

Legacies of the Haitian Revolution:
The Duvalier Regime and Color Politics in Haiti
1957-1971

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The Haitian Revolution and the Color Question

In **Haiti in the World Economy: Class, Race, and Underdevelopment Since 1700** (1989) and other writings (Dupuy 1995, 2004)¹, I argued that the Saint-Domingue Revolution of 1791-1804, which came to be called the Haitian Revolution, confronted and resolved at least two fundamental issues in the Caribbean: the questions of slavery and of white supremacy. After the Haitian Revolution, it became impossible to justify and maintain the regime of slavery for very much longer, and even in those Caribbean territories that remained under colonial rule until the twentieth century, the system of white supremacy vociferously defended during the period of slavery crumbled to give way to light-or brown- and dark-skinned elites long before the achievement of formal independence. But the Revolution did not resolve the questions of class and “color” divisions. In Haiti, as elsewhere in the Caribbean, the waning of slavery and colonialism was replaced by the emergence of new forms of class rule and social divisions based on “color” distinctions. Distinctions based on skin color (as well as hair texture and facial features) became redefined and fluid in terms of the classification of individuals, and cannot be understood as mere replicas of Western racism. But they tended nonetheless to correlate, albeit in varying degrees, with socio-economic class positions in such a way that those of lighter skin complexion tended to be found more among the dominant and wealthier than among the poorer and powerless sectors of the populations of the Caribbean.

It is in the context of the emergence and development of the class and color divisions in post-colonial Haiti that I will analyze the rise to power of the Duvalier

¹ I refer the reader to these writings for complete documentation of the argument and claims that I will make in this paper.

dictatorship in 1957 under the banner of black nationalism. Specifically, I will argue, the particular black nationalist ideology of the Duvalier regime can be traced to the conflicts between factions of the dominant classes comprised of light-skin mulattoes and blacks in the post-United States occupation of 1915-1934 that culminated in the “Revolution of 1946” led by President Dumarsais Estimé. But the deeper historical roots of the Haitian articulation of black nationalism can be traced to the factional conflicts between the emergent indigenous propertied classes during the Saint-Domingue Revolution that culminated in Haiti’s independence in 1804. However, an important difference in the articulation of black nationalism during the Haitian Revolution and by the Duvalier regime in 1957 is to be noted. In the former period black nationalism was an instrument in the struggle to free Saint-Domingue from French imperialist domination and create the independent nation of Haiti, whereas under Duvalier black nationalism became an instrument for the political ascendancy of the black faction of the Haitian ruling class to form a new pact of domination with the mulatto faction in the aftermath of the US occupation, but without challenging United States imperial dominance. Thus, one could argue, if during the period of the Haitian Revolution black nationalism had an anti-imperialist, albeit contradictory, character, its articulation by the Duvalier regime aimed at consolidating the political dominance of the black faction of the bourgeoisie while accommodating U.S. imperialist interests.

The Nationalist Question in the Saint-Domingue/Haitian Revolution

I will start with a brief overview of the main contradictions and conflicts among the factions of the emerging indigenous ruling class of what would eventually become the Republic of Haiti when Toussaint L’Ouverture, backed by his revolutionary army of ex-

slaves, took control of the French colony of Saint-Domingue in 1800 and declared himself Governor General. L'Ouverture proceeded immediately to reorganize the colony. The new government confiscated the properties of the French planters who fled the colony and refused to return with L'Ouverture in charge, and most of them were redistributed to officers of the revolutionary army. Slavery had been abolished and the former slaves made into citizens. The L'Ouverture government, however, decided to preserve the plantation system established by the French and rejuvenate sugar production as the basis for the colony's prosperity and which made Saint Domingue the prized possession of France in the New World. That required a constant supply of plantation workers, and herein lay the first major contradiction between the new rulers of the colony and the former slave masses.

Unlike the rulers of the revolutionary government turned into property owners or managers in need of a labor force, the former slaves aspired to become independent and subsistence farmers through a more radical redistribution of public lands and the properties of their former masters. If that happened, the emerging black landowning class in control of the colony would have been deprived of an exploitable labor force. L'Ouverture therefore opposed the break up of the plantations and the creation of a system of subsistence farming that was desired by the former slaves. To maintain order and the old production system, L'Ouverture imposed harsh disciplines on the laborers and made his generals in charge of the various districts responsible for running the plantations and regulating the labor system. Believing that the plantation system was the best means to develop the productive forces of the colony, L'Ouverture also encouraged

the French planters who had fled the colony to return and resume production on their old plantations.

In addition to the conflicting interests between the old planter class, the emerging black landed class, the old *affranchis* mulatto property owners, and the slave masses, there also surfaced different factions within L'Ouverture's revolutionary army in terms of the policies to be adopted toward France and the French planters. The class conflict that was unfolding between the newly emerging black landowning class and the former slaves was overdetermined by the race question between the French planters and the new revolutionary order. Two factions emerged within the ranks of the emerging black ruling class, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, on the one hand, and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a General in the Revolutionary army who opposed L'Ouverture's policies toward the French planters and favored outright independence from France, on the other hand.

Although Dessalines differed from L'Ouverture on what to do about France and the French planters, they both favored the system of large scale plantation production and the transformation of the former slaves into a proletarianized labor force. Both, therefore, opposed the interests of the former slaves to become an independent landowning peasantry. L'Ouverture, however, favored a non-racial solution to this problem by maintaining ties with France and forming an alliance with the former French planters. Dessalines, on the other hand, represented the interests of the nationalist faction of the newly emerging black propertied class which opposed an alliance with the French planters who would have remained dominant in the reorganized colony if L'Ouverture's plan had succeeded.

Moreover, the conflict between the two factions within the revolutionary government was not only between the new black propertied class and the French planters, but also between the former and the old class of predominantly mulatto property owners who came into their own as a class during the so-called coffee revolution of the 1750s and '60s. L'Ouverture, having defeated an attempt by the mulattoes to overthrow him and gain control of the colony between 1799 and 1801, favored an alliance with them and the French. Dessalines, for his part, sought to make the black property owners dominant. Herein also lay the origin of the "color question" and the internecine conflicts between the black and mulatto factions of the dominant class that would characterize Haiti's post-independence history.

My argument so far may be summarized as follows. L'Ouverture and Dessalines represented the aspirations of a newly emerging black propertied class. Both wanted to maintain power through military dictatorships; to preserve the system of plantation production for export established by the French by coercing the former slaves to become a proletarian labor force on the plantations; and to use their control of the state to promote the growth of a landed bourgeoisie by redistributing confiscated lands to functionaries and military officers, while opposing the formation of an independent and landed peasantry. But the two leaders also differed in some important ways. L'Ouverture tried to create a black landed elite by avoiding the question of independence and by dealing with the race question through an alliance with the former French master class and mulatto property owners. It was L'Ouverture's hope that by promoting a black landed bourgeoisie equal in power to the whites and mulattoes, slavery and the system of racial stratification characteristic of the old regime could be dismantled without breaking the

ties with French capital and the French economy deemed essential for Saint-Domingue's development.

L'Ouverture's refusal to break with France, coupled with the recalcitrance and racism of the French colonialists and the opposition of the black nationalist faction, made that solution unworkable and led to the adoption of a racially based nationalist alternative by Dessalines and his supporters. Dessalines reduced the contradictions of the colonial regime to the division between whites and blacks--i.e., to the race question--rather than between property owners and laborers, as L'Ouverture had done. Dessalines' objective was to make the black elite the uncontested leaders of Haiti, and he and his allies in the revolutionary army came to the conclusion that this required getting rid of L'Ouverture. That opportunity came when Napoleon Bonaparte sent a military expedition to recapture Saint-Domingue in 1803 and reinstate the slave regime. Betrayed by Dessalines and others, L'Ouverture was captured by the French and sent to exile in France. With him out of the way, Dessalines formed an alliance with the mulatto forces to push the French out of the colony and declare Haiti's independence.

The key differences between L'Ouverture and Dessalines, then, are this. Although he did not take the final step toward independence, L'Ouverture's program offered the possibility of a non-racial solution to the colonial question based on an alliance among those old French planters who would have accepted to live with the old mulatto bourgeoisie and the newly formed black bourgeoisie as their equals. In other words, L'Ouverture wanted to abolish the system of slavery and white supremacy, maintain the status of Saint-Domingue as a self-governed colony, and extend full citizenship to the former slaves and mulattoes alike.

This was indeed a radical project that was ahead of its time. In 1946, 98 years after slavery was abolished in the other French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe, France incorporated them as Overseas Departments with full citizenship and the right to elect their own legislative assemblies. But in 1802 slavery and the system of white supremacy were essential to France, its merchant class, and its colonial planters, and it was simply beyond Bonaparte's capacity to contemplate L'Ouverture's propositions. When one combines this reality with the racism and opposition of the mulattoes on the one hand, and the aspirations of the black nationalist faction for complete independence, on the other hand, it's not hard to conclude that L'Ouverture's vision was doomed from the start. The elimination of L'Ouverture, then, was the logical conclusion, and once this happened Dessaline's racially based nationalist alternative became realizable.

With the whites out of the way, the acrimonious prejudices between mulattoes and blacks would resurface as a principal division that would underline much of the struggle for power between the two factions of the dominant class in post-independence Haiti. As this occurred, the "color" question replaced the "race" question as the ideological battle ground between the black and mulatto elites. In that context, the racist ideology developed during the colonial period to defend white supremacy became redefined and transformed into ideologies of "color" that undergirded the struggles between the two factions of the dominant class and the broader cultural struggles to define the meaning of nationhood and peoplehood in the new Haiti.

The Duvalier Regime and Black Nationalism

The dominant class that emerged during the revolutionary war and after independence in Haiti, therefore, was neither homogeneous in terms of the socio-

economic origins or the complexions of its members, nor unified politically. That factionalized class consisted, on the one hand, of the class of predominantly mulatto property owners who descended from the *affranchis* class of Saint-Domingue, and, on the other hand, the new black bourgeoisie formed during the regimes of Toussaint Louverture (1801-1803) and Jean-Jacques Dessalines (1804-1806), on the other hand. A major consequence of the class structure of Haiti was that the state itself became a source of accumulation and social advancement for those who controlled it. Since the state also depended primarily on the circulation process—through direct or indirect taxation—for its revenues, the state bourgeoisie entered into conflict with the private sector bourgeoisie to appropriate part of the surplus wealth produced by the working and farming classes. So intense was that conflict during the reign of Dessalines (1804-1806) that a civil war broke out after his assassination in 1806 and led to the partition of the country into the northern kingdom dominated by the black landed and military elites led by Henri Christophe, and the Republic of Haiti in the West and South under mulatto dominance under the leadership of Alexandre Pétion. Haiti would be reunited as a country in 1818 with the rise to power of the mulatto Jean-Pierre Boyer.

The class divisions described above expressed themselves in terms of ideologies of “color.” As they developed during the 19th century, the “ideologies of color” consisted of a reformulation of the racist ideology created during the colonial period by the French. In post-independence Haiti, the ideologies of color became an expression of the conflicts between mulatto and black factions of the bourgeoisie and middle class to impose their dominance and justify their claim to power. The black elite used the ideology of color as a means of social advancement by countering the mulattoes’ contempt for and

devalorization of blacks. For their part, mulattoes used it to prevent their dominant social and economic position from being challenged (Péan 2000, 112-113).

The mulatto ideology rejected the notion of racial inequality proposed by European racism, but adopted nonetheless the European somatic norm image, with one important modification. Contrary to the European racist ideology which eschewed all notions of racial intermixing to depict its ideal type of “whiteness,” the mulatto ideology claimed that all advanced civilizations, most notably European, were the products of racial intermixing, and that Africa remained “backward because she has always been outside the great currents of immigration” (Laroche, cited in Martinez 1973, 29; and also in Labelle 1978, 57). From this it followed that the mulattoes, as the product of miscegenation between Europeans and Africans, considered themselves “closer” to the Europeans and therefore “more civilized” and “more advanced” than the blacks who were “nearer” the Africans. Thus, mulattoes believed they should rule Haiti because they were the “most capable.”

By contrast, the *noiriste* or black nationalist ideology claimed that the selfishness of the mulattoes since independence caused the ills of the country and that only blacks could articulate the interests of the black majority against those of the minority mulatto elite. Therefore blacks, and not mulattoes, should be in power because they alone could be the “authentic” spokesmen for the black masses and represent their genuine interests. As Louis-Joseph Janvier, one of the leading intellectuals of the 19th century and an articulate proponent of black nationalism put it, “a government of the majority by the majority and by those who respect the majority is the only one possible in Haiti” (Janvier 1885, 248).

The two factions or blocs of the dominant class, then, redefined the racist ideology of the slave and colonial era to legitimize their claim to political power. It was not always easy to distinguish between mulattoes and blacks since the definition of who was “mulatto” and “black” tended to coincide with the class position of the individuals being defined. And not all mulattoes belonged to the dominant class, just as all blacks were not excluded from it. Nonetheless, as a social category, skin color and color classifications, fluid as they were, tended to correlate more-or-less with social class position in such a way that those of lighter skin complexion tended to be found more among the dominant and wealthier than among the poorer and powerless sectors of the population (Trouillot 1990, 110-113). Mulattoes certainly used “color” strategically in their choice of marriage partners, and to exclude “blacks” with non-identifiable “mulatto” or upper-class lineage from their social clubs. But they could not exclude blacks from having access to the means of production or political power. The wealth or power of individuals from both color factions of the dominant class made it possible for them to acquire similar standards of living, to educate their children in the same schools, to bequeath their wealth to their offspring, to reproduce their particular racisms through social or familial alliances, and hence to reproduce the system of class domination and its characteristic cleavages.

Still, neither faction ever became socially, economically, politically, or ideologically hegemonic because neither could crystallize the ideology of color into structures of exclusion or institutional discrimination. Since the reunification of Haiti in 1818 until the United States invasion and occupation in 1915, a balance of power or “pact of domination” had been formed between the mulatto and black factions of the dominant

class, with the former retaining its advantages in the economy and the latter tending to predominate in controlling the state and in land ownership in the northern and Artibonite regions of Haiti. The US occupation, however, would change that precarious balance of power in favor of the mulattoes, and this fact would set into motion important new processes that would ultimately set the stage for the rise of François Duvalier to power in 1957 as the purported champion of the black nationalist cause.

During the 1930s and 1940s there emerged an explicitly racist current within the broader *Indigéniste* movement of that period. Linked internationally to the *Négritude* movement, the *Indigénistes* in Haiti criticized and rejected the racist claims of western culture and the re-articulation of those beliefs in Haiti by the bourgeoisie (both mulatto and black) which valued European and especially French culture as a mark of its social superiority. By contrast, the *Indigénistes* promoted a “genuine” Haitian culture that recognized and validated its African roots and contents. An explicitly racist offshoot of the *Indigéniste* movement, known as the *Griot*² group (of which François Duvalier was a founding member), also emerged and went further by claiming that there existed a specifically African psychology and culture that was biologically determined and present in the collective personality of the predominantly black Haitian population. Accordingly, the solution to Haiti’s ills, which the *Griots* attributed to the mulattoe elite’s European cultural values and support for the American occupation, consisted of transferring political power to the “authentic” representatives of the black majority and reorganizing the institutions of the society to express the African cultural values of the masses. Thus, the differences between mulattoes and blacks did not stem from their divergent class or

² The term *griot* is of African origin and refers to the poet, the story-teller, or the magician who transmits tribal customs, beliefs, and myths to younger generations.

economic positions, but stemmed principally from their cultural differences determined by their biological (i.e., color) characteristics. Moreover, contrary to those in Haiti who advocated a democratic form of government, the *Griot* nationalists maintained that Haiti needed a black leader who embodied the aspirations of the black masses and would defend them.

This more explicitly anti-mulatto articulation of the *Griot* nationalists served as the rallying cry for those sectors of the black middle class and bourgeoisie who opposed the economic and especially political resurgence of the mulatto bourgeoisie during and after the United States occupation of Haiti from 1915-1934. That movement succeeded in bringing Dumarsais Éstimé to power in 1946 with the aim of shifting power back to the black elite and middle class. The so-called Estimist Revolution of 1946 was short-lived, however, as mulattoes seemed to gain the upper hand once again with the rise to power of Colonel Paul Magloire in 1950. Though not a member of the mulatto class, Magloire nonetheless was allied with and served the interests of that class. As a member of the *Griot* group and supporter of the “1946 Revolution,” Duvalier set himself the task of conquering power on behalf of the black bourgeoisie and middle class in 1957.

It is in this historical context, then, that one can understand better the objectives of the Duvalier regime between 1957 and 1971 and its use of black nationalism in achieving them. Once he was “elected” president with the help of the Haitian military in 1957, Duvalier proceeded to consolidate his control over the state apparatuses. Duvalier did not seek to alter the class structure of Haiti and thus the social and economic dominance of the Haitian mulatto bourgeoisie. Neither did Duvalier aim to reduce the economy’s subordination to and dependence on foreign capital. Duvalier’s and the black

nationalists' objectives were to capture political power for the black bourgeoisie and middle class as a counterweight to the mulatto bourgeoisie's economic dominance. This would be achieved by forging an alliance with other class factions under the leadership of the black bourgeoisie and middle class. The other classes that formed the power base of the Duvalier regime included members of the expatriate Levantine business groups resented and socially excluded by the mulatto bourgeoisie, sectors of the medium-size farmers, and elements from the urbanized lumpen proletariat. Duvalier had very little support among the urban working classes.

For all its anti-mulatto ideology, however, Duvalier did not exclude mulattoes who shared his views and objectives from his administration. Though they were small in number, several well-known high-ranking mulatto officers and members of the mulatto bourgeoisie were among the staunchest defenders of the Duvalier regime in its early years. This shows once more that ideologies of color cannot be reduced to the color of one's skin or to the class faction one belonged to, but rather to one's self-identification, interests, and objectives. As Cary Hector pointed out, however, one needs to distinguish between the ideology of conquest of power and the ideology of power (Hector 1972, 52), that is, between black nationalism as a contesting and revanchist ideology and black nationalism as the ideology of the black bourgeoisie/middle class in control of the state. The former justified the claim to political power by Duvalier as the incarnation of the "historic mission" of the black elite to gain power in the name of the black majority against the exclusivism and elitism of the mulatto minority. Once in power, Duvalier moved to monopolize the political space by suppressing all competing political opposition. Marxism especially became a target, in all its variants. From 1958 onward,

anti-communism and the open persecution of all “communists” (often used as a euphemism for anyone who opposed Duvalier) became a constant of the Duvalier regime.

Duvalier did not limit his attack to ideological and political opponents, however. To achieve the black nationalists’ objective of a social and political balance with the mulatto bourgeoisie, the latter had to be removed from positions of power or authority in the apparatuses and agencies of the state, including and especially the military. To be effective against the mulattoes, however, the government’s purge and repressive measures had to be ubiquitous and include all opposition or potential opposition, and it could know no bounds. Therefore Duvalier’s first order of business was to consolidate his power within the state and over the society, and he spent the first seven years of his rule implementing that policy. The regime created a vast clientelistic network by staffing all the apparatuses of the state, including the military, with those loyal to Duvalier.

From 1957 to 1964, Duvalier unleashed a reign of terror hitherto unknown on all opponents, real, potential, or imagined, and on the population in general. Moreover, he sought to extend his control over all major institutions in the state and civil society, from the military to the legislature, the media, the Catholic Church, the public schools, and the trade unions. Still distrusting the military for its historic role in the making and unmaking of governments, however, Duvalier built an alternative armed force directly under his control, the so-called Volunteers for National Security, more popularly known as the *Tontons Macoutes*, recruited mainly from the ranks of the lumpenproletariat in the urban centers and landless peasants, section chiefs, and Vodou priests in the rural areas. With 10,000 members, the *macoute* force readily became much larger than the regular armed forces, including the police, which numbered slightly over 5,000.

Under Duvalier, the terrorism of the state reached new heights. The regime distinguished itself from all previous governments in its unlimited and indiscriminate use of violence. No one was spared: men, women, children, families from all classes, and even entire towns were subjected to the tyrannical and unpredictable violence of the state. By striking against all, anywhere, and at any time, the new violence became as symbolic as it was preventive. After 1965 when the regime had consolidated its power and created its vast and effective apparatus of repression and terror, it no longer needed to apply physical violence with the same degree of intensity as it did during the early years.

By 1964, Duvalier had tamed the mulatto bourgeoisie and all other sectors of society through his terrorist methods, had extended his control over the educational and religious institutions, the media, subordinated the regular armed forces to his own paramilitary forces, and transformed the other branches of government to respond to his dictates. The Duvalier regime differed from its predecessors in its extremes. It went further than most in its widespread and systematic application of violence against individuals regardless of class, gender, or age. It also differed from prior dictatorships in its creation of an effective dual power structure directly controlled by the dictator; in its usurpation of all powers from all branches of government and their concentration in the hands of the chief executive; in its control over and remolding of the major ideological and cultural institutions of the society; and in its use of its own sources of income from taxation and the public enterprises. The Duvalier regime, in short, succeeded in shifting political power in favor of the state bourgeoisie and middle class allied with it, and in consolidating its power in all the apparatuses of the state and in the most important institutions of society.

In my view, the significance of Duvalierism was not only the form in which it exercised power, but also that it used it to restore the balance that the black bourgeoisie and middle class had achieved with the mulatto bourgeoisie under Estimé in 1946-1950 but lost in the subsequent years under Magloire. The Duvalier regime shifted the *balance of political power* in favor of the black bourgeoisie and middle class and achieved a greater degree of autonomy from the bourgeoisie as a whole. Those were its primary objectives. Control over the state apparatuses offered the only sure avenue for the social and economic advancement of the black middle class because of the limits of private sector development and the exclusionary barriers imposed by the mulatto bourgeoisie and foreign capital. It did not intend or attempt to eliminate the economic dominance of the mulatto bourgeoisie as such, or the exploitative economic system on which that dominance rested. The regime simply sought to force the social and political accommodation of the mulatto bourgeoisie with the black bourgeoisie and middle class as the only way for the latter to share the spoils of the extant economic system.

Though Duvalier was willing to risk alienating the mulatto bourgeoisie to consolidate his power, he could not afford to do without the backing of some of the western European powers and especially of the United States. It was therefore essential for Duvalier to maintain good relations with the latter, but not at the expense of his regime, its objectives, and its practices. In short, Duvalier accepted his dependence on foreign capital, but under certain conditions that he was not willing to compromise. Duvalier was willing to offer all the necessary advantages to foreign capital, such as tax exemptions, an abundance of cheap labor, and a climate of labor peace due to the suppression of all independent labor organizations and the banning of strikes. In return

for these concessions, Duvalier expected to be given foreign economic and military assistance, especially from the United States, but without the latter interfering in how he governed the country.

Through his clever exploitation of the United States' fear of communism and Haiti's proximity to Cuba, Duvalier managed to win its support. After the successful Cuban Revolution and the botched Bay of Pigs invasion by the United States, Duvalier managed to get a reluctant United States to increase its aid package to Haiti. It was not until Duvalier's uncontested "reelection" in 1961 as president for life, and the continued corruption and brutality of the regime that Haiti-US relations soured under the Kennedy administration. Even so, the Kennedy administration made no attempt to topple Duvalier. Duvalier may have been a barbaric tyrant, but he was also staunchly anti-communist and knew how to exploit the East-West conflict. For the United States, which had failed to launch a successful invasion against Castro, had drawn strong international criticism for invading the Dominican Republic and overthrowing its democratically elected president, and was getting more deeply involved in an unpopular war in Vietnam, it was far more desirable to acquiesce to the Duvalier regime than to alienate it further and push it to seek ties with the Eastern bloc, as Duvalier feigned. After the assassination of President Kennedy, the Johnson administration resumed its assistance to Haiti. For its part, the Duvalier regime, now secured in its power, could rein in the *macoutes*. Repression was no longer a daily necessity because the regime had succeeded in silencing the internal opposition and/or forcing it into exile. Thus repressive practices could be relaxed and targeted against selected opponents. The projection of this new image of political stability and less open repression paid off. In 1969 President Richard

Nixon renewed full military and economic aid to Haiti, and the recovery of the economy during the two years prior to the death of François Duvalier could be mainly attributed to the improved political climate.

Besides winning renewed economic and military aid from the United States, the regime sought reconciliation with the mulatto bourgeoisie, now politically tamed, and encouraged foreign capital investment, now that a climate of political stability had been created. The reconciliatory moves toward the mulatto bourgeoisie also entailed a marked decrease in the anti-mulatto rhetoric of the early years. For its part, the mulatto bourgeoisie realized that the Duvalier regime concerned itself primarily with the monopoly of state power and not with its economic expropriation. Faced with the choice of joining the opposition, most of which was in exile, or acquiescing to the rapacious Duvalier dictatorship to protect its own interests, the mulatto bourgeoisie chose the latter. Besides, the regime's repressive policies toward workers benefited the bourgeoisie directly and offered other advantages such as tax evasion and participation in the generalized corruption of the government.

Foreign capital, too, especially that sector that relied on intensive labor production, saw many advantages in investing in Haiti. The abundance of cheap labor, the containment of all labor discontent, the generous fiscal concessions of the government, and the proximity of Haiti to the United States, all served to attract foreign assembly manufactures to Haiti. Between 1967 and 1970, nearly 100 foreign companies, primarily from the United States, signed contracts to install plants in Haiti. Bauxite and copper production also increased, and tourism nearly doubled. By the time François Duvalier died and his 19-year-old son Jean-Claude succeeded him to the presidency in

1971, a new alliance or pact of domination had been formed between the Duvalier regime—that is, the black nationalist bourgeoisie and middle class, the mulatto bourgeoisie, and foreign capital.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing discussion, it may be possible to draw some comparisons between the articulation of black nationalism during the period of the Haitian Revolution and the regime of Duvalier père from 1957-1971. Given the difference in the perspectives and strategies of Toussaint L'Ouverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, it would be justifiable to attach the label black nationalism to the latter only. L'Ouverture's strategy was non-racial and inclusive insofar as he sought to maintain ties with France, and form an alliance with the former French planters and the propertied mulatto class. Dessalines, by contrast, wanted to expel the French altogether and declare Haiti's independence. Insofar as he sought an alliance with the mulatto class it was primarily tactical rather than inclusive, since his aim was to promote the growth of a black elite through an exclusive control of the state. Thus, it could be said, Dessalines' black nationalism had both an anti-imperialist and a class objective that corresponded to the interests of the emerging black faction of the dominant class of Haiti.

By contrast, Duvalier's black nationalism was used exclusively to promote the interests of the faction of the black bourgeoisie and middle class to counter the economic and political dominance of the mulatto bourgeoisie in the aftermath of the US occupation and the failure of the "Estimist Revolution of 1946" to reverse that trend. Duvalier's success in consolidating political power for the black elites and forming a new pact of domination with the mulatto bourgeoisie, however, depended on continued US support

for his regime. Through his anti-communism, his suppression of dissent and labor rights, and the concessions he made to foreign, especially US, capital, Duvalier obtained that support and thus ensured the survival of his and his son's regimes for three decades.

The conclusion I draw from this discussion of black nationalism, then is this. As a variant of nationalism in general, black nationalism can express both an anti- or a pro-imperialist project. But it cannot shed its fundamental class objective since its articulation is always at the service of those who seek to take power in the name of a "people" or a "race," and by excluding those not considered part of that "people" or "race." Black, mulatto, white, or any other variant of nationalism, therefore is first, foremost, and always a class project.

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