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## Talk about Haiti

### The Archive and the Atlantic's Haitian Revolution

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IN THINKING about the legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World it is tempting to think in binaries. The revolution produced fear and terror among whites, hope and inspiration among slaves and free people of color. The revolution resulted in the radical end of slavery in Saint-Domingue; elsewhere (for instance, in Cuba, southeastern Brazil, and parts of the southern United States) it served as a catalyst to further enslavement. And in postcolonial Haiti itself the promise of radical revolution went unfulfilled as the despotism and mass poverty of colonial servitude were reconfigured in the postcolonial period.

The same kind of double structure is present when we think of another legacy of the Haitian Revolution, namely the construction of a powerful silence around the Haitian Revolution. Among the most important and persuasive expressions of this critique are Michel-Rolph Trouillot's 1995 essays "An Unthinkable History" and "The Three Faces of Sans Souci."<sup>1</sup> In these works, Trouillot argued that contemporaries were incapable of apprehending a revolution made by enslaved men and women. Limited by that incapacity, they reverted to explanations about the decisive role of outside agitators, the pernicious effects of French Revolutionary ideology, and the miscalculations of slaveowners and statesmen. Rarely if ever did they consider the power or consciousness of slaves themselves. According to Trouillot, this contemporary inability to understand the Revolution helps explain the relative absence of the Haitian Revolution in the production of historical knowledge. Unprecedented and unmatched in its challenge to slavery and colonialism, radical in its outcome, it remains little known compared to other world revolutions. Though more studied in the last decade than ever before, it still easily earns the label penned by Trouillot in 1995: "the revolution the world forgot."<sup>2</sup>

But if Trouillot has provided a much-needed and powerful condemnation of the relative silence that has surrounded the Haitian Revolution to the present, other authors have shown that at the time, as news of the slaves' actions erupted onto the world stage, everyone seemed to be talking and thinking about events in Saint-Domingue. As Julius Scott has amply demonstrated, from South America to New England news of the Revolution spread across linguistic, geographic, and imperial boundaries. And even in Europe, according to Susan Buck-Morss, the events were known to "every European who was part of the bourgeois reading public," who apprehended the Revolution as "the crucible, the trial by fire for the ideals of the French Enlightenment."<sup>3</sup> If this was silence, it was a thunderous one indeed.

My purpose in this essay is not to refute the idea—now so powerful in the literature—of a silencing of the Haitian Revolution, but rather to get inside and move beyond that claim. I contend that before we can understand the meanings of Haiti, we must first explore the ways in which Haiti was talked about as it was created. What news circulated? Through what specific points of contact? Among whom? With what language and images? And with what kinds of resonance? As these kinds of questions suggest, our focus is not only on the content of Haitian news, but also on the social and physical networks that helped produce, circulate, and transform rumor and observation into news and eventually into historical narrative and explanation.

To engage in this kind of exploration, I ground this study in Cuba, a neighboring island where consciousness of Haiti and its revolution was particularly strong. The easternmost point of the island was only about fifty miles away from Haiti. Early in the Revolution, slaveowners from the French colony arrived by the thousands, carting slaves, seeking refuge, and telling stories of black vengeance and physical desolation. Throughout the decades following Haitian independence, there were continuous scares and rumors about imminent Haitian invasions into scarcely populated eastern territory. So, in many ways, in Cuba the Haitian Revolution felt immediate and urgent. That urgency, however, derived not only from physical proximity or patterns of migration, but also from the fact that Cuba was in a sense beginning to supplant Haiti. In terms of sugar production, it was coming to occupy the place formerly held by French Saint-Domingue. Cuban planters, merchants, and bureaucrats were highly conscious of this; and, in fact, they explicitly saw themselves as following in the footsteps of, and eventually surpassing, their once-prosperous French counterparts in Saint-Domingue.<sup>4</sup> One of the immediate effects of the

Revolution on this neighboring island was an ever-growing number of enslaved Africans, finally making Cuba the most profitable colony. The revolution produced a potentially powerful force that it created a heightened consciousness of race. It also produced a massive rise in the price of sugar, setting that I explore the material and social conditions that was dramatically dismantling the colonial society that was at the same time growing slave system in Cuba.

In what follows I will focus on the ways in which news of the revolution entered Cuba from revolutionary Saint-Domingue, in particular for several reasons. First, the revolution was unexpected and surprising. Second, because of how rich and detailed was the information that reached the island, and the diversity of the social actors involved. Third, the examination of both routes encourages a broader examination of the broad categories that scholars have used to study the revolution's impact in the Atlantic World. Finally, the way historical knowledge is produced and used in Cuba.

### Witnessing Revolution

In Cuba, word of the slaves' uprising spread quickly after it started. A stream of almost daily news came over the next thirteen years. Letters of news from French and non-French residents of Saint-Domingue to hand, sometimes reaching local Spanish officials. Proclamations, reports, and newspapers were spread aboard ships. Official pleas from authorities in Spanish officials in Cuba and elsewhere. News came in very different circumstances, from the mulatto general André Rigaud, the son of Toussaint Louverture, the prince of Saint-Domingue, as well, was in command of Santiago de Cuba, in at least one instance, the embattled provincial governor who was receiving little sustenance from the revolution. Communications arrived regularly from central Saint-Domingue.

Indeed, sometimes the very players of the revolution in person. French officers and troops

much-needed and powerful condemnation surrounded the Haitian Revolution. It was shown that at the time, as news of the Revolution reached the world stage, everyone seemed to be looking at Saint-Domingue. As Julius Scott has written, "From America to New England news of the Revolution crossed geographic, and imperial boundaries. For Susan Buck-Morss, the events were seen as part of the bourgeois reading public's preoccupation as 'the crucible, the trial by fire and the crucible.'"<sup>3</sup> If this was silence, it was a

to refute the idea—now so powerful—that the Haitian Revolution, but rather to affirm it. I contend that before we can understand the Revolution, we must first explore the ways in which it was communicated. What news circulated? Through what channels? Through whom? With what language and imagery? As these kinds of questions lead us to the content of Haitian news, but also to the ways that helped produce, circulate, and transform news and eventually into histori-

ography, I ground this study in Cuba, a place where the news of Haiti and its revolution was most visible. At that point of the island was only about 100 miles from the Revolution, slaveowners from all over the island, carting slaves, seeking refuge, and suffering economic and physical desolation. Through the Revolution, there were continuous Haitian invasions into scarcely populated areas. In Cuba the Haitian Revolution was a direct threat, however, derived not only from the proximity of the Revolution, but also from the fact that the Haitian Revolution sought to supplant Haiti. In terms of sugar production, the place formerly held by French Saint-Domingue, and bureaucrats were highly conscious of the Revolution and saw themselves as following in the footsteps of the once-prosperous French Saint-Domingue. One of the immediate effects of the

Revolution on this neighboring island was thus the importation of an ever-growing number of enslaved Africans, to work the sugar that was finally making Cuba the most profitable of colonies. Here, then, the Revolution produced a potentially powerful contradiction: at the same time that it created a heightened consciousness of slave rebellion and power, it also produced a massive rise in the actual number of slaves. It is in this setting that I explore the material and quotidian links between a revolution that was dramatically dismantling slavery in Saint-Domingue and a colonial society that was at the same moment erecting a profitable and growing slave system in Cuba.

In what follows I will focus on two distinct streams of information entering Cuba from revolutionary Saint-Domingue. I chose these two in particular for several reasons. First, because they are in many ways unexpected and surprising. Second, because they highlight on the one hand how rich and detailed was the information arriving and on the other hand the diversity of the social actors it reached. And, third, because an examination of both routes encourages one to reconsider some of the broad categories that scholars have used in talking about the Revolution's impact in the Atlantic World and to reflect more generally on the way historical knowledge is produced.

### Witnessing Revolution

In Cuba, word of the slaves' uprising in Saint-Domingue arrived just days after it started. A stream of almost continuous information would follow over the next thirteen years. Letters of private French citizens, addressed to French and non-French residents of Cuban cities, circulated from hand to hand, sometimes reaching local Spanish authorities. Copies of printed proclamations, reports, and newspapers arrived with letters or smuggled aboard ships. Official pleas from authorities in Saint-Domingue reached Spanish officials in Cuba and elsewhere. Subsequent ones arrived, under very different circumstances, from other officers of France, for instance from the mulatto general André Rigaud, as he did battle against the forces of Toussaint Louverture, the principle black leader on the island. But Louverture, as well, was in communication with the Spanish governor of Santiago de Cuba, in at least one instance even offering his aid to the embattled provincial governor whose city was lacking in basic foodstuffs and receiving little sustenance from the capital.<sup>5</sup> In Cuba, then, communications arrived regularly from central players of the Revolution.

Indeed, sometimes the very players arrived, relaying news and opinions in person. French officers and troops leaving Saint-Domingue for France

often did so by way of Cuban cities such as Santiago and Havana. When Vézien Desombrage, French commander of Jérémie, evacuated the colony in 1793, he stopped in Santiago, providing the governor there with extensive information on the state of the French colony. Several years later, in 1800, when the officers, soldiers, and families of the forces of André Rigaud evacuated Saint-Domingue after their defeat by the forces of Toussaint Louverture, they chose the same route. Their presence in Santiago de Cuba, said the governor of that city, had become widely known among the local population.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the war, defeated French troops, now in greater number, also evacuated by way of Santiago. Informed of the massive arrival of French soldiers, the captain general in Havana ordered the provincial governor in Santiago to confine these troops to their ships so as to avoid all contact with Spanish subjects. But these measures did not prevent local residents from seeing and learning of the evacuating soldiers, leaving their once prosperous colony in the hands of men of color, many of them formerly enslaved.

If one source of news was French soldiers passing through Cuba en route from Saint-Domingue to France, another—more important for our purposes—was the Spanish and Cuban soldiers and officers who experienced firsthand the revolution in Saint-Domingue. Recall that during the war between France and Spain from 1793 to 1795, the theater of war and revolution was not limited to the French side of the island. Spanish forces claimed French territory, and Spanish commanders mobilized and collaborated with the leaders of former French slaves, such as George Biassou, Jean François, and, most famously, Toussaint Louverture. Spanish forces thus had regular contact with the slave revolution that would make Haiti. And, as it turns out, many of these Spanish forces were composed of men who had come directly from Cuba and who then returned to Cuba with that experience and those stories in mind.

The Cuban regiments began arriving in Spanish Santo Domingo during the summer of 1793, approximately two months after Spanish governor Joaquín García pacte for the services of armed French slaves, who came to be known as the black auxiliaries. The soldiers arrived under the command of Matías de Armona, who from exhaustion and utter frustration at having to embody and make material the alliance between the Spanish monarchy and the slave forces of Saint-Domingue, grew ill and was replaced by another Cuban, Juan Lleonart. Upon arriving, both officers seemed perplexed and disturbed by this alliance, which they understood as one between a legitimate army and bands of runaway slaves. Their discomfort deepened as they gradually came to see Spain's complete

reliance on these forces. By April 1794, the Spanish had taken territory formerly belonging to France: Marmelade, Petite Rivière, Fort Dar, and others. The Spanish commanders of the Cuban regiments insisted that their presence was illusory. To hold these towns, they relied on the support of their auxiliary forces, the allegiance of which was at best the worst, transitory.

The tables seemed to have been turned. The black auxiliaries, former slaves for military victories, were now the ones responsible for their continual survival. Armona complained that the Spanish ones were like tributaries who provided food, drink, money, and other resources to the French, in the name of security. He complained that the black auxiliaries, with their ranks and titles, that they wore impositions, that they tried to act like men, acting "with pride" and "we needed them and *we* have to please them." He also complained that the auxiliary forces and these Spanish officers were the cause of this inversion. White officers wrote to the king as friends and exuding deference even to the king, while black officers wrote with demands, threats, and promises of trees of liberty topped with crowns.

In military ritual and ceremony, the black auxiliaries received official sanction. Toussaint and others were honored in early 1794, each receiving a gold medal for their services as his loyal vassals. The king also honored two Cuban infantry units who accompanied the Cuban regiments who gathered to receive the king's highest honor, who played the military music, who were the recipients, and who joined the two regiments in the meal prepared in their honor.<sup>9</sup>

In an examination of the contact between the black auxiliaries and men from Cuba, one thing that emerges is the black auxiliaries' latter to apprehend and in a sense claim the landscape that lay before them. To claim the landscape was a two-pronged interpretation of the landscape. The black auxiliaries observed them closely and tried to recognize them. They watched carefully and imputed motives. The Spanish commanders approached their camps, tried to understand the composition of their guards, and tried to make predictions about black loyalty or treachery.

such as Santiago and Havana. When the commander of Jérémie, evacuated the colony, providing the governor there with the remnants of the French colony. Several years later, the soldiers and families of the forces of the colony fled after their defeat by the forces of the Spanish on the same route. Their presence in the ruins of that city, had become widely known.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the war, defeated and the governor, also evacuated by way of San Juan, of French soldiers, the captain general and the governor in Santiago to confine the colony and all contact with Spanish subjects. The Spanish residents from seeing and learning about their once prosperous colony in the ruins of the formerly enslaved.

The soldiers passing through Cuba en route to the colony, another—more important for our purposes—were the soldiers and officers who experienced the colony of Saint-Domingue. Recall that during the years 1793 to 1795, the theater of war was on the French side of the island. Spanish and French commanders mobilized and used former French slaves, such as George Biassou, Toussaint Louverture. Spanish and French with the slave revolution that would lead to the fall of these Spanish forces were coming from Cuba and who then returned with these stories in mind.

When the Spanish arrived in Santo Domingo during the first two months after Spanish governor Juan Manuel de Cádiz, of armed French slaves, who came to the colony. The soldiers arrived under the command of the Spanish and utter frustration over the alliance between the Spanish and the colony of Saint-Domingue, grew ill and was in a state of anart. Upon arriving, both officers and the colony's alliance, which they understood as a betrayal, and bands of runaway slaves. Their arrival came to see Spain's complete

reliance on these forces. By April 1794, Spain held a large swath of territory formerly belonging to France, controlling such cities as Gonaïves, Marmelade, Petite Rivière, Fort Dauphin, and Mirebalais. But the commanders of the Cuban regiments insisted repeatedly that this control was illusory. To hold these towns, they were completely reliant on the black auxiliary forces, the allegiance of whom was, at best, painful and, at worst, transitory.

The tables seemed to have been turned. The Spanish depended on former slaves for military victories and relied on their magnanimity for their continual survival. Armona complained that the black forces saw the Spanish ones as tributaries who were obligated to supply them with food, drink, money, and other resources in order to preserve any sense of security. He complained that the auxiliaries gave themselves military ranks and titles, that they wore imposing military and royal insignia, that they tried to act like men, acting "with a certain air of superiority, as if *we* needed them and *we* have to please them."<sup>7</sup> The correspondence between the auxiliary forces and these Spanish-Cuban commanders gives a sense of this inversion. White officers wrote to former slaves addressing them as friends and exuding deference even as they called for obedience. New black officers wrote with demands, their documents stamped with images of trees of liberty topped with crowns sustained by naked black men.<sup>8</sup>

In military ritual and ceremony, the inversion was given material form and official sanction. Toussaint and Biassou were regaled in San Rafael in early 1794, each receiving a gold medal from the king of Spain in honor of their services as his loyal vassals. At the ceremony, it was the officers of two Cuban infantry units who awarded the medals. It was men from the Cuban regiments who gathered to witness the concession of this highest honor, who played the military music, who paraded with the medal recipients, and who joined the two black officers in a lavish two-hour meal prepared in their honor.<sup>9</sup>

In an examination of the contact between Haitian leaders and these men from Cuba, one thing that emerges powerfully is the attempt of the latter to apprehend and in a sense classify the political, military, and social landscape that lay before them. To do this, the Cuban officers engaged in a two-pronged interpretation of their new allies. On the one hand, they observed them closely and tried to read into their behavior larger designs. They watched carefully and imputed significance to the way black commanders approached their camps, the way they announced their arrival, the composition of their guards, and many other things, all to make predictions about black loyalty or treachery. But if circumstances required

this kind of close reading of allies' behavior, in practice the Cuban commanders just as often engaged in what might be called a kind of "intuitive sociology," where the form and protagonists of events were thought be knowable almost intuitively, with little reference to events and facts on the ground.<sup>10</sup> So, when the commanders began predicting black auxiliary attacks on the Spanish and Cuban forces, they did so principally with reference to what they saw as the inherent character of the rebels. These white Cuban and Spanish observers could close their eyes and not refer to anything specific, and still feel confident predicting what they saw as the inevitable outcome of a military and political alliance with former slaves.

On an even more basic level, we see how these officers, confronted with a large army of rebel slaves only nominally under their command, struggled to apprehend and classify the situation before them. How, for example, were they to approach the black commanders on which they now depended? They knew the black rebels were officially auxiliaries, but they often noted that really they were "runaway slaves." The officers' reports sometimes seemed to acknowledge that their own system of classification did not correspond with that of the slave rebels. Armona, for example, routinely recorded such discrepancies. "They," he said, referred to their positions as encampments, but he called them "*palenques*." He mentioned that they referred to themselves as generals, brigadiers, and lieutenants. He seemed about to record a difference in the way the Spanish named these same leaders, but then added, sheepishly almost, that they called them that, too. His discomfort suggests that the situation—that is the power of the forces led by black rebels—was making old labels (such as maroons) inappropriate, and new ones (such as general for a former slave) plausible, but still not so natural as to go unmarked.<sup>11</sup>

The alliance between the two groups ended in 1795, when Spain lost the war to France and ceded Santo Domingo. At that point, these Cuban and Spanish officers returned to Havana with physical artifacts from the war, many with slaves purchased or taken from the scenes of upheaval in Hispaniola, and all with firsthand accounts of revolutionary turmoil. On separate ships, roughly at the same time, Spanish authorities in Santo Domingo also embarked the black auxiliaries for Cuba. The Marqués de Casa Calvo, another Cuban-born officer from a very prominent Havana family who was then commander of Bayajá, where Jean François had staged a massacre of approximately seven hundred white French residents then living under Spanish rule, witnessed this embarkation. Faced with the certainty of seeing the perpetrators of this massacre headed for his

native Havana (where his family was by slaves), he decided to intervene. His letter that was pained and urgent. How agonizing he had found it to have with a "Black man who though he could escape from that sphere to which his fate relegated him." The letter was also to the Cuban governor to turn away the blacks in Havana. He begged him

not [to] lodge or settle in the bosom of the faithful to her King, nor within the venomous vipers. . . . I am almost an old man, 7th [of July], I am as well of the descent stepped on the vestiges of their fury. . . . colors, the same ones who assassinated and destroyed all who had property on this nation. Why more reflections, if with the

In truth, Calvo had nothing to worry about having been an eyewitness to the many objections to his superiors in Madrid. Biassou, or any of the seven hundred disembarking in Havana, though they had some time. In opposing the settlement of Biassou, Las Casas argued that they horrified a white population that counted color in their midst. He even stated that Biassou already resounded in Cuba. He may not have been exaggerating the crimes uncovered in the period and although slave witnesses spoke to the significance of François. In 1812, for example, during the largest and most interesting rebellion of enslaved and free witnesses made of the two black generals, despite their disembark.<sup>13</sup>

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groups ended in 1795, when Spain lost Santo Domingo. At that point, these Cuban Havana with physical artifacts from the or taken from the scenes of upheaval and accounts of revolutionary turmoil. At the same time, Spanish authorities in Santo Domingo auxiliaries for Cuba. The Marqués de San Juan was an officer from a very prominent Havana family of Bayajá, where Jean François had about seven hundred white French residents witnessed this embarkation. Faced with the authors of this massacre headed for his

native Havana (where his family was making a fortune on sugar worked by slaves), he decided to intervene. He wrote the governor of Havana a letter that was pained and urgent. It was pained because he confessed how agonizing he had found it to have to establish "a perfect equality" with a "Black man who though he called himself a General, did not escape from that sphere to which his birth and his origins in slavery had relegated him." The letter was also urgent, because he was imploring the Cuban governor to turn away the black forces and to forbid their entry in Havana. He begged him

not [to] lodge or settle in the bosom of the flourishing island of Cuba, loyal and faithful to her King, nor within the boundaries [*recinto*] of Havana, these venomous vipers. . . . I am almost an eyewitness to the disgraceful day of the 7th [of July], I am as well of the desolation of this whole Colony, and I have stepped on the vestiges of their fury. These are, even if painted with different colors, the same ones who assassinated their Masters, raped their Mistresses, and destroyed all who had property on this soil at the beginning of the insurrection. Why more reflections, if with these alone the human heart is horrified.<sup>12</sup>

In truth, Calvo had nothing to worry about, since Las Casas, without having been an eyewitness to the massacre, had already voiced strong objections to his superiors in Madrid. He prevented Jean François and Biassou, or any of the seven hundred members of their entourage, from disembarking in Havana, though the ships were moored in the harbor some time. In opposing the settlement of black leaders Jean François and Biassou, Las Casas argued that they were dangerous and that they horrified a white population that counted so many slaves and free people of color in their midst. He even stated that the very names of Jean François and Biassou already resounded in Cuba like the names of great conquerors. He may not have been exaggerating. In several Cuban slave conspiracies uncovered in the period and aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, slave witnesses spoke to the significance and appeal of the figure of Jean François. In 1812, for example, during the Aponte Rebellion, one of the largest and most interesting rebellions in the history of the island, numerous enslaved and free witnesses made ample references to the 1795 visit of the two black generals, despite Las Casas's refusal of permission to disembark.<sup>13</sup>

The claim, and indeed the scattered evidence, that the reputations of these two black generals were already well known on the island is of course important. It suggests that all kinds of news—not just official news—was circulating. Moreover, it suggests that this news circulated not just among

colonial authorities or soldiers or a well-connected elite, but rather that the population as a whole was coming into contact with news of black rebellion against enslavement and eventually against colonialism.

## Reading the Revolution

If the historical record seems to portray a Cuban world in which Haitian news reached a wide cast of characters, it also strongly suggests that this cast included people of color, slave and free—people who were sure to give such news very different spins than, say, a planter turned commander. Surviving records give us precisely this sense, as they allow us to explore some of the routes by which people of color learned of Haiti and the ways they thought about it.

The very first news of the Saint-Domingue slave insurrection appears to have arrived in Cuba on August 27, when a French officer appeared in Baracoa, Cuba's easternmost city and the one closest to the French colony. He arrived with a clear description of events and an urgent plea for aid.<sup>14</sup> The first indication that the news had reached the population of color comes almost as early, but—unfortunately—is significantly less clear. Here I am referring to a very brief, very vague entry in the meeting minutes of the Havana city council, an entry moreover the main subject of which is ostensibly a city butcher shop and not enslaved or free black people. In the entry, dated September 9, 1791, city council members tried to explain a sudden shortage of pigs at the city butcher shop for pork. The only explanation they proffered—and one they did not like—seemed to be that the shop was short of pork because people of color in Havana had begun sacrificing pigs in honor of insurgents in foreign colonies. A council member then went on to lament the potential influence of foreign blacks on their own slaves.<sup>15</sup> So just over two weeks after the start of the slave revolution in Saint-Domingue, people of color in Havana appeared to know of their acts. The entry further suggests that local blacks sought to honor the rebels and that they may have done so by sacrificing pigs. Here, of course, we cannot help but think of the Bois Caïman ceremony in which Haitian revolutionaries probably took blood oaths and sacrificed a black pig in preparation for the war they were about to commence.<sup>16</sup>

The question of how to interpret this brief mention of Haiti in the documentary record is of course a challenging one. The white official's confidence in alluding to the existence of pig sacrifices among Havana blacks made to honor or benefit foreign insurgents combined with the knowledge that pig sacrifices occurred in preparation for slave rebellion in Saint-Domingue tempts us to take the official at his word. It encourages

us to conclude, or at the very least (whether slave or free we cannot know) the Haitian Revolution days after it began resembled the very ceremonies of the Plain of Saint-Domingue. That suggests two things: the possibility that the pig sacrifice of Ethiopia as they are described in the text is a shared sense of belonging, and a shared sense of women engaged in the process of creating a new world that would become Haiti.

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It is impossible to say with any certainty whether there is a significant discrepancy in the two versions, or even say if the difference was one of emphasis. The records remind us again—in the face of the elementary and inscrutable can be the only way to have survived in the documentary world—that both versions of the event suggest

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us to conclude, or at the very least to suggest, that blacks in Havana (whether slave or free we cannot know) had certain knowledge of the Haitian Revolution days after it began and organized ceremonies which resembled the very ceremonies of their slave counterparts in the Northern Plain of Saint-Domingue. That suggestion, of course, leads us to further ones: the possibility that the pig sacrificers in Havana—those descendents of Ethiopia as they are described in the record—felt a powerful affinity, a shared sense of belonging, and a common purpose, with enslaved men and women engaged in the process of making themselves free in what would become Haiti.

But the record itself is highly ambiguous. In the official minutes of the Havana City Council meetings, the pig sacrifice and the Haitian Revolution are explicitly linked—though of course the latter cannot yet be named in that way. But the link is asserted only here and only on the basis of unspecified rumor and speculation. Reading backwards and forwards from that particular meeting, we see that the question of meat and pig shortages in the city was a fairly routine matter of business. The fact of a shortage in August or September 1791 is far from exceptional. The claim that the cause of that shortage was linked to local black solidarity with the revolution was. What is interesting, however, is that another version of that same meeting is available in the documentary record. When in 1794, colonial officials wrote to Madrid to plead that black prisoners from Saint-Domingue not be brought to Cuba to be sold as slaves, they referred to and reproduced the partial minutes from that original September 9, 1791, meeting. But in this later transcription, there was no mention of pig sacrifice. Here, the same colonial official shares instead the news of the arrival of a French ship from Saint-Domingue carrying 292 slaves and fresh information of a massive slave insurrection. News of the arrival of the ship is immediately followed by the same lament that appears earlier about the likelihood that foreign insurgents will corrupt and incite Cuban slaves to rebellion. Thus one written version of the meeting begins with speculation of pig sacrifice, the other with the news of rebellion arriving aboard a French slave ship.<sup>17</sup>

It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty what accounts for the significant discrepancy in the two versions of the meeting. We cannot even say if the difference was one of design or of error in transcription. The records remind us again—in a very tangible way—just how fragmentary and inscrutable can be the traces of slaves' political vision that have survived in the documentary record. Yet for all that inscrutability, both versions of the event suggest that white elites were perceiving and

fearing the possibility of precisely that vision. They imagined that slaves in one locale would act in support of fellow slaves elsewhere for a goal that was shared across lines geographical and imperial.

Other records suggest that whether or not actual bonds of practical support ever came to exist, people of color in Cuba clearly had the desire to imagine them. In casual street encounters between free urban blacks and local whites, in confrontations between masters and slaves, in heated exchanges between black suspects and white interrogators, Cuban people of color regularly referred to the Haitian Revolution as something they respected and hoped to emulate. They referred by name to men such as Toussaint Louverture, Dessalines, Christophe, and Jean François. They even said among themselves that they wanted to be captains or leaders precisely like these men. Their testimony, on numerous occasions, explicitly refers to the "feats" of slaves in Guarico, the Spanish colonial name for Cap François—slaves they now referred to as their "*compañeros*." Slaves recruited others to conspiracy by urging them to do as their counterparts had done in Saint-Domingue, where blacks were now "absolute masters of the land."<sup>18</sup>

While the regular invocations of Haiti by slaves and free people of color leave no doubt that they learned and used knowledge of revolutionary events, on their own these references do not tell us how and from what sources they acquired that knowledge.<sup>19</sup> In what follows, I focus on one source, which according to the captain general of Cuba, the Márques de Soneruelos, was of notable importance in informing Cuba's people of color about the unprecedented events of the Haitian Revolution. The source is a surprising one: an official Spanish newspaper—the *Gaceta de Madrid*, a biweekly publication of the Spanish government in Madrid.<sup>20</sup> What is perhaps surprising in examining this newspaper is that, for all the government efforts to curtail the flow of information, the source with most information on events in Saint-Domingue circulating in Cuba was not a foreign newspaper, but the official newspaper of its own metropole. According to the captain general, the problem this posed was significant. He lamented that the newspaper was so readily available: "It is sold to the public, and everyone buys it, and it circulates well among the blacks," who, he added, read it, discuss it, and analyze its contents "with considerable liveliness."<sup>21</sup> What worried the governor so profoundly was that in the pages of this gazette, Cubans of color encountered substantial and animated news of black rebellion in what had been an orderly and prosperous sugar colony just miles away. Here were stories of the revolutionary terror in Paris, of abolitionist debates in Britain, of war in

Europe. And in regular installments, and U.S. newspapers, stories of the

The *Gaceta's* coverage of the Revolution began with the first reference to the rebellion in 1791. The coverage continued, with articles on the abolition of slavery in Paris in 1794, on French territory in Saint-Domingue, and the figure of Toussaint Louverture (known as black until 1800).<sup>23</sup> Although coverage was not as frequent, we see, not surprising, that after the Revolution, the coverage intensified. The Leclerc expedition which began in 1801. The expedition was devised by the brother-in-law Leclerc, and meant to be seen as the evils and excesses that had led to the colony. The *Gaceta* covered this event in every number, news appeared of the many ships gathering for the journey, the number of troops and arms to be sent, the invasion given by the regular dispatches, the invasion of the colony by metropolitan

Coverage intensified still more with the arrival of the French on the coasts of Saint-Domingue in February 1801. The rebels began learning of the reactions of foreign powers, the resistance at the Couleuvre ravine near Gonaïves, the resistance, cannon shots and hand-to-hand fighting. When fresh forces arrived at Le Cap, the rebels refused to grant them entry without the presence of the governor. At Port-au-Prince, the rebels set fire to the ships and refused to disembark. Alongside the detailed descriptions, the newspaper reprinted extracts from official reports (from the governor of Saint-Domingue) to the Overseas Minister. The news in the pages of the newspaper and the interest with much interest in Cuba.<sup>24</sup>

The frequency and nature of the news was like a serialized novel. Little by little, the news grew and grew; little by little, the news became clearer and clearer. And as in a novel, the unfolding events were quite intimate. So, a quite detailed description of the re-

that vision. They imagined that slaves of fellow slaves elsewhere for a goal mythical and imperial.

Whether or not actual bonds of practical color in Cuba clearly had the desire encounters between free urban blacks between masters and slaves, in heated and white interrogators, Cuban people Haitian Revolution as something they referred by name to men such as Christophe, and Jean François. They wanted to be captains or leaders of the Revolution, on numerous occasions, explicitly named as such. For example, Juan de los Rios, the Spanish colonial name was referred to as their "*compañeros*." They urged by urging them to do as their countrymen, where blacks were now "absolute

of Haiti by slaves and free people of learned and used knowledge of revolutionary references do not tell us how and from knowledge.<sup>19</sup> In what follows, I focus on the role of the captain general of Cuba, the Márques de Casa de la Torre, in informing Cuba's people of the events of the Haitian Revolution. The role of the Spanish newspaper—the *Gaceta de Madrid*—in the Spanish government in Madrid.<sup>20</sup> The role of this newspaper is that, for all the flow of information, the source with the most-Domingue circulating in Cuba was the official newspaper of its own metropolitan area. The problem this posed was significant: the newspaper was so readily available: "It is so easy to get it, and it circulates well among the people, that it is difficult to discuss it, and analyze its contents" "with the result that the governor so profoundly was surprised by the blacks of color encountered substantial rebellion in what had been an orderly colony. Here were stories of the revolutionary debates in Britain, of war in

Europe. And in regular installments, often reprinted from French, British, and U.S. newspapers, stories of the Haitian Revolution unfolded.

The *Gaceta's* coverage of the Revolution began in November 1791, with the first reference to the rebellion of the slaves in the North.<sup>22</sup> Coverage continued, with articles on other attacks and massacres, on the abolition of slavery in Paris in 1794, and on Spanish and English attacks on French territory in Saint-Domingue. In 1796, readers first encounter the figure of Toussaint Louverture (though he is not explicitly identified as black until 1800).<sup>23</sup> Although coverage of Haitian events is regular and fairly frequent, we see, not surprisingly, that at certain moments of the Revolution, the coverage intensified. This was clearly the case with the Leclerc expedition which began leaving France in the final months of 1801. The expedition was devised by Napoléon, commanded by his brother-in-law Leclerc, and meant to contain what authorities in Paris saw as the evils and excesses that had taken root in their once-prized colony. The *Gaceta* covered this event in exceptional detail. In almost every number, news appeared of the expedition: readers learned of so many ships gathering for the journey from Brest to Saint-Domingue, of the number of troops and arms to be transported by each. The impression given by the regular dispatches was of an imminent and massive invasion of the colony by metropolitan forces.

Coverage intensified still more with the arrival of the expedition on the coasts of Saint-Domingue in February 1802. Then, readers of the gazette began learning of the reactions of former slaves and their leaders. Arriving at the Couleuvre ravine near Gonaïves, the expedition encountered resistance, cannon shots and hand-to-hand combat from Toussaint's men. When fresh forces arrived at Le Cap, the black leader Christophe refused to grant them entry without the previous authorization of Toussaint. In Port-au-Prince, the rebels set fire to the town before French troops could disembark. Alongside the detailed descriptions of such encounters were reprinted extracts from official reports by Leclerc and Rochambeau (governor of Saint-Domingue) to the Overseas Minister. All this was published in the pages of the newspaper and read, as we know from Someruelos, with much interest in Cuba.<sup>24</sup>

The frequency and nature of the reports turned the news into something like a serialized novel. Little by little, the number of ships leaving Brest grew and grew; little by little the reactions of rebel slaves became clearer and clearer. And as in a novel, sometimes the details of the unfolding events were quite intimate. So for example, the gazette published a quite detailed description of the reunion between Toussaint's wife and

her two sons (both of whom had been sent to France to study and who now accompanied the expedition on Napoléon's request). We learned of her embrace, her tears, and the maternal love she displayed. Longer still was the gazette's description of Toussaint's own meeting with his sons shortly thereafter.<sup>25</sup>

In fact, as news of the expedition unfolded, the key questions soon came to center around Toussaint himself—how would he receive the expedition, what would his attitude be, what would his destiny be? The ultimate answer came, of course, with news of his deportation to France in June 1802.<sup>26</sup> Even with Toussaint out of the picture, however, the gazette's readers may have soon begun to surmise that his plans were perhaps bearing fruit. Gradually, more and more articles began appearing about the mounting deaths of French soldiers. They learned of Leclerc's death, and the death of many other officers who only a few weeks earlier had appeared in the gazette's pages as the dogged persecutors of Toussaint and his allies. By the end of the year, almost every number of the gazette seemed to provide evidence of the weakness of the French and the growing power of black leaders such as Dessalines and Christophe.<sup>27</sup>

But the gazette spoke not only of black military victories, it also published articles that gave some insight into the desires and the ideas of Haitian rebels. It published the words of black leaders. The issue of the gazette that had prompted the complaint by Cuban Captain General Someruelos, in fact, contained two translated proclamations by black Haitian leaders. One signed by Dessalines and another by Dessalines, Christophe, and Clerveaux. In both documents, the black leaders invited refugees who had fled the colony to return and live peacefully under the new system being erected. But their invitation also entailed a clear and explicit threat. Speaking of the refugees, the three leaders declared:

The God who protects us, the God of free men, commands us to extend toward them our victorious arms. But those who, intoxicated with a foolish pride, . . . [those who] think still that they alone form the essence of human nature, and who pretend to think that they are destined by heaven to be our owners and our tyrants, [we tell them] never to come near the island of Santo Domingo, because if they come, they will find only chains and deportation.<sup>28</sup>

This was the proclamation that had so worried Someruelos—a proclamation in which were manifest the power of new black leaders, who forbade the return of Saint-Domingue to its colonial ruler and who were willing to admit only those refugees who deigned to live under a government of former slaves and in a society without slavery.

Just one week after Someruelos's complaint, the gazette reported the printing and circulation of this document, a two-page article in the pages of the gazette. This time it was the Haitian declaration of independence, signed by Dessalines on June 19, 1802. The gazette six months later on June 19, 1802, reported the Haitian declaration of independence. French ships, for example, and that they should do their best to have them confiscated. But in spite of their attempts to limit the circulation of the declaration now translated, published, and read by Cubans, who Someruelos argued with a little difficulty. So, we know that people read the Haitian declaration of independence. Slaves who had vanquished their masters.

Now we can understand more precisely the impact upon recognizing that these words were a new kind of presence and power in the world of black people, were circulating in the world of people of color learned of Haitian independence. Itself there was not one black person who read the stories by memory.<sup>30</sup> It was also that the example acquired more and more significance.

### Archives, History, and

Through the pages of the *Gaceta de la Armada*, soldiers formerly stationed in the theater of war, and other multiple routes not traced here, the story, in detail, and sometimes intimate, of the revolution. We know now that whatever sparked in Cuba by the example of the Haitian revolution, be imagined out of whole cloth, but it was raw material, on detailed narrative, of the residents of Cuba regarding those who were slave conspirators in Bayamo relayed to Spanish authorities, or when during the revolution slaves and free people invoked the revolution and others, both the tellers of and the listeners, have had ample opportunity to learn of the exploits. The oft-repeated assertion that any attempt at political liberation

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Just one week after Someruelos penned his attack on the publication and circulation of this document, a new proclamation appeared in the pages of the gazette. This time it was the Haitian declaration of independence, signed by Dessalines on January 1, 1804, and published in the gazette six months later on June 1. We know that other copies of the Haitian declaration of independence had already arrived in Cuba, aboard French ships, for example, and that authorities on the island had done their best to have them confiscated, translated, and sent to Madrid.<sup>29</sup> But in spite of their attempts to limit its circulation, in June we see the declaration now translated, published, and circulating, even among black Cubans, who Someruelos argued were able to acquire the gazette with little difficulty. So, we know that people of color in Cuba were able to read the Haitian declaration of independence, a proclamation of former slaves who had vanquished their masters by force of arms.

Now we can understand more profoundly the discomfort of Someruelos upon recognizing that these words and ideas, that these examples of a new kind of presence and power in Haiti, of a new liberty by and for black people, were circulating in his own colony. It was not only that people of color learned of Haitian news, for according to the gazette itself there was not one black person who did not already know these stories by memory.<sup>30</sup> It was also that with repetition and circulation, the example acquired more and more substance.

### Archives, History, and the Haitian Revolution

Through the pages of the *Gaceta de Madrid*, through contact with soldiers formerly stationed in the theater of war and revolution, and through other multiple routes not traced here, people in Cuba received interesting, detailed, and sometimes intimate news of the world's first black revolution. We know now that whatever sense of fear or hope may have been sparked in Cuba by the example set by Haitian events did not have to be imagined out of whole cloth, but would have likely drawn on ample raw material, on detailed narratives, and suggestive stories available to residents of Cuba regarding those events. So, for example, when alleged slave conspirators in Bayamo relayed the name of Jean François to Spanish authorities, or when during the Aponte conspiracy in Havana in 1812, slaves and free people invoked the names of Jean François, Christophe, and others, both the tellers of and the audiences for those stories would have had ample opportunity to learn of the real Jean François and his exploits. The oft-repeated assertion that Cuban Creole elites feared that any attempt at political liberation would stir the population of color,

perhaps makes more sense when we know that members of that elite had firsthand experience in Santo Domingo with unsuccessful attempts to mobilize and contain armed former slaves in support of elite political goals. Cuban men had been defeated by some of those slave forces in 1794–95. Cuban residents had opportunities to witness defeated whites evacuate the French colony and then to read the proclamations of their black victors. The fears or hopes allegedly inspired by the Haitian Revolution would have been shaped by these very concrete contacts and experiences.

The proliferation of substantial, detailed, even intimate talk of the Haitian Revolution does not, however, require that we abandon the important notion of “silence” discussed at the outset of this paper. Rather, it compels us to try to understand more deeply the ways in which such silences (and mentions) were constructed, sustained, and challenged, and the ways particular kinds of historical knowledge and narratives became ascendant.

In 1995, Michel-Rolph Trouillot brilliantly and persuasively argued that the silence that has tended to surround the Haitian Revolution is explained in part by the inability of contemporary observers to understand or narrate the events of the Revolution—and particularly the aspirations and actions of slave rebels—with the language and categories available at the time, or even now. For Trouillot this is a silence in which the archive itself is implicated, as an institution of power that selects, gathers, organizes, and legitimates certain kinds of documents and facts in ways that reinscribe the power already at play in the historical act itself.<sup>31</sup>

I would suggest, however, that a grounded analysis of the ways in which people regularly spoke, heard, learned, and wrote about the Revolution as it unfolded, encourages us to approach the archive in a different way: not as transparent depository of transparent documents, but neither simply as obstacle for historian and accomplice to state power. A more fruitful approach, rather, invites us to see the archive as also containing the traces of the operation of its own power. There, we can trace the processes by which certain silences and narratives are created, reformulated, sustained, and broken. And in the archive, Haiti emerges simultaneously in multiple forms: as a place about which detailed, complex, dense, and unruly stories circulated, and as a name that served as loaded key word, black-and-white image, a brief cautionary (or inspirational) invocation. Indeed, if we focus on the sources themselves, we see these dual uses competing even in the same documents. We see at work, in other words, the very process of silencing, the process of what Trouillot calls archival

power itself. It is as if we could see the struggle to contain events in categories that were not theirs.

We see this, for example, even in the use of the very term *Haiti*. Haiti, of course, was not the name of Santo Domingo immediately after independence; the name for the island; it signified mourning for the dead. Originally it was the name “on everyone’s lips” when it came time to name the new state. The state became Haiti in name, but the Spanish seemed loathe to use that title; to use it would be to recognize the victory of slaves over European rule. Thus, for example, in the world in general, the name Haiti made its appearance in the decades after it was created. In Santo Domingo, using the name Santo Domingo for more than a decade after this was the source of great confusion. The entry of people from Haiti shortly after independence, without naming Haiti, referring simply to “the blacks,” of course, caused predictable confusion. Refugees from the formerly Spanish Santo Domingo and were unsure if they also were Haitians. It is revealing irony that those Haitians who supported his anticolonial bid against Spain are referred to as “franceses” rather than Haitians.<sup>34</sup>

The same disconnect between the names of the narrators and the complex and unruly events they are evident as well in the ways in which the authorities struggled to deal with black people. A person unknown to them just years or decades before. Someruelos facing letters from black people in the metropole. He seems at a loss not to know what to follow, but even about what language to use and with what consequences.<sup>35</sup> Here, the Cuban officers discussed earlier in the text, who in Santo Domingo, and knew not what to do with the people who served as their “auxiliaries,” “misers,” even as they admitted that

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power itself. It is as if we could see the tug of war, the efforts of narrators to contain events in categories that will not allow them to fit.

We see this, for example, even in the archival use or absence of the very term *Haiti*. Haiti, of course, was the name given to colonial Saint-Domingue immediately after independence. It was the Arawak-Taino name for the island; it signified mountainous or high lands; and supposedly it was the name “on everyone’s lips” and the name “enthusiastically welcome[d]” when it came time to name the new country.<sup>32</sup> But though the state became Haiti in name, colonial and metropolitan authorities seemed loathe to use that title; to use it, they must have surmised, would be to recognize the victory of slaves and former slaves and the defeat of European rule. Thus, for example, in Cuba and in the Spanish-speaking world in general, the name Haiti makes only scattered archival appearances in the decades after it was created. Spanish authorities continued using the name Santo Domingo for newly independent Haiti, even when this was the source of great confusion. When officials forbade (yet again) the entry of people from Haiti shortly after independence, they did so without naming Haiti, referring simply to Santo Domingo. The move, of course, caused predictable confusion when local authorities confronted refugees from the formerly Spanish part of the island still called Santo Domingo and were unsure if they also were included in the prohibition.<sup>33</sup> It is revealing irony that those Haitians who helped Simón Bolívar win his anticolonial bid against Spain are identified in the historical record as “*franceses*” rather than Haitians.<sup>34</sup>

The same disconnect between the categories and names deployed by narrators and the complex and unprecedented realities on the ground are evident as well in the ways in which colonial and metropolitan authorities struggled to deal with black heads of state, a category of person unknown to them just years or months earlier. So Captain General Someruelos facing letters from black authorities, opts to seek advice from the metropole. He seems at a loss not only about what political strategies to follow, but even about what language to use, what titles, what tone, and with what consequences.<sup>35</sup> Here the Captain General seemed to echo the Cuban officers discussed earlier in the paper, who arrived in Spanish Santo Domingo, and knew not what to name the troops of former slaves who served as their “auxiliaries,” calling them “maroons” and “skirmishers,” even as they admitted that they were “the all” of the war.<sup>36</sup>

But the writings of Spanish officials also explicitly acknowledge this struggle to name and narrate the scenes before them with words that

could not be made to correspond. In doing so, they left for our archives intriguing traces of the struggle between competing ways of naming the history represented by Haiti. In one revealing exchange between Santiago governor Sebastián Kindelán and the Haitian leader Alexandre Petión, we see in fact two discordant regimes of classification. The Haitian letter refers to the "time of the French" and to the Haitians; meanwhile the letter of the colonial official cannot admit such a reality. Here Haiti even in the postindependence year of 1809 continues to be named as "a foreign colony."<sup>37</sup> In these day-to-day documents of empire, and in exchanges such as these, are revealed the conflicts between different visions of Haiti—Haiti as newly independent nation, and Saint-Domingue as permanent turbulent colony. Such examples—and there are many in the historical record—encourage us to move beyond seeing the archive as an institution that only works to silence particular narratives and legitimate those associated with the victors of history. It is more interesting, challenging, and productive to imagine the archive as a place that may also contain—if we choose to read it that way—traces of the conflicts between competing histories and their would-be tellers.

Take, for instance, the following exchange dating from the final months of the revolution in 1803. By midyear, with the conflict in Saint-Domingue now clearly a war of independence, French troops and white residents began (again) fleeing from the colony and arriving by the boatloads in eastern Cuba. The local governor wrote almost daily letters to his superiors informing them of the number of ships and people arriving constantly to his territory. He had each captain of each ship formally interviewed, and each solicited "hospitality" from the Spanish. In one such request for hospitality, the French officers stressed the fact that England and France were now again at war and that their town was under threat of British invasion. The governor hearing this request showed little compassion and was inclined to deny refuge. If the threat was merely from the attack of a British enemy, then why not flee to another point in the colony? It was not, he added, as if they were threatened by black troops or black rule. Having expressed this doubt and having voiced a familiar—if at the moment alternative—narrative, he overdetermined the nature of the narrative that would ultimately be produced. Formally requesting hospitality days later, that is, stating the official reason for their flight, the refugees' petition now requested hospitality in a more urgent and conformist language. "We left of absolute necessity," they wrote, "because we were about to be killed by black rebels."<sup>38</sup> Here we see clearly how the power and authority of the governor, and perhaps the very exigencies

of producing routinized documents of the archive and turned several possible archival war between Britain and France, black rebels and their metropole—in blacks violently sacrificing whites.

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### Notes

I thank Doris Garraway for the opportunity to present this paper at the lively conference at Northwestern University. To the Northwestern audience, I thank also the Rutgers Black Atlantic Seminar, the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor Black Atlantic Seminar, the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World colloquium, and the Haitian Revolution colloquium at NYU. In previous versions, I'd like to thank Laurent Dubois, Rebecca Scott, Jean Hébrard, Julius Scott, Gloria García, Reinaldo Funes, Walter Johnson, and Doris Garraway. A version of this material appeared in Spanish as "El silencio de la revolución haitiana," *Indias* 63 (2003): 675–93.

1. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* (1995).
2. Ibid., 71. For important recent work on the Haitian Revolution, see Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World* (2004) and David Geggus, *Haitian Revolution and the Slave Wars* (2002).
3. Julius Scott, "The Common Will of Haiti," 837.

... In doing so, they left for our archives between competing ways of naming the revealing exchange between Santiago and the Haitian leader Alexandre Petión, regimes of classification. The Haitian let-ench" and to the Haitians; meanwhile cannot admit such a reality. Here Haiti r of 1809 continues to be named as "a o-day documents of empire, and in ex- d the conflicts between different visions ndent nation, and Saint-Domingue as a examples—and there are many in the to move beyond seeing the archive as silence particular narratives and legiti- ctors of history. It is more interesting, agine the archive as a place that may ad it that way—traces of the conflicts their would-be tellers.

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of producing routinized documents of empire, shaped the record of the archive and turned several possible narratives—for example, of impe- rial war between Britain and France, or of anticolonial struggle between black rebels and their metropole—into a much simpler, starker story of blacks violently sacrificing whites.

In such sources we can see the multiple disjunctures in the way con- temporaries wrote and heard about Haiti—the gap between the proliferation of detailed information and the simultaneous emergence of vulgarized, key-word type references to Haiti, as well as the incompatibility between the terms and categories available to narrators and the unprecedented realities and outcomes on the ground. Such inconsistencies serve to illumi- nate the processes by which a particular kind of historical narrative and a particular kind of historical knowledge becomes ascendant. In these disjunctures we are able to observe colonial power trying to convert the Haitian Revolution, among the most radical and significant of the mod- ern world, into a mere warning, a cautionary tale in black and white, a caricature with only suppressed traces of the will and thought of the black and mulatto men and women who made the Revolution. But if the historical record shows anything at all, it is that that suppression was far from total.

### Notes

I thank Doris Garraway for the opportunity to be part of this volume and of the lively conference at Northwestern University from which it emerged. In addition to the Northwestern audience, I thank audiences at the John Carter Brown Library, the Rutgers Black Atlantic Seminar, the University of Pittsburgh Atlantic History Seminar, the University of Michigan–University of Windsor joint conference on Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World, and the graduate students in my Haitian Revolution colloquium at NYU in spring 2004. For comments on earlier versions, I'd like to thank Laurent Dubois, Sibylle Fischer, Mimi Sheller, Herman Bennett, Rebecca Scott, Jean Hébrard, Fernando Martínez, Michael Zeuske, Julius Scott, Gloria García, Reinaldo Funes, Consuelo Naranjo, Manuel Barcia, Walter Johnson, and Doris Garraway. A shorter and earlier version of some of this material appeared in Spanish as "Noticias de Haití en Cuba," *Revista de Indias* 63 (2003): 675–93.

1. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*.
2. Ibid., 71. For important recent work on the Revolution, see especially, Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*; Carolyn Fick, *The Making of Haiti*; and David Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*.
3. Julius Scott, "The Common Wind"; and Susan Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti," 837.

4. On the Cuban sugar boom in this period, see especially Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *El ingenio*; Rolando Ely, *Cuando reinaba su majestad el azúcar*. For an important conceptual discussion of this boom and the emergence of a "second slavery" in the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution and British abolitionism, see Dale Tomich, "Spaces of Slavery, Times of Freedom" and "The 'Second Slavery,'" both in his *Through the Prism of Slavery*.

5. In a letter to Someruelos, Sebastián Kindelán translates and transcribes Toussaint's communication. Governor of Havana Sebastián Kindelán to the Marqués de Someruelos, Captain General of Cuba, 29 April 1800, in Archivo General de Indias, Seville (hereafter AGI), Cuba, legajo 1534.

6. Kindelán to Someruelos, 31 August 1800, in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1534.

7. Matías de Armona to Joaquín García, Captain General of Santo Domingo, San Rafael, 12 August 1793, in Archivo General de Simancas, Simancas, Spain (hereafter AGS), Sección Guerra Moderna (GM), legajo 6855. Emphasis added. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

8. The reference to the stamp of the tree of liberty appears in Armona to García, San Rafael, 14 August 1793, in AGS, GM, legajo 6855. For a discussion of slave royalism and the on-the-ground compatibility of royalist and republican motifs, see Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 106–8.

9. "Continuación de la noticias de la Ysla de Sto Domingo asta 25 de Marxo de 94" in file "Relación de lo ocurrido en la Ysla de Santo Domingo con motivo de la guerra con los franceses, 1795. D. Antonio Barba," Servicio Histórico Militar, Madrid (hereafter SHM), Colección General de Documentos, Rollo 65, doc. no. 5-4-11-1. The document mentions that General Jean François had received the same honor earlier.

10. The term "intuitive sociology" is borrowed from Arlette Farge and Jacques Revel, *The Vanishing Children of Paris*, 53.

11. Armona to García, San Rafael, 12 and 14 August 1793. In folder "Correspondencia del Brigadier Dn. Mathías de Armona desde 19 de Junio hasta 10 de Septiembre de 1793" in AGS, GM, legajo 6855.

12. Marqués de Casa Calvo to Luis de las Casas, Captain General of Cuba, 31 December 1795, in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1474.

13. "Testimonio de la criminalidad seguida de oficio contra el negro Miguel, Juan Bautista y José Antonio sobre la conjuración que intentaban contra el Pueblo y sus moradores [Bayamo]," 25 August 1805, in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1649. On Aponte, see Matt Childs, "'A Black French General Arrived to Conquer the Island': Images of the Haitian Revolution in Cuba's 1812 Aponte Rebellion," in David Geggus, ed., *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, 135–56; and José Luciano Franco, "La conspiración de Aponte," and *Las conspiraciones de 1810 y 1812*.

14. See Ignacio Leyte Vidal, Tte. Gob. de Baracoa, to Luis de las Casas, 27 August 1791, in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1435; and 28 August 1791, in Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Havana (hereafter ANC), Asuntos Políticos, legajo 4, exp. 33.

15. Archivo del Museo de la Ciudad de La Habana, Capitulares del Ayuntamiento de la H, 1791, folio 247, 9 September 1791.

16. For an interesting and persua and the controversy that has surrou "The Bois Caiman Ceremony," in H.

17. Cabildo extraordinario 12 l Pedro de Acuña, 19 February 1794,

18. See Ada Ferrer, "La société enne," especially 346–56.

19. Julius Scott's pathbreaking a brilliant analysis of the currents o which sailors figure very prominently

20. Larry R. Jensen, *Children o* in fact, one of only two newspapers censorship legislation in February 17 an effort to prevent the spread of Fre

21. Someruelos to Sec. de Estado nal, Madrid (hereafter AHN), Estad the letter also appears in Someruelos Estado, legajo 12, exp. 50.

22. *Gaceta de Madrid* (hereafter

23. On the emancipation decre victory in Bayajá, GM, 1 April 1794 ary 1794, 103–4, and 26 August 17 that I have found in the periodical i does not appear to be identified as (50). Coverage of the conflict betwe 1799 (894). For his appointment as

24. GM, 1801: 1 December, 12 22 December, 1278; GM, 1802: 5 J 2 April, 313–16; 6 April, 326–29; 385–86; 18 May, 477–79. Someruelo legajo 12, exp. 50).

25. Both appear in GM, 21 Ma

26. See GM, 1802: 23 March 2 348–50; 20 April, 376–77; 18 May June, 606–8; 6 July, 650–52; 9 July, 6 789; 28 September, 971.

27. On disease and death amon 817–8; 20 August, 831–2; 19 Oc December, 1269; and in 1803: 25 J

28. GM, 23 March 1804, 267–

in this period, see especially Manuel Moreno *Cuando reinaba su majestad el azúcar*. For an analysis of this boom and the emergence of a "second Haitian Revolution and British abolitionism, see *Notes of Freedom*" and "The 'Second Slavery,'" *Slavery*.

Sebastián Kindelán translates and transcribes the report of Havana Sebastián Kindelán to the Captain General of Cuba, 29 April 1800, in Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Cuba, legajo 1534.

August 1800, in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1534. In García, Captain General of Santo Domingo, in Archivo General de Simancas, Simancas, Spain (AGN), legajo 6855. Emphasis added. Sons are mine.

of the tree of liberty appears in Armona to the Captain General, in AGS, GM, legajo 6855. For a discussion of the compatibility of royalist and republican ideas, see *Notes of the New World*, 106–8.

as de la Ysla de Sto Domingo asta 25 de Mayo de 1795. Lo ocurrido en la Ysla de Santo Domingo desde 1795. D. Antonio Barba," Servicio de Simancas (SHM), Colección General de Documentos, Documento 1000. The document mentions that General Jean François

"gy" is borrowed from Arlette Farge and *Notes of Paris*, 53.

el, 12 and 14 August 1793. In folder "Correspondencia de Armona desde 19 de Junio hasta 10 de Agosto de 1793," AGI, legajo 6855.

Luis de las Casas, Captain General of Cuba, in AGI, legajo 1474.

ad seguida de oficio contra el negro Miguel, de la conjuración que intentaban contra el negro, 15 August 1805, in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1649. "Black French General Arrived to Conquer the Island in Cuba's 1812 Aponte Rebellion," in *The Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, 100. La conspiración de Aponte," and *Las con-*

Gob. de Baracoa, to Luis de las Casas, 27 August 1791, in Archivo Nacional de la Historia, Legajo 4, exp. 33.

15. Archivo del Museo de la Ciudad de la Habana, (hereafter AMCH), Actas Capitulares del Ayuntamiento de la Habana Trasuntadas, Enero 1791 a Diciembre 1791, folio 247, 9 September 1791.

16. For an interesting and persuasive discussion of the Bois Caïman ceremony and the controversy that has surrounded it in the literature, see David Geggus, "The Bois Caïman Ceremony," in *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*, 81–92.

17. Cabildo extraordinario 12 February 1794, appended to Las Casas to Pedro de Acuña, 19 February 1794, in AGI, Estado, legajo 14, no. 73.

18. See Ada Ferrer, "La société esclavagiste cubaine et la révolution haïtienne," especially 346–56.

19. Julius Scott's pathbreaking work first raised this question and offered a brilliant analysis of the currents of communication among people of color, in which sailors figure very prominently. See Scott, "Common Wind."

20. Larry R. Jensen, *Children of Colonial Despotism*, 6. The gazette was, in fact, one of only two newspapers allowed to operate in the metropole after censorship legislation in February 1791 clamped down on the peninsular press in an effort to prevent the spread of French revolutionary currents.

21. Someruelos to Sec. de Estado, 25 May 1804, in Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid (hereafter AHN), Estado, legajo 6366, exp. 78. A transcription of the letter also appears in Someruelos to Sec. de Estado, 13 August 1809, in AGI, Estado, legajo 12, exp. 50.

22. *Gaceta de Madrid* (hereafter GM), 25 November 1791, 856.

23. On the emancipation decree, see GM, 8 April 1794, 394; on the Spanish victory in Bayajá, GM, 1 April 1794, 363–71; on British victories, GM, 24 January 1794, 103–4, and 26 August 1794, 1006–7. The first mention of Louverture that I have found in the periodical is from 2 December 1796 (1024), though he does not appear to be identified as black in the journal until 18 January 1800 (50). Coverage of the conflict between Louverture and Rigaud begins 15 October 1799 (894). For his appointment as prefect, 4 August 1801 (816).

24. GM, 1801: 1 December, 1214; 8 December, 1230; 18 December, 1236; 22 December, 1278; GM, 1802: 5 January, 12; 23 March, 270; 26 March, 283; 2 April, 313–16; 6 April, 326–29; 9 April, 338–41; 20 April, 376–77; 23 April, 385–86; 18 May, 477–79. Someruelos's letter is the one cited above (AGI, Estado, legajo 12, exp. 50).

25. Both appear in GM, 21 May 1802, 489–91.

26. See GM, 1802: 23 March 270; 2 April, 312; 6 April, 328–9; 13 April, 348–50; 20 April, 376–77; 18 May, 477–79; 21 May, 389–91; 1 June, 528; 22 June, 606–8; 6 July, 650–52; 9 July, 664–5; 27 July, 736; 6 August, 780; 10 August, 789; 28 September, 971.

27. On disease and death among French troops, see GM in 1802: 17 August, 817–8; 20 August, 831–2; 19 October, 1054–55; 14 December, 1241–2; 24 December, 1269; and in 1803: 25 January, 67–8.

28. GM, 23 March 1804, 267–8.

29. Marqués de Someruelos to D. Pedro Cevallo, 14 March 1804, in AHN, Estado, legajo 6366, exp. 70.

30. GM, 18 May 1804.

31. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, passim, but especially 48–53. For other important and generative work on thinking about the archive, see especially Arlette Farge, *Le goût de l'archive*.

32. Thomas Madiou, *Histoire d'Haïti*, quoted in Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*, 207.

33. AGI, Cuba, legajo 1549.

34. See Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery*, 345.

35. Someruelos to Junta Suprema, 26 December 26, 1808, in AGI, Estado, legajo 12, exp. 57.

36. Armona to García, San Rafael, 10 September 1793. In folder "Correspondencia del Brigadier Dn. Mathías de Armona desde 19 de Junio hasta 10 de Septiembre de 1793" in AGS, GM, legajo 6855.

37. AGI, Estado, legajo 12, exp. 54.

38. Kindelán to Someruelos, 15 August 1803, with enclosed "Testimonio de los autos obrados sobre la arribada que han hecho a este Pro. de Stgo. de Cuba 5 Goletas y una balandra francesas . . . con varias familias de la misma nación pidiendo hospitalidad," in AGI, Cuba, legajo 1537A. See also J. A. Caballer, Consejo de Indias, 21 February 1804, in Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Madrid, Política, República Dominicana, legajo 2372.

## Toussaint Louv

### Launching the Haiti in the French Media

HEGEL'S DIALECTIC of master and slave, of unhappy consciousness, was deeply explored by Buck-Morss in "Hegel and Haiti," by the way. In her work about the upheavals in Saint-Domingue, in this case, Buck-Morss examined the reception of Saint-Domingue in *Minerva*, a new German outlook, which published between 1797 and 1801, totaling more than a hundred pages, including summaries, and eyewitness accounts. In Buck-Morss's research, it seems inevitable that the paradigm would have emerged from the notion of the slave revolution in Saint-Domingue. Her analysis of the diffusion and reception of the Haitian Revolution in other countries and the significance of the reception of news of the Revolution, understood without considering the context in which the news was produced within, and especially the role of the Revolution, and what role the external political demands and interpretations played. "the Haitian Revolution was the crucial moment of the French Enlightenment," and "Even the bourgeois reading public knew it" (8). The Haitian Revolution is a media phenomenon begs to be examined for its cultural influence, but for the political significance of the *parole* by former slaves.

Buck-Morss sidestepped the intertextual relationship between French media with the observation that