contrary, by making these omissions, the world's conscience is even more difficult. We must start from the spirit of the law of May 10, 2001, passed by the French Parliament recognizing "slavery and trafficking as crimes against humanity."

It also requires the honesty of the French government, as I have already mentioned, to repay Haiti the debt of independence. As US president Bill Clinton and Pope John Paul II have done, every French head of state must visit Gorée's House of Slaves and publicly ask for forgiveness from the black people scattered around the world. The issue is not to point the finger at Africans for the horror of the slave trade but rather to blame the Western mercenaries who arm blacks in Africa, from ancient times until now, to destroy each other.

Failed in its practice of exclusion by omission, France must now recognize its guilt and finally apologize to Haitians in particular and to Africans in general. The government of France must put an end to hypocrisy. In the French collective memory, there is an oblivion of the past of France as a colonial state preaching the virtue of slavery, a national amnesia. Haitian people, the victory of Vertières is, above all, your victory.

We must not stop proclaiming that the first defeat of Napoleon is not Bailén in Spain or Moscow but Vertières in Haiti on November 18, 1803.

Thanks to the armed struggle, Haiti had liberated itself from the colonial system by its own means. This revolution in Santo Domingo prompted the French National Assembly to vote for the abolition of slavery in 1794. This was the general hypocrisy in the French Parliament at that time when some parliamentarians could only tolerate the word “slave” in a revolutionary decree. These gentlemen spoke of the status of “nonfree people,” and at the same time, slavery was nonetheless established, recognized, confirmed, and enshrined in law. With the French Army defied at Santo Domingo, in the face of this accomplished fact, France had to ratify and extend the end of slavery in the other colonies in 1848 after finally throwing off the masks. Haitian people, Vertières therefore represented a total victory I had won over the colonial and imperialist world in the name of mine.

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CHAPTER VIII

ON MY BEHALF

As a slave, as Charles Caesar said, I lost all the freedom that was possible to take from me. My talents, my industry, and my work did not belong to me; my actions were all about the will and caprices of another—outrages, punishments, death itself.

Slave of the fields and later a carpenter, I was born in a sugarcane plantation located in Cormier in Grande-Rivière-du-Nord. I lived in this house from early childhood to adulthood. Stalked like an animal, stamped with the initials of my master in the back, I resisted. I always dreamed of freeing my brothers from the yoke of slavery because I had always hated the treatment we were given in the colony, especially the slaves of the fields. That was why I took advantage of the lessons of my master, Dessalines, to learn the trade of carpentry.

If there existed in the dwelling place of slaves of the fields, it was certainly that of the so-called slaves of the fields, or else called slaves of the garden or slaves of place, in connection with their place of work was

the plantation. They were the largest and most unhappy population of the colony, and their living conditions were totally different from those of skilled slaves. Not only did they work in their fields of cultivation but the most difficult part was they also had to be at their posts most of the time from morning to six in the evening.

Every day exposed, bareheaded, to an overwhelming sun, which could boil their brains, and at times exposed to the rain, the living conditions of these slaves were most deplorable. They were never well fed enough for the many difficult tasks they were working on. The *ajoupas*, which served as their houses, if they had them, were most execrable. As for their clothes, they were covered with rags, and they went to the limit of nakedness.

The slaves, in forced labor, had to clear by means of sharp objects several hectares of forests from their natural vegetation to make them arable spaces. This manual labor imposed intense physical efforts, like many other works that were given to each slave. The work of the fields required great endurance, especially light sleep, for—as Justin Girod-Chantrons said—“the work of the Negroes begins with the day,” more precisely at six o’clock in the morning. The awakening that called them to their daily work was also not the most soothing. The crackling of whips, the muffled cries, and the dull whimpering of the Negroes who saw the light of day only to curse it because they remembered their existence only by painful sensations were what replaced the cock’s singing at the morning.

In the account of the journey that led him from Bordeaux to Santo Domingo, from 1782 to 1785, Girod-Chantrons reported the spectacle of a hundred slaves he saw working in the plantation, trying with all their might to make a land a fertile space.

There were about a hundred men or women of different ages, all digging pits in a piece of cane, and most bare or ragged. The sun danced plumb to their heads, sweat ran down all the parts of their bodies, their limbs appeased by the heat, tired of the weight of their picks and by the resistance of a greasy earth, hardened to the point of making break the tools, however, made the greatest efforts to overcome all obstacles. A gloomy silence reigned among them; the pain was painted on every physiognomy, but the hour of repose had not come. The ruthless eye of the manager was watching the workshop, and several commanders armed with long whips, scattered among

the workers, beat roughly from time to time even those who, by weariness, seemed forced to slow down, Negroes or Negresses, young or old, all indistinctly.

Still, after plowing the earth, it was now necessary to go planting. Here is the story of a witness, the French Benjamin Frossard:

When the field destined for it is well prepared, lines are made three and a half feet apart. When this operation is finished, the Negroes are placed opposite each line, after having marked on the hoe the distance of the ditches they are to dig. Each ditch is fifteen or twenty inches long, four or five inches wide, and seven to eight inches deep. As they advance, young Negroes walk after them to adjust the two stalks together, leaving the tips of the head off the ground. Then they fill the pit of the earth that the first ones had fired. Sugar cane is usually planted in the rainy season.

In the case of indigo, much more attention and effort was required, for this plant requires good, moist, smooth, and not too dry soil; it would occupy a lot of ground where it grew and wanted to be alone. For this, we weeded and cleaned up to five times the land where we wanted to plant the seed of indigo. Sometimes we pushed the cleanliness so far that we swept the ground as we swept a room. After preparing the land in such a careful way, unlike sugarcane, seeds were used, not young plants, to grow indigo. The slaves who dug the pits were the same ones who planted the seeds. Also, planting indigo is the most painful because it was necessary that those who planted were always bent, without straightening up, until the whole length of the land was completed. Often, slaves were forced to stay for two hours or longer in this posture.

Here is a description of the work done in the field: We dug holes or pits where we must put the seeds. For this purpose, slaves or others who must work there lined up at the head of the field; and walking backward, they would make small pits the width of their hoe, two to three inches deep, about one foot apart from one another, and in a straight line as much as possible. When they had arrived at the end of the field, each one was provided with a small bag of seeds; and going back on their steps, they put eleven or thirteen seeds in the pits that they had just made.

The cultivation of coffee was not exempt from a lot of toil. After the plants had pulled out their heads, it was also necessary to proceed with weeding or even cleaning. It was a matter of ridding the coffee of weeds without removing “any of these roots that crawl on the earth and intertwine in all directions and serve to strengthen it.” Also, as the plant grew, it produced branches that, over time, can hinder its growth. It was necessary, in this case, to proceed to the size, which was a delicate work. On the Cormier dwelling, the master assigned six slaves to this task. Finally came the stage of fertilization, which consisted in spreading manure on the plantation to make it fertile and thus more profitable.

Haitian people, this was the difficult regime applied to field workers in Santo Domingo. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, was part of this group called slaves of the fields before becoming a skilled slave. Orphaned, my aunt Victoria Montou was the closest member of my family. She taught me how to fight in a hand-to-hand combat and how to throw a knife. Nicknamed affectionately Gran Toya, she guided me and advised me in my youth. From her, I learned the military profession according to the Guinean tradition. I used this knowledge to free my brothers from slavery—a sacrifice that I ask you, O people, never to erase from your memory.

FROM YOUR MEMORY

A people without memory is a people without a future.

—Todd Strasser

Haitian people, do you have an idea of the suffering endured by your ancestors who have left you this piece of land? The suffering of the Negro in the cotton, coffee, indigo, and sugarcane plantations?

Here is the story of a day's work in a cotton plantation. Each slave receives a bag with a strap that goes around his neck so that the opening reaches his chest while the bottom touches almost to the ground. The slave also receives a large basket with a capacity of about two barrels, where he puts the cotton when the bag is full. The baskets are carried in the fields and placed at the beginning of each row.

The day begins at sunrise at around six and ends at dusk at six. The work routine is so exhausting and difficult to maintain that some are, after punishment upon punishment, assigned to other tasks. With the exception of ten or fifteen minutes at noon to swallow the ration of cold soup, the slave has no right to stop for a moment until it is too dark to see. During the full moon, it is not unusual to work until the middle of the night, until the supervisor gives the order to stop work.

An ordinary day of work can harvest two hundred pounds of cotton. Punishment is severe if a slave assigned to picking does not reach that weight. The first time an inexperienced new slave is sent into the fields, he is flogged tirelessly and hurried to work as quickly as possible. When the day is over, the baskets are totaled and transported to the gin for weighing. Even the most weary and exhausted slave never advances to the gin with his basket of cotton without being overcome by fear. If he has not gathered the required weight and has not completed the task assigned to him, he

knows he will suffer. And if he has exceeded the weight of ten or twenty pounds, his master will probably readjust the next day's task accordingly.

Whether he has harvested too much or too little cotton, he always approaches the gin in fear and trembling. In most cases, there is insufficient picking, and slaves do not want to leave the fields. Upon weighing, the lashes follow. The baskets are then transported to the cotton shed and stored as hay. All workers must trample on the cotton to tamp it down. If it is not dry, instead of immediately taking it to the gin, it is spread on racks two feet high and six feet wide, covered with planks, and separated by narrow alleys.

The working day is still far from over. Upon arrival in the house, after the transport of the baskets to the cotton shed, the slave must do routine tasks—feed mules and pigs, cut wood, and prepare the meager ration of food for the next day. This work is always done by candlelight. At midnight, the slave returns to his bed, a sack of straw spread on the floor. Lying in this position, dejected and exhausted, he is already thinking about the day tomorrow.

Haitian people, this was the natural environment in which I was born. To make the Negro work like a beast of burden, it was the essence of the colonial and slave system, built from the barbarism of the masters and the metropolitan authorities, to reach the maximum abundance of economic production in favor of the metropolis. Described as the fate reserved for the slave in the colony, these were some of the techniques that made Santo Domingo the Pearl of the West Indies because no part of the world, considering its surface, concealed as much wealth as this island, whose prosperity rested on the dehumanization and the abuses imposed on the slave coming from Africa and forcibly transported in the colony: removal of teeth, ears, arms, and legs; branding; slapping; spitting in the face; insults; burial while alive; standing with the head covered with syrup and exposed to ants; hanging; drowning; shooting; rape; etc.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, say to you, O people, to avoid the same fate for future generations. There is no other way to follow that but by national reconciliation to develop Haiti.

CHAPTER IX

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

A pact of reconciliation between all the sons of Haiti—that's my other message to the nation. To walk in the footsteps of the ancestors is the way of deliverance for Haiti, which goes from crisis to crisis.

Haitian people, I and Pétion did not have the same interests. Born in Grande-Rivière-du-Nord, I was a slave of the fields who knew all the miseries in the plantation. I lived as a youth deeply marked by the physical and moral constraints of servitude. I was a rebel slave, a chestnut. I refused to follow the orders of the master and the commander. Often punished, I was whipped to death. My body was covered with scars left by iron rods.

Pétion was a mulatto born of a very rich French father and a mulatto girl. During the southern war between Lt. Gen. Toussaint-Louverture and Gen. André Rigaud, we were face-to-face, fighting in two different camps. When I encircled Jacmel in 1800, Pétion was the commander defending the city. An officer trained in Paris and exiled with Rigaud after their

defeat in the south, he returned to Santo Domingo in 1802 among the men of the French expedition to restore slavery.

However, even from different social classes and having different military careers, we found an agreement at the Congress of Arcahaie—a common front between blacks and mulattoes to fight the French. With the pact signed, surrounded by the leaders of the revolution, I tore off the central white part of the French tricolor, and I brought together the red and the blue. This action symbolized the union between blacks and mulattoes. Catherine Flon then sewed the first Haitian bicolor.

All the officers rallied to this new flag, except those of Lamour Desrances, who opted for the black and red flag. I chased the partisans of Desrances who refused to recognize my command, and I sent after him Gen. Nicolas Geffrard, who arrested him and annihilated his party.

Haitian people, as in 1803, you can remake history. As at the Congress of Arcahaie, all leaders of the country can sit around a table for a national conference. The time is for peace and not for violence. It is time to reconcile you, O people, to develop Haiti. Divided since the day after independence, you have never taken the time to build a nation in the image of the ideals of your ancestors. These last ones who, at the cost of enormous sacrifices and their blood shed at Vertières, have left you this corner of the earth. You have to go on this example to cultivate a head politics together.

Some accused me by saying that I was persecuting Freemasonry. They said that I did not want to understand what was sublime in this institution whose purpose was to make men better by establishing among them the closest fraternity. This accusation turned out to be false because it had no foundation. After I entered Port-au-Prince in 1803 as the head of the native army, having learned that there was a lodge where Freemasons were meeting, I immediately ordered Battalion Commander Bedouet to go break their assembly. I made that decision not because I was persecuting Freemasonry but because I was convinced that the participants were opponents who were plotting against the revolution.

Haitian people, by murdering me and abandoning my body at Pont-Rouge, you betrayed the aspirations of social justice on which was cemented the Congress of Arcahaie. Taken in the gears of a fratricidal struggle for the conquest of power, the thorny question of social justice had always fragmented the Haitian society into factions: nationalist/liberal, Duvalierist/Francoist, Lavalas/Convergence, Tèt Kale/Pitit Dessalines. As a result, the nation had never agreed on a plan to build Haiti.

“Unity is strength” is your motto. O people, your way of acting as a people, a member of the same nation, goes against this principle. Success has always been a matter of clan, group, family, and individual instead of being a collective vision. “A country, a people, a nation,” it is said in “La Dessalinienne.” However, after more than two hundred years of independence, you have always missed the opportunity to realize this dream: to build the Haitian nation that I have founded but that, nevertheless, I have not had time to weld. Protestations, civil wars—you have always been caught in the same trap: tearing each other apart to facilitate the occupation of the territory by imperialist powers.

On January 1, 2004, it was the celebration of Haiti’s two hundred years of independence. All the ancestors in the afterlife rejoiced at the event. Boukman, Toussaint, Christophe, Capois, Pétion, Gabart, Guérin, Daut, Lamartinière, Marie-Jeanne, Péralte—all were present in the Hall of Initiates to commemorate with great pomp the bicentennial. We even had a conference around the epic of Vertières. We discussed the mistakes made after independence, and at the same time, we were watching on a big screen preparations for the party on the land of Haiti.

Disappointment was evident on the faces of the ancestors. One by one, I saw the audience leave the room. I saw for the first time my men crying. Capois-La-Mort, who was nicknamed the Brave, tore up the book *The Secret of the Initiates*, which he commented with Gandhi. Henri Christophe, the master builder who set fire to the Cape to prevent Leclerc’s troops from entering the city, threw the cane he was holding in his hand. The staff hit the ground and turned into a giant snake under the admiring gaze of Moses, the savior of the people of Israel in captivity for more than four hundred years in Egypt. Marie-Jeanne—the wife of Lamartinière, the one who took the lead of the native soldiers to make a way out among the men of Leclerc and allowed the native troops to leave Crête-à-Pierrot—tore her clothes under the stunned look of Mary Magdalene, the woman who washed Jesus’s feet with her hair and pure perfume. Catherine Flon tore into pieces the two-colored Haitian flag, next to the emblems of other nations. Hardly supported by Mother Teresa and Rosa Parks, she left the scene. I saw these heroic men and women crying like children in the Hall of Initiates.

Even the great Toussaint-Louverture had red eyes. He described the armed struggle between Aristide’s people and the Group of 184, led by Aped, as the most disgusting action in the history of the nation. The

lieutenant general told me that he has suffered much more in these difficult days by looking at the situation in Haiti than when he was interned at Fort de Joux. Standing in a corner in the Hall of Initiates, Socrates—guest of honor of the assembly—discussed the story with Diogenes. The presence of the Greek philosopher refreshed my memory of the history of the lamp, a good example that illustrated what was happening in Haiti today.

Haitian people, instead of following in the footsteps of your ancestors gathered in fraternity to celebrate the bicentennial, instead of resurrecting in your memory the pride of being the first independent black republic of the world, you have made yourself like an idiot by antinationalist leaders who had the war axes unearthed to the nation to deliver a show of violence that made the hidden enemy laugh at Versailles.

Since independence, the country has searched in vain for the path of stability. Trapped, we do not know by what evil force has kept Haiti mired in underdevelopment. O people, time is for reconciliation. Building together today's Haiti for the generations of tomorrow is the challenge facing you in these difficult and overwhelming days.

To win this fight, O people, you have to go back to your roots, that is, to connect with Africa.

CHAPTER X

RETURNING TO YOUR ROOTS

Since independence on January 1, 1804, Haiti has experienced more than forty coups and thirty years of dictatorships with the Duvaliers. Thousands of Haitians are starving every day. Authorities are avidly plundering the state coffers. The people are threatened daily with theft, looting, and kidnappings. It is a reign of inequality, social injustice, impunity, discrimination, domination, and exploitation.

In 2018, it is already more than 214 years since I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, have declared the independence of the nation. O people, even for the most basic needs, you cannot yet bring solutions. You are like a sailboat shaken by the waves and being carried away to a certain catastrophe. The majority of the population is not immune to the weather. You are exposed to insecurity, to natural disasters; you see no need to talk about health, education, employment, and housing shortages.

Haitian people, no need to trace history; it is known to all that you are the first independent black people in the world, the only anticolonialist,

antiregationist, and antislavery revolution of humanity. Yet you are the last in relation to the index of human development on the American continent. Because of discrimination, prejudice, exploitation, favoritism, young Haitians—even graduates—are in transit, waiting for the first opportunity to immigrate abroad. The population is no longer attached to the country and has less and less confidence in its ability to overcome the crisis.

O people, you have become the laughing stock of the world with your misery exposed on the front pages of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Miami Herald*, and *Le Parisien*; and the photos of your ugliness spread on the biggest news channels of the world: CNN, Fox News, BBC, NBC, TV5MONDE, etc. Occupied in 1915 by the Americans and since 2004 by a UN military force, you have not even managed to guarantee the sovereignty I have given you in Vertières. Your economy, based on imports, is dominated by foreign companies. Haitians in the countryside and the urban masses live in the doldrums and are now in a chaotic situation. Alone and left behind after natural disasters and environmental problems, you no longer have your Creole pig, slaughtered in a brutal revenge by decision makers of your destiny. Rice production in Artibonite is reduced to its last limit, unable to compete with rice producers from Arkansas and various parts of the United States.

However, Haiti has inexhaustible riches: its culture, its art, and its ancestral traditions. To benefit from this heritage, Haitian people, you must return to your roots.

The Haitian culture is rich in Indian, African, and Western traditions. Haitian craftsmanship is known for its creativity and colors. Its wood carvings and ironworks are the most beautiful in the Caribbean. After Brazil, the Haitian carnival is the richest cultural event in America. It is a whole ritual of subversion useful to the viability of the society, a representation of the memory or the identity of the people, the desire to satisfy the aesthetic taste. Rara is yet another Haitian tradition throughout the Americas. Proverbs, sources of pleasure and instruction, form an important part of oral culture. It is the memory of the Haitian daily life of the present and the past. In Haitian traditions, storytelling and stories of African origin play a fundamental role. In addition, traditional Haitian music and dance is the strongest expression of national identity. Traditional dances encourage collective work. They allow the Haitian to accept his roots, to be reconciled with himself.

Haitian people, why not go back to your roots to build the country? Why do you refuse to integrate ancestral culture into schools to immerse its roots like a majestic tree “in your soul as a resilient people”? O people, we must return to ancestral beliefs to see where the bond of trust has been broken among the group. You have to defeat the strategy of the occupier, who since the colonization has imposed a gospel of resignation and submission to eliminate the strength of voodoo in the Haitian culture as a cultural matrix.

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VOODOO: A CULTURAL MATRIX

Haitian people, contempt for the culture on which the Haitian nation is founded is a major handicap to the development of Haiti. One despises voodoo without realizing that it is the religion practiced by the majority of Haitians. Some people openly practice it below the peristyles, and others do it secretly, away from another's eyes. Many great Haitian painters have openly claimed that this culture, once oppressed, has become a source of inspiration. Among them are André Pierre, Hector Hyppolite, Robert St. Brice, Mario Benjamin, Edouard Duval-Carrié, LaFortune Felix, Stevenson Magloire, and the sculptors Liautaud, Jolimeau, Beloved, Rocklor, and Nasson.

The ceremony of the Bois Caïman, regarded as the founding act of the revolution and the war of independence and also the first big collective uprising of the blacks against slavery, was a voodoo ceremony? Dutty Boukman, the priest who assembled the slaves on Lenormand de Mézy's home for the Bois Caïman ceremony, was a *houngan*? Cécile Fatiman, the lady who plunged the knife into a black Creole sacrificed in the circumstances, was a mambo priestess. The wife of Louis Michel Pierrot, who commanded a military battalion in Vertières and who later became president of Haiti, Fatiman had been sold with her mother to Santo Domingo and lived in Cap-Haïtien until the age of 112, in full possession of her faculties.

Roots music is one of the most popular rhythms in Haiti. It derives from voodoo. This music has given the country honor in every corner of the world.

In 2011, the compilation *Brassens, Echoes of the World*, produced to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the death of the famous author-composer Georges Brassens, was a great success. After this, project developer Émile Omar decided to continue this experiment with new versions created and recorded, especially for the second volume, *Brassens*,

Echoes of Today. Along with fifteen other artists from Mongolia, Colombia, and England, Racine Mapou de Azor has been chosen to interpret “Le testament” of Brassens. Sixteen artists have interpreted the timeless and borderless work of Georges Brassens in unpublished versions and in their native language.

Richard Morse’s group RAM remains a very productive and prominent roots group. In an article in the newspaper *Le Nouvelliste* published on May 2, 2007, the singer testifies to having contributed to a revolution in voodoo and morals. Representing the expression of the local culture on large international plateaus, enriching it by mixing it with world trends, creating albums and videos out of the ordinary, RAM has favored the appreciation of very beautiful Haitian songs and cultural traditions sometimes unknown or neglected.

The group Boukman Eksperyans is another example of the power of voodoo in Haitian music. The band Lòlò and Manzè does miracles wherever they move around the world. In 1989, the group has made its first international debut at the Louisiana festival in the state of New Orleans in the United States; and in 1990, Boukman Eksperyans has embarked on its second major international tour in Europe, United States, and Canada.

Boukman Eksperyans is one of the most respected Haitian musical groups on the international scene. The group, in concert on June 4, 2015, at Les FrancoFolies de Montréal, has offered one of the great performances of Haitian engaged music. Through songs of revolt, denunciation, and awareness, the group denounced imperialism, oppression, and especially corruption that gangrene Haiti.

We can still put on the list several other Haitian roots groups who draw their repertoire in voodoo, for example, Racine Ginen, Chandel, Tokay, Rev, Racine Kanga, Koudjay, etc. “Bade Zile,” “Kouzen,” and “Banda” are standards of traditional Haitian music, arranged by Jacques Schwarz-Bart, the virtuoso Guadeloupian saxophonist, in his latest album. Simbi, a Swedish jazz band, plays exclusively Haitian roots music derived from voodoo.

How many in the country know the answer to this question: where does Haitian voodoo come from? I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, answer that voodoo is a religion of West Africa practiced in Haiti. From the fifteenth century, the African populations of the Côte de l’Or and present-day Benin, who practiced voodoo, were victims of the slave trade. The main components of voodoo originated in Benin and Nigeria, and this

religious practice spread to several parts of the Caribbean, particularly in Haiti, because of the trafficking that transported hundreds of thousands of black people from Africa to Santo Domingo.

Indeed, voodoo goes beyond the grids of analysis of a religion. It is a manifestation of African civilization with its thought pattern that has given birth to the great kingdoms of Dahomey, Uganda, Burundi, Angola, Kenya, Congo, Ghana, Mali, Rwanda, Toro, and many others. In Haiti, voodoo worship is a miniature reproduction of the complexity and emancipation of this civilization by its sciences, its philosophy, its art, its social organization, its spirituality, its perception of the universe that is conveyed to through the *vèvè*, the prayers, the adorations, the symbols, the peristyles, the sacred chambers, the spirits or *lwas*, etc.

Despite all the prejudices and persecutions of which the adepts have been the object, voodoo worship still retains an important place in the hearts and lives of Haitians. It is an integral part of the Haitian culture, even if it sometimes suffers from a bad image related to witchcraft. The detractors argue that voodoo ceremonies are used for evil practices intended to send bad spells or even to kill some people. This is a bad knowledge of the religion. Practitioners of voodoo invoke God the Creator before any ceremony, and then they use dance and trance to be possessed by the forces of the spirit.

Every time we talk about voodoo, the issue of witchcraft comes up. There is nothing to deny. Witchcraft exists in voodoo. Whoever wants to hurt someone or get help from evil forces will see a voodoo priest or a mambo who stands out from the Guinean rhythm. However, one must not confuse wizard and voodoo. The first has one ultimate goal, to hurt the other; the second uses the *lwas* as a protector. Voodoo is, like all religions, an adoration cult where the believer addresses the Supreme Being by asking for forgiveness, a favor, or a blessing.

The difference between voodoo and witchcraft is enormous. Sorcery comes from Africa and has been practiced on the continent for a long time. It encompasses all forms of magic and occult practices. This is the traditional magic in many African countries where wizards call on spirits who influence people and events. The wizard has only one goal—destroy and kill, do the most harm. In voodoo, however, the will is directed toward good.

There is no doubt also that the phenomenon of zombification exists in Haiti. We want to link this phenomenon to the practice of voodoo.

Voodooers know how to zombify someone and how to get the zombie back, according to the detractors who link voodoo to the practice of Sanpwèl and Bizango. To understand the two phenomena, one realizes that zombification and Bizango are much more related to witchcraft than to voodoo, which is a religion.

Voodoo, as a religion, fulfills an important social function in Haiti. It allows a certain entertainment of the population but also an escape from a sordid daily reality, thanks to its songs and its dances. Voodoo ceremonies strengthen the solidarity of its members and are an element of cohesion in the expanded structure of the peasantry. Contrary to popular belief that voodoo is worship of the devil, studies have provided rather positive details about this culture. It is very instructive in this respect to read the testimony of Fridolin Saint-Louis, who presents this cult as a total phenomenon, an effective cohesive force used by the peasant and the Haitian proletarians.

Just as the Bible and other sacred books like the Torah or the Koran present cases or situations where the believers of these religions invoke daily the founders, the prophets, and the gods who inspired these holy scriptures, voodoo has spirits called *lwas*. However, we accept the prophets in other religions; but in the case of voodoo, the whites make us believe that it is superstition and black magic. Detractors propagate the dangers associated with the idea of invoking the *lwas* until Souvenans and Soukri, which are mystical places associated with the Haitian culture, are rather taken as diabolical places.

Haitian people, like the saints in the Catholic Church are intermediaries between the believer and God or Jehovah, so do the *lwas* serve as intermediaries for voodoo in his contact with the Good Dye, the god of the weak and the persecuted and the creator of the earth and the universe, whom Boukman called during the ceremony of Bois Caïman. Thus, like many religions, there is a voodoo calendar with important dates where each month is devoted to a spirit or a cycle and is celebrated by a feast or a procession. Everything is celebrated in the name of the Higher Spirit whom Christians call God or Jehovah, the Muslims call Allah, and the voodooers call Good Dye.

- January: dedicated to Rada spirits. Practitioners are dressed in white.
- February: cycle of Congo spirits from Africa.

- March: period of Voodoo processions. We enter the era of *rara*. The *hounfors* go down the street and celebrate the life always reborn.
- April: Ibo spirits cycle. There are ceremonies during which the jugs of the *hounfor* are broken and reduced into a fine powder, which will be used for the manufacture of certain *vèvès*.
- May: May 1 is the feast of buds. Believers celebrate nature.
- June: Ogou cycle. The night of the summer solstice is devoted to St. John. A ram is sacrificed there.
- July: The Ogou cycle continues for another month in the voodoo calendar. A bull is often sacrificed.
- August: Celebration of O Dan, *lwa* particularly important in voodoo, also called Damballah.
- September: release of *assotor* drums, symbolic destruction and reconstruction of the temple, *hounfor*
- October: We celebrate Aïzan, *lwa* initiator and protector of *hounfors*.
- November: The month of Guédé. Believers wear black, purple, or mauve scarves for ceremonies in honor of the dead, especially on November 1 and 2.
- December: This is the month devoted to loquat spirits of the Petro rite. The believers are dressed in red. This is the month when we practice *pakèt-congo*. The night of December 24 to 25 is the night of the Great Ceremony, during which are given to the faithful the famous “baths of luck.”

Among the Hindus of India and the Chinese Buddhists, all the gods receive adorations from those people who find it normal to invoke their prophets. Why is it a curse when the Haitian invokes the *lwas* like Papa Legba, Erzulie Dantor, Erzulie Freda, Ogou Feray, Ogou Balendjo, Damballah, Azaka Médé, Simbi Andezo, Loko Atissou, Ogou Shango, Guede Nibo, Marassa, Agwet Aroyo, Kafu, Ti Jean Petwo, Lenglensou, Bad Aizan, or Saint Jacques la Majeur?

Was not Boukman a Muslim who converted to voodoo like the majority of ancestors from Africa? Would it have been a coincidence if the priestess who accompanied Boukman during the ceremony was a mambo named Cécile Fatiman? Fatima is the name of one of the daughters of the

prophet of Islam, and every good Muslim had to give that first name to his first daughter.

On the other hand, during this ceremony on August 14, 1791, where there is a question of sacrifice, corresponds to 14 Dhou Al-Hijjah 1205 in the Hegira era, lunar calendar of the Muslims, date of the last day of the feast of the sacrifice Eid al-Adha or Aid-el-Kebir, a feast celebrated in memory of God's sacrifice to Abraham.

Voodoo, like all other religions, has millions and millions of followers in the United States, particularly in Louisiana, New Orleans, and Florida. This cult is also practiced in Brazil, particularly in the state of Bahia; Cuba; the Dominican Republic; Jamaica; Trinidad; and the French West Indies. The Brazilian religions of candomblé, Xangô, Umbanda, and batuque and the Cuban religions of Lucumí and Palo Mayombe all share a number of elements in common with Haitian voodoo.

Many elements of the Haitian culture come from voodoo—drum, rhythm, music, dance, and art, for example. I ask that Haitians take back the most African aspects of their culture to affirm the legitimacy and dignity of their origins. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, am associated with Ogou Feray, the god of war, because I am a warrior, and have I dropped all the barriers erected by the French on my way to prevent me to attack them on the battlefields. Therefore, O people, to find the way to liberation, I recommend that you return to your roots. This is the approach to build Haiti.

THIRD PART

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THE RENAISSANCE

Like the phoenix, an immortal bird of fire reborn from the ashes, I dream of the rebirth of Haiti. Haitian people, to close my message, I dictate my advice in the third part of the book. It's a plan on how to build Haiti. Listen to your emperor's words. It's a hymn of rebirth at the ten departments of the country.

Nord-Est: Our Hope

Nord-Ouest: Our Obligation

Nord: National

Ouest: Work

Sud-Est: Serving Fairly

Artibonite: Love

Centre: Courage

Grand'Anse: Nobility

Sud: Survive

Nippes: Noble

Our hope, our national obligation, is to work and serve fairly with love, courage, and nobility to survive nobly.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, compose these words that constitute my message to the ten departments of the country. This hymn must be taught in all nursery, primary, and secondary schools. As a catechism lesson, it must be memorized by every Haitian. And it is so, O people, that you will learn to unite as a nation to realize that Haiti can come out of this quagmire. As "unity is strength," the country can make its way toward development. Cultivate division, and you will be drowned forever in misery like an iceberg in the ocean. In both cases, it is a collective experience. Touch together the light of development as a great people, or perish together like idiots.

This hymn you will recite with one voice so that freedom does not perish and for you to nourish the roots of future generations, who will have the difficult task of building Haiti.

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CHAPTER XI

BUILDING HAITI

Haitian people, you want to build Haiti. Do not be fooled. I have given you independence from a vision. It is based on this vision that you can build your country. You must have a dream. This dream is about giving you a goal and struggling to achieve it. It is not a question of wishing and waiting passively. We must act! For that, you have to work on your mentality, to reeducate yourself because we do not build a country with an arrogant antinationalist economic elite that is closed to competition—a filthy economic elite making his fortune in contraband and nonpayment of taxes. We do not build a country with a middle class without conviction, ready to sell his conscience to help the elite maintain the status quo. We do not build a country with an illiterate people, unable to influence their future.

I gained independence with an illiterate indigenous army because the colonist refused to allow my soldiers, who were mostly former slaves, to attend school. However, I appealed to Pétion, who acquired knowledge in

France, to become the commander of the artillery. To have his confidence, I offered him the hand of my daughter Célimène. Of course, he refused the marriage. However, I was always grateful to him for being one of the founding fathers of independence. Believing in the power of education and in the formation of the ministerial cabinet, after independence, I appealed to competent and educated citizens to occupy important positions in the new state.

Haitian people, if you want to build Haiti, you must start by making a balance sheet. Where are the factories of yesteryear: the milling industry, Cement Haiti, HASCO, the sawmill of Haiti, the sugar factory Darbonne, the Board of Tobacco and Matches, Les Allumettes Haitiennes LAHSA Gonaïves, the factory St. Andrew in Saint-Marc, SHADA, etc.? Where are the *guildives* with the strong smell of molasses and sugarcane juice? There have been thousands under my empire. Where are the rice mills, corn, and cassava that swarmed in the plains and the Haitian countryside? Where are the cooperative agricultural stores and community pharmacies? Where are the McDonald railroad tracks that crossed the country from the department of the Ouest to the department of Artibonite? Where are the movie theaters and theaters in the country? Have you visited the National Pantheon in Champ de Mars and checked how many valuable items are in the museum catalog?

Look in your archives and count the historical documents that you have preserved for posterity. Look at GNP statistics, the deterioration of the environment, the population growth, the trade and budget deficit, and the per capita income of the nation, and compare the figures to neighboring Caribbean countries, and then you will have an idea of the state of the country to build.

There is no glory working in outsourcing. By doing this, O people, you do not participate in the creation of a middle class. How can you develop the country just by sewing clothes for American firms? How can you develop local agriculture when you import fifteen thousand tons of rice each year to the United States and you neglect the production of rice fields in Artibonite? The only way out for Haiti is the real economy. You have to refuse international assistance because aid money is a means used by the imperialist powers to keep you under control.

An alternative development plan is what you need to start the battle for change. Use your annual national budget of 204 billion gourdes (\$3 billion from government revenue and \$1 billion in assistance). Since there

are many areas where intervention is needed, you ask yourself, which of the necessary investments should be considered as priorities over others? Should you focus on building infrastructure and agricultural productivity? Or should you pay more attention to education? Many possible answers can be considered. In fact, everything is a priority in the country. However, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, say that education should be the priority if we seek to establish a solid foundation on which Haiti should be built. In the absence of a major national campaign to teach and educate the masses, the project of developing the country will always be a challenge.

Education, education, education—it is the priority of the moment, O people, if you want to build Haiti. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, do not know how to read or write, but I have always known from my experience that education is the pillar of the development of a nation. The construction of Haiti has a price. Are you ready, O people, to pay this price with the benefit of leaving for the next generation a society of social justice and equality for all? A democratic country where the rights of the human being are respected: the right to life, health, food, work, housing, education, security, freedom of expression, and common good? A country where every Haitian can feel proud of his identity?

Since the late 1960s, Haiti has embarked on the assembly that represents until now the most popular sector of activity. The textile sector alone accounts for almost 90 percent of total merchandise exports. This sector employs between twenty thousand and twenty-five workers on the minimum wage, or 225 gourdes/day, which is the equivalent of \$5. Victims of social repression, these workers make clothes for Gap, Walmart, and Levi's.

Haitian people, why get involved in this activity without ever making the slightest attempt to get out of it? An economy that relies heavily on reexport assembly has very limited expansion in terms of opportunities available for increasing the national growth potential. Certainly, many countries in North Africa, Asia Pacific, and America have taken this route at some point but only as a springboard to move on to other more advanced and interesting stages of processing. You must follow the example of these countries.

Private actors seem to take pleasure in the assembly and show no desire to migrate to relatively more elaborate production lines (coproduction, manufacture of finished products, etc.) that are able to enhance the creativity and cultural and technical wealth of the country. O people, we

must act and reflect on the means to be implemented for the emergence of a Haitian model differentiated by art and craft capable of competing with other countries in the region. It also involves a literature review to identify, in the US Hope/Help initiatives, Canadian and EU preferences, categories of high-value-added items that need to be identified considered in the context of diversification and genuine integration into trade flows.

Indeed, in addition to the advantage of the natural access to markets that it enjoys as a founding member of the WTO, Haiti has the benefit of special and differential treatment linked to its membership in the group of least developed countries (LDCs). It also has access to duty and quota exemptions both in the European Union market and in the United States. We must consider, O people, all these undeniable advantages to build the country.

The construction of Haiti requires the awakening of national consciousness. This construction will begin the day every citizen will accept to make sacrifices and to respect his rights and his duties—in short, to be a patriot who loves his country and agrees to do everything for its enhancement. It is this ideal that has led me to wage the war of independence to defeat Napoleon's ambition to occupy America.

General Christophe shared my vision of a strong and firm nation before the enemy. He preferred to burn Cap-Haïtien rather than leave the city to Leclerc. Christophe had property in the city. He was a general, and he commanded the native army in the North. However, at the time, he sacrificed his personal interests for collective salvation to build Haiti. For your memory, O people, here are a few sentences stating the story of the facts:

Bonaparte sent a formidable army, composed of the bands of Italy and the remains of the army of Egypt, on November 18, 1801. This fleet arrived a few months before the French legislature decreed that slavery in the colonies be restored by the Treaty of Amiens on May 20, 1802.

The expeditionary army landed on the coasts of the old colony on January 29, 1802. On February 4, they immediately appeared before the port of Cap-Français, where Christophe commanded. Summoned to hand over the key of the city, Christophe refused to give up the forts and the place entrusted to his command. In spite of the resistance of the inhabitants and the militia, Leclerc disembarked and occupied Cap-Haïtien. Then Christophe gave the order to burn down the city as well as all the public buildings. His house at the corner of Dauphine and Hazard

Streets in Cap-Haïtien—richly furnished with paintings of masters, heavy silks, and valuable carpets—would be delivered to the flames of his own hand shortly before the disembarkation of the French forces. Immediately after independence, Cap-Haïtien was rebuilt, and King Henry would build in 1810 the Citadelle Laferrière, which remained a marvel in the eyes of the world.

This citadel is the largest fortress on the entire American continent. Located at the summit of Bonnet à l'Évêque at an altitude of 969 meters, it covers an area of 8,000 m². Its wall is from 5 to 7 meters thick, and its longitudinal walls reach 940 meters. The citadel has been built with large cisterns to conserve water and storehouses to store enough food for a year for a garrison of five thousand soldiers.

The map of the citadel was not designed by a Frenchman. It was developed in 1805 by Henri Barré, a native of Haiti who began the first work. A Scottish architect named Laferrière was to finalize the construction. In addition to engineers and technicians, more than twenty-two thousand workers of all ages had contributed to its erection.

Henri 1^{er}, inspired by my vision, declared that he wanted to build a civilization in the Caribbean that would have nothing to envy to the old civilizations of Europe. For this, he built churches; nine palaces, including the Palace of 365 Doors and the Palace of Sans-Souci; fifteen castles; and the Citadelle Laferrière. The northern kingdom was the richest region in the Caribbean.

Throughout his administration, in addition to reorganizing the finances and the army, Christophe promulgated the most useful reforms. He built monuments, palaces, and theaters. At Sans-Souci, he built schools, factories, fountains, and canals. He established a foundry that manufactured cannons, guns, projectiles, and weapons of war. The king paid particular attention to the protection of water and forests, the irrigation of the lands, the drying up of marshes, the construction of bridges and roads, and the maintenance of public roads. It restored the road network inherited from the colonial period. He built the buildings, embellished the cities, and restored the service of the colonial posts. He armed and supplied a small military fleet.

The northern kingdom exported twenty-five million tons of coffee. Trade was with the United States, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Holland, and the Spanish colonies. Baron de Vastey, one of Christophe's most faithful political auxiliaries, reported that during the year 1817, no

less than 150 foreign merchant ships entered the harbor of Cap-Haïtien. From April 1 to June 6, 1815, still in the only port of Cap-Haïtien, Madiou said, "Twenty-six ships had been shipped exporting ten million tons of sugar and as much coffee and cotton, and June 6, there had seven loading or leaving. From the months of July, August, and September, there were fifty berthed in the same port, and in two months three million tons of sugar, coffee, and cotton had been exported from the other ports."

To manage the state of the North, we find alongside Christophe the most prestigious generals of the war of independence like Paul Romain, Toussaint Brave, Jean-Philippe Daut, Étienne Magny, Martial Besse, Jean-Louis Larose, Cangé, Vernet, Philippe Guerrier, Jean-Louis Pierrot, Pierre Toussaint, and Jean Fleury; officers and officials like Prézeau, Bastien, Leveillé, Ménard, Tassy, Thomas Béliard, Étienne Béliard, Valentin Vastey, Alexis Dupuy, Juste Chanlatte, Julien Prévost, Nord Alexis (the father of President Alexis), Charles Imbert, J. Henry Latortue, Joachim Noel, Joachim Deschamps, and Louis Achille; and Catholic priests like Antoine Reyes and Corneille Brelle.

Haitian people, we are still talking about changing the government in the country as if it is a solution to build Haiti. The idea is always the same: we want another president or another prime minister; this is the refrain we hear in street protests in Port-au-Prince. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, say that Haiti does not have a problem about having a president or prime minister. The country's problem is a system problem. The same cause always produces the same effect. How can one expect a different result if the cause is always the same? I would be murdered in the same way on October 17, 1806, if today I returned to live in Haiti. Homesickness is the absence of a national conscience, the absence of vision of an elite retaining a retrograde and corrupt mentality for more than two centuries.

The bourgeois Haitian elite are distinguished from other citizens of the nation by neither behavior nor habits. They wade in the same environment of filth and misery, and in the evening, the elite—a minority with fair skin—seek refuge in the heights of Pétion-Ville. It is neither in the creation of factories nor in other investments of a national character that the wealth of this elite is born; they are not nationalists, like so many other elites in neighboring Caribbean countries. They are a champion of smuggling and collect their fortune through all illegal activities—drugs, kidnapping, arms sales, tax evasion, etc. They live in Haiti, but they are not part of the

society. They are like strangers domiciled. They do not participate in any development project and think of Haiti as a foreigner.

All the riches of the country belong to them, and the money derived from it is deposited in a foreign land. They get married like everyone else, but they accept marriage between members of the same family. They share the same carnival atmosphere with the people but not the same table. They spend the week in Port-au-Prince but not on weekends. They choose the coast of Arcadins, the Dominican Republic, or Florida as privileged destinations from time to time to breathe a different air from the nauseating odor of the capital. At the same time, they finance all the politicians in the country to be always ready for power.

They are materially rich, but they are poor in spirit because they are unable to see despite their fate being linked with that of the people who live in shantytowns. The American, Canadian, or French boss despises them like a scoundrel. They are despised, and even in this contempt, they find glory. They are criticized, and they close their eyes from the lives of others they avidly exploit. A clan war has become much fiercer every day within the clique itself. Arabs hate Jews as local mulattoes hate the Syrian Lebanese in the Haitian bourgeoisie. Like the frogs in a pool of stinking water, the bourgeois Haitian elite is swarming, and on the backs of the people it is doing.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, say that without resolving the conflict that has existed since independence between the elite and the masses, Haiti will drag behind for a long time this epithet: the poorest and most backward country of the Western Hemisphere. All Haitians need a consensus to build Haiti. Building a country has a price. Are you ready, O people, to make the same sacrifices made by the South African people after more than half a century in apartheid (1948–1991), under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, to reconcile the nation? Haitian people, you have to work a lot on your mentality to reach this level.

You must free yourself from grudges to save the country—a difficult challenge for the people so resentful because they have endured too much. But it is not impossible. It only takes solid awareness.

Haiti needs a leader with the ability to gather around a table all sectors of society, friends as well as enemies. Haitian people, you have to go through this step to build Haiti. The way I advise you is *national reconciliation*. Refuse this advice, and all the sons of the country will perish

together like idiots because, in front of you, there is only one choice: to perish together or to free oneself as a group.

Building Haiti is possible. It is obvious that, to build the country, you have to start from the ground up. You have to set the rules. The basic principle of nation building is found in the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States. On this basis, Haiti needs a new constitution better adapted to integrate all the sons of the country in the new project to build the Haitian nation.

We need a serious state, a decided state, that controls what happens on its territory. The current Haitian state, with a faltering structure whose sovereign functions are financed by international generosity, is a bankrupt state that is unable to build its future.

Valuing Haitian culture is another important imperative for building Haiti. Haitian cultural institutions must do this work in the spirit of openness. For this, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of cultural institutions and reinforce the role of culture in promoting an economically or politically egalitarian society and in popular education at the service of genuine developments with a common aim. Is it not obvious that the culture of a people must be at the service of its development and emancipation?

Learning to live together is another challenge to build Haiti.

LIVING TOGETHER

Learning to live together is another advice from your emperor. Eager to build Haiti, Haitians can achieve such a goal only if they all come together around this vision of “learning to live together.” The spirit of “learning to live together” that has originated in the Haitian villages constitutes the nourishing sap of the country, the soul of the Haitian nation. Learning to live together is guided by the feeling of enhancing the Haitian dignity. It aims to reinforce the commitment that every Haitian has to take toward common good, justice, respect of the rights of each one in the society, and the building of harmonious relations between people living inside and outside the country. As compatriots living together under the same flag, the duty of every citizen is to cherish the country, to protect it, to elevate it to progress. In short, work on its development for present and future generations. In every Haitian, money and personal interests must not be the first and only movers of action; love of neighbor, the duty to help, the sense of belonging, and the need to be useful to society must be the norm in behavior and exchange.

Learning to live together was the secret of all the great peoples who had marked the history of humanity. Ancient Egypt, Greece, ancient Rome, all these great civilizations were created around the principle of “learning to live together.” I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, freed the slaves in Santo Domingo because blacks and mulattoes signed a pact to “learn to fight together.” The black and mulatto native soldiers learned to tolerate each other and to establish a common and circumstantial front to fight the French.

Together, meditate on the problems. Together, share experiences. Together, solve the problems. This way of doing things is intended to encourage everyone’s participation in national construction—to build a society based on collectivism and not on individualism. Learning to live together is based on fundamental ethical values: respect, forgiveness, and

reconciliation. That means understanding one another and developing the nation together.

O people, do you remember the practice of *combite* in Haiti? This is a form of solidarity once found in the Haitian countryside where peasants put themselves together to do work for the benefit of a member of the group. A calendar is then drawn up. Each, in turn, receives the *combite*. Everyone works at his or her place. The person who receives the team has the sole duty of giving food and drink to the workers. Agricultural work is done on the basis of mutual help, where the workers share their effort, their time, their food, their sorrow, and also their joy and reality. Such practices naturally create strong ties of friendship, solidarity, sincerity, and obligation in the villages.

The *combite* can play a big role in Haiti's development: plowing the land, picking crops, cleaning the streets, building roads and houses, educating the population through a national literacy and citizenship campaign, and helping those who have a community project. The *combite* has several benefits. The work is done in record time, but also, the whole community dimension appears. The "doing together" and "the spirit of gathering" are the two great principles to inculcate in the mentality of the younger generations to build Haiti.

The example of *tèt ansanm* can stop the country in its descent into hell and show the whole world, O people, what you dare to do with your courage and your determination. The Constitution of the Republic of Haiti, in its first article, devotes Haiti as a cooperative republic. This is the basic principle of the formation of the Haitian state. I have sacrificed my life to defend this ideal. My actions under my empire have been based on the principle of social justice and citizen equality. Sharing the property of the state among all the citizens is the cry I have made to denounce the monopolization of the wealth of the country by mulattoes who have boasted of being the only heirs of the property left by the settlers after independence.

The same battle continues today. Indeed, the struggle observed in Haiti is between the mulattoes and the masses for the sharing of wealth. I have observed the same battle that I have waged before and after the independence, which has led to my assassination by the mulatto oligarchy of the time. This struggle is still going on in the country. Between the ambition of mulattoes to capture everything and the absence of black elite, the Haitian unconscious fails to grasp the vision of *tèt ansanm*, necessary to elevate the nation and create a state of law where all citizens will have

the same rights and privileges. The ambitious mulatto feeds on the image of the racist mulatto squanderer of Rigaud to legitimize the resurgence of the arbitrary exploitation of the wealth of the country as we have seen under Pétion, Boyer, Riché, and Rivière Hérard. The black, deprived of a nationalist spirit, feeds on the image of the corrupt, hypocrite Negro seller of homeland of Conze to legitimize the practice of robbery and corruption as seen under Soulouque, Solomon, Duvalier, the provisional regimes, Aristide, Préval, Martelly, and Moses.

The reality is sometimes more complex when the black and the mulatto have the common cause of exploiting the nation. Under my empire, Major General and Minister of War Guerin is a mulatto, and Brigadier Generals Vaval and Yyou are black, while Charlotin Marcadieux is a mulatto, who has fallen while trying to protect me. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, am the only head of state in the history of the republic to have formed a ministerial cabinet with so many blacks and mulattoes.

Haitian people, you aim for the development of your country; do not give yourself to a pitched battle between brothers. Why indulge in a deadly war to prove something to the enemy, who rubs his hands? The recovery of Haiti must be for the benefit of every Haitian, just as its decline is an evil that causes the descent into hell of the entire nation. National reconciliation is the ultimate solution to the problems of the country.

I, your emperor, gave the example at the Congress of Arcahaie. I did not like mulattoes. They were sons of settlers, and by the nature of their birth, they believed themselves superior to the black soldiers who were former slaves. Like the white master, the mulattoes abused the blacks in the colony. They enslaved them like their fathers and applied against them the same methods of abuse. By signing the agreement of Arcahaie, I remembered the terrible misadventure of blacks who fought alongside the freed men for the implementation of the decree of May 15, 1791. The victory won, instead of being rewarded, these blacks were all transported and murdered on an old ship at the Môle Saint-Nicolas after the agreement of the freed men with the whites of Santo Domingo.

Despite all acts of treason, I signed a pact of solidarity with mulattoes. This gesture opened the door to independence. I knew that only union, at the time, could give me victory, so I negotiated the agreement with Pétion. It was a cyclical negotiation certainly, but it was useful to lead us to independence and get to protect the country. O people, inspiring you on this model, we must reconcile the nation around new plans to build Haiti.

NEW PLANS OF ACTION

As I have preached in 1805, we have to develop new plans, that is, we must reshuffle the cards and accept the rules of the game that are right for the minority as well as the majority. The spirit of “learning to live together” is the direct approach that allows the Haitian to put his values into practice. In this case, it is necessary to integrate all social classes to contribute to the start of the economic and social machinery of a cooperative republic. The integration of the rich and the poor, city dwellers and peasants, workers and unemployed, teachers and students, politicians and members of the civil society in the battle to change Haiti represents the reliable movement to engage the nation toward the path of development.

This issue, as I said, could not be settled through protests and street violence. I slaughtered mulattoes in the South and learned from this error after I gained deep knowledge in the Hall of Initiates. There, I met several other great characters in history and learned from their experiences—Jesus Christ, Muhammad, Buddha, Confucius, Gandhi, Dr. King, Mandela, and others. So I accepted the principle that, in politics, going to the extreme can hinder or complicate the struggle.

It would be illusory to believe that the economic development of Haiti will be the work of countries that call us “friend.” In the eyes of the United States, France, and Spain, in short Western nations, especially old colonial metropolises, Haiti is and will always be a bad seed—a nation to isolate from the rest of the world because it has a rebellious reputation. To think that the development of Haiti will be the pleasure of the imperialist powers is stupid. To rely on international institutions or foreigners to point you to the path of development is a childlike approach. Do not listen to the fallacious promises of those rancorous countries that have not been able to forget 1804.

The future belongs to you. It is up to you to make the commitment to choose the path to follow for your emancipation. Just know that there

is no uniform development model. First, you have to chart your own development theory and then practice. We cannot understand the problem of corruption. Without a macroeconomic vision and high consciousness of the population, it is impossible to start this very complex machine or to ensure its functioning.

You must applaud the progress made by other Caribbean countries. But beware as most of these countries have adopted fragile economic models dictated and imposed by imperialism. The neighboring Dominican Republic has a rather extraordinary breakthrough in the economic field, but it is known that the Dominican people have neither the capital nor the autonomy to decide. Their elite combined their efforts to design and execute the neoliberal plan.

Similarly, we must avoid the path of the Castro revolution and the path taken by Chávez to come out of the imperialist grip. Cuba, at the time of the revolution unleashed in the early 1950s, had the support of the Russians, who took advantage of the opening to create a breach in US politics. Chávez was betting on the Venezuelan oil to get out of the United States. Haiti must base itself on the educational revolution and the support of the population to pave the way for a sustainable development plan.

In fact, industrialization remains the sure path to economic development. However, given some of the constraints of your history as a colonized people, you have to accept the reality of promoting economic growth from your cultural traditions. For that, it is not safe to depend solely on foreign capital to promote your economic development. It is necessary to encourage technically sound Haitian agricultural production to make a profitable contribution to the industry.

It is necessary at all costs to avoid a massive displacement of the agricultural population. The presence of a middle class that drives the development of a society must be resuscitated. Once these two challenges are overcome, industrial development will begin to ensure continued growth through capital accumulation. The challenge is to control the avatars of the capitalist world aided by a mafia clique in the Haitian private sector swearing on their heads that Haiti will never leave the bottom of the abyss where it has been engulfed since independence.

Henri Christophe applied agrarian militarism to make the northern kingdom one of the richest regions of the continent. In the current situation, O people, you must apply the Comrades and cooperativism to develop Haiti. You must open credit unions, community stores, pharmacies,

agricultural banks, technical and vocational schools, seed banks, and craft centers all over the country. You have to focus your resources on the development of human capital, competitive productivity, and research and development. The Haitian state must adopt a fiscal policy encouraging the development of new technologies and a new policy of rebalancing for the benefit of agriculture (investing in agricultural machinery, setting low interest rates, balancing and controlling import/export trade).

Haitian people, to build the country, the state must take control of the territory. How do you think Haiti could be built when 70 percent of Haitian executives live abroad? Millions of Haitians have left the country in recent decades; we must reach a plan for integrating the diaspora into the development process. We must eliminate the republic of Port-au-Prince to decentralize the country. Decentralization has the advantage of improving the legitimacy of political decisions by bringing decision makers closer to those to whom they apply. It also improves the efficiency of the administration, thanks to a better knowledge of the field by the local authorities. The decentralization of the territory will engender an equitable redistribution of the wealth of the state and, at the same time, will allow indirect investment in the improvement and well-being of the Haitians.

Decentralizing the country is the first step in developing the ten departments. Reforming the education system with a more practical than theoretical approach is the second step. Finally, strengthening the rule of law from the point of view of justice, security, and law enforcement is another necessity. But to get to all that, you need a revolution; this is what I call an educational revolution.

Indeed, we must make education a national project to achieve, if not to eradicate illiteracy, at least to reduce it to a rate of less than 10 percent. We must be taught in a Haitian school based on respecting values and traditions; in short, we must have a knowledge of the great mechanisms of learning and human fulfillment to help us regain our full potential and connect with ourselves and others. We must win the battle against obscurantism, a weapon used by the settlers in Santo Domingo and adopted after independence by the various regimes, from Jean-Pierre Boyer to François Duvalier, to zombify the Haitian population. It takes a new concept of university that is more research oriented. The university must be at the service of the Haitian society and a tool to find answers to major political, economic, and social issues. The state must develop a policy to keep cadres in the country and, at the same time, encourage all

Haitian intellectuals and professionals outside Haiti to participate in the battle for change.

To develop Haiti, it requires an awareness of the elite that blatant inequality kills the ideal of collective well-being. Respect for rights brings greatness to the peoples and civilized nations of the world. The elite must have the courage to admit this truth.

What is needed now is to understand and admit the fact that both mulattoes and the masses have accomplished independence together in 1804. They have fought alongside each other during the war of independence. That is why it is imperative to look together for the causes of and solutions to the Haitian dilemma, for neither hatred nor revenge is a solution to the Haitian evil. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, I developed these feelings to the last limit, because appropriate in 1804 against executioners who have done so much harm to my brothers slaves. The same feelings are to be rejected in the current context. It must be a revolution; however, instead of my war cry *koupe tèt*, O people, I preach instead the path of a gentle and quiet revolution—the revolution of the mind. We must fight illiteracy, educate the population, and modernize the country.

Haitian people, to build Haiti, you have to work on your mentality. You have to educate the youth in Creole and French. More than that, you have to encourage young people to learn English and Spanish to be competitive in the international market. In short, you must build a society on moral and intellectual values to replace those based on ignorance and absurdity. We must think how not to rebuild a state but to build a state. To build Haiti, you have to invest a lot in education. This is the foundation of change: to teach people the taste of enjoying, choosing, and rising. The Haitian must love his culture in the quest to accept his identity.

ACCEPT YOUR IDENTITY

Identity is not given once and for all; it is built and transformed throughout life.

—Amin Maalouf

Haiti does not only confront an electoral and political crisis. The country is not only facing an economic and social crisis. The crisis is much deeper. It's an identity crisis.

The crisis in Haiti is not what we see. There is certainly a political instability that persists since independence and a weakening of institutions (justice, police, finance, government, university). The real crisis is elsewhere. It concerns the need for recognition and affirmation among Haitians. After centuries of persecution, we are forced to recognize that the Haitian people feel the need to connect to their culture, customs, and traditions, in short, connecting to their roots.

Whenever you accept these absurd arguments that voodoo is the religion of the devil or that the *lakous* (Souvenans, Soukri in Artibonite, Basen Senjak in the North, and Ti Sentann in the Northwest) are cursed places or, even worse, that the ceremony of Bois Caïman was a pledge taken by Boukman with evil spirits, O people, it is a devaluation of your heritage and ipso facto a loss of your identity that you endorse. When you make use of these statements in your vocabulary, it is the admission of your fragility of identity, which stems from lack of education.

May you one day try to destroy all objects in connection with voodoo—here I am talking about the antisuperstition campaign (1939–1942) known as *rejete* initiated by the Catholic Church and started under the presidency of Sténio Vincent (1930–1941), to end under the reign of Élie Lescot (1941–1946). Haitian people, this is the proof that one seeks to erase from

your conscience the spirit of protest that animates you when it is for you to claim what you owe.

Generally defined as an antivoodoo offensive launched by the Breton clergy, the antisuperstition campaign is developed in two phases. The first phase of the campaign (1939–1940), interpreted as a peasant movement, is the work of countrymen determined to reject voodoo. The second moment (1940–1942) is characterized by the recovery of this movement by the clergy concordat supported by public authority, with the intention of better fighting Anglicanism, Protestant cults, and voodoo. This campaign officially ends with violent incidents at Notre-Dame d'Altagrace in Delmas (northeast of Port-au-Prince) and the revocation of the apostolic nuncio in 1942.

Haitian people, all the biblical words that the priest or the pastor has taught you are the same ones I have heard during Sunday masses on the plantation. “Blessed are those who are poor because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.” Or “It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into paradise.” This evangelization has been spread among the slaves to discourage them, to detach them from anything that could give them the determination to confront the colonial system. It is a gospel of submission and blind obedience to all the recommendations of the master that the slave must execute. The interpretation of this gospel is made in the very interests of the white colonist, who thinks he is the only human creature to enjoy all privileges. The slave, meanwhile, is a thing taillable and servable at thank you. The preacher’s mission is to do everything so that the Negro will be afraid of getting rich. The son of Ham, he must accept his state of being born to suffer.

“Blessed are those who mourn because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.” “Blessed are those who believe without seeing.” These are always verses to be taken from this gospel of oppression.

From the arrival of Christopher Columbus at Môle Saint-Nicolas in 1492 to the concordat of 1860, has the damage done by Catholicism to the Haitian people already been accounted for? Have we already measured the effect of Christianity—diverted from human charity—on the Haitian collective conscience?

From 1492 to 1697, during the two hundred years of Spanish colonization, millions of Indians died, while only a few thousand Spaniards had settled in Hispaniola. Bartolome de las Casas, in his book *Historia de las Indias*, reported that, in 1508, there were about sixty thousand Tainos

on the island of Hispaniola. By 1531, gold mining, suicide, and disease had reduced this number to six hundred, from 80 percent to 90 percent. Have we already written the story of these martyrs?

The acts of genocide committed by conquerors were well known, although they were hidden for a long time in the European archives. The death of tens of millions of Indians in the Americas was by far the largest genocide in history. The first Spaniards who landed in Hispaniola used torture, massacres, rapes, and hard labor to destroy the natives. Thus, on an original population whose volume remained to be specified, historians estimated about one hundred million inhabitants for the whole continent; the natives had almost disappeared.

White Europeans, in the name of Christianity, have diverted the true message of Christ to convert and decimate the Indian population by forced labor at the mines and the importation of infectious diseases. These Europeans were bringing black Africans en masse to begin the sordid slave trade. Have we already written the history of the slave trade? Tons of gold were mined from Spain's basement of Hispaniola for two hundred years, and France, for more than a century, eagerly exploited the soil of Santo Domingo, which became Haiti. Have we already calculated the figures to compensate the Haitian people? The establishment of slavery was done in the name of Christianity. Has anyone ever analyzed the harm caused by religion in Haiti?

Haitian people, to free you, you must first accept your identity and bond your roots.

Detractors say that the Bois Caïman ceremony is a seal of curse on Haiti. They argue that the revolution of 1804 has been made in blood because it is the fruit of sacrifices offered by ancestors to evil spirits. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, answer that Haiti is underdeveloped not by the fact that the country has found its freedom in 1804. The imperialist countries have understood it very well. Unfortunately, rather than apologize for the crimes of genocide after several embargoes on Haiti, they continue their macabre plan to destabilize the nation.

Haitian people, like you, I had long been convinced that I would never come out of misery and servitude, until the day freedom of conscience was awakened in me. From there, I thought that a change in my condition of existence could be envisaged. I wondered about the true identity of my person, considered as something subject to the whims of a master who

had the power of life and death over me. So I decided to take action to liberate my people.

You are free now, O people, to explore the way for a collective liberation. You can even learn my strategy of struggle, but I advise you to despise in the current context the armed struggle. Rather, undertake the revolution of the mind to find a solution to the problem of Haiti.

Finding the solution to the problem of the country is not easy. It is not impossible either. Tackling the politics of exclusion, consolidating institutions, building the rule of law—these are the big challenges if you seriously want to build Haiti. Untie the identity crisis, which is a complete mess.

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UNTIE THE IDENTITY CRISIS

Heir to the African slave trade, the religion of voodoo impregnates the Haitian culture more than any other element and contributes to the forging of the Haitian identity. For François Houtart and Anselme Rémy, voodoo is what we can call unspeakable haitianity or the trace, that is, the part of the collective unconscious, the inheritance whose African origin only references sovereignly produced and not imposed from the outside.

Alfred Métraux recognizes an undeniable role of voodoo in the artistic field. The author argues that voodoo has enabled the Haitian peasantry to preserve the African heritage in two specific areas: dance and music. The book *Aspects éducatifs et moraux du vodou Haïtien* (1995) by Claudine Michel is roughly from the same angle of approach. The author states that by plunging its roots in spiritual and moral values of social justice, of well-being for the forgotten, of mutual tolerance, the voodoo cult conveys a universal message intended for men and women of goodwill. It plays a role of cohesion and hope that has allowed the slaves of yesterday to free themselves from colonization and Haitians today to survive the various civil military dictatorships.

The presence of voodoo is essential to the Haitian identity. It has first steeped history as a contentious force in times of slavery. This has allowed the generation of different forces for the liberation of slaves. At present, it appears as a form of expression of the disadvantaged and exploited masses of Haiti. Despite the combined persecutions of the Haitian state, Catholic clergy, and Protestant preachers, voodoo continues to play its role as an element of identity among the Haitians. It does not only play a social and political function but it also permeates several worlds in the Haitian culture such as literature, music, theater, and painting.

From this perspective, we must consider the work of Martha Jean-Claude and that of Emerante de Pradines as an important contribution to

the knowledge of the Haitian culture. These two researchers have not only honored the various rhythms of voodoo music but they have also enriched them with American pop, popularized through groups like Boukman Eksperyans, RAM, Boukan Ginen, Racine Mapou de Azor, Chandèl, Koudjay, Kanpech, and Tokay.

However, despite an important place in the social and cultural life of Haiti, voodoo beliefs, accompanied by ritual practices, are not well assimilated by a large section of the elite. Implanted in the context of the demoniac and struck with taboos, they have spread in hiding, maintaining an ambiguous relationship with the law.

Lakous—which are places of refuge, sacred places, and preservation of ancestral heritage and whose first motive for creation is freedom—are now undergoing more and more attacks from the West, seeking to desecrate them. One of the challenges of future generations is to identify the resistance and accommodation strategies to protect the sustainability of these places and practices and also to list all the cultural riches, which have been transmitted orally in these mystical places from the colony until now.

The religion of the struggle of the oppressed, assigned to marronage to escape the wrath of the Church and sometimes the state, voodoo has suffered several setbacks that have indisputably led to this identity crisis among Haitians. After independence and until 1860, Haiti remains isolated from the world on the political, economic, and religious levels. The absence of the massacred or fleeing Catholic clergy leaves the field open to the unrestricted activity of *houngans* and mambos. With the concordat of 1860, signed between the Haitian state and the Vatican, the Catholic Church will soon resume its privileged place as the religion of the state.

The early twentieth century was full of repressive persecutions against *houngans* on the grounds that they were *makandas* or werewolves, but behind this witch hunt, it was the elimination of voodoo as a religious practice that was targeted. The Catholic clergy of that time, most of whom were Breton, were under the guise of the antisuperstition campaign and decided to avenge themselves from the *lwas*, which according to their beliefs were the spirits associated with the Haitian Revolution. In fact, the French priests sought to avenge their death in 1804 under my command, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor.

It is obvious that most constitutions, from 1804 to 1987, recognize freedom of worship in Haiti. However, voodoo does not enjoy the same treatment as Christianity in the country. It has always been considered

not as a religion but as a satanic practice. This consideration is always damaging to the respect we have for the culture of the 80 percent of people forged in voodoo. It is perfectly understandable in these conditions that this leads to an identity crisis in the Haitian society.

The 1804 revolution, whose leitmotifs were the Bois Caïman ceremony and the general uprising of slaves on August 22, 1791, led to too many demands associated with the struggle for liberation for voodoo to be openly admitted to the political scene. It was not until 2002, on the initiative of Aristide, that voodoo was recognized as a religion in itself by the state of Haiti.

Always in a defensive position, never offensive, voodoo is expected to play an important role in the conquest of the Haitian identity. It is in this context that you must continue the struggle, O people, until you get the grip of the West.

Haitian people, did you have in memory the crimes that the Spaniards who accompanied Christopher Columbus committed on the aboriginal population? Was it not in the name of Christianity adapted to the cause of colonization that the conquerors at the time inflicted the most formidable treatments on the first inhabitants of the island? The Spaniards, upon their arrival at Môle Saint-Nicolas, invaded the homes of the natives and perpetrated the most dreadful crimes on their people, forcing them to a religion contrary to their natural system of life. The French settlers adopted the same approach with the black slaves. In both cases, they acted with the complicity of the Church.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, am a Christian. I respect Christianity. On the Duclos house, I attended every Sunday Mass celebrated by a Catholic priest, assisted by a sacristan, in the parish. On April 2, 1800, I married Marie-Claire Heureuse Félicité Bonheur, whose education was entrusted to her aunt, Élise Lobelot, housekeeper for the religious order of Saint Dominic. The wedding ceremony took place in the parish church of St. Rose in Saint-Marc. My coronation, as emperor for life, was celebrated on October 6, 1804, in Cap-Haïtien Cathedral. After my marriage, on February 2, 1806, I legitimized my children in front of the Dessalines registration officer Nicolas Saget. They were all baptized in the Catholic religion:

1. Marie-Françoise Célimène, born on October 2, 1789, in Saint-Marc
2. Celestine, born on April 2, 1793

3. Jacques Bien-Aimé
4. Jeanne Sophie, born on January 20, 1799
5. Albert
6. Serine

Even my illegitimate children conformed to the prescriptions of Christianity.

1. L. Dessalines, baron under Henry I, beheaded at the death of Christopher at the same time as the king's son (October 18, 1820)
2. Jacques Métellus, born on June 26, 1805, in Cap-Haïtien
3. Suprême, born in 1806 in Dessalines
4. Innocent says the Prince
5. Marie Thérèse Angèle Adeline
6. César Jean-Jacques Dessalines, shot by Emperor Soulouque in 1856
7. Marie Noël
8. Dorimène
9. Francillette
10. Louis
11. Elizabeth
12. Émilie Marie-Claire
13. Brutus

During the massacre of the French in 1804, I dictated the order to spare the Catholic priests. I even imposed in the imperial constitution of May 20, 1805, these principles:

Art. 50: "The law admits no dominant religion."

Art. 51: "Freedom of worship is protected."

Of all the passages that open, announce, and give direction to the twenty-two constitutions of the Republic of Haiti, the preamble of the charter of May 20, 1805, is undoubtedly the most moving and the most sublime by its capacity to express the relationship of the Haitian people with the great Creator of the universe. "In the presence of the Supreme Being before whom mortals are equal, and who has poured out so many different species of creatures on the surface of the globe as to manifest his

glory and power by the diversity of his works. In the face of the whole nature, of which we have been so unjustly and for so long considered the children repulsed.”

A fervent religious, I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, condemn the hypocrisy in the words of evangelization of the missionaries and the role and the blessing of the religions, particularly of the Catholic Church, in the treaty. Indeed, no intervention of the pope, at the time, condemned slavery. The Vatican did not ban this trade and even encouraged the colonial powers in their actions. To profit from the slave trade, the popes allowed and then approved slavery. Under the guise of the legend of Ham, they condemned the slavery of the American Indians, yet they encouraged that of the blacks of Africa. But the truth was simple: blacks were much more robust to the work of the land, and they saw that the Indian population was largely decimated as a result of hard work in the gold mines, so they had to be replaced.

The Edict of Nantes, known as the Code Noir, in article 2 states that “all slaves on our islands shall be baptized and instructed in the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion. Let the inhabitants who buy newly arrived Negroes warn the governors and stewards of the said islands, within a week, at the latest, to pay an arbitrary fine, which will give the necessary orders to have them instructed and to baptize in due time.”

Article 3 said, “Forbid any public exercise of religion other than the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion. We want offenders to be punished as rebellious and disobedient to our commandments. Let us defend all assemblies for this purpose, which we declare illicit and seditious, subject to the same punishment that will take place even against the masters who will allow them and suffer with respect to their slaves.”

Also, the black man—barely arriving from the slave ship—was bought by the settler, entered his flock of slaves, and was officially baptized so that the master obeyed the legal injunctions. The baptism of slaves was part of the obligations of the master in relation to the requirements of the Code Noir of 1685. Attendance at the Sunday Mass was part of the obligations in the colony. The slaves who were in the islands had to be baptized and to be instructed in the religion of their masters (Catholic, apostolic, and Roman). The masters had to warn the governors and intendants as soon as possible of the arrival of the new slaves under penalty of fine.

In the Code Noir, the slave is presented as a “piece of furniture”: the owner could sell him at will like an animal. As stated in article 44

of the Code Noir, “Declare slaves to be moveable, and as such to enter the community, to have no follow-through by mortgage, to share equally between co-heirs.”

In the evangelistic words that the Catholic priest taught in the colony, slavery was a natural and legitimate practice. Becoming a state religion in Santo Domingo, Christianity linked to Catholicism did not prohibit slavery and considered masters and slaves as equals before God. It was only belatedly and gradually that the condemnation of slavery appeared in the Catholic Church, an accomplice and beneficiary of the system, but it is limited, most often, to a condemnation of the slave trade.

The position of the Catholic Church on black slavery had always been mixed. In 1435, when the Spanish fought against the Portuguese for the possession of the Canary Islands and exploited their population, the papal bull *Sicut dudum* of Pope Eugene IV condemned the slavery of the black inhabitants, on pain of excommunication. From 1441, everything changed when the Portuguese led their maritime and military expeditions along the coasts of Africa and captured the first slaves. This first slave was the origin of the Atlantic (or Western) slave trade. Slaves would be offered to the same pope, Eugene IV, who from this time would endorse the Portuguese conquests in Africa, especially those of Prince Henry the Navigator, prince of Portugal and precursor of the European colonial expansion. In the eyes of the pope, these expeditions were encouraged because they contained the expansion of Islam.

Pope Eugene IV and his successors (Nicholas V, Calixtus III, and Sixtus IV) would approve the Portuguese expeditions by seeing the opportunity to convert to Christianity all those populations of Africa considered as pagans by the Catholic Church. At the end of a political agreement between Portugal and the Vatican, the Catholic Church granted the commercial monopoly of Africa to the king of Portugal Alfonso V, who could enslave the inhabitants of the continent. The Christian Church by Pope Alexander VI organized the division of the world between Portugal and Spain with the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494.

The position of the Catholic Church in favor of trafficking was far from well documented. Too happy to have new territories of evangelization, the Vatican encouraged slavery throughout the colonial period. Here are the names of some famous popes who encouraged slavery.

- 1442: Gabriele Condulmer (Eugene IV) ratified the conquests of Prince Henry the Navigator in Africa.
- 1455: Tommaso Parentucelli (Nicolas V) hoped that the populations would soon be converted to Christianity and gave his approval to the Portuguese commercial monopoly in Africa. He gave the king of Portugal complete freedom to subject pagan Saracens and other unbelievers or even reduce them to perpetual slavery.
- 1456: Alfonso De Borja (Calixtus III) affirmed that the administration of the new Portuguese possessions and their interests must be entrusted to the order of Christ, the brotherhood of Henry the Navigator.
- 1481: Francesco della Rovere (Sixtus IV) declared that the lands conquered in Africa were granted to the king of Portugal.

In 1517, Charles V, a fervent Catholic who was the most powerful monarch of the first half of the sixteenth century, authorized the slave trade.

The Anglican Church also played an important role in slavery via the Society for Spreading the Word in Faraway Lands. In the plantations of Barbados, the name of the company was branded on the chest of slaves belonging to the Anglican Church, and among the leaders of the society were the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of London and York. During the emancipation of slaves, the Church would even be compensated for the loss of these slaves in the plantations of Barbados.

The abbot Rigord, a priest in Port Royal in Martinique and an antinotorious notorious, wrote in 1845 (three years before the abolition), “We are inclined to consider the slave trade as a providential fact. . . . May thousands of these unfortunates find in bondage the freedom of the children of God.”

Haitian people, is it not with this colonial heritage that you seek to identify today by despising your ancestral culture from Africa? Why forget your identity? Why deny your culture, which is the only thing you have acquired able to connect you to your origin and to remind you of your provenance? I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, say that the loss of cultural identity is the cause of all the problems that the country is currently facing. Indeed, the loss of tradition makes economic, political, social, and cultural life more difficult to manage. This loss of identity is

the manifestation of the turbulence inside the Haitian society. That is why it is important for the Haitian people to reconnect with their culture.

Know that the culture of ancient Africa is the epicenter of the social reality that has allowed your brother, your sister, your father, and your mother to enjoy this piece of land called Haiti. Your honorable ancestors have left you this heritage, but alas, some of the heirs of the settlers, by spirit of revenge, prevent your emancipation.

Haitian people, who have made you believe that, for Haiti to be developed, you must necessarily copy the Western culture? It's a wrong thought. Asian countries—in this case, Indonesia, India, Vietnam, China, Japan, and South Korea—are developed countries, and they are from non-Western cultures. Several Arab countries are rich and advanced, yet they are of Muslim culture. These people have progressed with their ancestral cultures, and they have no problem selling their country to tourists, who make the trip precisely to discover their mysteries.

Haiti must do the same—finding development based on a culture specific to the Haitian man. This is the *conditio sine qua non* for you, O people—to find your identity.

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FIND YOUR IDENTITY

A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots.

—Marcus Garvey

The problem of identity began the day the slave embarked on the slaver. There, the captain of the ship stuck a poster with an identification number. Upon arrival in Santo Domingo, he was sold to a master at an auction. Each Negro then bore the name of its owner. And then the process of isolation began. The slave, usually deported with his family, was separated from them.

It was the complete disappearance of his identity. The slave did not know who he was anymore. He was forced to believe that the other—the colonel of him. When he looked at himself, he saw a black shadow intervening between his new person, which had become a thing in Santo Domingo, and the being he was before his deportation. And there, he found himself in the middle of other slaves coming from different countries, and each Negro in the colony spoke his own language. There was no way to communicate in the plantation.

We lived in gangs, and as intelligent as we were, we became wild in this environment. We found ourselves in groups, we defined ourselves through them, and we all had the name of the master of the house. And then the question arose again: “Who am I in the group?” Or more accurately “What am I in the group?” We passed from the state of a subject to that of an object.

At each occasion, the slave who looked recalcitrant or who portrayed a rebellious attitude was put on sale or sent to a slave breaker. He would find another master, was incorporated to another group, and was dealing with the same struggles.

It was always the tactic to make others lose their identity, which continued. The slave, by being abused and dehumanized, had become an object. It became impossible for him to find his cultural identity, and suddenly, it was impossible to find himself.

It was in the name of this concept—of losing identity, losing a *raison d'être*—that the masters acted to belittle the slave to his simplest expression. It was necessary that the Negro attend Mass and obey the commandments of the gospel. Appropriate texts were read every Sunday to make the Negro accept his condition of existence and make him believe that the words taken from the Bible were the only way to spiritual salvation.

From then on, the spirit of rebellion disappeared in the slave; and suddenly, the traditional markers also disappeared, and the bonds of support were strained. A commander was chosen from within the group. He became the executioner, and it was him who maintained the system with a whip. Faced with all these barriers, the identity of the group could no longer be built in the action or in the perspective of *tèt ansanm*. It was then created in the Negro the feeling of total submission, the complete acceptance of his state as a “thing” in Santo Domingo.

Bois Caïman was like an alarm clock, a collective awareness that materialized in a general uprising, followed by acts of destruction of all plantations in the northern region of Haiti. The black appropriated his past, an origin to which he turned with nostalgia and which wished to recover. This origin was concretized on a territory (Santo Domingo), in a common language (Creole), and in the resurgence of ancestral customs (voodoo). It created a bond of solidarity in a fight that had a single aspiration: live free or die.

From then on, there was a movement back to their African origins both from slaves born in the colony called Creoles and from those born in Africa called bosses. With a will more or less asserted (more or less warrior) to find their stolen identity, then began a quest for self; to seize their identity meant to grasp the authenticity of their being.

It was only by perceiving that the white colonist was different from himself that identity consciousness would be born in the slave. This awareness would quickly affect the entire group. The perception of the difference from the other was the starting point toward the discovery of this identity. “I am different from my master, so the slave . . . so I exist.” And the reflection continued. “If the colonist abuses me in the name of the principles drawn in this gospel that he forces me to apply, it simply

means that the enslaved black man and the master settler will not be able to worship the same God and practice the same gospel.” Becoming free in his reflections, the slave became a being aspiring rights.

Once the problem of identity was solved, the slave went in search of his human dignity. He learned that he was a person and not a thing. In that case, he deserved respect, and he aspired to be free as the white man he always called Master. Later, he found answers to questions he had been asking for a century since his captivity in America.

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, solved the problem, thanks to the lessons of Aunt Toya and the instructions of my last teacher who taught me the trade of carpentry. That was why I made these articles part of the imperial charter.

Article 28, the last in the imperial constitution of 1805, reads as follows: “At the first blow of alarm, the cities disappear and the nation is standing.” It is a martial and heroic formulation of the duties of the citizen threatened with his freedom that I have incorporated into the national charter. Article 9 stipulates, “No one is worthy to be Haitian if he is not a good father, good son, good husband and especially good soldier.” It is an expression of my vision on how to develop Haiti.

CHAPTER XII

TALKING ABOUT HAITI'S DEVELOPMENT

Haitian people, I am called to speak to you in this way because I am your emperor, the founder of this nation. I have ordered you to come out of your decline to show the world that you can do the story again. You can develop Haiti, which will find its name of Pearl of the Antilles.

Haiti is rich. It is time to develop a plan to build the country. After so many years of observation and analysis of failures, we must commit to provide solutions for the benefit of all, for the socioeconomic, health, nutritional, educational, and security progress of the entire population. The big challenge today, O people, is to take these steps to free you from dependence on international aid and the constant need for foreign assistance. You are at a crucial crossroads, Haitian people, because the socioeconomic reality of your country calls and challenges you. It is time that your elected officials embark the population in a global plan for the

structural transformation of the society by establishing a relationship of trust and involving communities in solving their problems.

Do not rely on the area of your territory (27,750 km²) to fear globalization. The difference between poor and rich countries is not in the area of the territory. Santo Domingo is a small island lost in the Caribbean, yet during the colonial period, the island—with its coffee, cotton, sisal, logwood, and indigo—has fed more than half of Europe. With a national conscience, Haiti can reconnect with its past.

To develop Haiti is the order I give you to raise the awareness of the wealthy in Pétiion-Ville, the poor in the slums, the peasants in the countryside, the workers in the factories, the diaspora abroad, the schoolchildren and students, and the people in the provinces and in the capital to make them understand that Haiti is a common heritage. Therefore, every Haitian must cherish her, protect her, work on her recovery. Who among you, my Haitian brothers, after leaving this corner of the earth, do not think about the well-being of your native soil? Who among you, having disembarked at Toussaint-Louverture Airport, do not rejoice at this troubadour sound: “Ayti ala m kontan we w. Potopts to jam I tanvi we w.” (Haiti, how happy I am to see you, Port-au-Prince, as I wanted to see you again).

Haitian people, wake up! Toussaint-Louverture, the spiritual father of independence, was the first of the blacks. Charlemagne Masséna Péralte, the leader of the Cacos who defied the Americans in 1915, was born in your country. Adm. Hammerton Killick was a Haitian. The heroism that this commander showed during the explosion of his warship was second to none. Here, for the present and future generations, is the story of the facts:

On September 6, 1902, Admiral Killick—a prominent Firminist and commander of the Haitian fleet that had only one warship called *Crête-à-Pierrot*—had revolted against the provisional government of Nord Alexis. He confiscated the German ship carrying arms and ammunition.

Another German warship—the *Panther*, placed at the disposal of the provisional government—was ordered to seize the Haitian vessel and its commander. *Crête-à-Pierrot* has been declared a pirate ship by the provisional government. In Gonaïves, where the Firminist government had settled, the vessel *Panther*—commanded by Eckermann—appeared off the harbor of the city. Admiral Killick, who was on the ground, rushed on board and ordered his crew to abandon the ship. The Germans summoned Admiral Killick to surrender. He refused, and once he was sure that the Haitian sailors who had left the ship were out of danger, accompanied by

Dr. Coles who was drunk and who would not or could not leave the boat, he wrapped himself in the Haitian flag and blew up his boat by setting fire to the confiscated ammunition.

In memory of Admiral Killick and other national heroes such as Padre Jean, Mackandal, Jean-Francois, Boukman, Biassou, and Jeannot, Haiti must be developed.

A country is a piece of land. It develops with the workforce of its citizens. The participation of every citizen in the battle for change is essential. Look at all the other countries to which you fled—the United States, Canada, France, Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic. These countries are not what they are by chance or luck. The inhabitants have worked; they have devoted their souls to build their nation. They have agreed to make sacrifices and put order in their way of life. In short, they strengthen the institutions and submit to the rule of law.

Take for example South Korea. This country was completely devastated in 1950 as a result of the war against North Korea. After the armistice of Panmunjom signed in 1953, South Korea began its reconstruction. Currently, the country is ranked as the twelfth largest economy in the world. South Korea is the world's largest market for male cosmetics. The literacy rate of people over fifteen is 99.2 percent for men and 96.6 percent for women. The Internet access rate is among the highest in the world.

The South Korean culture is certainly influenced by Japan and China, but the country has done everything to preserve its culture despite the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism. This country is a perfect model for developing Haiti. After the Korean War in the 1950s, the government of Paul Eugène Magloire made a gesture of solidarity with the South Korean government by giving them a grant of \$2,500. This gesture of solidarity constituted the first funds for the reconstruction of South Korea.

Haitian people, like the South Koreans, when will you decide to develop your country? It is not important to copy the model of others or to imitate your neighbors. You are a genius race, and you can invent a unique development model based on the traditions and customs inherited from the dozens of mixed tribes on the land of Santo Domingo to give birth to the Haitian man, including Congo, Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Benin, Guinea, Cameroon, Nigeria, Zambia, Tōgō, Burkina Faso, and more.

Captured in Africa and embarked by force, your ancestors crossed the Atlantic chained and arranged in the suffocating holds of slave ships.

Marked with a hot iron, they suffered whips, mutilations, and all kinds of abuses. The white colonist boasted of a thousand refinements, methods of punishment and killing. He poured burning wax on their heads. He made them eat their excrement. Those on death row were burned alive or died tied to the four poles, their belly open, while the masters' dogs ate their bowels.

What other people on earth could live in such a hell and finally was able to defeat this system by arms?

You are the most diverse nation in the world. You have in your seed the mixture of European, African, and even Asian blood. According to accounts shared on the plantations, some eleven million Africans were sold as slaves on the Atlantic coast between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries, to which should be added seventeen million African slaves sold between the eighth century and the twentieth century in trans-Saharan trade and the Indian Ocean trade, a total of twenty-eight million slaves deported from Africa.

What other nation on earth has such diversity? It took your ancestors a century or more to break free from bondage. They could not communicate because they came from different tribes. Finally, they composed a language: Creole. This new language gave them the power to communicate. They used this language to plot and create solidarity. They fled into the hills by getting themselves brown to keep their freedom. Today, O people, you are free; you have done everything to lose your freedom and return as the slave of whites.

When will you retake your nation? When will you start combite to develop Haiti? In the wake of the earthquake of January 12, 2010, the country has lost a clear opportunity to build a long-term vision of its development. When will the women, men, and youth of Haiti and members of the diaspora start building? Put in place an adequate, stable, effective, and equitable institutional environment? A network of transport, telecommunications, and energy infrastructures well developed and maintained? A healthy and stable macroeconomic environment and a flexible and efficient labor market with efficient goods and services? Create a comprehensive network of health care and primary education allowing people in the country to get easy access to higher education and training? In short, the emergence of a new form of leadership: participative leadership.

Reports and studies have already shown that no ready-made solution will work on the Haitian soil. To develop Haiti, the state must take control of the territory. How do you, O people, build the country when 70 percent of Haitian executives live abroad? Millions of Haitians have left the territory during the last decades; it is necessary to reach a plan of integration of this diaspora to develop the country. The republic of Port-au-Prince must be eliminated to decentralize the national territory. Decentralization has the advantage of improving the legitimacy of political decisions by bringing decision makers closer to those to whom they apply. It also improves the efficiency of the administration, thanks to a better knowledge of the field by the local authorities. The decentralization of the territory will finally engender an equitable redistribution of the wealth of the state and, at the same time, will allow indirect investments in the improvement and the well-being of Haitians. This is the idea on which my vision rests.

Haitian people, to develop Haiti, illiteracy must disappear. Conscious of the importance of education, I have written a special article in the imperial constitution of 1805: "Art. 11 - Every citizen must possess a mechanical art."

Haitian people, what have you done with the National Education Fund? Thousands and thousands of children in the country do not go to school for lack of money, and the state has a multimillion-dollar debt as arrears of wages in the public sector. What has Haiti done with the National Education Fund?

In 2011, President Martelly launched the National Education Fund. He planned to collect at least \$180 million on phone calls and the same amount on transfers for a period of five years. He wanted to raise \$1.5 million to educate 1.5 million young people deprived of education. And according to calculations, when the government would combine the two taxes, they should pay at least \$8 million a month to supply the fund.

The funds are collected, and the promises made by the government are not kept. As I have done during the audit, it is time for you, the Haitian people, to demand accountability. What have your leaders done with the National Education Fund? Education is the greatest factor in the socioeconomic development of a country. Great thinkers like Aristotle, William Petty, and Mill have emphasized the importance of education. It promotes social harmony and makes citizens more just and civil.

To develop Haiti, you have to invest a lot in education. Good education, as Montesquieu says, consists in giving us ideas and proportioning them.

A country with an illiteracy rate between 40 percent and 50 percent is condemned to live in misery and mediocrity. Education is the most powerful weapon to change Haiti. Education + profession + awareness is the equation to build Haiti. This is why, in the imperial constitution of 1805, priority has been given to technical education: every pupil must learn a manual profession. In this original work, I have manifested dual political will—training technical cadres and awakening the national consciousness of as many citizens as possible through education.

Haiti will never develop without the express will of Haitians to build the rule of law. It is necessary to involve the citizens and to take into account the resources and the potentialities of the soil. It is necessary to integrate the population in the development of its community and to make a bourgeoisie with national consciousness through the Haitian economic actors through legal provisions.

Credible elections are needed to elect responsible and competent parliamentarians. Faced with the challenge of market liberalization and the social needs that must be solved, these parliamentarians will have to draft laws that create a favorable climate for business, the creation of wealth and jobs, and growth; it is now necessary for them to stop absenteeism to propose, debate, vote, and control as stipulated in their assignments. Strong, independent justice is needed with honest and competent magistrates to enforce the law against all and for all. The challenge is to protect one without favoring the other. Finally, you need an executive branch with a trusted president and prime minister, leaders who want the well-being of the people.

Selected leaders will now have to embark the population on a major project for economic, social, educational, health, environmental, and political progress and growth. A project of this magnitude will not be possible without a climate of trust, access to good information, administrative transparency, good governance, and citizen involvement (including the involvement of the diaspora through a legal framework of integration). We must integrate the entire population into this development task by allowing students, professionals, local leaders, and leaders of organizations to participate in public discussion, decision-making, management, and control on the establishment of a global development plan.

And even if trillions of dollars are allocated by the international community to develop the country, Haiti will not come out of misery or underdevelopment without a sustainable development plan taking into

account education of the masses, decentralization, and the repatriation of cadres—in short, building a society based on justice, law, and equality for all.

To develop Haiti, Haitian leaders must stop swindling and give importance to science, technology, and sustainable development to profoundly transform this society. An informed, involved, and mobilized Haitian population is an effective weapon for Haiti's development. Investing in people is the answer to achieve this goal. That's why, Haitian people, I recommend investing in the youth.

The youth is a weapon for Haiti.
 Training the youth guarantees a good future.
 You will have a rich and thriving country.
 Haiti needs its youth to build its democracy,
 A treasure that never perishes.
 The youth is the strength of the country.
 In the footsteps of a rejuvenated youth,
 You will have a fulfilled people
 In a rich and blessed country,
 Engaged and thoughtful.
 In Vertières, I abolished
 Slavery, and I created the word "democracy."
 A century or more before the United States,
 Seeing his people degraded
 Is an affront to an informed leader.
 O people, do you know what represents Haiti
 In the United Nations assembly?
 It is the first independent black republic, built
 On the ideals of justice and democracy.
 Haitian people! Admire the youth in your country.
 They are a bearer of hope and life;
 Despite all the trials and adventures,
 O people, the youth in Haiti
 Will one day take the torch of democracy
 To restore order in the country.
 Confident in what I predict,
 I wish for a flourishing future
 Full of prosperity to infinity

In Haiti, this darling paradise.
That being said,
I ask the imperialist powers,
After I break the slave system,
To end the embargo
That for three centuries Haiti has worn on its back.

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CHAPTER XIII

END THE HISTORIC EMBARGO ON HAITI

It is time for the international to stop the gruesome plan to gently strangle this rebellious island to give a lesson to the ideals of 1804.

—Jean Jacques Dessalines

Haiti continues to pay, at a high price, the consequences of its birth, according to Christophe Wargny of *Le Monde diplomatique* in February 2010. The journalist has published his article a month after the earthquake of January 12, which has left more than three hundred thousand dead. The first independent black republic in the world continues to drag behind the legacy of three hundred years of colonization. The war of independence that has caused a global embargo on the young nation is another factor related to the underdevelopment of the country. Haiti has been banished from 1804 to 1862 in the list of independent countries and

then has suffered the worst abuse in its history. The great powers of the time—the United States, France, England, Spain—have blocked all trade between the young republic and other countries of the world. Here is a statement from the French National Assembly:

We declare to all those who will belong, that to retaliate against enemies and detractors of the Republic, all relations and communications by commercial or private buildings, between Haiti and the various islands of the Archipelago of the wind and leeward, are rigorously prohibited as from the first of May next.

Consequently, all commercial or privately-owned vessels, which will enter the ports of the Republic, after the first of May, coming from the aforesaid islands or colonies, will be seized and confiscated, together with all that will exist on board, half for the benefit of the state, half for the benefit of anyone will make known the contravention.

This secret article of the text added to the Treaty of Paris concluded between France and England guaranteed to the former state the power to assert its rights over the young republic. The text is worded as follows: “In the event that His Majesty the Most Honorable Christian deems it appropriate to employ any means whatsoever, even that of arms, to recover Santo Domingo and bring back under his obedience the population of this colony, His Britannic Majesty undertakes not to put in it, or to allow it to be put by any of his subjects, directly or indirectly an obstacle. S. M. B., however, reserves to his subjects the right to trade in the ports of Santo Domingo, which would not be attacked or occupied by the French authorities.”

The first act displayed by the powers of the time was a quarantine of the new state. It was necessary to prevent the deed of Haiti from being repeated on the continent where the slave trade and slavery made the wealth of the metropolises. England, the United States, France, Spain, and the allies had, so to speak, gone the distance to keep Haiti isolated, keep it out of international life, and hinder its rise.

For more than sixty years after independence, the country survived the international embargo. France and the imperialist countries had in their

plan to suffocate the Haitian economy to force my regime to negotiate independence. But I swore that I would never accept the dictates of whites.

Raised in my school, Henri Christophe had the same feeling. At the moment when Pétion received in the West a delegation led by Dauxion-Lavaysse, dispatched to negotiate independence, Christophe in the North made Germain Franco, who was part of the same delegation, tried for treachery and shot Augustin Franco alias.

Europe, one of the great powers of the eighteenth century, was so angry with the young nation that, for more than half a century, Haiti remained totally isolated diplomatically, punished as the only independent state of the Caribbean to evade colonial rule by its own means. Isolated politically and economically, the country had so far been paying the price for the international blockade. Indeed, no country at the time had taken the first step to integrate Haiti in the concert of sovereign nations, which strengthened the weakening of the country and delivered the young republic to isolation.

Threatened by France and deceived by the promises of Spain and England, to save the gains of 1804, I fell back on the United States, whose independence had been declared on July 4, 1776. I continued the foreign policy of Toussaint-Louverture. I named Brunel (Toussaint's former trusted agent) Haiti's representative to the United States. This appointment aimed to strengthen existing ties between the two countries and to establish diplomatic and friendly relations with a view to officially recognize the Haitian independence.

In February 1804, I wrote an official letter to Pres. Thomas Jefferson calling for the recognition of Haiti's independence and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States. Jefferson, who was a notorious and recognized anti-Haitian, putting himself on the side of the European colonialist powers, had not given a favorable response to this correspondence. On the contrary, he forced the US Congress to vote for the US embargo on Haiti, what was imposed in 1805. To the French chargé d'affaires Louis A. Pichon, sent by Talleyrand to undertake a misinformation campaign against my empire, President Jefferson declared, "The United States opposes with the strongest force to the independence of the island under black domination. I would like that the authority of France be restored to Santo Domingo."

Under my empire, Haitian-American relations were essentially commercial. They consisted in exchanging tropical products (coffee, sugar,

cotton, cocoa, Campeche wood, skins of animals) with weapons and ammunition to ward off a possible return of the French. But it was unequal trade; taking advantage of our situation as a country without international recognition, the Americans bought our products at cheap prices and sold us products at a high price. In addition, in our ports, they refused to pay taxes and corrupted our customs employees and local chiefs. In Les Cayes in 1806, foreign traders would provide the necessary money to pay the soldiers to revolt against my regime. Haitian-American relations were suspended in 1806 by a US congressional vote on February 28 prohibiting any trade with Haiti at the request of France.

Despite this vote, Pétion continued my diplomatic policy, even going as far as maintaining military relations with the United States. In 1812, he sent a Haitian contingent of 150 soldiers to Chalmette, Louisiana, to help the Americans in their second war of independence against England. He then granted special privileges to American ships at the request of US commercial agent W. Taylor.

But these opportunities did not change the refusal of the official recognition of Haitian independence. To force the United States to help Haiti, the senate of the republic passed on October 15, 1814, a law that granted additional privileges to English products at the expense of US products. Faced with the refusal of the United States to recognize independence, on July 28, 1817, the Haitian Senate passed a new law that maintained the privileges granted to English products.

When he came to power in 1818, Boyer pursued a dual policy: to reunify the country and then the island (1822–1844) at the national level and to continue the fight for the recognition of independence at the international level. In July 1822, Boyer's secretary-general pleaded to J. Q. Adams to formally recognize our independence.

Despite the recognition of France's independence from Haiti in 1825, the US Congress successfully opposed the country's participation in the summit of independent countries of America held in Panama City in 1826. When US leaders received the invitation by Colombia to participate in the Congress of Panama, which was to bring together, for the first time, all the free states of the American continent, the American leaders protested as soon as they learned that the issue of the recognition of the Haitian independence would be on the agenda. The Americans threatened to boycott the meeting in case this meeting included representatives from Haiti. Sen. Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, for example, warned,

Our policy towards Haiti has been set for 33 years. We have established commercial relations with her, but no diplomatic relations. We do not receive his Mulatto Consuls or his Black Ambassadors. And why? Because the Peace of eleven States will not allow the exhibition among them of the fruits of a successful Negro insurrection. It will not allow Black Ambassadors and Consuls to give their fellow Blacks in the United States proof of the honors that await them if they attempted a similar effort. It will not allow this fact to be seen and it is said that for the murder of their masters and their mistresses, they will find friends among the whites of the United States.

And Sen. Edward Everett from Massachusetts added, “I will yield the whole continent to anyone who would take it: to England, to France, to Spain. I wish it were swallowed up in the heart of the ocean before I saw any part of the white America, be converted into a continental Haiti by this frightful process of bloodshed and desolation by which only such a catastrophe could have been achieved.”

If the United States, from 1822, recognized the independence of the new Hispanic republics of Argentina, Colombia, Chile, and Mexico, the Haitian independence would be recognized, however, in 1862.

Now the question is, do Western countries—particularly France and Spain, which looted Haiti for three centuries, and the United States, which occupied the country for nineteen years (1915–1934)—have a role to play in developing Haiti? The establishment of a plan to help rebuild infrastructures and launch the Haitian economy—are they not obligations on the part of such powers to compensate for their wrongs?

As the United States secretary of state, Gen. George Marshall said in a speech at Harvard University on June 5, 1947, “It makes sense for the United States to do everything to help restore the world’s economic health, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace.”

I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, say it is necessary that France, Spain, England, Portugal, Belgium, and all these rich countries of the West that have built their wealth in the slave trade do everything to help restore the socioeconomic stability of Haiti and Africa, without which there will be no stability in the world, for both Haitians and Africans will continue to flee misery in their countries and challenge the immigration laws of these capitalist nations.

Three major events marked the Haitian history during the late nineteenth century. The Cap-Haïtien earthquake (1842), the Lüders affair (1897), and the execution of the three Coicou brothers who supported the candidacy of Anténor Firmin (1908).

On Saturday, May 7, 1842, a violent earthquake hit the northern part of Haiti. This appalling earthquake destroyed the cities of Môle Saint-Nicolas, Port-de-Paix, and Fort-Liberté. Among the other affected cities was Cap-Haïtien, the capital of Santo Domingo, which was suddenly reduced to dust.

Demesvar Delorme was playing marbles with his brother when he noticed that some of the soldiers marching in the parade on Saturday stumbled and fell quite grotesquely. Here is how the author describes the scene:

A thud, a distant, lugubrious roar, as if coming from a deep gulf, is heard on the east side. . . . We stumble, my brother and I also fall. The steeplechase of the cathedral that I had in front of the air, the bells ringing with the chime of the carillon without rhythm, sinister, a horrible knell. The bell tower collapses, the upper parts first, then the church fell, and all the houses, and all the houses that I saw, and finally the whole city. A glowing red gleam, agitated in all directions, which had become a dark, gloomy gleam, glowing red gleams, agitated in all directions.

In addition to the earthquake, a tidal wave had invaded the commercial streets of the waterfront, leaving a nauseating thick black mud after its passage. In *Pour l'histoire religieuse du diocèse du Cap-Haïtien*, Mgr. Jean-Marie Jan said that “the sky was so obscured by the whirlwinds of dust that it looked like a complete night. The sea rushed over the town, into the houses bordering the quay, and withdrew at once, fortunately. . . . Throughout the night, there were frequent oscillations and violent concussions. Moreover, the trepidations of the soil were repeated every day and, sometimes, several times, for nearly a month.

Cap-Haïtien Cathedral, an imposing neoclassical building, would be fully restored one hundred years after its collapse, in 1942, under the government of Élie Lescot. The earthquake did not spare the Citadelle Laferrière and inflicted irreparable damage to the Palace of Sans-Souci, whose chapel would be faithfully rebuilt under the administration of

Sténio Vincent. It was not until 1844 that the Haitian government, after a visit of the president Philippe Guerrier, was granted 50,000 gourdes for the city, which would be used to rebuild the quay and to clear the streets of their rubble.

The other highlight was the diplomatic incident between Haiti and Germany commonly known as the Lüders affair. The homeland was humiliated by the Germans during this affair. The acceptance by Pres. Tiresias Simon Sam to execute the ultimatum of the German government was the worst humiliation made to the Haitian nation by a foreign country. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, followed the course of events in the Hall of Initiates. I exploded with anger when I saw the white flag hoisted on the flagpole of the National Palace. Christophe, Capois, Boisrond-Tonnerre, Lamartinière, Marie-Jeanne, and all the heroes of the war of independence were shocked by the capitulation of the Haitian government.

Here is the report of the facts in the archives: On September 21, 1897, two police officers entered the central stables in Port-au-Prince to arrest nineteen-year-old Dorléus, suspected of robbery. Emile Lüders—born of a German father, the owner of the place—alerted by the noise that occurred on the ground floor of his apartment, came down, furious; he opposed the arrest of his employee who, despite everything, was taken to the police station.

Lüders, unhappy, went to the police station to arrogantly demand the release of his employee. He was insulting the police and even hurting them. He was apprehended for rebellion, assault, and battery on the police and was brought before the justice of the peace. The judge sentenced him to one month in prison and a fine of forty-eight gourdes. He appealed the decision. The civil court set up in the court of appeals reversed the decision and, in a verdict on October 14, 1897, sentenced him to one-year imprisonment.

Three days later, with the support of US ambassador W. F. Powell, German chargé d'affaires Count Schwerin obtained the release of Lüders, who left the country on October 22, 1897. Not satisfied by the fact that the case had not been dismissed by the judges, Schwerin demanded the following on December 6, 1897, from the Haitian government:

1. The return of Émile Lüders to the country because he was born of a Haitian mother and a German father

2. A ransom of \$20,000 to be paid to Germany
3. A twenty-one gun salute to the German flag
4. A letter of apology addressed to the German government
5. An official ceremony organized in honor of Chargé d'Affaires Count Schwerin

Four hours were given to Haitian president Tiresias Simon Sam to fulfill the conditions. If accepted, he would hoist a white flag to the mast of the National Palace; otherwise, the German warships *Charlotte* and *Stein*, which had dropped anchor in the bay of Port-au-Prince, would bomb the capital.

The Haitian government exacted the demands of Germany. I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor, used the pen of Oswald Durand, the author of "Choucounne," to answer the Germans.

When our ancestors broke their shackles,
 It was not for crossing his arms.
 To work as masters, the slaves
 Have kissed the hand-to-hand death,
 Their blood, afloat, fattened our hills.
 Our turn; yellow and black, let's go!
 Let's dig the soil left by Dessalines:
 Our fortune is there, in our valleys.
 Independence is ephemeral
 Without the right to equality!
 To tread, happy, this earth,
 We need the austere motto! "God, work, freedom!" . . .
 The work therefore, descendants of Africa,
 Yellow and black, sons of the same cradle.
 Ancient Europe and young America
 We can see from a distance the fierce assault.
 Let's dig the ground in the year one thousand eight hundred and four
 We conquered our ancestors with strong arms.
 It's our turn now to fight
 With this cry: "progress or death!"

The assassination of the three Coicou brothers was the first event that began the upsetting twentieth-century history of Haiti. Massillon

Coicou took his heart and soul for the candidacy of Anténor Firmin in the presidential election of 1902 and led a fierce campaign against the opposite camp of Nord Alexis. Returning to Haiti in 1905, in the midst of the terror regime instituted by Nord Alexis, he publicly expressed his support for Firmin and his desire to overthrow Alexis. After the crushing of the Firminist insurrection in January 1908, Coicou went underground, continuing the armed rebellion against Alexis. Captured with two of his brothers, Horace and Pierre-Louis, all three, plus twenty other insurgents, were summarily executed in the night of March 14 to 15, 1908, in front of the outer walls of the cemetery of Port-au-Prince.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the country was in a state of almost permanent insurrection. From 1910 to 1915, five presidents succeeded one another; this situation culminated with the execution of 167 political prisoners on July 27, 1915, followed by a popular revolt that overthrew the government and put to death Pres. Vilbrun Guillaume Sam. This insurrection, led by Rosalvo Bobo, worried the United States, which was then considering its interests in the sugar company HASCO and the merchant bank Kuhn, Loeb & Co. The Americans occupied Haiti in 1915 to diminish the influence of the Germans, very present in the affairs of the Haitian state, under the pretext of “restoring peace and order” in the country.

The United States policy for all of America was expressed in principle by the Monroe Doctrine. This doctrine posed the principle “America to the Americans.” In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt recognized that the United States had a right of intervention in American countries.

It must be recognized that the occupation and expansion of North American imperialism in the Caribbean and Central America began well before Roosevelt’s declaration. In 1889, the United States government made every effort to set up a naval base at Môle Saint-Nicolas. In 1893, the Americans occupied the Hawaiian Islands; and in 1898, they took control of Puerto Rico. In 1898, the United States went to war against Spain for the control of Cuba. The establishment in 1903 of a naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the construction of the Panama Canal consolidated the American plan of military control of the region. In 1905, they carried out an operation of the international police in Nicaragua. In 1907, the Americans took control of the customs of the Dominican Republic; in 1909, it was Honduras’s turn. In 1912, their second intervention turned into a military occupation in Honduras. In 1914, the marines invaded

Mexico, landing at Veracruz. On July 28, 1915, it was the American occupation of Haiti, followed by that of the Dominican Republic in 1916. In 1917, the United States bought from Denmark the Virgin Islands. After establishing their protectorate in Cuba, annexing Puerto Rico and the Philippines, and obtaining control of Dominican and Haitian customs, the United States finalized the Monroe Doctrine.

The American occupation of Haiti was facilitated by the government of Antoine Simon, who signed contracts with American firms on scandalous terms by the creation of the company of the National Railway, the Wharf of Port-au-Prince, from the Transways and Electric Lighting Company. The acquisition in 1911 by the National City Bank of New York, under the pressure of the State Department, of 20 percent of the capital of the National Bank of the Republic of Haiti, opened the US government control of the country's finance and customs.

In July 1914, upon the instructions of the National City Bank, the Bank of the Republic of Haiti refused to renew for the fiscal year 1914–1915 the budget agreement under article 12 of its contract, which provided for monthly advances of 600,000 gourdes and \$500,000 for the payment of public employees. This decision caused a popular uprising, followed by violent protests in the streets of Port-au-Prince. After a difficult start because of the racism of the marines and the imposition of chores, the American occupation ended in 1934.

After the occupation, the political instability created by the controversy between the mulattoes and black populist military for control of power continued. Élie Lescot, Jean Dumarsais Estimé, Paul Eugène Magloire, Nemours Pierre-Louis, Franck Sylvain, Daniel Figiolé—the fragile governments succeeded one after the other. It was not until 1957, with the rise of François Duvalier, who would become life president of Haiti in 1964, that the country saw an apparent political stability.

Nicknamed “Papa Doc” for his past as a country doctor, Duvalier's father inaugurates a personal power thanks to the denunciation and feeds the terror with the help of his partisans, nicknamed Tontons Macoutes, real squadrons of the death. Before dying in 1971, François Duvalier appointed his son, Jean-Claude, as his heir; the latter would become the youngest president in the world and would be nicknamed “Baby Doc.” Jean-Claude Duvalier continued to lead in the footsteps of his father (1971–1986) before being forced to exile in France after a popular uprising on February 7, 1986.

The National Council of Government led by the commander in chief of the army Henri Namphy took control. A new constitution was passed on March 29, 1987, and general elections were held on November 29, 1987. These elections would be canceled after the massacre at Ruelle Vaillant, where dozens of voters lost their lives. On January 17, 1988, from a political party election, Leslie Manigat—general secretary of the party Rassemblement des Démocrates Nationaux Progressistes—became president of Haiti with 50.29 percent of the vote, ahead of ten other competitors.

After four months in power, Manigat was overthrown on June 17 by a military coup led by General Namphy, who himself was removed from power by a second coup on September 17, 1988, which was conducted this time by Gen. Prosper Avril, a former member of the National Council of Government. Accused in the massacre of St. Jean Bosco on September 11, 1988, the military government of Avril left power in March 1990. A judge of the court of cassation, Mrs. Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, replaced him on March 13, 1990, and organized the elections in December 1990, during which Jean-Bertrand Aristide became president of Haiti.

After six months in power, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown by a coup led by Gen. Raoul Cédras on September 29, 1991. For three years, the paramilitary force called FRAPH would intimidate the population and murder several members of the base of resistance to the coup; these members, linked to the popular sector, preached the return of Aristide to power. In 1994, Aristide was reinstated by the administration of Bill Clinton during Operation Restore Democracy.

Aristide left the presidency in 1996, and René Préval succeeded him. The latter executed the neoliberal plan, which was one of the conditions negotiated by Aristide with the Americans for his return. Préval ended his five-year term, and Aristide was reelected in 2000 with a low percentage of votes compared with the 1990 presidential election, which he won with more than 65 percent of votes, to become the first democratically elected president in Haiti. After several months of pressure exerted by the international community, particularly by France “with the intervention of Régis Debray and Véronique de Villepin-Albanel,” Aristide—arrested by the American marshals—was forced to leave the country. The president of the court of cassation Boniface Alexandre assumed power, assisted by Gérard Latortue as prime minister.

In February 2006, after the elections marked by uncertain ballot counting, thanks to popular events, René Préval was elected a second time to the presidency, the only Haitian president to complete his two terms. Préval left power on March 14, 2001, one year and two months after the tragic earthquake of January 12, 2010.

From May 14, 2011, to February 6, 2016, Michel Martelly—a musician without any political experience—was elected president of the republic after the direct intervention of the American ambassador, submitting the order to the Provisional Electoral Council that Martelly should participate in the second round instead of Jude Célestin. In November 2016, Jovenel Moïse became president of Haiti after winning the presidential elections in the first round with 54 percent of the vote.

For more than thirty years, from 1986 to 2017, we have witnessed the same political turbulence that is polluting the Haitian social environment.

- February 7, 1986: end of the reign of Jean-Claude Duvalier, and the National Council of Government (CNG) was appointed with Gen. Henri Namphy, Col. William Regala, Col. Max Vallès, Col. Prosper Avril, Gérard Gourgue, and Alix Cinéas as members
- February 17, 1986: the rehabilitation of the blue and red flag
- March 29, 1987: vote for the new constitution of Haiti
- November 29, 1987: Ruelle Vaillant massacre, ending the presidential and parliamentary elections
- January 17, 1988: Leslie F. Manigat acceded to the presidency of Haiti
- June 19, 1988: a military coup put an end to the Manigat-Célestin government
- End of June 1988: Gen. Henri Namphy dissolved Parliament and announced the drafting of a new constitution
- September 17, 1988: a coup d'état orchestrated by a group of soldiers, with Sgt. Joseph Hebrews as leader, overthrew General Namphy and acclaimed Gen. Prosper Avril as president of Haiti
- March 9, 1990: General Avril was forced to resign, and Judge Ertha Pascal Trouillot succeeded him
- December 16, 1990: Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected president of Haiti with 67 percent of the votes

- January 7, 1991: coup d'état of Roger Lafontant and violence in the country, especially in the capital, where several houses, including the apostolic nuncio, were burned by Lavalas supporters
- September 30, 1991: after seven months in power, Aristide was exiled. Gen. Raoul Cédras, commander in chief of the Armed Forces of Haiti, led the country through Joseph Nérette, a judge at the court of cassation
- June 19, 1992: Marc Bazin became provisional president and held the office of prime minister at the same time
- October 14, 1993: assassination in Port-au-Prince of the minister of justice François Guy Malary
- October 15, 1993: President Aristide's letter to the Security Council to urge member states to take the necessary measures to strengthen the provisions of resolution 873
- September 11, 1993: Antoine Izméry was abducted by a dozen armed henchmen in the very walls of the Sacred Heart Church and, dragged out, was executed in the street in front of the church
- May 6, 1994: the Security Council imposed new sanctions on Haiti by resolution 917, and the mandate of MICIVIH was extended by one year by resolution 48/27B of July 8, 1994, of the general assembly
- May 12, 1994: Émile Jonassaint, a judge at the court of cassation, occupied the office as provisional president of Haiti
- July 11, 1994: the provisional government issued a decree declaring undesirable MICIVIH personnel in the country and gave them forty-eight hours to pack
- July 1994: an embargo was adopted against Haiti by the UN Security Council
- August 28, 1994: murder of Fr. Jean-Marie Vincent
- August 30, 1994: at the Haitian Embassy in Washington, Robert Malval was officially inaugurated as prime minister by Pres. Jean-Bertrand Aristide
- September 17, 1994: talks by former US president Jimmy Carter to convince the military to give up power
- September 18, 1994: the first contingents of the multinational invading army under Gen. Hugh Shelton took control of Haiti
- September 29, 1994: the Security Council voted to lift the embargo against Haiti

- October 15, 1994: Pres. Jean-Bertrand Aristide returned to Haiti after three years of exile
- October 19, 1994: special envoy Dante Caputo resigned in his post
- October 23, 1994: Lakhdar Brahimi, former Algerian foreign minister, replaced him as special representative of the UN secretary-general
- December 17, 1995: former prime minister René Préval became president of Haiti by winning the first round of voting
- May 9, 1997: resignation of PM Rosny Smarth
- April 3, 2000: the journalist Jean Léopold Dominique and Radio Haiti-Inter employee Jean-Claude Louissaint were assassinated in Delmas
- May 21, 2000: presidential and parliamentary elections were held in the country
- November 26, 2000: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, in the second round, won the election; with a majority of seventy-two seats out of eighty-two obtained by Lavalas, Aristide's political party, in the controversial spring 2000 election, had control over the country
- December 3, 2001: Brignol Lindor was murdered in Petit-Goâve by a group of men close to Mayor Dumai Bonny
- September 22 to 23, 2003: assassination of Amiot Métayer of the Cannibal Army in Gonaïves in Saint-Marc
- January 1, 2004: high-tension Haiti bicentennial day with antigovernment demonstrations and violence against protesters, leaving an indeterminate number of wounded; despite the tension, Aristide went to Gonaïves in the middle of the shots
- February 29, 2004: the Americans forced Aristide, his family, and his close collaborators to go into exile; the Alexandre-Latortue administration was appointed to lead the country
- June 1, 2004: in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1542, MINUSTAH was established in Haiti
- February 7, 2006: René Préval became, for a second time, president of Haiti
- January 12, 2010: at 4:53 p.m., an earthquake measuring 7.0 to 7.3 struck southern Haiti and killed more than three hundred thousand people and caused considerable material damage, mainly in the center of Port-au-Prince
- November 28, 2010: presidential and legislative elections

- December 7, 2010: Mirlande Manigat came in first position with 31, 37 percent of the vote, and Jude Célestin in second place with 22, 48 percent; the US Embassy disapproved of the results of the Provisional Electoral Council
- January 16, 2011: Jean-Claude Duvalier returned to Haiti
- March 18, 2011: Jean-Bertrand Aristide also returned to Port-au-Prince
- March 20, 2011: Michel Martelly, who replaced Jude Célestin, won the second round with 67.6 percent of the vote
- October 25, 2015: first round of the presidential election and the second round of legislative elections, with the results of the first round widely disputed by the opposition, which had condemned an electoral coup by the ruling party; the candidate of the incumbent party, Jovenel Moïse, had collected 32.76 votes against 25, 29 percent, for Jude Célestin.
- February 7, 2016: the term of Martelly ended, and Jocelerme Privert was elected by the national assembly to succeed him provisionally

After numerous postponements of the second round of presidential elections in 2016, the election was finally canceled because of irregularities. A new vote was held on November 20, 2016. Jovenel Moïse with 55, 67 percent of the votes, won the first round of elections and became the forty-second president of Haiti. He was sworn in on February 7, 2017.

Haitian people! I, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, your emperor from the Hall of Initiates, look at the fragility of democracy. As founder of the homeland, I have the ultimate confidence that despite your degradation, with renewed consciousness, you will regain your rebirth.

*

With this sentence uttered, the emperor slowly closed the big book in which he read his message. He broadly opened both arms in adoration and declared firmly, “O people, the time has come for me to repeat the great journey. Before returning to the Hall of Initiates, I leave you with Boukman’s prayer:

The god who created the earth, who created the sun that gives us light.
The god who holds the oceans and roars the thunder.
God who has ears to hear: you who is hidden in the clouds,

Who shows us where we are, you see that the White has made us suffer.
The God of the white man asks him to commit crimes.
But the God inside us wants us to do well.
Our god, who is so good, so right, commands us to avenge our wrongs.
It is he who will direct our weapons and bring us victory.
He is the one who will help us.
We should all reject the image of the god of the white man who is so ruthless.
Listen to the voice of freedom that sings in all our hearts.”

The prayer ended. The emperor took the form of a gigantic black butterfly and flew over the national territory by spreading his blessing on the ten departments. With the mission accomplished, the spirit faded from the face of the earth.

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Chapter XIV

SOME HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

THE CODE NOIR

Seen as the symbol of the slave trade and slavery practiced by France, the Code Noir (or edict for the policing of slavery)—which includes sixty articles—is promulgated in March 1685, the same year as the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, under the reign of Louis XIV. Established by Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, he sets the legal status of slaves in the French West Indies. The ordinance is a royal act, which will be duly registered and will have the force of law in the French colonies.

Applied first in the Caribbean, the Code Noir affects Guadeloupe and Martinique in 1685, Santo Domingo in 1687, Guyana in 1704, Mauritius and Réunion in 1723. As the first regulation of slavery, it will be little

modified and will remain in force until the decree of abolition of slavery on April 27, 1848. There are articles about physical punishment and a declaration that the slave is a piece of furniture.

Art. 1

Let us wish that the Edict of the late king of glorious memory, our most honored lord and father, of April 23, 1615, be executed in our islands; In doing so, let all our officers drive out of our islands all the Jews who have established their residence, to whom, as to the declared enemies of the Christian name, we command to leave it in three months from the day of publication hereof, on pain of confiscation of bodies and property.

Art. 2

All the slaves who will be in our islands will be baptized and educated in the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion. Let the inhabitants who buy newly arrived negroes warn the governors and stewards of the said islands within eight days at the latest, on pain of an arbitrary fine, which will give the necessary orders to have them instructed and baptized in due time.

Art. 3

We forbid any public exercise of religion other than Catholic, Apostolic and Roman. We want offenders to be punished as rebellious and disobedient to our commandments. Let us forbid all assemblies for this purpose, which we declare illicit and seditious, subject to the same penalty which will take place against the masters who will allow it and suffer with regard to their slaves.

Art. 4

Will not be proposed, no commanders to the direction of the Negroes, who do not make profession of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion, under penalty of confiscation of the said Negroes against the masters who have proposed them and of arbitrary punishment against the commanders who will have accepted the said direction.

Art. 5

Let us forbid our subjects of the Protestant religion from bringing any trouble or impediment to our other subjects, even to their slaves, in the free exercise of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion, on pain of exemplary punishment.

Art. 6

Let us enjoin all our subjects, of whatever quality and condition, to observe the days of Sundays and feasts, which are guarded by our subjects of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion. We forbid them to work, or to have their slaves work on the said days, from midnight to midnight until the cultivation of the earth, the manufacture of sugar, and all other works, on pain of a fine and arbitrary punishment against masters and confiscation of both sugars and slaves who will be surprised by our officers in the work.

Art. 7

They also forbid them to keep the Negro market and all other goods on the said days, on the same penalty of confiscation of the goods which will then be at the market, and of an arbitrary fine against the merchants.

Art. 8

Let us declare our subjects who are not of Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion unable to contract in the future any valid marriages, declare bastards the children who will be born of such conjunctions, that we want to be held and reputed, hold and repute for true cohabiting.

Art. 9

Free men who have had one or more children of their concubine with slaves, together the masters who have suffered, will each be fined 2,000 pounds of sugar, and, if they are the masters of the slave of which they have had said children, want, besides the fine, that they are deprived of the slave and the children and that they and they are adjudged to the hospital, without being able to be emancipated. However, let us not understand the present article to take place when the free man who was not married to another person during his concubine with his slave, will marry in the forms observed by the Church said slave, who will be franked by this means and children made free and legitimate.

Art. 10

The solemnities prescribed by the Ordinance of Blois and the Declaration of 1639 for marriages will be observed both with regard to free persons and slaves, without, however, requiring the consent of the father and mother of the slave but that of the master only.

Art. 11

Let us expressly forbid the priests to proceed to the marriages of slaves, if they do not show the consent of their masters. Also forbid the masters to use any constraints on their slaves to marry them against their will.

Art. 12

The children born of slave marriages will be slaves and will belong to the masters of slave women and not to those of their husbands, if the husband and wife have different masters.

Art. 13

If the slave husband has married a free woman, the children, both male and female, must follow the condition of their mother and be free like her, notwithstanding the servitude of their father, and if the father is free and mother slave, children are slaves alike.

Art. 14

The masters will be required to have their baptized slaves buried in the holy land in the cemeteries intended for this purpose. And, with regard to those who die without having received baptism, they will be buried in some field near the place where they will have died.

Art. 15

Let us forbid the slaves to carry any offensive weapons or big sticks, scarcely whipping and confiscating weapons for the benefit of the person who will seize them, except only those who are sent to hunt by their masters and who will carry their tickets or known brands.

Art. 16

Let us also forbid slaves belonging to different masters to gather together day or night under the pretext of weddings or otherwise, either at one of their masters or elsewhere, let alone in the highways or remote places, on pain of punishment. body which cannot be less than whip and fleur de lys; and, in case of frequent recidivism and other aggravating circumstances, may

be punished with death, which we leave to the arbitration of the judges. Let us enjoin all our subjects to run to the offenders, and arrest them and bring them to prison, though they are not officers and there is no decree against them.

Art. 17

Masters who are convinced of having allowed or tolerated such assemblies composed of other slaves as of those who belong to them will be condemned in their own and private names to repair all the damage that will have been done to their neighbors on the occasion of said assemblies and in fine of 10 ECU for the first time and twice in case of recidivism.

Art. 18

Let us forbid the slaves to sell canes of sugar for any reason or occasion whatsoever, even with the permission of their masters, barely whipping slaves, 10 livres tournaments against the master who has allowed it and such a fine against the buyer.

Art. 19

They are also forbidden to display for sale at the market or to wear in private houses to sell any kind of foodstuff, even fruits, vegetables, firewood, grasses for the food of animals and their manufactures, without the express permission of their masters, by a ticket or by known marks; barely claims of things so sold, without refund of price, for masters and 6 pounds fine tournaments to their profit against buyers.

Art. 20

To this end we want two persons to be appointed by our officers in each market to examine the goods and merchandise to be brought there by the slaves, together with the notes and marks of their masters, which they will carry.

Art. 21

Allow all our inhabitants of the islands to seize all the things of which they will find the slaves loaded, when they will not have notes of their masters, nor known marks, to be returned incessantly to their masters, if their The house is near the place where their slaves have been found guilty: otherwise they will be sent to the hospital to be in custody until their masters have been notified.

Art. 22

The masters will be required to have their slaves, aged ten years and up, supplied each week for food, two and a half pots, measure of Paris, of cassava flour, or three cassavas each weighing two pounds, and at least half, or equivalent, with 2 lbs. of salted beef, or 3 lbs. of fish, or other things in proportion: and to the children, since they were weaned to the age of ten, half food above.

Art. 23

We forbid them to give the slaves brandy of cane or guildive, to take the place of the substance mentioned in the preceding article.

Art. 24

They likewise forbid them to discharge the food and substance of their slaves by allowing them to work certain days of the week on their own behalf.

Art. 25

The masters will be required to provide each slave, each year, with two cloths of canvas or four yards of canvas, at the discretion of the masters.

Art. 26

Slaves who are not fed, clothed and maintained by their masters, as we have ordered by these presents, may give notice to our attorney general and put their memoirs in his hands, on which, and even ex officio, if the advice comes from elsewhere, the masters will be prosecuted at his request and without charge; what we want to be observed for the barbaric and inhuman crimes and treatments of the masters towards their slaves.

Art. 27

Disabled slaves through old age, sickness or otherwise, whether the disease is incurable or not, will be fed and maintained by their masters, and, in case they have abandoned, said slaves will be sold to the hospital, to which the masters will be condemned to pay 6 sols per day each, for the food and the maintenance of each slave.

Art. 28

Declare the slaves to be able to have anything that is not their masters; and all that comes to them by industry, or by the liberality of other persons, or otherwise, in whatever capacity, to be acquired in full ownership to their masters, without the children of slaves, their fathers and mothers, their parents and others cannot claim anything by inheritance, dispositions inter vivos or because of death; which provisions declare us null, together all the promises and obligations which they would have made, as being made by people incapable of disposing and contracting on their own.

Art. 29

Nevertheless, let the masters be bound by what their slaves will have done by their command, by all that they have managed and negotiated in the shops, and by the particular

kind of commerce to which their masters have assigned them, and if their masters have not given them any order and have not appointed them, they will be held only up to what will be to their advantage, and, if nothing has turned to the profit of the masters, the nest egg of the said slaves that the masters will have allowed them to be held, after the masters have deduced by preference what may be due to them; except that the nest egg consisted in whole or in part of goods, of which the slaves would be allowed to traffic separately, on which their masters will come only by contribution to the ground the pound with the other creditors.

Art. 30

Slaves may not be provided with office or commission having any public function, nor be constituted agents by other than their masters to manage and administer any trade, or be arbitrators, experts or witnesses, both in civil and criminal matters: and In the event that they are heard in testimony, their testimony will serve only as a reminder to help the judges to light up elsewhere, without being able to draw any presumption, conjecture, or form of proof.

Art. 31

Slaves cannot be parties to or be tried in civil matters, either by asking for or in defense, or by being civil parties in criminal matters, except their masters to act and defend in civil matters and to prosecute in criminal matters compensation for the outrages and excesses that will have been committed against their slaves.

Art. 32

The slaves can be prosecuted criminally, without the need to render their masters part (if not) in case of complicity: and will be the accused slaves, judges at first instance by the

ordinary judges and by appeal to the Sovereign Council, on the same instruction and with the same formalities as free persons.

Art. 33

The slave, who has struck his master, his mistress or the husband of his mistress, or their children with contusion or bloodshed, or in the face, will be punished with death.

Art. 34

And as to the excesses and acts of slavery committed against slaves, they want them to be severely punished, even if they are dead.

Art. 35

The robberies, even those of horses, caval, mules, oxen or cows, which have been made by slaves or freedmen, will be punished with punishments, even death, if the case so requires.

Art. 36

Theft of sheep, goats, pigs, poultry, sugar canes, peas, millets, manioc, or other vegetables, made by slaves, will be punished according to the quality of the flight, by the judges who, if it is a waste, condemning them to be beaten by the executor of the high justice and marked with a fleur-de-lis.

Art. 37

The masters will be held, in case of theft or other damage caused by their slaves, besides the corporal punishment of slaves, to repair the wrong on their behalf, if they do not prefer to abandon the slave to the one to whom the wrong was done; what they will be obliged to choose in three days, starting from that of the condemnation, otherwise they will be deposed.

Art. 38

The fugitive slave who has been on the run for a month from the day his master denounces him in court, will have his ears cut off and will be marked with a fleur-de-lis on one shoulder; if he reoffends another month to count equally from the day of the denunciation, he will have the ham cut off, and he will be marked with a fleur-de-lis on the other shoulder; and the third time he will be punished with death.

Art. 39

The freedmen, who have given retreat to their homes to runaway slaves, will be condemned by body to the masters by fine of 300 pounds of sugar for each day of detention, and other free persons who have given them such a pension, in 10 pounds. fine tournaments by each day of retention.

Art. 40

The slave punished by death on the denunciation of his non-accomplice master of the crime of which he has been condemned will be estimated before execution by two of the principal inhabitants of the island, who will be appointed by the judge, and the price the estimate will be paid to the master; and, for what to satisfy, it will be imposed by the intendant on each head of the paying negroes rights the amount carried by the estimate, which will be feasted on each of the said negroes and raised by the farmer of the royal domain to avoid expenses.

Art. 41

Let us prevent judges, prosecutors, and clerks from taking any tax in criminal trials against slaves, barely conceded.

Art. 42

Only for the masters, when they believe that their slaves have deserved to be chained and beat them or ropes. They forbid them to be tortured, or to do them any mutilation of limbs, on pain of confiscation of slaves, and to proceed against the masters extraordinarily.

Art. 43

Let us enjoin our officers to criminally prosecute the masters or the commanders who will have killed a slave being under their power or under their direction and to punish the murder according to the atrocity of the circumstances; and, in the event of absolution, let our officers dismiss both the masters and the commanders, without their having to obtain from us letters of grace.

Art. 44

Declare the slaves to be moveable and as such to enter the community, to have no follow-up by mortgage, to be equally divided between the coheirs, without haste and birthright, to be subject to customary dower, feudal withdrawal and lineage, feudal and seigniorial rights, the formalities of decrees, or the entrenchment of the four fifths, in case of disposition because of death and testamentary.

Art. 45

However, we do not intend to deprive our subjects of the faculty of stipulating them peculiar to their persons and theirs on their side and line, as it is practiced for sums of money and other moveable things.

Art. 46

In the seizures of the slaves observed will be the forms prescribed by our ordinances and the customs for the seizures of movable things. We want the money coming from it to be distributed by order of seizures; or in case of collapse, on the ground the pound, after the privileged debts have been paid, and generally that the condition of the slaves is regulated in all cases like that of the other movable things, with the following exceptions.

Art. 47

The husband, the wife, and their immoveable children cannot be seized and sold separately, if they are all under the power of the same master; declare void the seizures and separate sales which are made of them, which we wish to take place in voluntary alienations on sentence, against those who make the disposals, to be deprived of the one or those which they have kept, which will be adjudged buyers, without being required to make any additional price.

Art. 48

Also slaves who are currently working in sugar mills, indigo farms and dwellings, aged fourteen and up to sixty years old, cannot be seized for debts, except for what will be due from the price of their purchase, or that the sugar factory, indigence, habitation, in which they work, is really seized; forbid, under penalty of nullity, to proceed by real seizure and adjudication by decree on the sweets, indigestible and dwellings, without including the negroes of the aforesaid age currently working there.

Art. 49

The judicial farmer of the sugar mills, indigo plantations, or dwellings actually seized jointly with the slaves, will be

required to pay the full price of his lease, without being able to count among the fruits he perceives the children who will be born slaves during his lease.

Art. 50

Let us wish, notwithstanding all contrary conventions, that we declare null, that the said children belong to the party seized, if the creditors are satisfied elsewhere, or to the purchaser, if a decree intervenes; and, for this purpose, mention will be made in the last poster, before the interposition of the decree, of these children born to slaves since the actual seizure. Slaves who have died since the actual seizure in which they were understood will be mentioned in the same poster.

Art. 51

In order to avoid the expense and the length of proceedings, it is necessary to ensure that the full price of the joint award of funds and slaves, and of what will come from the price of judicial leases, is made between the creditors according to the order and their privileges and mortgages, without distinguishing what is for the price of funds from what is for the price of slaves.

Art. 53

The feudal lineages and lords will not be allowed to withdraw the funds ordered, if they do not remove the slaves sold jointly with funds nor the successful tenderer to retain the slaves without the funds.

Art. 54

Let us enjoin the noble and bourgeois usufructuaries, amodiators and other benefactors of the funds to which are attached slaves who work there, to govern said slaves like good fathers of family, without they being held, after their finished administration, to make the price of those who have died or

been reduced by sickness, old age or otherwise, without their fault, and without being able to retain for their benefit the children born of the said slaves during their administration, who we wish to be preserved and returned to those who are masters and owners.

Art. 55

Twenty-year-old masters will be able to free their slaves by any act of life or death, without their being obliged to give reasons for postage, or to require the advice of parents, although they are under twenty-five years old.

Art. 56

Slaves who have been made universal legatees by their masters or appointed executors of their wills or guardians of their children, will be held and reputed, hold them and repute for emancipation.

Art. 57

Let us declare their enfranchisements made in our islands, take them place of birth in our said islands, and the freed slaves do not need our letters of naturalness to enjoy the advantages of our natural subjects of our kingship, lands and countries of our obedience, yet that they were born in foreign countries.

Art. 58

Let the freedmen pay special respect to their old masters, their widows and their children, so that the injury they have done to them will be punished more severely than if it were done to another person and free from them all other useful offices, services and rights which their former masters would like to claim over their persons as well as their property and estates as bosses.

Art. 59

Let us give the freedmen the same rights, privileges and immunities enjoyed by the free-born; want the merit of an acquired freedom to produce in them, for the persons as well as for their goods, the same effects that the happiness of the natural freedom causes to our subjects.

Art. 60

Declare confiscations and fines which have no particular purpose, by these present we belong, to be paid to those who are in charge of the recipe of our rights and our revenues; Nevertheless, it is desired that distraction be made of one-third of the said confiscations and fines for the benefit of the hospital established on the island where they have been adjudicated.

FOR AUTHOR USE ONLY

THE ACT OF CAPITULATION OF THE FRENCH FORCES AFTER THE BATTLE OF VERTIÈRES ON NOVEMBER 18, 1803

Dessalines had transported his headquarters to the village of Upper Cape. At five o'clock in the afternoon on November 19, 1803, he saw arriving at camp Commander Duveyrier, adjutant of Rochambeau, to deal with the surrender of the place. They drew up and signed the following act:

Art. 1

The city of Cape Town and the forts that depend on it will be handed over in ten days, from the present, to General-General Dessalines.

Art. 2

The ammunition of war that will be in the arsenals, the weapons and the artillery will be left in the state where they are presently.

Art. 3

All the ships of war and others which will be judged necessary by the general Rochambeau so much for the transport of the troops and the inhabitants as for the evacuation will be free to go out on the appointed day.

Art. 4

The military and civil officers, the troops composing the garrison of the Cape, will come out with the honors of the war, carrying away their arms and the belongings belonging to their demi-brigades.

Art. 5

The sick and the wounded who are not fit to be transported will be treated in the hospitals until their cure will be specially recommended to the humanity of General Dessalines.

Art. 6

General Dessalines, in giving the assurance of his protection to the inhabitants who will remain in place, demands from the justice of General Rochambeau the liberation of the men of the country, whatever their color, who cannot under any pretext whatsoever, to be forced to embark with the French army.

Art. 7

The troops of the two armies will remain in their positions until the tenth day fixed for the evacuation of the Cape.

Art. 8

General Rochambeau will send, for the sake of the present conventions, the adjutant Urbain Deveau, in exchange for which General Dessalines will hand over an officer of the same rank.

Done double copy and in good faith at the Headquarters of the Army, the aforementioned days, months and years.

Signed: DESSALINES-DUVEYRIER.

THE FIRST PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Haiti, November 29, 1803

The independence of Santo Domingo is proclaimed. Rendered to our first dignity, we have recovered our rights, and we swear never to let them be robbed by any power of the earth. The awful veil of prejudice is now torn! Woe to those who dare to reunite his bloody rags!

Owners of Santo Domingo, who wander in foreign lands, proclaiming our independence, we do not forbid you to return to your property: far from us this unjust thought! We know that there are among you men who have abjured their old errors, renounced their foolish pretensions, and recognized the justice of the cause for which we have shed our blood for twelve years. We will treat those who love us as brothers: they can count on our esteem and friendship, and come back to live among us. The God who protects us, the God of men, commands us to stretch out our victorious arms. But for those who, intoxicated by a proud pride, slaves interested in a criminal pretension, are blind enough to believe that they are privileged beings and to say that heaven has destined them to be our masters and our tyrants, that they never approach the shore of Santo Domingo; they would find only chains or deportation. Let them stay where they are; that they suffer the evils they have so well deserved; that the good men of whose credulity they have for too long abused, overwhelm them with the weight of their indignation!

We have sworn to punish anyone who talks to us about slavery. We will be inexorable, perhaps even cruel, to all the soldiers. Nothing costs and everything is allowed to the world. Let them shed streams of blood, and burn seven eighths of the globe to defend their liberty. They are innocent before God, who has not created a shameful yoke.

If, in the various uprisings that took place, whites, of whom we had no reason to complain, were victims of the cruelty of some soldiers or farmers,

we sincerely regret their unfortunate fate, and declare to the face of the world that these murders have been committed in spite of ourselves. It was impossible, in a crisis like that in which the colony was then, to stop or prevent these disorders. Those who have the slightest knowledge of history know that Fulani, that he is the most civilized on earth, is open to all excesses when agitated by civil discords, and that it is not powerfully seconded meeting new obstacles. But now that the dawn of peace presages and the calm of victory has been overcome, Santo Domingo must take a new look, and its government must now be that of Justice.

Given at the Fort Dauphin headquarters on November 29, 1803, signed Dessalines, Christophe and Clerveaux.

FOR AUTHOR USE ONLY

PROCLAMATION OF JANUARY 1, 1804, OF THE GENERAL-IN-CHIEF JEAN-JACQUES DESSALINES TO THE HAITIAN PEOPLE

Citizens,

It is not enough to have expelled from your country the barbarians who have bloodied it for two centuries; it is not enough to have put a check on the ever-reviving factions which were alternately played out by the phantom of liberty which France exposed to your eyes; it is necessary, by a last act of national authority, to assure forever the empire of liberty in the country which has seen us born; it is necessary to ravish the inhuman government, which has long held our minds in the most humiliating torpor, all hope of being re-enslaved; you have to live independently or die.

Independence or death . . . Let these sacred words rally us, and be the signal for the fighting and our meeting.

Citizens, my compatriots, I gathered on this solemn day these brave soldiers, who, on the eve of receiving the last sighs of liberty, have lavished their blood to save it; those generals who have guided your efforts against tyranny, have not yet done enough for your happiness. The French name is still gloomy in our country.

Everything recounts there the memory of the cruelties of this barbarous people: our law, our manners, our cities, everything still bears the French imprint; what did I say? There are Frenchmen on our island, and you think you are free and independent of this republic which fought all the nations, it is true, but which never conquered those who wanted to be free.

What! Victims for fourteen years of our credulity and indulgence; vanquished, not by French armies, but by the pitiful eloquence of the proclamations of their agents; when will we get tired of breathing the same air as they? His cruelty compared to our patient moderation; its color to ours; the expanse of the seas that separate us, our vengeful climate, tell us enough that they are not our brothers, that they will never become so, and that, if they find an asylum among us, they will still be the masters of our troubles and our divisions.

Indigenous citizens, men, women, girls and children, look at all parts of this island; seek there, you, your wives, you, your husbands, you, your brothers, you, your sisters; what did I say? Look for your children, your babies! What have they become? . . . I shudder to say . . . the prey of these vultures. Instead of these interesting victims, your dismayed eye perceives only their assassins; that the tigers, still disgusting with their blood, and whose frightful presence reproaches you for your insensibility and your slowness in avenging them. What are you waiting for to soothe their manes? Remember that you wanted your remains to rest with those of your fathers, when you drove out tyranny; will you go down to the grave without avenging them? No, their bones would repel yours.

And you, precious men, intrepid generals, insensitive to your own misfortunes, have raised up freedom by lavishing on it all your blood; know that you have done nothing if you do not give to the nations a terrible but just example of the vengeance of a people proud to have recovered their liberty, and jealous of maintaining it; let us frighten all those who dare to attempt to rob her again: let us begin with the French . . . May they shudder when we approach our coasts, if not by the memory of the cruelties which they exercised there, at least by the terrible resolution that we are going to devote to death, whoever, born French, defiles with his sacrilegious foot the territory of liberty.

We have dared to be free, dare to be free of ourselves and for ourselves; let us imitate the child who is growing up: his own weight breaks the edge that becomes useless and hinders his progress. What people fought for us? What people would

like to reap the fruits of our labors? And what dishonorable absurdity to conquer to be slaves. Slaves! Let the French have this qualifying epithet: they have conquered to cease to be free.

Let's walk on other tracks; Let us imitate those people who, bearing their solicitude to the future, and apprehensive of leaving to posterity the example of cowardice, preferred to be exterminated rather than stricken from the number of free peoples.

Let us beware, however, that the spirit of proselytism destroys our work; let us peacefully breathe our neighbors, let them live peacefully under the rule of the laws they have made for themselves, and let us not, revolutionary foolish, make ourselves the legislators of the West Indies, make our glory consist in disturbing the repose of the islands near us: they have not, like the one we inhabit, been sprinkled with the innocent blood of their inhabitants; they have no vengeance to exercise against the authority that protects them. Happy to have never known the plagues that have destroyed us, they can only wish for our prosperity.

Peace to our neighbors! But anathema to the French name! Eternal hatred to France! This is our cry.

Indigenous of Haiti, my fortunate destiny reserved me to be one day the sentinel who had to watch over the idol to which you sacrificed, I watched, fought, sometimes alone, and, if I was happy enough to put in your hands the sacred deposit which you have entrusted to me, consider that it is yours now to preserve it. In fighting for your freedom, I worked for my own happiness. Before consolidating it with laws which assure your free individuality, your leaders whom I assemble here, and myself, we owe you the last proof of our devotion.

Generals, and you chiefs, gathered here near me for the happiness of our country, the day has arrived, this day which must eternalize our glory, our independence. If there could exist among you a lukewarm heart, let him go away and tremble to pronounce the oath which must unite us. Let us swear to the whole universe, to posterity, to ourselves, to renounce France forever, and to die rather than live under its domination. To fight until the last sigh for the independence of our country!

And you, people too long unfortunate, witness the oath that we pronounce, remember that it is on your constancy and your courage that I counted when I embarked on the career of the freedom to fight there the despotism and the tyranny you had been fighting for fourteen years. Remember that I sacrificed everything to defend yourself, parents, children, fortune, and that now I am only rich in your freedom; that my name has become a horror to all people who want slavery, and that despots and tyrants pronounce it only by cursing the day that saw me born; and if you ever refused or received murmuring the laws which the genius who watches over your destinies will dictate to me for your happiness, you deserve the fate of ungrateful people.

But far from me this frightful idea, you will be the support of the freedom that you cherish the support of the leader who commands you.

Put in your hands the oath to live free and independent, and to prefer death to everything that tends to put you back under the yoke.

Finally swear to pursue forever the traitors and enemies of your independence.

Given at the Headquarters army in the city of Gonaïves, January 1, 1804, the 1st year of independence.

Dessalines, general in chief;

Christophe, Pétion, Clerveaux, Geffrard, Vernet, Gabart, divisional generals; P. Romain, G. Gerin, L. Capois, Daut, Jean-Louis Francois, Ferou, Cangé, G. Bazelais, Magloire Ambroise, J. J. Herne, Toussaint Brave, Yayou, General Brigade; Bonnet, F. Papalier, Morelly, Chevalier, Marion, Adjutants-General; Magny, Roux brigade chiefs; Chareron, B. Goret, Macajoux, Dupuy, Carbonne, Elder Diaquoi, Raphael, Malet, Derenoncourt, officers of the army; and Boisrond Tonnerre.

**JANUARY 14, 1804, INCENTIVE ORDER
TO FACILITATE THE RETURN OF BLACKS
IN DIFFICULTY IN THE UNITED STATES**

FREEDOM OR DEATH

Government of Haiti Headquarters, January 14, 1804,

First year of Haiti's independence

The Governor-General, considering that a large number of blacks and men of color support, in the United States, all kinds of privations, because they cannot afford to return to Haiti, decrees that he the captains of American ships will be counted the sum of forty dollars for each individual whom they can bring back to the country. This decree shall be printed, published, and immediately dispatched, and a copy shall immediately be sent to the United States Congress.

The Governor-General, DESSALINES

SLAVERY, A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

“**T**he slave trade: a crime against humanity” is the final declaration of the United Nations Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, from August 31 to September 7, 2001. “What happened here is historic,” Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, South Africa’s minister of foreign affairs and conference chairperson, said in his closing speech. “We agreed that the depredation caused by slavery and colonialism has harmed everyone who is black, in the broad sense of the term.”

In the early 1990s, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) formally adopted the project of reparations claims, including compensation for slavery and colonialism. During their 1992 summit, African heads of state set up a group of experts to study the issue. Cochaired by the late prodemocracy Nigerian leader Moshood Abiola and former UNESCO director general Amadou-Mahtar M’Bow, the group organized a Pan-African conference in 1993 on the theme of reparations. Held in Abuja, Nigeria, this conference helped articulate Africa’s main arguments on the issue.

Senegal, by adopting a bill in March 2010 declaring slavery and the slave trade as a crime against humanity, thus became the first African country to adopt such legislation. The law had three articles. The first stated that “the Republic of Senegal solemnly declares that slavery and the slave trade, in all their forms, constitute a crime against humanity.” Article 2 provided for a national commemoration each year on April 27 “corresponding to the date of the abolition of the slave trade in the French colonies on April 27, 1848, on the initiative of Victor Schleicher.” Article 3 stipulated that “school curricula, especially in history classes, should include this question and give them sufficient space so that our children

can understand what has happened and the consequences of the slave trade on the subject evolution of Africa.”

In 2001, France recognized slavery as a crime against humanity. The French Parliament recognized—by the law of May 21, 2001, known as the Taubira law—slavery and the slave trade as crimes against humanity. The Senate adopted, at the second reading, the bill establishing this recognition in the same terms as the French National Assembly. “The slave trade and slavery of African populations, Amerindian, Malagasy and Indian, perpetrated in America and the Caribbean, in the Indian Ocean and in Europe, from the fifteenth century” was therefore recognized as a crime against humanity. The law was passed by the French Parliament on May 10, 2001, and promulgated on May 21, 2001. May 10 was chosen in 2006 as National Day for the Abolition of Slave Trade and Slavery.

According to historians, nearly 110 million Africans have been sold as slaves. During the crossing of the Atlantic from Africa to the Americas, 5,874 million Africans never arrived safely. The sick, the weak, the rickety infants were deliberately thrown to the sharks because they became unsellable merchandise.

Upon arrival in the colony, the black man was enslaved to work on a large scale in plantations. Whether in the southern United States, in the Caribbean as a whole, in Brazil, or in European-occupied areas of Africa, the treatment remained the same. Captured, sold, and resold by proprietors, the Negro in servitude was treated as a commodity. He was branded with a hot iron, and it was there that his ordeal began. According to the Code Noir, the fugitive slave would have his ears cut off and would be marked with a fleur-de-lis on one shoulder; if he repeated, he would have his ham cut off, and he would be marked with a fleur-de-lis on the other shoulder. At the third time, he would be punished with death.

Despite these horrors, the slaves never resigned themselves to their situation. The history of slavery in America was marked by permanent revolts in all their forms, despite abominable repressions. Submission had never been part of the behavior of the black man, crouching in bondage and leading a daily battle for the search for his dignity. The revolt was the mark of his determination: the claim of the Negro who believed that he had the right to freedom as the white settler.

Now that slavery is recognized as a crime against humanity, it is time for negotiation between the former colonial powers and the nation’s victims of trafficking to fix the terms of reparations.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judge, teacher, and writer, Jean Sénat Fleury lived in Haiti, particularly in Saint-Marc. His broad knowledge of Haitian law and his great skill in the art of teaching helped him play the role of trainer at the National Police Academy in 1995 and director of studies at the School of Magistracy of Pétion-Ville in 2004. Author of the important book *The Trial of Stamps: The Audubon Affair*, Mr. Fleury immigrated to the United States, specifically to Boston, in 2007, where he earned two master's degrees in public administration and political science at the University of Suffolk. In 2014, Fleury founded Caribbean Arts Gallery in Boston and later became the director of a charitable organization called Art-for-Change, whose purpose is to mentor artists.

Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Words from beyond the Grave, the latest work of Jean Sénat Fleury, is an imaginary narrative supported by moving historical facts and written in a clear and concise romantic style. In this book, the author borrows from Emperor Dessalines, the founder of the Haitian nation, a breathtaking monologue to express his dissatisfaction with the Haitian people and deliver his message on the path to build Haiti.

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