ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis:	THE DRAMA OF HISTORY: REPRESENTATION AND REVOLUTIONARIES IN HAITIAN THEATER, 1818-1907
	Nathan Hobson Dize, Master of Arts, 2016
Thesis Directed By:	Professor Valérie K. Orlando, Department of French and Italian

Since the beginning of the Haitian theatrical tradition there has been an ineluctable dedication to the representation of Haitian history on stage. Given the rich theatrical archive about Haiti throughout the world, this study considers operas and plays written solely by Haitian playwrights. By delving into the works of Juste Chanlatte, Massillon Coicou, and Vendenesse Ducasse this study proposes a re-reading of Haitian theater that considers the stage as an innovative site for contesting negative and clichéd representations of the Haitian Revolution and its revolutionary leadership. A genre long mired in accusations of mimicking European literary forms, this study proposes a reevaluation of Haitian theater and its literary origins.

THE DRAMA OF HISTORY: REPRESENTATION AND REVOLUTIONARIES IN HAITIAN THEATER, 1818-1907

by

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts
2016

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Acknowledgements

Even though I was always surrounded by them, I did not grow up a lover of books. It was not until I was in my first semester of college, struggling to adjust to life away from home, did I find myself lost in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, Camus' various Algerian countrysides, or Baldwin's New York. Reading became my refuge, my escape, and the way that I would relate to the world around me. While it is reading that has undoubtedly led me to complete this study, I would be remiss if I did not take the time to acknowledge those who have always been a profound source of encouragement, support, friendship, and love. Because even though this is a study of fictional works, none of the works I study would have existed without those elements either.

First, to Merle Collins, who gave me the space to grow in the numerous courses I took with her as an undergraduate English major interested in the Caribbean. I am grateful for her warmth and caring support, she always made me feel at home in her classes and during our many encounters in office hours. I used to say to friends that I majored in Merle Collins, which was not far from the truth. It must have been strange to sit in her seat and hear a student say that he thought he wanted to do a PhD in literature, but did not know why. With Professor Collins's encouragement, I would not have struggled to learn French. For that, I am eternally thankful.

To my professors and TAs in the University of Maryland Department of French and Italian, thank you for providing me with a home ever since I first stepped into a classroom in 2010. I want to thank CJ Gomolka, Valerie Orlando, and Sarah Benharrech for their support in some of my roughest linguistic and personal times. Whether I shared the details with you, or not, you have always helped me refocus my energy into the

French language. Un grand merci is due to Caroline Eades because without her I would have never been able to enter the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon as an English lecturer. During those ten months spent in Lyon I lived in French for the first time, met some of the most incredible people, and my French language abilities blossomed because of it. To my former instructors in the French department who then became my colleagues, Erica Cefalo in particular, thank you for welcoming me to your ranks and for your friendship. Lastly, for my colleagues still at the University of Maryland, thank you for your motivation, care, and support.

Apart from the Department of English and French and Italian, I spent many formative years in the Latin American Studies program at the University of Maryland. I had the honor of taking courses with Ivette Rodriguez-Santana, David Sartorius, and Daryle Williams. They challenged me to use my close reading skills in order to think like a historian, they exposed me to difficult texts, and provided me with the space to explore my interests. Thanks to Ivette for the numerous hours we spent in her office talking about life, studies, and everything in between. Thank you for prophesying that one day I would speak English, French, Kreyòl, and Spanish, I'm almost there. Thanks to David for his unwavering support and feedback, I have never been so challenged intellectually than in your company. And to Daryle, thanks for being a wonderful friend, and for the hour-long bike rides, especially those that do not end in fender-benders.

I cannot forget the impact that my professional community has had on my scholarship and my life. Mèsi anpil to my friends in Haitian studies how have been there since I first presented on Haiti in 2014. A special thanks goes to Marlene Daut, Julia Gaffield, Paul Miller, Mariana Past, Gina Athena Ulysse, John Walsh for your

unwavering support, graceful answers to silly questions, and for including an MA student in your projects and thinking. You have changed the way I look at the world and academia.

Day in and day out, I am thankful for my friends in and outside of school, you motivate me and keep me pushin'. First, to my friends from Baltimore, Adam Stokes, James Tagliaferro, and Zachary Wiener, you have always been there when I needed you. Thank you for twelve years of friendship. As we have grown up, moved away from home and back, our friendship has never wavered, and I know that it never will. To my friends in the university world and abroad, I want to thank Kelsey Corlett-Rivera for her mutual appreciation of sarcasm, Gary Lardaux for his ability to talk with nearly anyone regardless of the language, Magali Chatelain for her unbelieveable kindness, Florent Gonsalès for his untiring ear, Adrian May for his wisdom, Annie Rehill for her unwavering pragmatism, Cae Joseph-Messena for our conversations argotiques about Haiti and life. A special thanks to Chris Lewis and Abby Broughton, you two keep me grounded, laughing, and always encourage me to go for the terrible dad-joke as a source of happiness. Thank you.

I must recognize my wonderful family for their care and support. I have left them for months and years at a time, exploring subjects from esoteric to strange, in the pursuit of my dreams. Although I think it is hard to understand, nobody understands better than my family. To my mother and father, Mawzy and Paw, thank you for raising me to be a child who unabashedly expresses his feelings; you did a wonderful job. To Helen Atkinson, thank you for challenging me every day to be my best self. To my brothers Crannie, Marty, Sammy, Mischa, Paulie, and not so little Mateo, thank you for the hard

knocks and the good times, I love you all. To Erin Cunningham and Heather Dize, I'm glad you're in my life and a part of my family, you always bring me a smile. To my little heart-breaking nephews, Llama and Bean, stay cute, and Uncle Nathan will be home soon. I need to take the space to recognize my grandparents, without whom I would not be here and would certainly not be studying in university. Geraldine and Elmer Dize, Mom-mom and Pap, with every day that passes I'm reminded of your love and care. Here's to the soft-crab sandwiches and buttered bread. My grandfather always used to ask me to "tell him something smart," I think I'd even struggle with that prompt today. To Lora Bolyard, Grandma, I will never forget us playing wiffle ball in your back yard under the crab-apple tree. I look forward to our next ride to West Virginia together.

Last but not least, I want to thank a little sliver of an island in the Caribbean that has taught this kid from Baltimore more about himself than any person ever has. Mèsi anpil, ché Aiyti

A Note on Translations:

All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Archival Silences and Literary Echoes in Haitian Theater

Notre littérature menace de dormir en nos cartons, longtemps encore, sûrement, – pour toujours peut-être.
[Our literature risks sleeping in cardboard boxes, for a longtime, surely, – maybe forever.][1]
– *Massillon Coicou*

On March 27, 1902, Haitian playwright Vendenesse Estépha Ducasse passed away at the exact age of 30. The Port-au-Prince native was classically trained in schools established by the *Frères de l'Instruction Chrétienne* in Bel-Air and Grande Rue and was the writer of numerous plays that interrogated the historical and cultural history of Haiti, such as *Place vacante, Les Duels en mon pays, Noirs et Jaunes,* and *Toussaint au Fort de Joux*. The last of these plays is, as Antoine Innocent notes in his introduction to the published version of *Fort de Joux*, the only play by Ducasse to ever be printed and published. Innocent, the actor who interpreted the role of Toussaint Louverture, writes that Ducasse possessed a unique desire to "faire du théâtre un instrument d'éducation publique [make theater an instrument of public education]."[2] While the content of these plays are lost today, titles such as *Noirs et jaunes* and *Les Duels en mon pays* allow us to suggest that these works engaged with unresolved tensions that persisted throughout the nineteenth century, such as colonialism and political animosity between mulatto and *noiriste* politicians.[3] For Ducasse, an imperative clearly exists to blend a sense of history on both a local and global scale.[4] However, like many other Haitian playwrights whose work has disappeared since Haiti declared independence from France in 1804, Ducasse and his literary vision have been rendered silent over the course of the last century. This study is committed to the process of not only recovering the literary works themselves, the physical objects, but also to the analysis of the representations of Haitian history held therein. For it is through these theatrical representations of Toussaint Louverture, Jean-

Jacques Dessalines, and Henry Christophe that crucial figures and moments in Haitian history begin to be publically contested, in some cases, for the first time.

The epigraph to this introduction alludes to the fact that Haitian writers were, and perhaps have always been, aware that their writings faced the threat of erasure, of being subsumed by silences both literary and historical in nature. In his provocative and time-resistant work *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues that the Haitian Revolution was "unthinkable." As a result the rich history of the western side of Hispaniola became silenced in the scope of world history.[5] To an eighteenth century audience, the Haitian Revolution was unthinkable because of the ways in which it challenged both the French and the American Revolutions on anticolonial grounds. This incapacity to engage in meaningful ways with Haitian history has implications for various fields of inquiry, such as the social sciences and literature.[6] As both Sibylle Fischer and Marlene Daut argue, it is not that the Haitian Revolution was never referred to in literature or history, but rather that the anticolonial tenets of the revolution have been either suppressed or distorted for the benefit of French and American national discourses. Daut argues in her study *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789-1865* that the events of the revolution "were perhaps less 'silenced' in literal terms than they were incessantly narrated in a particularly 'racialized' way that had the ultimate effect of subordinating the position of the Haitian Revolution to the French and American revolutions."[7]

In the field of historical studies, much attention has been drawn to the lapses and silences surrounding the placement of the Haitian Revolution in the "Age of

Revolutions."[8] However, even though interdisciplinary methods have helped scholars comment on the cultural impact of the events of 1791-1804, Haitian theatrical representations of the Haitian Revolution have yet to be explored in-depth regarding the ways in which the silencing of the Haitian past was contested contemporaneously publicly and privately on stage. In a sense, Massillon Coicou was right to say that Haitian literature risks sleeping in cardboard boxes, perhaps for a long time, maybe forever.[9] This act of silencing, I argue, begins in the realm of representation, making theater the ultimate tool of contestation. The examination of theater is a means to change the way Haitian history and its actors are perceived over time. Furthermore, as Coicou's assertion highlights, the challenge facing Haitian literature at the turn of the nineteenth century is two-fold. There is a matter of the archive and the written word itself. The literary objects, the physical works themselves, have been spread throughout the world's libraries and archives throughout the past two-hundred years, making the task of recovering Haitian literature from their dusty cartons a demanding challenge. Second, there is the written archive on Haiti, its revolution, and its literary imprint. These sources have many different origins, emanating not only from Haiti, but also from countries throughout the globe. In the written archive, the matter of representation becomes a process of vetting sources and reconciling literary allegiances forged over time. This introduction will focus mainly on the written archive and its influence on representation. I will return to the problem of the physical objects and archival challenges of recovering Haitian literature in the conclusion of this study.

In order to understand the ways in which the written archive of the Haitian Revolution shapes and molds Haitian history, it is important to start with one of the most

time-resistant volumes of history, CLR James's *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. In his work *The Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*, David Scott argues that James's work is a "revolutionary epic," recounting the violence of the Middle Passage, the reverberations of the French Revolution in the colonies, and the events of the only successful slave revolution in the Americas. It also outlines, as Scott notes, "the political biography" of Toussaint Louverture, who set the stage for the successful end of the Haitian Revolution under the leadership of General Jean-Jacques Dessalines.[10] While James's history is still one of the most complete histories of the Haitian Revolution, it represents Haitian history and its actors solely through the lens of Toussaint Louverture. The revolutionary leadership, often referred to as the "Founding Fathers of Haitian Independence," indeed included the likes of Toussaint Louverture, but also Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Henry Christophe, Alexandre Pétion, Moïse Louverture, Sans Souci, and many others. However, the way that James chooses to represent Haitian history is through the heroic model of Toussaint. James writes:

> Of the men who would lead their brothers to freedom none of them as far as we know was yet active. Dessalines, already 40, worked as a slave for his black master. Christophe listened to talk in the hotel where he worked but had no constructive ideas. Toussaint alone read his Raynal 'A courageous chief only is wanted.' He said afterwards that, from the time the troubles began, he felt he was destined for great things.[11]

Within the space of five sentences, James elides the importance, military acumen, and intellectual capacities of both Dessalines and Christophe. These two men would eventually deliver the coup de grâce to Bonaparte's armies, declare Haitian independence, and serve as leaders of the fledgling Haitian nation until 1820. The juxtaposition of Toussaint reading and absorbing Enlightenment ideals with Dessalines

and Christophe performing work, either as forced or voluntary labor, fails to comment on the extraordinary feats of the two generals that led them to leave their own imprint on Haitian history.

By heralding Toussaint as the exceptional leader, James produces an imbalanced telling of history. Matters of representation worsen when James adds his famous appendix to the second edition of *The Black Jacobins*, in which his incendiary and reductive commentary on Dessalines and Christophe has left lasting effects on the Haitian Revolution's written record. When discussing early Haiti, the period immediately following independence, James writes:

> Dessalines was a barbarian. After Dessalines came Christophe, a man of conspicuous ability and within his circumstances an enlightened ruler. He also did his best (a cruel best) with the plantation. But with the abolition of slavery and the achievement of independence the plantation, indelibly associated with slavery, became unbearable.[12]

The true impact of these lines has greatly impacted Haitian historiography. They have played an active role in silencing or erasing the need for further research into Dessalines's empire or Christophe's kingdom. By representing these two figures as despotic, corrupt, and tyrannical, James summarily neglects their importance in the foundation and maintenance of Haitian freedom in its formative years following the final defeat of Napoleon's troops at the Battle of Vertières. *The Black Jacobins* has other problematic aspects, to be sure, but perhaps the most troubling is the establishment of an idea of Haitian despotism and political malfeasance.

In her recent collection of essays *Why Haiti Needs New Narratives: A Post-Quake Chronicle*, Gina A. Ulysse argues that Haiti is caught in a series of ossified and stagnant narratives. These narratives range from the stability or instability of its political situation,

its poverty level, or the fact that Haiti has become a "humanitarian charity case," – the list goes on. Like Ulysse, Sara E. Johnson argues that these narratives are, and have been historically, assigned to Haiti against its own will. In her conclusion to *The Fear of French Negroes,* Johnson contends that the colonial denomination for Haiti as the "Perle des Antilles" is inextricably connected to its contemporary label as the "poorest country in the Western Hemisphere."[13] Johnson and Ulysse aid in understanding how the power of representation has historically not been in Haitian hands, as even the example of CLR James reveals to a certain extent. Ultimately, Ulysse concludes her own project by suggesting that these "new narratives for Haiti" can, and often must, be found in older examples of Haitian narratives. This search for new narratives does not only have a political praxis, but, like Ducasse's vision for theater, an educational one as well. How might we call upon these plays about Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe to contest the way Haiti is perceived today? How can these plays disrupt the historiographical violence done to Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe? Can these plays be viewed as an intervention in the processes of public and private memorialization? What lessons do they aim to teach about Haiti and its history?

Representation: Between History and Memory

In her work on the concept of "postmemory," Marianne Hirsch explores the difference between memory and history through the notion of an "embodied experience." In Hirsch's formulation, postmemory is the "relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up."[14] The process of postmemory can be seen as a

means of transmission of history from one generation to the next. She argues that "memory signals an affective link between the past," which allows those who did not witness or live a particular experience to incorporate that moment into their memory.[15] This personal, affective link to the past distinguishes itself from history in the sense that it allows people to participate in the process of memorialization of a particular moment in history. In theater, however, the distinction between memory and history are not as clear, because in representing moments of Haitian history, the actors are both embodying history and performing an act of memorialization at the same time. Similarly, through participating in the spectacle, the audience absorbs the historical representation unfolding on stage while partaking in an ephemeral performance of memory.

On October 6, 1906, Antoine Innocent took the stage as Jean-Jacques Dessalines in Massillon Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines* for the first and only time. Performed in commemoration of the centenary of Dessalines's assassination, the play reenacts the tense political situation among Haiti's ruling elite that culminated in the murder and brutal dismemberment of Haiti's first emperor. In this example, spectators were transported one hundred years into the past to participate in a defining moment in Haiti's history while simultaneously participating in a nationally sanctioned act of memory. In this act of postmemory, we can see that the Haitian Revolution and the stories of its main actors remained present even in the consciousness of the generations that did not live through or witness Haitian independence and other formative moments of the nascent Caribbean nation. Even Haitian president Pierre Nord Alexis's (1902-1908) participation in *L'Empereur Dessalines* as a spectator represents an act of postmemory because Dessalines's assassination took place fourteen years before his birth.

Hirsch also raises two other key concerns relating to the process of postmemory that resonate with problems facing Haitian theater: the disruption in the transmission of stories/narratives and the idea that the transmission of these stories/narratives can exist within a context of action and resistance. Before, during, and after the Haitian Revolution, Haiti has endured many waves of what Laurent Dubois refers to as "aftershocks of history."[16] Whether under the weight of French colonialism, the pressures of an indemnity on Haitian independence, the indignity of US occupations that bookended the twentieth century, the cruelty of twenty-seven years of repressive dictatorial regime, or the devastation of a 7.3 magnitude earthquake, the transmission of Haitian history from Haitians has been historically disrupted. Understandably so, the stories and narratives present in Haitian theater absorbed the full impact of these aftershocks, which then caused the physical object of the text to either be lost or destroyed. Due to its interventionist nature and historical positioning, Haitian theater is the perfect vehicle to deliver a response to Gina Athena Ulysse's call for new narratives. For this reason, the plays I examine in the chapters that follow are those that have received little to no critical attention. In the event that these plays are mentioned, it is often in relation to a debate between literary anthologists about their place in a Haitian literary canon or to highlight the importance of a historical moment or actor, such as Jean-Jacques Dessalines or Défilée Bazile.[17] In my analysis, I seek to not only recognize Haitian playwrights's interventions in historical debates, but also explore the literary nature of their plays and intellectual careers.

Fitting with a *mise-en-valeur* of theater, the chapters are organized in chronological order based on the publication date of the plays and the lives of the

playwrights. The first chapter considers two operas that Juste Chanlatte penned under the reign of Henry Christophe in the Northern Kingdom of Haiti. In this chapter, I demonstrate through readings of *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale* (1818) and *La Partie de chasse du roi* (1820) that Chanlatte's theater helps construct a vision of Henry Christophe's Kingdom of Haiti through an embodiment of an anticolonial and antislavery ethos. By focusing on Chanlatte's career as a playwright and as a secretary under numerous Haitian premiers, I argue that his political and literary vision provides a new way to consider the innovative contributions of secretaries in early Haiti.

In the second chapter, I analyze Massillon Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines: drame en deux actes, en vers* (1906), focusing particularly on Coicou's literary vision, which I qualify in the Glissantian formulation of a "prophetic vision of the past." By writing a commemorative play about the assassination of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Coicou intervenes into the historical record to challenge the elision of Dessalines from the Haitian collective memory. Furthermore, I argue that by paying homage to Défilée Bazile, Coicou's work deserves to be evaluated as a feminist intervention in Haitian history, one that is too often dominated by figures heralded as fathers, sons, and other masculine qualifiers.

The third chapter focuses on *Fort de Joux; ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture* (1896) by Vendenesse Estépha Ducasse. Given the transnational importance of the figure of Toussaint Louverture, I argue that Ducasses's Toussaint differs from the lion's share of literary representations in that his Toussaint is not just anticolonial, but also possesses a potentially "Dessalinian" vision of Haitian governance prior to the defeat of the French. In my conclusion, I expand on the future of a Haitian theatrical archive, the

state of its recovery, and its potential opportunities in the digital turn of humanities and Caribbean scholarship.

What I aim to lay out in the chapters that follow is both a project of recovery (of literary objects, representations, and playwrights) and of resistance that challenges contemporary representations of Haiti in the present day. In responding to Gina Athena Ulysse's call for new narratives of Haiti, I argue that these plays provide new ways for scholars to interrogate the ossified representations of Haiti that have historically been grounded in a colonial or neocolonial political positioning. Lastly, in focusing on representation, I insist on the need to evaluate and re-evaluate understudied works of Haitian literature that provide us with new ways of thinking about Haiti, its people, its history, and its place in the world.

Chapter 2
Casting Poets in Christophe's Court: (Self)-Representations in Juste Chanlatte's *La Partie de chasse du roi* and *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale, en janvier 1818*

Some of these works have considerable intrinsic merit; and we have therefore resolved to place them before our readers, not only because they are so little, if at all, known in this country, but because they were written by the descendants of negros [sic], and by the nobles of the late kingdom of Hayti. They will afford us a specimen of the literature of that singular nation, and some means of judging of the intellectual dignity, which a population of blacks may hope to reach, in the most favorable circumstances.

The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal, "Hayti," January, 1821[1]

Situating Secretaries in Early Nineteenth-Century Haiti

On April 28, 1804 Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Governor General of Haiti, gave one of the most impassioned speeches of the newly forged nation, declaring, "[…] I have saved my country, I have avenged America."[2] Delivered nearly five months after declaring Haiti's independence, this proclamation ultimately delivered the anticolonial and antislavery tenor that Dessalines maintained for his two-year term as emperor of Haiti until he was assassinated on October 17, 1806. The April 28 speech is a collaborative document, drafted with the aid of secretary Juste Chanlatte. Secretaries played a major role in the writing of constitutions, declarations, and proclamations in the years following Haitian independence. Writers like Juste Chanlatte, Boisrond-Tonnerre, B. Aimé, and Pompée-Valentin Baron de Vastey among others were charged with the rendering the speeches of Haitian leaders like Dessalines, Henry Christophe, Alexandre Pétion, and Jean-Pierre Boyer into textual form. Deborah Jenson points out that the process of attributing the conceptual power of such documents to learned secretaries, often trained in Paris, leads us to overlook the carefully honed anticolonial, radical thought held by early Haitian leaders. If the conceptual power behind these documents belongs to the likes of Dessalines, Christophe and Pétion, where are we to locate the

secretaries? Are they merely conduits for an "official" version of "a Haitian political identity and agency that [resonates] on the world stage"?[3]

While it is important to highlight the rhetorical ingenuity of Haitian generals and early leaders, it is similarly crucial to recognize that political secretaries were not just the earliest example of Haitian bureaucrats. Jenson has convincingly argued that it is possible to separate Dessalines from his secretaries by tracking his denunciation of epithets such as "slaves," "brigands," and other tropes typically employed by the French to denigrate revolutionaries. Jenson asserts that, "there is a fluid, sustained, and critical structure of metaphor in major Dessalinian texts, regardless of secretarial signature."[4] However, if it is possible to track a Dessalinian rhetorical strategy, how then are we to evaluate the critical and creative rhetorical gestures of his secretaries?[5] For this reason, it is crucial to analyze not only the writings by these secretaries from a political sphere, but also from a creative realm such as poetry and theater. Perhaps one of the most exceptional examples of Haitian writers who bridged the gap between political and creative writing is the secretary for Dessalines's "I Avenged America" address, Juste Chanlatte.

Shifting the focus from Chanlatte the secretary to the poet and playwright is complicated and requires historical context in order to understand the various forms of Haitian literature that came with independence. Critics like Marlene Daut, Sibylle Fischer, Deborah Jenson, and Jean Jonaissant have altered the conception of Haitian literary production to include political documents such as constitutions, declarations, letters, manifestoes, and proclamations as a crucial contribution to early Haitian literature.[6] This sort of writing was common, much more so than other literary forms, in the early period of Haitian independence. Through works authored and co-authored by

the likes of Toussaint Louverture, Dessalines, Christophe, Pétion, and Boyer we come to understand the way the each leader circumscribed a particular vision of the Haitian nation following the expulsion of the French and the eradication of the institution of colonial slavery. While these documents are of invaluable literary and historical import, they are not the only examples of literary form(s) from the period of Haitian independence in the early nineteenth century. In her influential study *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*, Sibylle Fischer acknowledges there were writers like Baron de Vastey and Juste Chanlatte who greatly contributed to the scribal politics of the Kingdom of Haiti through myriad writings from poetry to theater, [7] from correspondence to manifestoes, and from philosophical treatises to historical studies.[8] However, scholars have often opted to analyze the prose writings of Vastey and Chanlatte. How, then, are we to evaluate the theatrical and poetic production in the Kingdom of Haiti? Instead of treating the Chanlatte's secretarial writings as a context for the artistic, how might the global political vision of Henry Christophe's monarchy be evoked in his works of theater?

Deborah Jenson suggests that Jean-Jacques Dessalines's political philosophy left an impact on Juste Chanlatte's later historical writings, arguing that the secretary employs a similar rhetoric when referring to the *soulèvement* of the "veil of prejudice."[9] It is convincing enough that through collaboration with Dessalines and other Haitian leaders that Chanlatte's political vision and rhetoric would be similar. However, such a connection simplifies Chanlatte's development as a writer, suggesting that he might have been incapable of projecting his own vision of the Haitian nation and the character of Haitian anti-colonialism. Chanlatte also falls into a long line of Haitian writers accused of

copying and borrowing from French literary conventions of the novel, poetry, and theater in the nineteenth century.[10] In order to question accusations of a mimetic Chanlatte, I argue that in his theatrical writings – featuring a blend of poetry and prose – Chanlatte is able to construct vision of the Haitian nation and anti-slavery politics independent of that which he co-writes in his work as a secretary to Haitian revolutionaries. As we will see in political documents like Dessalines's "I Avenged America" speech, a certain vision of the Haitian nation is proposed and constructed. However, just like intentionally fictional writing like theater and poetry, this vision is fictional in the sense that it is Dessalines's attempt to project a Haitian past, present, and future. In short, Dessalines's Haiti is just as inventive as Chanlatte's because it represents a particular vision of the nation from the perspective of an individual. By juxtaposing close-readings of Chanlatte's plays *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale en janvier 1818* and *La Partie de chasse du roi* with an analysis of his work under Jean-Jacques Dessalines, we will see how Chanlatte fashions himself as not just a literary voice but as an architect for Henri Christophe's Northern Kingdom of Haiti.

Anticolonial Literature and the Kingdom of Haiti

In 1820 *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal* published an analysis of the writings that emanated from the "late kingdom of Hayti." The *Review* provides a critical assessment of the kingdom of Haiti using works by Pompée-Valentin, Baron de Vastey and Juste Chanlatte, Comte de Roisers as examples of how the kingdom of Haiti stood as a legitimate and functioning monarchy. The epigraph to this essay affirms the *Review*'s praise for the intellectual rigor and ingenuity of Vastey and Chanlatte's writing, which reflect a continued need to "repel the reiterated attacks

[against Haiti's right to freedom and independence], and expose the still accumulating calumnies of the former planters."[11] By reading the *Review*'s assessment of intellectual activity in the Kingdom of Haiti, we can see that Chanlatte plays a major role in the scribal politics of the monarchy. Furthermore, through a close-reading of the US periodical, we can observe the confluence of colonial and anticolonial discourses in writing about Haiti that Chanlatte writes against in his theater. Finally, the *Review* establishes Chanlatte as one of the principle innovators of written Kreyòl through theater.

Extolling the anticolonial quality of texts produced under Henry Christophe, the Boston based *Review* distinguishes the kingdom as a bulwark against slavery and the proposed re-colonization of Haiti by the French. Attempting to refute a hemispheric and global perception of Haiti as the *enfant terrible* of the Americas, the *Review* claims that Henry Christophe has judiciously wielded his "kingly power […] to stifle faction, repel aggressors, and give energy, despatch [sic], and secrecy to public measures."[12] From this perspective Christophe's monarchy is a legitimate, and appropriate – although admittedly despotic – system of government. In a similar vein, the *Review* dispatches the clownish and racist critique of a black monarch, "[w]hatever ridicule we may attach to the notion of a black arrayed in the splendors of royalty, or decorated with orders of knighthood, or wearing the robes and coronets of nobility, *we must hold it, particularly in all European countries, to be a ridicule misplaced.*"[13] Nobility, orders of knights, and the accompanying regal attire is merely an attribute of monarchy, race has no place in the equation.

Christophe's kingdom, however, was not just any manifestation of monarchy; it was a pillar of freedom in a world bent on subjugating Haitians. The constant threat of

colonial retribution and "total extermination" stands as just one of the factors that justifies the potentially draconian policies under Christophe.[14] Apart from its anticolonial political stance, the kingdom of Haiti is viewed as an innovative state. Henry Christophe had established a system of education in many principalities, a network of churches, and a printing press housed in his favorite residence, the Sans Souci palace. The *Imprimerie Royale* at Sans Souci was the official outlet for publications relating to the Kingdom of Haiti, it was also responsible for printing Chanlatte's plays.[15] The *Review* cites Chanlatte's vaudeville opera *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale* as one of the most innovative works of Haitian literature because it provides a written trace of Haitian Creole (Kreyòl). While there has been much speculation in Haitian historical studies that Christophe wished to rid Haiti of French in favor of English, the *Review* argues that it is the literary imagination of Chanlatte, as well as the government support of the printing of his plays, makes the case for Kreyòl to become the "vernacular language of the kingdom."[16] The linguistic innovation of Juste Chanlatte is, undoubtedly, grounded in the history of slavery and creolization that took place in the Caribbean since the onset of colonialism. Juxtaposed with the anticolonial vision of Baron de Vastey, Juste Chanlatte's literary power is placed in relief as one of the major writers from the kingdom of Haiti.

Even though the *Review* provides an account of early Haitian literary ingenuity, it ultimately falls into a virulently racist rhetoric that Marlene Daut refers to as the discourse of "monstrous hybridity."[17] This coincidence is not surprising because, according to Daut, Vastey himself fell into a similar trap in his remarkable anticolonial writings such as *Le Système colonial dévoilé*. The *Review*'s analysis of Christophe's legions of soldiers was, itself, a marvel of anticolonial resistance because their "muscular

strength" and "patience under hunger, thirst, fatigue and exposure […] made them superior to whites"[18] Such argumentation reveals, as Daut writes, "how a racialized debate sparked and encouraged by pseudoscientific debates about 'race' permeated nearly every discussion of the Haitian Revolution in the nineteenth century."[19] While *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal* paradoxically produced commendable reasoning towards the legitimacy and vision of Christophe's monarchy, it ultimately digresses into a similar realm of racist reasoning through an adaptation of pseudoscientific terms of "race." Amidst these murky waters of racialized language, how might we recuperate Juste Chanlatte and the Haitian literary imagination effused in his plays? Is Chanlatte's dramatic representation of the Christophe's monarchy similar to this sympathetic American article?

Staging Juste Chanlatte or the Comte de Rosiers

Throughout his career as a man of letters in Haiti, Juste Chanlatte often wore many hats. From his work as a secretary under Jean-Jacques Dessalines to his role as official librarian and accountant under Henry Christophe to his unofficial roles as poet and playwright, Chanlatte had to adjust with the shift in political structure in Haiti from an empire to a monarchy.[20] We can similarly see this change in Chanlatte's name change as he takes on the title of "Count of Rosiers" from 1811 to 1820 (see Figure 2.1). In order to distinguish between the multiple stages of Chanlatte's writing career it is crucial to understand how the work he produced restages a Dessalinian rhetoric. Chanlatte's work as a rhetorical understudy of Dessalines is crucial for Chanlatte's career as a poet and playwright because it is in this work that he shifts from Juste Chanlatte the secretary to *Son Excellence Monsieur le Comte de Rosiers*.[21] Chanlatte's ascension from bureaucrat to

one of the highest representatives of Haitian letters required a change in medium, political texts to fiction, rather than a shift in content. I insist that the political tone of Chanlatte's plays maintain an acutely anticolonial and anti-slavery tenor as they represent a similar imagined Haiti as previously articulated in Jean-Jacques Dessalines "I Avenged America speech."

Figure 2.1 Royal crest of Juste Chanlatte, Comte de Rosiers[22]

In the first lines of his April 28 *Proclamation* Jean-Jacques Dessalines declares, "[L]es implacables ennemis des droits de l'homme ont subi le châtiment dû à leurs crimes [the relentless enemies of the rights of man have received the necessary punishment for their crimes.]"[23] Nearly six months after winning the final battle against the French and almost five months after declaring Haitian independence, Dessalines reminded the Haitian people that they no longer live under the yoke of colonial slavery. This speech endows the act of declaring independence, and avenging America, with a paradigm shifting quality. From now on, "*jamais aucun colonne mettra le pied sur ce territoire, à titre de maître ou de propriétaire* ; cette résolution sera désormais la base de notre

constitution [*never again will a colonial or a European set foot on this land with the title of owner.* This resolution will, from now on, be the foundational base of our constitution.]"[24] The shift from colonial slavery to freedom, the renaming of Saint-Domingue as Haiti, and the establishment of an anticolonial and anti-slavery clause in the Haitian constitution concretizes a new understanding of freedom in the Americas.

While the ideas of freedom in the April 28 proclamation have been convincingly attributed to Dessalines, Juste Chanlatte certainly had a hand in the writing process and we can see the effects of this collaboration in his work as a playwright. The metaphorical edification of freedom in Dessalines's proclamation is one of the first images we see in Chanlatte's play *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale, en janvier 1818*.[25] In the description of the stage decorations Chanlatte places a physical representation of Haitian independence that reigns over the entire play:

> Scène première.
> La scène se passe sur la Place de la Fossette. Du côté droit est un Limonadier, du côté gauche est un Restaurateur. Au milieu du fond du théâtre s'élève une Colonne consacrée à l'Indépendance, et ornée des attributs de cette Déesse.
>
> [First Scene.
> The scene takes place in the Place de la Fossette. On the right is a Café Owner and on the left is a restaurateur. In the middle of the back of the theater a Column dedicated to independence rises up, decorated with the attributes of this Goddess.][26]

The column dedicated to Independence is a physical representation of the ideas first expressed by Dessalines in the April 28 *Proclamation*. In the form of an obelisk Haiti has constructed its own monuments, celebrating freedom from the French and the end of slavery. This image of manufactured monuments contrasts with the natural imagery in Dessalines's text: "A ce signal, qu'un Dieu juste a provoqué, vos mains, saintement armées, ont porté la hache sur l'arbre antique de l'esclavage et des préjugés [on this

signal, that a just God has provoked, your hands, saintly armed, have taken the hatchet to the ancient tree of slavery and prejudice.]”[27] The natural order, “a just God,” allows the Haitian masses to strike down the system of slavery by cutting down the “ancient tree of slavery and prejudice” that the French planted in Saint-Domingue in 1627. These two images, slavery as natural and Haitian independence as man-made, contrasts with the famous “tree of liberty” that Toussaint Louverture spoke of during his deportation to France.[28] While Dessalines’s metaphor does not mention the need to uproot this tree, preventing it from growing back, he insists that French colonialism will never come back because only “pure air of august and triumphant liberty” blows through Haiti. We see, therefore, how Dessalines imagines Haiti’s future as both anticolonial and antislavery, effectively effacing the remnants of these French institutions through independence. This is the soil, the bedrock on which Chanlatte grounds his stage decorations dedicated to Haitian independence.

We see the importance of Haitian independence, and the Dessalinian era in one of the final scenes of the play, when a cast of characters appear as allegories for moments in Haitian history. While the characters refer to the reign of Henry Christophe, we can see how Chanlatte’s collaboration with Dessalines shines through into this fictional Northern Kingdom of Haiti. The characters in scene seven provide us with allegories of different moments in Haitian history, dating back to the first moment of colonial contact by Christopher Columbus: an Amazon woman and her child, a father, a mother, a young warrior, a young Haitian woman, and an elderly man. While there are twentieth century playwrights like Édouard Glissant who would later make reference to indigenous characters in Saint-Domingue, the scene in Chanlatte’s play differs in that it does not

involve spiritual incarnations of these representations or flashing backwards or forwards in time. In this way, we can see how Dessalines's vision of the Americas has influenced Chanlatte's conception of Henry Christophe's fictional kingdom in the play.

In spite of the eradication of the Amerindian population of Hispaniola from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, the Amazon woman is presented with her son. For her and her child Haiti – the pre-colonial Taino Arawak name for Hispaniola – stands as a bulwark against centuries of colonial violence that pushed the Amerindians towards extinction.[29] The Amazon woman transposes this Dessalinian sentiment to the Kingdom of Haiti as she teaches her son the importance of history:

> Nos mères avaient pleuré, nos pères avaient fremi [sic], nos époux nageaient dans leur propre sang, c'en était fait enfin de la triste patrie, lorsqu'un héros, le grand Henry nous a tendu une main sécourable [sic], et sur les débris du [sic] l'odieux sceptre des français [sic] a élevé cette Colonne à l'Indépendance. Viens, approche, cher enfant, que mes flancs ont porté, que ce sein généreux a nourri, regarde bien ce monument *(en lui montrant la Colonne à l'Indépendance)* jure moi de le défendre jusqu'au dernier soupir.
>
> Our mothers had cried, our fathers had trembled in fear, our husbands bathed in their own blood, which was the result of a woeful country, when a hero, the great Henry lent us a helping hand and on top of the debris of the odious scepter of the French raised this Column in the memory of Independence. Come closer, dear child, that I carried in my womb, that my generous breast nourished, take a good look at this monument *(showing him the Column in the memory of Independence)* and promise me to defend it until you breathe your last breath.[30]

While the play syncretizes the process of Haitian independence and attributes it to the legacy of Henry Christophe, the symbolic impact of this interaction between the Amazonian woman and her son is remarkable. First, independence is grounded in the sorrow of former generations who lived under the colonial French regime in Saint-Domingue. It is from the debris of colonialism that Haiti was born, effectively avenging the generations of Taino Arawaks who were killed over the course of three centuries.

Finally, Haitian independence is a fecund moment, where subsequent generations born free of slavery and colonialism will help protect the liberty fought for and won over the course of thirteen years of revolution. The other characters also help to echo a Dessalinian rhetoric where the young warrior evokes the war for independence suggesting that freedom is built on the remains of the Haitians who fought to the death, the father refers to the scars of slavery and therefore grounds Haitian independence in an antislavery sentiment, and the mother evokes female participation in the war for independence as nurses, warriors, and defenders of the liberty that will prevent the rape and kidnapping of future generations of Haitians. The edification of Haitian independence might seem to be a singular act by Christophe, but at least on Chanlatte's stage it requires a cast of characters to fully erect the monument to Haitian freedom and anti-colonialism.

Similarly to the stage decorations in *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale, en janvier 1818,* Juste Chanlatte's *La Partie de chasse du roi* features a monument to Haitian independence. Unlike in *L'Entrée*, however, this monument takes on a different physical form:

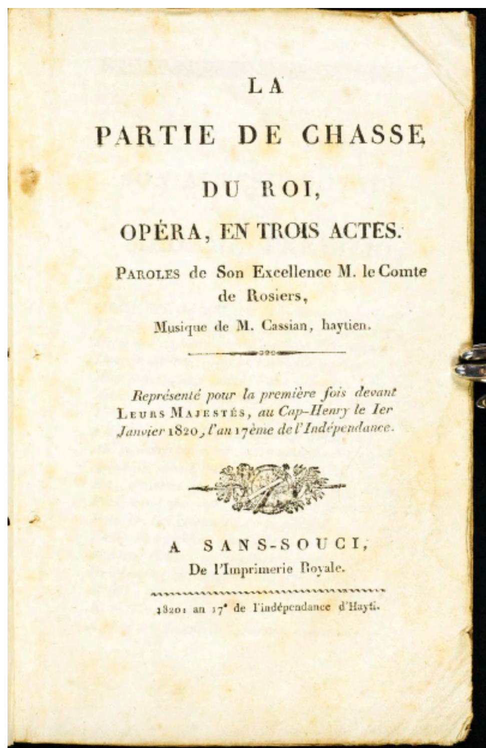
Acte premier.
Le théâtre représente une place pratiquée au milieu d'une forêt. Au fond s'élève une pyramide champêtre consacrée à l'indépendance. Du côté droit est l'autel de la Patrie, du côté gauche l'autel de la Liberté. De jeunes haytiennes [sic], mêlées avec un bataillon du corps des Royal Dahomets, (1) dansent autour des trophées qu'elles ont élevés, et célèbrent gaiment la veille de la fête de l'indépendance.
(1) Nom d'une nation guerrière de l'Afrique donné à la milice du Royaume.

Act One.
The theater represents a gathering area in the middle of a forest. In the rear a rustic pyramid dedicated to independence rises up. To the right is the altar of the Patrie, to the left is the altar of Liberty. Young Haitian women, mixed with a battalion of the Royal Dahomets, dance around the trophies they've erected, gaily celebrating the eve of Independence Day.[31]

Rather than in the Place de la Fossette in Cap Henry this monument is in the middle of a forest, and it takes the form of a pyramid rather than a column, grounding Haitian independence in both Haitian and Egyptian cultural expressions. [32] In his *Essai sur les causes de la revolution et des guerres civiles* Baron de Vastey also praises the cultural proximity between the Haitian and African monarchies when he describes the completion of the palace od Sans Souci:

> This year we witnessed the completion of the palace of Sans Souci and the royal church of that town [Milot]. These two structures, erected by the descendants of Africans, show that we have not lost the architectural taste and genius of our ancestors who coered Ethiopia, Egypt, Carthage, and Old Spain, with their superb monuments.[33]

For Vastey, as well, the edification of the Haitian monarchy is irrevocably linked to an African architectural and artistic tradition.



LA

PARTIE DE CHASSE

DU ROI,

OPÉRA, EN TROIS ACTES.

PAROLES de Son Excellence M. le Comte de Rosiers,

Musique de M. Cassian, haytien.

Représenté pour la première fois devant LEURS MAJESTÉS, *au Cap-Henry le 1er Janvier* 1820, *l'an 17ème de l'Indépendance.*

A SANS-SOUCI,

De l'Imprimerie Royale.

1820: an 17e de l'indépendance d'Hayti.

Figure 2.2 Frontispiece to *La Partie de chasse du roi, Opéra en trois actes* (1820)

Sibylle Fischer discusses the notion of Caribbean Egyptocentrism in relation to the aesthetics of Cuban carpenter José Antonio Aponte's fabled book of revolutionary images. She writes: "Caribbean Egyptocentrism would be an outstanding example of a modern syncretism where emancipatory ideas that originated in the plantation zone and European notions of history entered into contact and congealed into a political practice of liberation…"[34] In Chanlatte's stage directions we have a nearly contemporaneous example of this "modern syncretism" wherein the two prominent cultural referents are Egyptian (the pyramid) and Haitian (the *vaudoesque* ceremony in the forest as well as the altars to the patrie and liberty). The characters, like in *L'Entrée,* add to the significance of the décor. In the ceremony young Haitian women dance with members of the Royal Dahomets, the royal militia under Henry Christophe, while they sing praises to "Papa Henry" the founder of the Haitian nation in Kreyòl. The *Alamanch Royal d'Hayti* of 1820 lists the members of the Royal Dahomets, a royal guard under Christophe named after the former African kingdom, which gives a certain verisimilitude to Chanlatte's literary representation.[35] By having the Royal Dahomets dance partake in this *vaudouisant* ceremony, Chanlatte evokes, again, the fecundity of the Haitian monarchy and inscribes the roots of monarchy in Africa rather than in Europe. This is also indicative of the misreading of Chanlatte's theater as mimetic of European literary conventions because this scene is resistant to European theatrical tropes of exoticism. The act of circumscribing Chanlatte within French-language theater is to deny it of the syncretic nature of its cultural content and linguistic forms. It is more appropriate to approach Chanlatte's work as a Caribbean cultural production, examining its creolized and

syncretic elements in order to understand the way that his plays characterize the multicultural landscape of the Kingdom of Haiti.

Poetic (Self-)Representations and Chanlatte's Poetic Domain

While the paratextual elements of Chanlatte's plays help to expand our notion of what the Kingdom of Haiti looks like, his plays extoll the virtues of the monarchy through poetic scripts. There is both a poetic nature to the script in the sense that Chanlatte often writes in verse, but more directly, some lines are treated and presented as poems by characters in the plays themselves. This inclusion of poetry in the kingdom provides an imaginative challenge to the role of written word under Christophe's reign, especially in the kingdom that Chanlatte represents on stage. Even though Chanlatte was Paris educated, the majority of Haitians after independence had varying levels of literacy, which was a skill they were denied under colonial slavery. As Deborah Jenson has pointed out in her work on Toussaint Louverture, the intrepid general was able to read and write in French a well as dictate high volumes of letters to his secretaries in order to shape the perception of his administration during the Haitian Revolution.[36] By including poetry, a scriptural element to his various representations of the Kingdom of Haiti, Chanlatte imbues Christophe's monarchy with the emancipatory notion of literacy. As part of the theatrics of this gesture, Chanlatte casts himself as the poet in both *L'Entrée du roi en sa capital* and *La Partie de chasse du roi*, providing Juste Chanlatte with an opportunity to inscribe himself within the Kingdom of Haiti as a integral and visible emissary of the monarchy.

In the first scene of *La Partie de chasse du roi* during the ceremony around the monument to independence, the character named Vié Bayacou joins the Captain of the

Royal Dahomets and other soldiers in giving praise to the King for having liberated Haiti from the French. Unlike the soldiers, however, Vié Bayacou speaks Kreyòl to the crowd. While this may, at first, seem like a class division where high-ranking soldiers speak French and other Haitians speak Kreyòl the relationship between the two languages are more complicated. Vié Bayacou, after being urged by the crowd, begins to sing in rhyming French verse:

Sing the glory
Of the Royal Dahomet
Without sorcery
Bares the musket
And into obscurity
Dives every statuette

In warlike engagement
Tis not a real goblin
Of thrust, of measurement
Yet he struts plain
And for many a monument
Tis a rampart certain.

When disrespected
The Devil is kinder;
He is ceaselessly angered
As witnesses of hellfire
When the slavers showed
Him the shackles ironed.
[…]
Throne and patrie
Such is his refrain;
Laws, industry,
Tis his unique pain:
And his battery
Oh! Tis, his gain…

Chantons la gloire
Du Royal Dahomet ;
Sans nu [sic] grimoire
Il porte le mousquet
Et dans l'onde noire
Plonge tout marmouset

Dans les batailles
C'est pis [sic] un vrai lutin
D'estoc, de taille
Il fait voir son latin,
Et pour nos murailles
C'est un rempart certain.

Quand on l'outrage
Mieux vaut un lucifer [sic] ;
Il fait des rages
Qu'on ne voit qu'aux enfers
Quand de l'esclavage
On lui montre les fers.
[…]
Trône et patrie,
Voilà tout son refrain ;
Lois, industrie,
C'est son unique frein :
Et sa batterie
Est, ma foi ! tout son train…[37]

Revealing his linguistic range from Kreyòl to French, Vié Bayacou presents a creolized narrative of Henry Christophe's rise to the throne in the Kingdom of Haiti. His song begins by shifting the significance of the Royal Dahomets (the group) to *the* Royal Dahomet (single soldier, but also the individual kingdom). In this formulation Vié Bayacou distinguishes between the military force and royalty, the monarch Henry Christophe. What follows is a blend of images and references to spirituality, war, art, and

architecture that take on new meaning in Christophe's *patrie*. The battle for independence with muskets combines with images of gothic architecture and the supernatural (goblins, grotesque statuettes, spell books, hell, and Lucifer) as a rejection of the colonial order. These elements stand as the syncretic product of a fight for Haitian independence that signifies not only the birth of a new nation, but also the refusal of the yoke of slavery. In the third stanza, Christophe's rage, as some historiography refers to as his "despotism," is a product of the colonial, slaveholding world attempting to "show him the irons [of servitude]." While I have not cited Vié Bayacou's song in whole, the next lines trouble Christophe's despotism, suggesting that the kingdom and the fatherland are founded on principles of law and industry. However, unlike during the colonial epoch, the laws and industry are grounded in a unified front against slavery and colonialism.

As we have seen with Dessalines, such an anticolonial rhetoric is characteristic of writing from early Haiti, however, rather than through political writing, Chanlatte uses poetry to evoke similar ideals. Poetry is a major element of Chanlatte's theater, particularly as it relates to the character of the poet. In *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale*, Chanlatte casts himself as the poet, who, throughout the course of the play hands each character a song to sing in praise of Henry Christophe. In terms of the plot, the play tells the story of Henry Christophe's royal tour of the kingdom in 1814, where the monarch visited each province in order to meet the Haitian people.[38] The songs and poetry sung in *L'Entrée* are meant to set the stage for this visit, which is ostensibly an afterthought because the king and his royal retinue only appear for a brief moment at the end of the play. In this sense, the play itself can be seen as a poetic fashioning of Christophe's kingdom as a symbol, rather than producing a concrete representation of the king himself.

By not providing elaborate descriptions of Christophe or the physical appearance of the kingdom, Chanlatte is able to characterize the monarchy in terms of abstract concepts such as politics, ideology, and even poetics. In the same way, we get a palpable sense of the role the poet plays in fashioning the Kingdom of Haiti, which, in turn, establishes the poet as the ultimate creator of what Doris Sommer refers to as "foundational fictions."[39]

While Christophe is heralded as the founding father of Haiti in *L'Entrée* – and in *La Partie de chasse du roi* for that matter, Chanlatte can be seen as an architect who constructs a fictional kingdom. Similarly to the hemispheric vision of the "I Avenged America" speech, Chanlatte's character, the poet named Damis, refers to Christophe as the "first Sovereign of the New World."[40] Damis's first poem emphasizes the significance of a monarchy founded on anti-slavery legislation:

He still wants, for all the American lands	Il veut encore, et soudain l'Amérique
To adore a new monarch,	Adore un souverain nouveau,
He says, and his heroic and Herculean hands	Il dit, et ses mains héroiques [sic]
Give birth to this work	D'Hercule enfantent les travaux.
His voice travels like lightning's power	A sa voix sillonne la foudre,
Everything trembles, and the abyss howls	Tout tremble, et le gouffre mugit…. [sic]
With one single blow, reduces all to powder	D'un seul geste il réduit en poudre
The tyrant who rules and growls.	Le tyran qui roule et rugit.
The most ardent patriotism	Du plus ardent patriotisme
The crown is the right price for he,	La Couronne est le digne prix,
And the refrain of heroism	Et le refrain de l'héroïsme
Is: live, forever, live Henry!	Est : vive, à jamais, vive Henry !
For our ancient oppressors,	Pour nos antiques oppresseurs,
We needed, of our own race	Il nous fallait, de notre race
A monarch legislator.	Un Monarque législateur.
Who other than he	Quel autre semblable
Knew to vindicate our rights?	Eût su revendiquer nos droits ?
Honor, to this king, honor to thee!	Honneur à ce roi véritable !
Let us live or die for his legal foresights.	Vivons ou mourons pour ses lois.
Clio will tell the story	Clio racontera l'histoire
Of this hero, her majesty	De ce héros son favori,
We say, beauty of love, of glory,	Nous disons, beaux d'amour, de gloire,
Live, forever, yes, live Henry!	Vive, à jamais, oui, vive Henry ! [41]

Sung to the air of *A L'Univers la tyrannie,* Damis's poem situates the kingdom of Haiti within colonial America. His heroism in battle notwithstanding, Damis praises

Christophe's role as a *monarque légisalteur* [legislative monarch]. Two major elements of Chanlatte's theater surface in these lines: an attention to legal discourses of anticolonialism and the racial implications of a hemispheric vision of the Americas. First, the significance of law cannot be understated here because since Columbus's native voyage Europe has sought to legislate the Americas.[42] Although Christophe was not the first to create anticolonial or antislavery laws in the Americas, the fact that legal discourse figures into Chanlatte's poetry is nonetheless striking. In this way, we can see that Chanlatte commemorates a particularly Christophean legal precedent that can be found in legal documents and historical sources like Christophe's *Manifeste du roi*.[43] Second, as Chris Bongie suggests, Juste Chanlatte possesses a hemispheric vision of the Americas, wherein the oppressed – whether Amerindian, African, or Creole – constitute a unified people or race rather than a racially divided caste system. Even though Chanlatte was part of group of *gens de couleur libres* during the Haitian Revolutionary period, the lines quoted above make no reference to such colonial or racialist categories in this theatrical Kingdom of Haiti. It would also be intellectually irresponsible, as I demonstrated above in relation to the *North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal*, to generate a discussion of Chanlatte's race in relation to his intellectual work as though it spoke to a particular racial allegiance. In perhaps the most iconic lines of this poem, Chanlatte recasts the Dessalinian maxim "Freedom or death" as "Live or die for [Christophe's] laws" suggesting that legal status is a more concrete definition of freedom.[44]

If *L'Entrée* provides us with a political vision of the Kingdom of Haiti and its innovative, legal anticolonialism, then *La Partie de chasse du roi* generates a mythical

representation of the monarchy through the *mise-en-abîme* of a poetic *idylle dialoguée.* By inscribing Haiti within a rustic idyll Chanlatte is able to, like the later scenes of *L'Entrée*, project an image of the subjects of the Haitian monarchy. Through this literary construction that Chanlatte is also able to allude to the Henry Christophe's symbol of nobility featuring a phoenix carrying the inscription "je renais de mes cendres [I am borne again from my ashes]," referring to the birth of the kingdom post-revolution (see figure 2.3).[45]

Figure 2.3 The royal crest of Henry Christophe.[46]

Unlike the Imprimerie Royale printing of *L'Entrée, La Partie de chasse du roi* does not list the actors' names. However, given that Chanlatte casts himself as the poet in the former play, it is fair to suggest that he casts himself as the poetic *magister du village* [village teacher] in *La Partie de chasse du roi*. In creating his idyllic image of the rustic villages of the kingdom, Chanlatte is able to construct the Kingdom of Haiti "from

below" rather than focusing on the interplay between the king and his court.[47] In the *magister's* idyll allegorical characters of the peasantry (a shepherd and his daughter) and nobility (a knight and his son) cross paths in the far reaches of the Haitian kingdom. The interaction between peasantry and nobility projects a notion of equality in Christophe's kingdom, where the shepherd's daughter is a perfect match for the knight's son. While the negotiation of their unity is highly gendered, brokered between the two father figures, it represents the benefits of a modified system of feudalism in the Haitian monarchy.

The utopic match between peasantry and nobility is not just a convention derived from the genre of the idyll, but rather, it is part of the *magister's* and, in turn, Chanlatte's poetic performance for the king in the play and Henry Christophe as a spectator present in the royal theater. The shepherd's daughter's song professes "fidelity," "sincerity," and "sacrifice" presenting herself as the ideal royal subject and match for a knight who has pledged his life to the protection of the king.[48] Her fidelity and gratitude towards the king is the source of her upward mobility, her potential acceptance into the royal court. Even though the shepherd and his daughter have a tremendous amount of admiration for royalty and nobility, the knight and his son are equally gracious towards the peasantry. Effusing their praise for the "rustic meal" and the daughter's charming songs, the knight recognizes the worthiness of the peasantry class. In a final test of their fidelity to the monarch and his kingdom, the shepherd notices the knight dons royal seal of the king:

> A ces signes certains, à cette noble marque
> Je reconnais l'oiseau cher à notre monarque,
> Le Phénix, en un mot.
>
> [Of these symbols, of this noble mark
> I recognize the bird dear to our monarch
> In short, The Phoenix.][49]

The presentation of gracious royal subjects – peasant and noble alike – the *magister* is able to win the favor of his king. Following the idyllic dialogue the king responds to the performance:

> Bravo ! bravo ! M. le Magister, votre idylle réussira : j'aime beaucoup ce genre et la manière dont vous l'avez traité. Malgré tout le sel et l'agrément dont on sait, à la cour, assaisonner ses propos, on en revient toujours au langage des bergers. Quelle est belle et touchante ta Cloé ! Quel intérêt elle inspire ! c'est que ses discours comme son âme, sont sans apprêts et sans imposture. L'énigme du Phénix me plait fort : c'est un hommage délicat à votre Roi. Il en sentira, croyez-moi, le prix, et en attendant le Magister : (*tirant une bourse d'or de chaque main.*) Voilà pour le Phénix, et voilà pour Cloé.
>
> [Bravo! Bravo! M. the Magister, your idyll will be a success: I really love this genre and the manner in which you have treated it. In spite of the glitz and glitter that we are used to in the court, we always go back to the language of shepherds. She is so beautiful and touching, your Cloé! She inspires such interest! It's just hat her speech, like her soul, is without artifice and perfidy. The enigma of the Phoenix greatly pleases me: it's a delicate homage to your king. He shall feel it, believe me, the price, and in waiting for the Magister: (*handing [the Magister] a piece of gold in each hand. Here, for the Phoenix and for Cloé.*)][50]

The king is not only pleased by the genre of the idyllic dialogue, but the language and the images that it evokes. The "shepherd's language" or the language of the people is viewed as the most virtuous register and the ideal language for the kingdom because even the king "comes back to the shepherd's language." The dialogue is capable of erasing the seemingly arbitrary hierarchization in the kingdom through a common tongue. This scene is exceptionally self-referential in the sense that Chanlatte creates a dialogue between two kings and two poets. The first is the *magister* and the fictional king, who later pays the poet for his artistic creation. Then, there is Juste Chanlatte, Comte de Rosiers and the real Henry Christophe watching *La Partie de chasse du roi* in his very court. By establishing a dramatic rapport between the king and the poet, Chanlatte is able to inscribe himself first and foremost as the kingdom's official poet. Not only does Chanlatte establish

himself as the court's official poet, but his poetry also allows him to define the king – through the image of the phoenix – and his subjects. Functioning not only as a vehicle for his vision of Haiti, but also as an outlet for his poetry, theater grants Chanlatte noble social status in Henry Christophe's kingdom while also ensuring his place among the noble ranks of Haitian literature and theatrical production.

Literature in Early Haiti and Silences

As I have mentioned above, critics have recently expanded our vision of what constitutes literature in the early stages of Haitian independence. According to Deborah Jenson and Sibylle Fischer, this is an imperative gesture if we are to address the elision of Haiti in historiography as well as in cultural and literary studies. Not only does this help to understand the way Haiti fostered new notions of freedom and modernity in the Americas and on a global scale, but by studying works such as constitutions, speeches, and correspondence allow us to reconstruct the political philosophies of the historically misunderstood leaders of early Haiti like Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henry Christophe. This is a crucial, and necessary endeavor. However, in seeking to uncover the voices of early Haitian leaders, other voices are inevitably silenced and relegated to the margins of Haitian intellectualism.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot points out in his magisterial text *Silencing of the Past: Power and Production of History* that any attempt to attribute a voice to a historical figure (creating a mention) ineluctably silences another's voice.[51] For this reason, there are archival and historical consequences when we attempt to wholly attribute documents that were collaboratively created, such as Dessalines's "I Avenged America" speech, to one author. Just as a dismissal of Dessalines's literary ingenuity would marginalize his

role early Haitian radical thought, to definitively assign authorship to Dessalines would be to deny Juste Chanlatte's influence on early Haitian anticolonial rhetoric.

As I have demonstrated in Chanlatte's plays *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale* and *La Partie de chasse du roi*, Chanlatte effuses an anti-colonial and anti-slavery rhetoric in theatrical representations of the Kingdom of Haiti. As Chris Bongie argues in his work on Juste Chanlatte's history of the Haitian Revolution *Le Cri de la nature*, the resilient secretary-poet-historian possesses a hemispheric vision of Americanness also present in the speeches he collaborated on with Dessalines. Bongie traces Chanlatte's appropriation, or "haitianization" to evoke Aimé Césaire's *La Tragédie du roi Christophe*, and modifications of French literary conventions in "I Avenged America" and *Le Cri de la nature*.[52] While Bongie seems to challenge Deborah Jenson's assignment of the 1804 speech to Dessalines, I argue that they are complimentary.[53] Their attempts to track Dessalinian and Chanlattean motifs are part of the same venture of understanding early Haitian poetics. Going forward, rather than attributing any one text to one author, our goal should be a rigorous tracking of literary stylistics and poetics in early Haitian texts in order to reveal the ways in which particular voices distinguish themselves from, collaborate with, and engage with one another to construct a collective early Haitian poetics. Unavoidably so, a crucial element of this critical work is grounded in an analysis of Chanlatte's theater where we have unhindered access to Chanlatte's literary poetics.

Chapter 3

Reprising Jean-Jacques Dessalines: Massillon Coicou's "Prophetic Vision of the Past" in *L'Empereur Dessalines : Drame en deux actes, en vers*

L'idée dont je suis travaillé de resserrer de plus en plus le lien moral, le lien naturel qui unit, qui doit toujours unir la France et Haïti, m'a fait saisir avec un cordial empressement l'occasion qui m'est aujourd'hui donnée de montrer la filiation de l'une par rapport à l'autre.

[I have labored to hone in on, as close as possible, the moral and natural elements that unite, that must always unite France and Haiti, this idea has led me to take advantage of today's momentous occasion to elucidate the filiation of one in relation to the other.][1]

Massillon Coicou, *Le Génie français et l'âme haïtienne* (1904)

On July 23, 1903, serving in Paris at the Haitian diplomatic ministry, Massillon Coicou gave a speech at the *Mairie de Paris* on the kindred ties between France and Haiti. In his address, Coicou enumerates various French thinkers, poets, and novelists who have contributed to rendering Haiti legible on the other side of the Atlantic. Stating that his expressed goal of this *conférence* was to trace the influence of the French imaginary on the Haitian spirit, the nationalist poet applauds the efforts of these French figures and their century-long effort to liberate Haiti from the shackles of French colonial thought. It is, nonetheless, problematic that as a nationalist poet, Coicou appears to be effusing unrelenting praise towards French abolitionists and artists rather than to the Haitian masses that marched with Jean-Jacques Dessalines to the final defeat of colonial rule one hundred years earlier, in November 1803. Coincidentally, Coicou's literary legacy has been subject to similarly hasty readings when, in fact, the poet-diplomat makes a much more subtle gesture.

Writing at the turn of the century, Massillon Coicou's bibliographical Paris speech seeks to expose to the French, the numerous utterances of Haiti, its genius and revolutionary spirit in the French imaginary. His *maîtrise* of the French literary history, culture, and aesthetics was similar to the approach adopted later by leaders of Negritude

Aimé Césaire, Léon Gontran Damas, and Léopold Sédar Senghor as they began to dismantle the French colonial past in their myriad writings.[2] Given the exceptional nature of Coicou's decolonial rhetoric, how has his legacy fallen out of the purview of contemporary literary, historical, and cultural studies scholars? In addressing this question I engage with Édouard Glissant's theatrical gesture of a "prophetic vision of the past," which he outlines in the preface to his play *Monsieur Toussaint.*[3] While I do not mention Glissant's play at length in this chapter, I contend that Massillon Coicou adopts a similar literary stance as a poet-historian in his play *L'Empereur Dessalines: Drame en deux actes en vers*.

Perhaps one of the most pertinent ways of interpreting the elision of Massillon Coicou and his works from the Haitian (literary) imagination is through what Michel-Rolph Trouillot referred to as the "silencing" of the Haitian Revolution and its legacy. As literary and historical scholars have engaged with Trouillot we have seen that there were active efforts to suppress, neologize, and promote particular versions of the Haitian Revolution that has pervaded nearly every aspect of Western culture for the past two centuries.[4] As far as the "silencing" of Coicou is concerned, he fuses his literary output with Haiti's past, rendering himself vulnerable to the same processes of forgetting and effacement that Trouillot outlines in *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. These processes, described in terms of *erasure* and *banalization*, are the result of the work of a more general public and specialists. The questions then become: How is Massillon Coicou written into, or out of the literary legacy of the Haitian Revolution and how might an inclusion of Coicou's writing challenge the current representations of the Haitian Revolution and its aftermath?

One of the central figures in the work of Massillon Coicou is the revolutionary general, and the first emperor of Haiti, Jean-Jacques Dessalines. In a number of his poems and his only printed play, *L'Empereur Dessalines : Drame en deux actes, en vers* (1906), Coicou fixates on the assassination of Dessalines because it represents, for him, one of the most formative moments in Haiti's national memory and consciousness. As a poet and playwright, Coicou's fixation on the Haitian Revolution is significant in the sense that the cultural impact of the revolution remains salient one hundred years later. In memory studies, Marianne Hirsch refers to this phenomenon as the "generation of postmemory," where the generations not directly involved in the trauma of historical events act as the conduits, the means of contemporary transmission of a particular cultural past.[5] In transmitting the events of Dessalines's assassination to generations of Haitians who never lived under Haiti's first emperor, Coicou generates a certain "presence of the past" that allows Haitians to engage with the depths of their cultural history.[6] Additionally, as Hirsch points out, this transmission allows these generations of postmemory to raise questions of responsibility, memorialization, and erasure.[7] Amidst a flurry of work focusing on restoring the image of Dessalines, shifting the perception of him from an imperial despot to a politically savvy premier.[8]

In what follows, I argue that *L'Empereur Dessalines* provides us with one of the first reevaluations of the representations of Jean-Jacques Dessalines in Haitian history. As the Founder of the Théâtre National d'Haïti, the theatre was the ideal location for Coicou to perform such a task. However, because only the first act of Coicou's play was ever printed, I insist that by drawing our attention to his poems about the events at Pont Rouge we are able to reconstruct an idea of what the final act of *L'Empereur Dessalines* may

have looked like. Finally, in the wake of feminist interventions into Haitian history and literary studies, I examine the implications of Coicou's claim that Défilée – a solider under Dessalines's during the Haitian Revolution – is the "perfect incarnation of [a Haitian] national consciousness.]"[9]

Troping the Bard: Massillon Coicou's "ambition poétique"

Apart from notable exceptions, Massillon Coicou's œuvre has been severely understudied, and when it has, it has been subjected to rather capricious readings.[10] Perhaps one of the most notable, and contradictory, attempts to engage with Coicou's literary production comes from the Haitian bibliophile, historian, and archivist his monumental survey of Haitian literature, *Les Origines sociales de la littérature haïtienne* (1962). In analyzing Coicou's poetry, Trouillot frequently compares the Haitian bard's early works with his more "mature" later works producing a rather subjective evaluation of the young poet's "art." Preferring the patriotic style of Coicou's *Poésies nationales* (1892) Trouillot argues that his two subsequent volumes of poetry *Impressions* and *Passions* (1903) are that of an immature, romantic poet, "[Ce] sont des œuvres de première jeunesse ; quant aux *Poésies [nationales],* elles dénotent plus de maturité, cette maturité à laquelle aboutira le barde dans *L'Oracle* ou dans *L'Empereur Dessalines* […] [These are works of a young poet, when it comes to *Poésies [nationales]*, they denote the utmost maturity, this maturity that the bard would fully achieve in *L'Oracle* or in *L'Empereur Dessalines*…]"[11] However, that five years after publishing *Les Origines sociales* Trouillot changes his tone in reference to Coicou's later works, especially *L'Empereur Dessalines*, in the preface to his own play representing the assassination of

Jean-Jacques Dessalines, *Dessalines, ou le sang du Pont Rouge* (1967). In the opening paragraph of the Trouillot's preface, he states:

> Ce ne sera pas la première fois que l'Empereur Dessalines aura été placé sur la scène. Massillon Coicou, dans son « Dessalines », nous a présenté au début de ce siècle, un personnage falot et ridicule, qui ne reflète pas la tendance nationaliste ordinaire du barde, de l'auteur de « *L'Oracle* » et des « *Poésies Nationales* ».
>
> [This is not the first time that Emperor Dessalines will have been staged. Massillon Coicou, in his "Dessalines," presented us, at the beginning of the century, a bland and ridiculous character, which did not reflect the normally nationalistic tendency of the bard, the author of "L'Oracle" and "Poésies Nationales."][12]

The contradiction of his critique in *Les Origines sociales* aside, Trouillot, in justifying the relevance of his own work, argues that Coicou's Dessalines reproduces a "fausse interprétation de la psychologie des personnages [false interpretation of the characters' psychology]" and claims that the playwright "ne comprenait pas les contingences auxquelles l'Empereur était en proie, et que ses réformes, dont quelques-unes étaient les plus progressistes de son époque, lui valurent la haine d'une élite dénuée de toute aspiration nationale [did not understand the circumstances of which Dessalines was the prey, and that his reforms, of which certain ones were the most progressive of his time, granted him the hatred of an elite devoid of any nationalist aspirations.]"[13] As previously mentioned in reference to Coicou's speech at the *Mairie de Paris,* this type of hasty reading of *L'Empereur Dessalines* poses problems for an accurate evaluation of the poetic and historical work that the Haitian writer gestures towards in recreating the scene of Dessalines's assassination.

In the preface to *L'Empereur Dessalines*, Massillon Coicou interestingly anticipates the critique that Trouillot levies against him in the preface to *Le Sang du Pont Rouge*. Presenting his work as one of "bonne foi," Coicou poetically states that the

historical event, the assassination of Dessalines at Pont Rouge, is the inspiration for his play:

> [Le] charme de la vérité a exercé sur moi sa souveraine puissance, et l'imagination du poète s'est fiancée à la raison de l'historien, heureuse de trouver dans la seule matière de l'évènement qui l'avait sollicité l'élément de poésie à son œuvre. A mesure donc que se déroulaient, à son évocation, les péripéties du sombre drame du 17 Octobre [sic], le poète se surprenait à être satisfait de son œuvre, qui, pourtant, était l'œuvre d'un peintre fidèle.
>
> [Truth's charm took control of me with her extreme power, and the poet's imagination wedded itself to the historian's reason, gleeful to find only in the events the material that which had called on the poetic elements of this œuvre. Therefore, the somber drama evoked in the events of October 17 unraveled, the poet took great pleasure in his work that was, actually, the masterpiece of a faithful painter.][14]

Rather than a work of historical fiction, where the historical events are seen as potentially malleable or unstable, Coicou confesses his desire for a realist exposition of the "somber drama of the 17 of October" when Dessalines was betrayed. Furthermore, Coicou's evocation of painting, poetry, and history challenges Trouillot's limited definition of the intellectual work of historians and playwrights. For Coicou, the confluence of the poet's imagination and the historian's reason provides the ideal perspective from which to "mettre l'histoire de notre pays sous nous yeux [place the history of our country before our eyes]."[15] While recognizing that historians and poets have different tools, their agendas can be harmonized in the sense that both seek to reveal the symbolism and importance of the national consciousness of a people. As such, Coicou refers to his play in the *préface* as a poem, one that seeks to delve into the meaning of the assassination of Dessalines by recreating the events that left an "enormous, bloody mark" on the Haitian national consciousness that remains a century later when *L'Empereur Dessalines* was first performed.

Even though Coicou shows his concern for the stylistic elements of his play, referring occasionally to his writing as poetry and verse, he is more interested in revealing the social impact of Dessalines's assassination. This is, of course, extremely ironic when considering Trouillot's criticism. According to Coicou, two of the most pronounced characteristics of Haitian nationalism – servile ignorance and glutinous *égoïsme* – have caused the events that took place at Pont Rouge to become lost in posterity. Out of this loss, as a poet-historian, Coicou seeks to recover the betrayal that took place on October 17, 1806, in order to reinvigorate the Haitian national consciousness. In doing so, Coicou incarnates a "prophetic vision of the past" that Édouard Glissant refers to in his preface to the 1961 version of *Monsieur Toussaint*. Discussing the historical studies of CLR James and Aimé Césaire of Toussaint Louverture, Glissant claims that his present work:

> […] n'est pourtant pas tout droit d'inspiration politique ; il se réfère plutôt à ce que j'appellerai, par paradoxe, une *vision prophétique du passé*. Pour ceux qui ne connaissent de leur histoire que la part de nuit ou démission à quoi on a voulu les réduire, l'élucidation du passé proche ou lointain est une nécessité. Renouer avec son histoire obscurcie ou oblitérée, l'éprouver dans son épaisseur, c'est se vouer mieux encore aux saveurs du présent ; lesquelles, dépouillées de cet enracinement dans le temps, ramènent à une vaine délectation. C'est là une ambition poétique.
>
> […is not politically inspired; rather it is linked to what I would call, paradoxically, *a prophetic vision of the past*. For those whose history has been reduced by others to darkness and despair, the recovery of the near or distant past is imperative. To renew acquaintance with one's history, obscured or obliterated by others, is to relish fully the present, for the experience of the present, stripped of its roots in time, yields only hollow delights. This is a poetic endeavor.][16]

Although Glissant attempts to depoliticize the act of recovering history by stating that his project is not politically, but rather poetically inspired. This does not, however, make Glissant's play apolitical. Instead, he intentionally melds poetics and politics in his historically informed play. In his recent study *The Haitian Revolution in the Literary*

Imaginary: Radical Horizons, Conservative Constraints, Philip Kaisary argues that Glissant's distancing of himself from political recoveries of Toussaint Louverture, most notably from CLR James's *The Black Jacobins* and Aimé Césaire's *Toussaint Louverture*, "foreshadows Glissant's later retreat to cultural politics, a position that becomes most clearly apparent in the 1990 work *Poétique de la Relation*."[17] Ostensibly arguing that Glissant's interpretation of Haitian history in a wider, post-national scope weakens the political radicalism of Toussaint Louverture – and other historical figures – Kaisary suggests that *Monsieur Toussaint* marks a conservative turn in Glissant's postcolonial poetics. While Kaisary's evaluation of the sparse criticism of Glissant's play is masterful, I disagree that a fallible "all-too-human" Toussaint constitutes a pessimistic political stance.[18] Toussaint's imperfection, rather than being a negative or pessimistic politics, allows other heroic figures to enter the fray in a well-established historiographical and literary tradition that privileges Louverture. I contend that Glissant's "*prophetic vision of the past,*" while foregrounded as being a poetic positioning, is actually the type of radical political project Massillon Coicou undergoes in *L'Empereur Dessalines* to render Jean-Jacques Dessalines present in the Haitian national consciousness.

Staging Dessalines: A Poetic In(ter)vention

As Haitian studies continue to develop in the aftermath of the "Haitian Turn," scholars and artists have devoted a great deal of energy to understanding the repressive power of representation in historical and literary scholarship.[19] One of the most concerted efforts has been to revisit the figure of Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Portions of edited volumes, sections in peer-reviewed journals, and entire journal volumes – in the

case of the July 2012 issue of *The William and Mary Quarterly* – have provided a new stage for analysis and re-framing of the legacy Jean-Jacques Dessalines. In his 2005 article "The Theater of the Haitian Revolution/The Haitian Revolution as Theater," Michael Dash argues that the "bicentenary of the Haitian Revolution has provided an occasion for a tragicomic restaging of the events that led to the declaration of Haitian independence in 1804."[20] Ten years later, with the recent commemoration of the "Memorial for Slavery and the Atlantic Slave Trade"[21] in Guadeloupe, literary scholar Deborah Jenson argues that Dessalines's unique invention of "a dual liberty, both anti-colonial and anti-slavery" is a reason why the Haitian liberator should continue his path towards center stage.[22] In her magisterial study *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution*, Jenson directs our attention to the need to understand the way history and literature meld together in constructing the representations of leaders like Dessalines. If we are to "understand and appreciate the significance of narrative or poetic representations" of Dessalines, as well as the "forces that allowed, or repressed [them]" it is crucial to engage with the way theater works with and projects (counter)narratives in a popular sphere.[23]

The opening scene of the play is set around a royal ball, held in the honor of Dessalines's daughter Célimène and the offering of her hand in marriage to the future president of the Republic of Haiti, Alexandre Pétion.[24] It is interesting to note, that Célimène does not actually appear in in the play, nor is she included amongst the actors listed in the play's paratext. From the very beginning, the treacherous plot to assassinate Dessalines looms over the play, from the gossiping palace guards to generals Henry Christophe and Pétion. After humbly declining Célimène's hand, the action of the play

alternates between Dessalines addressing his inner circle of advisors and Pétion plotting his demise. Henry Christophe is the only character that is a part of both factions, serving as a double agent in order to placate Dessalines and aid Pétion in his plot.

The later scenes of the first act delve into the psychology of Dessalines, who appears wounded by his unfaithful cabinet of generals and advisors. Often featuring long speeches by the emperor, these moments allow Coicou to confront and dispel claims of Dessalinian barbarism. Creating the conspiracy of revolt in the southern provinces of Haiti, Christophe and Pétion trick Dessalines into declaring war. The final scene of the first act ends with Dessalines "extrêmement courroucé [extremely irate]" departing with a faction of troops to quell the uprising.[25] Coincidentally, this is the final scene of *L'Empereur Dessalines* because the second and final act of the play was lost or never printed. The fragmentation of Coicou's play, in a metaphorical sense, means that Dessalines is never assassinated, which provides the play with a rather radical, albeit unintentional, vision of Dessalines. As a result of the loss of the second act, Dessalines's assassination is not the only absence, but the only female character in the play, Défilée, never appears on stage. In reading *L'Empereur Dessalines,* these absences are key considerations when understanding the representations of Dessalines, Défilée and Haitian history through Coicou's re-imagining of the events at Pont Rouge.

Returning to Dash's reference to the theater of the Haitian revolution, a major portion of the restitution of Jean-Jacques Dessalines takes place in Caribbean literature. While Dessalines is a character in quite a few fictional and theatrical works from Haiti, the Caribbean, and the African diaspora, these characters are often flat, secondary roles that render the revolutionary as a brutish general and second in command to Toussaint

Louverture. However, as Marie-Agnès Sourieau points out, there are a number of plays in which Dessalines is the protagonist such as *Dessalines ou le sang du Pont Rouge* by Hénock Trouillot, *Le Pont Rouge* by Jean Métellus, and *Dessalines, ou la passion de l'indépendence* by Vincent Placoly. These plays all feature "a shared historic vision – a Dessalinian imaginary."[26] All three of the plays Sourieau analyzes are set around the assassination of Dessalines in 1806, but Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines* interestingly falls out of the purview of her work. Throughout the course of her article, Sourieau formulates three separate, yet linked, readings of the theatrical Dessalines: the paternal, the Christ-like, and the tyrant. While the first two readings are compatible with Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines,* the "tyrannical" side of Dessalines is much more nuanced because of the way Massillon Coicou interprets the impending assassination plot at Pont Rouge.

For Massillon Coicou, Dessalines's assassination is not just an act of treachery, of fratricide, but also an instance of historical brutality that alters the lived experience of Haitians. For this reason, Coicou casts Dessalines as a victim of tyranny, rather than an unprovoked practitioner. From the very beginning, Dessalines is viewed as a peaceful, unifying presence, especially by the palace guards in the first scene of the play:

> Factionnaire 1:Vous avez vu?
> Factionnaire 2: J'ai vu
> Factionnaire 1: L'empereur danse!
> Factionnaire 2: Il danse.
> Factionnaire 1: Décidément, c'est donc doux d'avoir l'indépendance! Nous ne connaissons [sic] pas tout cela sous les blancs. N'est-ce pas?
> Factionnaire 2: Ah, ça, non!
> […]
> Factionnaire 1: […] L'Empereur est un homme, un nègre comme nous; et tous ceux que l'on nomme le Grand Conseil, tous ceux que nous voyons ici et qui dansent, ce sont des nègres, eux aussi! N'est-ce pas que c'est bien?

[Guard 1: Have you seen?
Guard 2: I have seen
Guard 1: The Emperor dances!
Guard 2: He dances.
Guard 1: Assuredly, it is quite splendid to be free. We didn't have that with the whites, right?
Guard 2: Oh, that, no!
[…]
Guard 1: The Emperor is a man, a negro like us, and all those of who refer to him as the Grand Consul, all of those who we see here and who dance are negroes as well! Isn't it wonderful?][27]

Before presenting the assassination plot, Coicou carefully notes the systemic changes that have taken place in Haiti under Dessalines' reign. In spite of their subordinate position as palace guards, the ubiquity of black freedom has changed the way they look at the world. Black bodies are no longer chained slaves or brutal soldiers, but prestigious political figures free to dance. It is also important to know that the palace guards are the only characters in the play who are unnamed, anonymous Haitians, representing the view of "the people." After introducing Pétion, Gérin and Christophe as the principal figures in the assassination plot, Dessalines enters onto the stage as a jovial presence:

Amis et compagnons, même avant de m'asseoir
Ce qu'à chacun de vous j'ai dit cent fois ce soir,
Pardonnez-moi de vous le redire sans cesse:
C'est que je suis content du bal de la princesse,
Qui fait que vous voici groupés autour de moi
Comme au premier janvier. Aussi, c'est dans l'émoi
De ces doux souvenirs qui bercent ma mémoire…

[Friends and companions, even before being seated
What I have told each and every one of you this evening,
Pardon me for having ceaselessly told you again:
That I am happy with the princess's ball,
Which means that you are all gathered here around me
Like on January first. Also, it's the emotion
Of these delicate moments that nurture my memory… [28]

Coicou's Dessalines is a charismatic "man of the people," giving thanks to his guests and sharing his fond memories of a young nation on the night he plans to offer Pétion his daughter Célimène's hand in marriage as a symbol of unity between the mulatto and black Haitians. Later in the scene Pétion, in spite of his perfidious character, mentions, "we are your children and you [Dessalines] are our father." Pétion's character allows Coicou to create a nearly canonical tragedy out of The Pont Rouge.

As a further rejection of the traditional presentation of Dessalines, Coicou's Emperor rejects his tyrannical destiny: "Moi qui veux cependant, à défaut d'être un grand/ entre tous, n'être pas, pour le moins, un tyran [I who want, however, by default of being grand above all, not to be, at least, a tyrant.]"[29] After having learned of Pétion's seditious plans, Dessalines pledges to no longer be the father, nor the leader of Haiti, but its master. As Sourieau rightfully points out, this was the historical reality that led Dessalines to "[exercise] power in a ruthless and despotic way that replicated the colonial pattern of domination and slavery."[30] However, in Coicou's version, Henry Christophe talks Dessalines off of this tyrannical ledge by committing himself to the greater project of justice, forcing Pétion and Gérin to confess to their treacherous plot or "c'est moi qui, de ma main, les frapperai tous deux [It is I who, with my own hands, will strike both of them.]"[31] Dessalines ultimately accepts Christophe's "wise" proposal because, without Christophe taking responsibility for punishing Pétion and Gérin, the Haitian elite would blame him for their deaths. In Coicou's formulation of the events that took place at Pont Rouge, Dessalines the Christ-like figure and Christophe is the proverbial Judas Iscariot. Before leaving Christophe, Dessalines laments: "Ils diront que je suis un brutal,/ N'est-ce pas? Un tryan, le plus cruel des maîtres?/ Mais eux, dis! Que sont-ils? Ne sont-ils pas des

traîtres? / Pourtant garde-toi bien du plus léger soupçon / Qui leur ferait saisir que je sais qu'ils sont! [They'll say I'm a brute, no? A tyrant, the most cruelest of masters? But what of them! What are they? Are they not traitors? Maintain, yet, the slightest suspicion which will make them realize that I know that they are!]"[32] Dessalines leaves the stage just as troubled as when he entered, however, he is still not aware that Christophe is the missing link in the planned coup d'état.

Conscious of his position as emperor, Coicou's Dessalines never ceases to interrogate his potential fall into despotism. After deciding that the southern Haitian elites are to blame for a planned uprising, Dessalines declares civil war in order to maintain the social fabric of the young Caribbean nation:

> Le Sud souffle la guerre, il n'y aura que du sang!
> Car moi, je ne vais pas distinguer l'innocent
> Du coupable. Le Sud est debout ; il succombe,
> C'est le Sud que mes mains coucheront dans la tombe !
> On a dit qu'autrefois je me montrerai cruel,
> C'est faux ! Mais cette fois je jure d'être tel !
> […] Moi, pour fonder mon règne,
> Sans vouloir cependant que jamais nul me craigne,
> Mais en disant plutôt que mon peuple naissant
> Est la chair de ma chair et le sang de mon sang !
>
> [The South declares war, there will be only blood !
> I shall not pause to distinguish innocence
> From culpability. The South is on its feet, it shall fall,
> It is the South that my hands will send to its tomb!
> They've said before that I would prove cruel,
> This is a lie! But this time, I certainly will be!
> […] To establish my reign,
> Without wanting for anyone to ever fear me,
> But rather saying, I wish for my people to flourish,
> For they are the flesh of my flesh and the blood of my blood!][33]

Coicou's Dessalines cognizant of his detractors' views often exercises a rather authoritarian use of power, confessing his reluctance to become a despot. If Dessalines is

a tyrant, it is not of his doing, but that of his enemies. As the last lines of his declaration of war highlight, Dessalines's ultimate wish is to unite the Haitian people, of his own flesh and blood, rather than to make them fear his wrath. Another example of how Dessalines is a measured character is when Gédéon reveals that Christophe is amongst the treacherous bunch. Rather than reacting violently to the news, Dessalines wishes to know why his military entourage is conspiring against him. In fact, it takes Boisrond-Tonnerre and others to convince Dessalines that it is better not to question treachery, but "to attack it at its roots."[34]

The truth is that we may never know how *L'Empereur Dessalines* ends because the second and final act was never printed the only known version printed by the Imprimerie Edmond Chenet. However, through an interpretation of Dessalines's final lines of the first act as well as excerpts from Coicou's poem "Une Voix sur le Pont-Rouge" we can infer that the second act seeks to reprise the figure of Dessalines as a martyr for the unification of Haiti rather than a despotic ruler. In his final words before embarking towards his assassination at Pont Rouge, Dessalines proclaims to a group of sword-brandishing soldiers:

> Alors, l'œuvre étant fait [sic], et bien fait, s'il s'élance
> Un jour de ces débris, par dessus leur silence
> De tombe, un autre Sud, un autre peuple, enfin,
> Mon souvenir pour lui n'aura pas été vain ;
> Car c'est sur l'ordre, alors, qu'il faudra qu'il se fonde,
> Pour qu'il se fasse, un jour, sa place dans le monde !
>
> [This task is well achieved, very well so, if it leaps out
> One day from the pile of debris, their silence will rise
> From the tomb, a new South, a new people, finally,
> My memory of her will not have been in vain;
> Because it is order on which the South will have to establish itself,
> In order for it to make, one day, a place for itself in the world!][35]

For Dessalines, the war in the South is more than just a manner to retain his power; it is an act of nation building. These lines have significance beyond the scope of Dessalines's assassination. They also take root in the Haitian struggle for independence, which sought to create a nation of former slaves looking for their place in the world. Coicou echoes the significance of these final words in his poem dedicated to Dessalines in the collection *Poésies nationales* entitled "Une voix sur le Pont-Rouge:

> Et tu crus, ô Garat, t'acquérir de la gloire,
> Quand tu frappas ainsi le héros immortel !
> Et tu crus effacer une ombre sous le ciel,
> Quand tu jetas ainsi le voile sur l'histoire !
>
> Non, il grandit toujours, l'homme de Dieu hanté,
> Le bras fort qui ceignit la race en agonie
> Du bouclier d'airain que forgea son génie ;
> Non, il vit, le géant né de la Liberté.
>
> Dans la région sainte où la Force s'incline,
> Tremblante au pied du Droit ; par delà le ciel bleu,
> Au rang des rédempteurs, satellites du Dieu
> De justice et d'amour, rayonne Dessaline [sic].
>
> [And you believed, O Garat, to have attained glory,
> When you struck this immortal hero!
> And you believed to have erased the shadow below the heavens,
> When you so throw the veil over history!
>
> No, he grows still, the haunted man of God,
> The powerful arm that protected this race in agony
> From the bronze buckle that forged his genius;
> No, he lives, the giant borne of Freedom.
>
> In the saintly region where Strength succumbs,
> Trembling at the feet of the Law; to beyond the blue heavens,
> Beside the redeemers, the disciples of God
> Of justice and love, shines Dessalines.] [36]

In both of these excerpts, Coicou establishes Dessalines as the founder of Haiti, but also as a symbol for Haiti itself. Both the country and its emperor were born of a struggle for

freedom, maintained by racial unity, and betrayed by the slander of tyranny. Although the second act is lost, Coicou's poetry allows us to speculate that the missing act seeks to valorize Dessalines and vilify his perfidious entourage. Through both the play and his poetry, Coicou reveals a dedication to the past that exemplifies the Glissantian mission to plunge into the past in order to understand the present.

What if Haiti Were a Woman: Reading Défilée and Her Absence[37]

In his 1853 study *Etudes sur l'histoire d'Haïti*, Beaubrun Ardouin provides a dramatic account of the assassination of Jean-Jacques Dessalines. While on his way to quell insurrection in the south of Haiti, Dessalines and his troops were ambushed, fired upon, and killed by conspiring soldiers led by Henry Christophe and Alexandre Pétion. In Ardouin's retelling of this formidable moment in Haitian history he focuses on the body of Dessalines, how it was stripped naked, mutilated, disfigured, and left on the side of the road to rot.[38] Not long after, a general ordered Dessalines's body to be relocated to the Place d'Armes in front of the royal palace on Port-au-Prince, representing the emperor's ultimate fall from grace. In this sanguinary moment of Haitian history, one woman, Défilée Bazile, dared to resist the summary execution and humiliation of Dessalines by gathering and interring the Emperor's remains. For this, among other reasons, Défilée was long presumed mad.[39] In his preface to *L'Empereur Dessalines*, Coicou argues that Défilée is the ultimate symbol of Haitian national consciousness, however, she never appears because the second act is missing. By reading historical accounts of Défilée's devotion to the humanity of Dessalines's dead body, Coicou's play constitutes a feminist intervention into the representation of Haitian history through a poetic mission to include Défilée as a key figure in the recovery of Dessalines's assassination at the Pont-Rouge.[40]

The older brother of the Haitian poet Coriolan Ardouin, Beaubrun Ardouin is one of many Haitian historians to preserve Défilée's legacy in historical interpretations of Dessalines's assassination. In *Etudes sur l'histoire d'Haïti,* Ardouin writes:

> Ce corps inanimé, mutilé, percé de tant de coups, à la tête surtout, était à peine reconnaissable ; il resta exposé sur cette place d'armes jusque dans l'après-midi, où une femme noire, nommée Défilé [sic], qui était folle depuis longtemps, rendue à un moment lucide, ou plutôt mue par un sentiment de compassion, gémissait seule auprès des restes du Fondateur de l'Indépendance, lorsque des militaires, envoyés par ordre du général Pétion, vinrent les enlever et les porter au cimetière, jetant des fleurs sur cette fosse qui recouvrait les restes de Dessalines. Quelques années ensuite, Madame Inginac y fit élever une modeste tombe sur laquelle on lit cette épitaphe : « Ci-gît Dessalines, mort à 48 ans ».
>
> [This inanimate body, mutilated, pierced by so many blows to the head, was barely recognizable. It remained exposed at the place d'armes until the afternoon when a black woman, named Défilée – long considered mad – benefitted from a lucid moment or, rather, was moved by sentiments of compassion, moaned alone before the remains of the Founder of Independence and, after the soldiers had come, by order of General Pétion, to remove them and carry them to the cemetery, spread flowers over the pit that held the scraps of Dessalines. A few years later, Madame Inginac erected a modest headstone on which featured the following inscription: "Here lies Dessalines, dead at the age of 48."][41]

For Ardouin, this moment is symbolic of a Haitian patriotism and sentimentality towards Dessalines as the founder of Haitian Independence. In spite of his recognition for Défilée, it is impossible to note the inherent judgment Ardouin levies against her as a mad black woman. How is it that a woman, long presumed mad, would have a moment of clarity that would convince her to preserve and respect the humanity of Dessalines inanimate cadaver? Myriam J.A. Chancy articulates in her study *Framing Silence: Revolutionary Novels by Haitian Women,* how women like Défilée "have consistently been written out of both the historical an literary records of Haiti" because, as Chancy notes, "Haitian women have been subsumed under an overtly male-identified national identity."[42] Juxtaposed with J.C. Dorsainvil's narrative of Dessalines burial in *Manuel d'histoire*

d'Haïti (1925) we can see how Défilée and Madame Inginac are characterized differently, this time as the principal actors of Haitian national recognition of Dessalines as the *Fondateur de l'Indépendance*:

> Sur le soir, une vieille folle, nommé [sic] Défilée, enferma dans un sac les restes de l'Empereur et les transporta au cimetière intérieur. Plus tard, quand les passions politiques furent apaisées, Mme Inginac reconnut publiquement que Dessalines avait été bon pour elle et son mari ; elle fit ériger, à Sainte-Anne, une modeste pierre tombale avec un épitaphe, éloquente en sa simplicité : « Ci-gît Dessalines, mort à 48 ans ».
>
> [In the evening, an elderly madwoman named Défilée, gathered the remains of the Emperor in a satchel and carried them to the interior cemetery. Later, when the political passions of the day subsided, Madame Inginac publically recognized that Dessalines had been good to her and her husband. Therefore, at Saint-Anne, she erected a modest headstone with the inscription, elegant in its simplicity: "Here lies Dessalines, dead at the age of 48."] [43]

While Ardouin and Dorsainvil both mention Madame Inginac as well as Défilée in their descriptions, the difference between the two is subtle but reveals the foregrounding of Défilée, rather than the state as the principle actor in commemorating Dessalines. However, neither author seeks to delve into the subject of Défilée's purported madness, nor do they wish to inscribe her as part of a larger history of the Haitian Revolution. This is part of a wider trend that Chancy refers to as the "tactile absence" of women in "historical reconstructions of the Haitian Revolution (1786-1804) and of all the major periods of colonialism that took place following Independence."[44]

While Défilée's presence in the historical record ensures that she will not be forgotten, her characterization as mad has, especially in theater, a lasting legacy. In Langston Hughes's play *The Emperor of Haiti,* Défilée, like many of the other characters in the play, have had their names changed de-historicizing the actors in the play, while maintaining a relatively accurate account of Dessalines's assassination.[45] Hughes's

changing of Défilée's name disrupts the historical preservation of Défilée's resistance to Dessalines's body being publicly humiliated, whereas other Haitian playwrights who have written about the assassination of Dessalines have categorically defined Défilée's character, like Hénock Trouillot, as "une folle" [a crazy woman].[46] To return to Marie-Agnès Sourieau's influential article on Dessalines in historical drama, she argues that Défilée resembles Mary Magdalene, "mourning and caring for the body of a now sanctified man."[47] In comparing the role of Défilée in Trouillot's *Dessalines ou le sang du Pont Rouge*, Vincent Placoly's *Dessalines ou la passion de l'indépendance*, and Jean Métellus's *Le Pont Rouge*,[48] Sourieau ultimately echoes Chancy's evaluation of women in the Haitian national consciousness, writing:

> Défilée personifies the courage and patriotic piety of the young country, but her madness dooms her to uttering nonsense and finally to silence. Thus, if this madwoman embodies the national consciousness of Haitians, as many historians and dramatists seem to believe, what can we say about the nation's reason and wisdom over the two centuries that will follow?[49]

Sourieau rightfully emphasizes the need to question the intent of the three playwrights. What kind of future do these plays imagine for Haiti if their founder is brutally murdered and the only lucid and patriotic figure is a madwoman?[50] Furthermore, what does Défilée's madness mean for subsequent generations of Haitian women seeking to find a voice in the nation's storied history?[51]

The effacement of the second act in Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines* is nonetheless problematic when trying to locate Défilée's voice, if not simply because she never appears in the first act. However, we can see in the preface that while Coicou accepts the assumption that Défilée was a madwoman, without profound reflection on the colonial or patriarchal trauma that might be at the origins of her mental instability, he

questions the sanity of Haitian men as well. Emphasizing Défilée's act of resistance, Coicou writes:

> Et, d'autre part, n'est-il pas vrai que, lorsque Défilé [sic] traversait Port-au-Prince, faisant d'un sac fangeux un linceul à l'empereur, bravant les huées d'une cohue de gavroches lapidant ce cadavre en lambeaux, subissant enfin la risée de tant d'hommes et de femmes qui trouvaient insensé le geste de la folle, n'est-il pas vrai que Défilé [sic], qui n'avait certes aucun souci de la gloire de demain, qui ne pouvait, en sa sublime inconscience […] n'est-il pas vrai, pourtant, que la plus belle incarnation de la conscience nationale c'est elle, cette folle qui s'en allait ainsi au milieu de ces fous qui se croyaient des sages ?
>
> [And, for that matter, is it not true that when Defilée crossed Port-au-Prince using a muddy sack as a shroud for the emperor, braving harassment by the various street urchins who tore this cadaver to shreds, enduring the mockery of many men and women who found the madwoman's gesture senseless. Is it not true that Défilée had no fears for the glory of tomorrow, who could have in her sublime ignorance […] Is it not true that she is the most beautiful incarnation of a national consciousness, this madwoman who ventured out amongst all these madmen who thought themselves wise?][52]

Not only is the act of recovering Dessalines's body, battered and torn to shreds, considered an act of resistance, but the humiliation and harassment that Défilée undergoes in order to preserve the Emperor's remains is not effaced. Noting the "boos of the street urchins" allows us to further interpret the way Coicou inscribes the violence Défilée, herself, undergoes as a possible source of her madness. Even though Coicou characterizes her as mad, her insanity is called into question in relation to "all of these madmen who thought themselves wise." For if the person who recovers the mutilated body of the Emperor is mad, from what mental affliction did those responsible for his murder suffer? By questioning Défilée's effacement via madness, we can imagine that in the lost second act that a resistant, potentially vocal Défilée, preserves the Dessalinian legacy of liberty and anti-colonialism, in which Haitian women have their own share.

Finding the New in the Old: Responding to the Call for New Narratives

On the 11th of January 2010, Gina Athena Ulysse began writing a series of essays and reflections on the way Haiti is represented in art, cinema, Western media and society. Her essays would later become her 2015 book *Why Haiti Needs New Narratives: A Post-quake Chronicle,* wherein she argues that "the Haiti in the public domain was a rhetorically and symbolically incarcerated, trapped in singular narratives and clichés that, unsurprisingly, hardly moved beyond stereotypes."[53] In her masterful study *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas,* Sara E. Johnson suggests that Haiti has always been the object of (neo)colonial power, whether being represented historically as the "Pearl of the Antilles" or the "Poorest country in the Western Hemisphere."[54] Changing this perception is a monumental task. However, as this study of Massillon Coicou's fragmented and lost play demonstrates, there are "new" narratives that can be found in the old. Narratives that have been hidden in the past, lost in archives, appearing as apparitions in fragmented literary-historical works.

As Ulysse points out, changing the perception of Haiti is a matter of narrative and representation. Feminist scholars Myriam JA Chancy and Marie-Agnès Sourieau draw attention to the need for increased visibility and questioning of Haitian women's absence, silence, and exclusion from the nation's history. When taken at face value, Coicou provides mere speculation into the role women like Défilée played in the moments following Haitian independence. However, when juxtaposed to historical descriptions drawn from Haitian history textbooks, female agency is elided to favor a collective or state process of memorialization. By recovering and re-reading texts derided by generations of biased critics like *L'Empereur Dessalines,* we can see how women have created, acted out, and performed resistance to state violence before and after Haitian

independence. Furthermore, the study of Haitian theater, in particular, provides us with an artistic medium in which women played an active role throughout various moments in Haitian history. Theater, thus, provides a stage where new and obscured representations of Haiti can be recovered in order to combat the pervasiveness of singular, stereotypical perceptions of Haiti and its history.

Chapter 4

Staging Anti-Colonialism in *Fin-de Siècle* Haitian Theater: *Fort de Joux; ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture* by Vendenesse Ducasse

"That's what happens when you personify hopes and dreams in one person. He becomes nothing but a literary device." – Marlon James, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*[1]

Iconic Toussaint: A Global Figure

Toussaint Louverture's imprisonment and subsequent death at the Fort de Joux on April 7th, 1803 triggered a world-literary event.[2] Spanning two centuries, writers such as William Wordsworth (Britain), Alphonse de Lamartine and Eugène Labiche (France), Anna Seghers (Germany), Jean-Michel Cusset (Guadeloupe), Édouard Glissant (Martinique), CLR James (Trinidad), Derek Walcott (Saint Lucia), Langston Hughes and Wendell Phillips (USA) have recounted the final moments of Toussaint's life in literary forms from poetry to theater to prose. Among the leaders of the Haitian revolution, Toussaint and his many literary and historical representations have received, by far, the most critical attention. The subject of various biographies from Haitian, French, and US American writers, Toussaint and his "world historical" legacy continue to raise questions about the problematic nature of his tenure as the Governor of Saint-Domingue and the relationship between Saint-Domingue and France.[3]

More than one-hundred years after slavery was abolished in Haiti, Haitian playwright and contributor to the literary revue *La Ronde* Vendenesse Ducasse wrote and enacted his play *Toussaint au Fort de Joux* (1896). It is one of the first plays published by a Haitian dramaturge to dramatically represent Toussaint Louverture's captivity and death in France in 1803.[4] The author of many historical plays in both prose and verse, *Toussaint au Fort de Joux* was the only play ever printed due to the efforts of writer and

actor Antoine Innocent (1873-1960). Innocent reassembled the script and printed the play under the title, *Fort de Joux; ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture.*[5] Apart from a warm critical reception by his contemporaries, Innocent and Duraciné Vaval, literary critics and anthologists have been reluctant to credit Ducasse's work as being much more than a fictionalization of Toussaint's imprisonment and death. Anthologist Ghislain Gouraige, while including Ducasse in his volume *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne*, questions the verisimilitude of *Fort de Joux*, arguing that Ducasse "had taken the liberty to imagine [certain] circumstances [avait encore droit en imaginer les circonstances]"[6] As a result, Ducasse's work fell out of a critical purview until the exploratory and provocative work by VèVè A. Clark and Jean Jonaissant shed new light on potential tracks for future research into Caribbean and Haitian literary studies.

However, the scholarship on Haiti and the Haitian Revolution over the last twenty years has revealed a particular fascination with Toussaint, especially in a transnational scope, eliding Haitian representations of the leader and the final moments of his life in captivity.[7] Furthermore, when considering the theatrical representations of Toussaint, of which many focus specifically on his death in the Fort de Joux, scholars prefer a Pan-Caribbean approach rather than examining Haitian historical drama. For this reason, this chapter analyzes the various ways in which Vendenesse Ducasse memorializes Toussaint in *Fort de Joux, ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture* as a champion for freedom. In the Haitian national memory, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, *Papa Desalin*, is often referred to as the key founding father of Haiti, while Toussaint occupies a secondary role. Why then, does Ducasse choose to reincarnate this episode from Haiti's colonial past? In assessing the theatrical reenactment of Toussaint's imprisonment and

death, I argue that Ducasse's representation of Toussaint's final moments reveals the brutality of French colonial nostalgia as Saint-Domingue begins to shift to independent Haiti. By doing so, Ducasse deviates from the majority of the dramatic representations of Toussaint, portraying him as unequivocally anticolonial, despite Toussaint's claims to French loyalty in his legislative writings as the Governor of Saint-Domingue.

Escaping from the Fort de Joux/Frenchness

Following Henry Christophe and Jean-Jacques Dessalines's surrender to General Leclerc, Toussaint Louverture was abducted and deported from Saint-Domingue to France on June 7th, 1802.[8] In a letter to Napoléon Bonaparte, General Leclerc briefly recounts the affaire: "j'envoie en France avec toute sa famille cet homme si profondément perfide, qui, avec tant hypocrisie, nous a fait tant de mal. Le gouvernement verra ce qu'il doit en faire [I'm sending to France, with his family, a man so deeply perfidious, who, with so much hypocrisy, did us a great deal of harm. The government will see what needs to be done with him.]"[9] Toussaint arrived in France in July and was later transferred to the Fort de Joux on August 23rd, where General Caffarelli would later interrogate the revolutionary and current Governor-for-life of Saint-Domingue. Although Leclerc's letter is rather ambiguous in terms of not only the charges against Toussaint, but also what awaited him at the fortress on the France/Swiss border. John Patrick Walsh rightfully points to the both the cruelty of Toussaint's imprisonment as well as his protracted execution in citing a letter found stitched in the handkerchief Toussaint wore around his head in captivity. I quote the same passage at length in order to understand the conditions that Vendenesse Ducasse depicts in his theatrical rendering of the final moments of Toussaint's life:

> A re te arbitrerement sans montandre ni me dire pour quoi, an pa re toute mésavaire, piÿer toute ma famille, an general, saisire mé pa pié, et les garde, man bar qué, an voyer nu comme ver de ter, re pan dre de colomni les plusatros cer mon conte, da pré cé la, je sui an voyer dant les fon du ca chau, nes ce pa coupe la janbre dun quie quin et loui dire marché, nes ce pa coupé la langue et loui dire parlé, nes ce pa an teré un homme vivant?
>
> [To arrest arbitrarily without hearing me, nor telling me why, taking away all my affairs, pillaging my entire family, in general, seizing my papers and keeping them, embarking me, sending me naked like an earthworm, spreading the most atrocious calumny about me, after that, I am sent to the depths of a cell, is this not to cut off the leg of someone and telling him to walk, is this not to cut out the tongue and telling him to speak, is this not to bury a man alive?][10]

Toussaint vividly describes how his kidnapping and imprisonment has left him physically and psychologically debilitated, providing a vivid depiction of the conditions in the Fort de Joux. This is the *point de départ* for Ducasse's play as Toussaint's personal valet, Mars Plaisir, trembling from the cold, says "Oh! Ce froid du Jura, cette prison de glace! [Oh! The cold of the Juras, this prison of ice!]"[11]

Over the course of six scenes in verse, one act in total, Ducasse recreates the final moments of Toussaint's life in the Jura Mountains, surrounded by three interlocutors: Mars Plaisir, Amyot (the commander of the Fort de Joux), and General Caffarelli (Napoleon Bonaparte's Aide-de-camp). The first scene presents an intimate moment between Mars and Toussaint as they share fond memories of Saint-Domingue, nostalgia for the victories of the Haitian Revolution, and grief regarding their kidnapping and imprisonment in France. One of the more sentimental moments of the play is when Toussaint reproaches Mars for having mentioned his two sons and his wife, all of whom were abducted by Napoleon in order to leverage Toussaint during his interrogations by Caffarelli. Toussaint cuts Mars off, "Tais-toi, car dans mon œil humide, / Je sens venir des pleurs. Ne me rappelle pas / Ces êtres adorés, arrachés à mes bras [Be quiet, because

in my humid eye, / I feel the tears coming. Do not remind me/ of these dear beings taken from my very arms.]"[12] In scene two, Amyot is sent by Napoleon, who never appears in the play but is extensively referenced, to strip Toussaint of his soldier's regalia and to clothe him in "un habit bourgeois [bourgeois cloths]".[13] Toussaint ultimately surrenders his epaulettes but refuses to dress as a French bourgeois, reinforcing the idea that he is a "man of the people." I will return to this episode when I discuss Toussaint and Ducasse's apparent "disavowal" of Toussaint's effusive French loyalty in the 1801 constitution of Saint-Domingue.[14] Scene three is the shortest, but symbolic in the sense that Toussaint gives Mars a collection of writings that he has produced since his captivity began in August of 1802.[15] General Caffarelli enters the stage in scene four and, employing a French republican discourse, begins to interrogate Toussaint in regards to his foreign affairs with British General Thomas Maitland and representatives from the Spanish side of Saint-Domingue, in what is now the Dominican Republic.[16] In spite of Caffarelli's republican speech, constantly referring to Toussaint as "citoyen [citizen]," Napoleon's Aide-de-camp seems to circumscribe a French republic from which Toussaint and Saint-Dominguans are excluded. This is the basis for what I will discuss later in reference to French colonial nostalgia. The fifth scene is where Toussaint implores Mars to leave the Fort de Joux, after he receives word from Amyot that he is being transferred to a different prison.[17] Left alone at the end of scene five, the sixth and final scene begins with Caffarelli discovering Toussaint in a delirious state, having forgotten that he was even in captivity. Caffarelli ultimately confesses to Toussaint how miserable he feels for his role in the entire affair. The play ends with Toussaint predicting the end of the Haitian Revolution, dealing colonial slavery the final coup de grâce, and evoking a Dessalinian

rhetoric by exclaiming "A bas les égorgeurs, VIVE L'INDÉPENDANCE ! [Down with the cut-throats, LONG LIVE INDEPENDENCE!]"[18]

Confronting French Colonialism with Saint-Dominguan Freedom

Returning to the beginning of the play, the discussions between Mars and Toussaint set the stage for the ensuing action of the play where both Amyot and Caffarelli acknowledge that the French wish to deny these Saint-Dominguans their liberty. The interplay between the characters reveal the play's ultimate battle as being between French colonialism and Saint-Dominguan/Haitian freedom, in which Toussaint is the lynchpin. On August 17, 1801 Toussaint Louverture promulgated a new constitution for the colony of Saint-Domingue declaring in the third article, "Il ne peut exister d'esclave sur ce territoire; la servitude y est à jamais abolie. Tous les hommes y naissent, vivent et meurent libres et français [Slaves can no longer exist in this land; servitude is forever abolished. Everyone here is born, lives, and dies free and French.]"[19] While my goal is not to produce an analysis of Toussaint's constitution, the context of this particular document plays a significant and interesting role in *Fort de Joux, ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture*.[20] In her article "Complexities of Imagining Haiti: A Study of National Constitutions, 1801-1807," historian Julia Gaffield suggests that there are three reasons Toussaint would assign every person born in Saint-Domingue French nationality: "to express and engender a sense of loyalty to the metropole," "to gain favor from France and to encourage recognition of Saint-Domingue's effort to gain limited independence," and "to maintain peace with France."[21]

While these might have been the motives of a historical Toussaint, Ducasse includes the clause about freedom in his play, applauding Toussaint's anticolonial gesture

but, at the same time, actively disavowing the notion that all Saint-Dominguans be legally considered French. We can see this most clearly in three instances: when Mars and Toussaint refer to Saint-Domingue in the first scene, when Toussaint refuses to wear the French bourgeois uniform, and when Caffarelli excludes Saint-Domingue from his vision of the French Republic.

As prisoners, the valet/master relationship between Mars and Toussaint breaks down, even though Mars still considers Toussaint as *maître,* because they are both reduced to inmates. Mars speaks with *franchise* and Toussaint is aware of his imprisonment while they deliberate the freezing temperatures in their French cell. Urging Mars to leave him alone in the Fort de Joux, Toussaint confesses his appreciation towards his valet:

> Tes souffrances pour moi me navrent, je l'avoue.
> Pour qu'à mon sort, ainsi ton âme se dévoue,
> Tu ne regrettes pas le ciel de *ton pays*,
> Ce ciel étincelant aux regards, éblouis,
> Et cette immensité scintillante, étoilée,
> Qui sourit et s'étend toujours immaculée ?
> Tu ne regrettes pas l'ombre de tes manguiers,
> La svelte majesté de tes palmiers altiers,
> Ton printemps éternel et tes sources plaintives,
> Les ébats du village et ses chansons naïves,
> Tes vallons, tes forêts aux mystères divers,
> Tes près toujours fleuris, ainsi que tes monts verts ?
> […]
> Oh ! Dis, t'en souviens-tu ? Pars donc, je t'en conjure.
> *La liberté*, je te la donne, je le jure.
>
> [The pain you endure in my name rends my heart, I must admit.
> When it comes to my destiny, you devote your soul.
> Regret not the sky of your homeland
> That sky shining bright, dazzling to the eye,
> And this sparkling starry immensity,
> That smiles and immaculately extends itself?
> Regret not the shadow of your mango trees,
> The svelte grandeur of your tall palm trees,

> Your eternal spring and your mourning streams,
> The village rhythms and its naïve songs,
> Your valleys, your forests of diverse mysteries,
> Your flowery plains, as well as your green mounts?
> […]
> Oh! Do you remember it? Leave then, I beg of you.
> *Freedom,* I now grant it to you, I assure you.][22]

In granting Mars his freedom, Toussaint dissolves the power dynamic that existed in Saint-Domingue. Toussaint fully here actualizes the emancipatory ethos, ironically, of the 1801 constitution while imprisoned in France. However, Mars is, paradoxically still not wholly free because he remains a prisoner in the Fort de Joux. Philip Kaisary, in his illuminating analysis of Toussaint's 1801 constitution, notes that "even when freedom is offered as a reciprocal bargain by a black revolutionary, rather than as a gift from white colonialists, it still falls short."[23]Apart from offering him his freedom, Toussaint challenges Mars to think about "his country." Through a nostalgic enumeration of images from Saint-Domingue, Toussaint transports the two back to the island and away from the frozen heights of the Jura Mountains. It is also important that Toussaint uses the possessive "ton pays," as he himself will later formulate as "mon pays," attributing to Mars a sense of ownership and identification with Saint-Domingue rather than France. In spite of Toussaint's warm gesture toward liberty, Mars refuses to leave his side:

> Oh ! que sera pour moi la liberté sans toi ?
> […]
> St-Domingue n'est plus qu'une terre qui navre.
> C'est le pays des pleurs et des crimes sans nom !
> Maître, je n'irai pas à St-Domingue Oh ! non.
> Je ne veux plus revoir ces villages, ces plaines,
> Témoins de mes ébats, témoins de mes fredaines,
> Car je me souviendrai… mes larmes couleront,
> Et les amers regrets me courberont le front.
> D'ailleurs, songez-y bien, Isaac et Placide…
>
> [Oh! What would freedom mean to me without you?

> […]
> Saint-Domingue is nothing more than a land that mourns
> It's the country of tears and nameless crimes!
> Master, I will not go to Saint-Domingue. Oh! No.
> I do not wish to see those villages again, those plains,
> Witnesses of my rhythms and of my mischief,
> Because I will remember… my tears will flow,
> And the bitter regrets will ruffle my brow.
> Furthermore, think hard, Isaac and Placide…][24]

In Mars's perspective, Saint-Domingue is not the same country without Toussaint. The Governor-for-life's departure from the island represents the ominous return to colonial melancholy. This is not because Mars categorically rejects his country, but that without Toussaint there to protect the liberty of the people, Saint-Domingue would revert back into a colonial state or, a "country of tears and nameless crimes." To refer back to the 1801 constitution, we see how Ducasse transposes similar notions of freedom in the play. However, there is a notable ambivalence towards Frenchness, given that neither Toussaint nor Mars refer to their country being French, and the possible future of a Saint-Domingue without Toussaint means the return of the inhumane crimes of French colonialism.[25] Not only is the possibility of the return of French colonialism a possible future for the island, but also Mars' reference to Toussaint's two sons Isaac and Placide, both kidnapped by Napoleon, imbues the action with the reality of colonial brutality. Furthermore, it appears as though Ducasse ignores the historical context of the 1801 constitution in his play because while Mars might not have been subjected to the abuses of slavery, the new set of laws did not abolish the plantation labor system. Kaisary notes that, "[w]hile [Toussaint's set of laws] constitutionalized universal emancipation with one hand, with the other it instituted repressive labour control, including enforced

plantation labour and restrictions on mobility, in the name of commerce and economic necessity."[26]

Between the first and second scene, Toussaint undergoes a remarkable change in tone, where he adopts a republican etiquette by referring to his French interlocutors as "citoyen." Sufficiently versed in French republican rhetoric, it is certainly not out of character for a "historically accurate" Toussaint, but such a formal epithet amplifies the difference between Mars and the French characters. Toussaint does not, for instance, refer to Mars as "citoyen," in spite of the fact that he now has rights as a free person. Under the guise of republican decorum, Amyot, loyal servant of Napoleon and commander of the Fort de Joux, enters Toussaint's cell and demands his military effects; "Citoyen Louverture/ Je viens vous prévenir que par cet arrêté/ Notre premier [sic] Consul veut qu'il vous soit ôté/ le chapeau militaire ainsi que l'uniforme [Citizen Louverture/ I have come to inform you that by this decree/Our First Consul wishes that you be stripped of/ your military hat as well as your uniform.]"[27] By referring to Toussaint as "citoyen," Amyot ironically accords the revolutionary leader a sign of respect while simultaneously stripping him of the visible markers of his resistance to French colonialism. With a barely visible sign of physical pain, Toussaint hands Amyot his regalia, revealing not only an emotional reaction to his defamation, but also showing the physical effects of this not-so-private shaming. Mars serves to remind the viewers and the readers of Toussaint's anguish, "Alors la Nation/ veut ajouter l'outrage à l'humiliation? [So the Nation wishes to add insult to injury?"][28] Toussaint begins to speak, presumably to explain to Mars why he acquiesces to Amyot's request, but he is

interrupted by Amyot who hands him bourgeois clothing. Toussaint rejects the clothing, saying:

> Gardez-les, citoyen. Encor [sic] que je frisonne,
> Et quoique mes haillons soient glacés sous ces toits,
> Je ne porterai pas ce vêtement bourgeois.
> […]
> Je veux qu[e Napoléon] sache, au moins, que c'est sous ses drapeaux,
> Que c'est sous les boulets, que c'est sous la mitraille,
> Le fusil à la main, souvent dans la bataille,
> Le sabre nu, j'ai conquis, ainsi que lui,
> Ma réputation, ma gloire d'aujourd'hui.
> Mes titres, je les dois à votre République.
> Il ne peut pas ternir ce temps plus qu'héroïque.
> Dites le lui pour moi, s'il semble l'oublier.
> Si Bonaparte croit pouvoir m'humilier…
>
> [Keep them, citizen. Still I shiver,
> And regardless of whether my breath freezes beneath this roof,
> I will never wear this bourgeois attire.
> […]
> I want Napoleon to know, at the very least, that it is under his flags,
> It is behind his cannonballs, it is under fire,
> With rifle in hand, often in battle,
> Sabre bare, I conquered, just as he,
> My reputation, my glory today.
> My titles, I owe them to your Republic.
> He cannot tarnish this more than heroic moment.
> Tell him for me, because he seems to forget.
> Si Bonaparte believes he can humiliate me…][29]

Without changing his tenor, Toussaint reproaches Amyot for offering him civilian and bourgeois clothing. Even though Toussaint willingly surrenders his military garb, he refuses to falsely present himself as a typical French bourgeois. As Philip Kaisary notes in his discussion of visual representations of Toussaint, the Saint-Dominguan governor frequently dressed in French military regalia.[30] This is not surprising, considering that the French appointed Toussaint a general to lead expeditions into the Spanish side of Saint-Domingue to wage war with the Spanish and the English. In the above passage, Ducasse

is attentive not only to Toussaint's physical suffering due to the frigid heights of the Jura, but also the psychological effects of humiliation. Second, Toussaint recognizes that France granted him his official titles, but his reputation is of his own construction. Lastly, like his rejection of French clothing, Toussaint dislodges Saint-Domingue from France by referring to France as "votre République," or Amyot's and Napoleon's France. By separating the two, Toussaint declares a sort of, however flawed, Saint-Dominguan independence. Unlike the historical Toussaint, Ducasse's Toussaint breaks from the "free and French" model proposed by the 1801 constitution. Instead, it reads "free and Saint-Dominguan" as Toussaint and Mars continue to refer to "mon pays" and "ma race" as separate entities from France.[31]

After Amyot exits the stage, he cedes his antagonistic role to General Caffarelli who immediately begins interrogating Toussaint, despite his waning health. From Caffarelli's first lines, it is clear that he is a manifestation of Napoleonic despotism. He enters Toussaint's cell, declaring, "Citoyen Louverture,/ Si vous souffrez, c'est vous qui le voulez, je jure./ Si vous dites bien vite où gisent les trésors/ Immenses, enfouis aux mornes du Cahors,/ Croyez-moi, je mets fin à vos cuisantes peines,/ En faisant tomber à l'instant vos chaînes [Citizen Louverture,/ If you suffer, it is you who wishes it, I assure you./ If you tell me where the treasure lies/ Immense, stashed in the hills of Cahors./ Believe me, I will put an end to your meaningless suffering,/ By releasing this instant from your chains.]"[32] (16) While still employing republican decorum, it is important to note the sadistic nature of Caffarelli's remarks. By imprisoning Toussaint and Mars, France has reduced them to the status of slaves, once again in chains. Furthermore, the only means of manumission depends on the master's volition.[33] In what follows, during

Toussaint's interrogation, Ducasse reveals the pernicious nature of French colonial nostalgia. In doing so, Ducasse creates a Toussaint who, playing on Caffarelli's glorification for Napoleonic France, envisions a separation from France in order to forever banish slavery and involuntary servitude from Saint-Domingue.

Throughout his interrogation of Toussaint, Caffarelli is concerned with rumors that the Saint-Dominguan general possesses hidden treasure, which provides a context for his display of colonial nostalgia.[34] Prior to the Haitian Revolution, Saint-Domingue was the most profitable colony and, for France, the revolution left a massive economic burden.[35] Caffarelli essentially blames the revolution and disorder on Toussaint's lust for power, rather than result of a collective rejection of the subhuman humiliation of plantation slavery:

> Non, c'est *vous* qui fûtes l'artisan
> De votre propre chute. Habile et malfaisant,
> *Vous* vous êtes joué trop souvent de la France,
> En trompant son désir, sa plus noble espérance,
> Sous prétexte toujours de servir le pays.
> Que de fois, sans trembler, *vous* <u>nous</u> avez trahi [sic]!
> Naguère encore, lorsque, transportées par <u>nos</u> flottes,
> <u>Nos</u> soldats étonnés débarquaient sur *vos* côtes,
> Étalant *vos* projets par les plus noirs desseins,
> Plutôt que de *vous* livrer St-Domingue en <u>nos</u> mains,
> *Vous* avez mieux aimé incendier *vos* villes,
> Déchaîner les horreurs des disputes civiles,
> Semer partout la faim ainsi que le trépas,
> Mais toujours vaincus, battus à chaque pas,
> *Vous* avez payé *vos* crimes par *vos* défaites ;
> Tous ces combats pour les <u>nôtres</u>, c'étaient des fêtes.
> Enivré des appas d'un dessein trop hardi,
> *Vous* pensiez tenir tête aux hommes de Lodi,
> Aux illustres soldats de <u>notre</u> République,
> *Vous*, les viles rejetons arrachés à l'Afrique !
>
> [No, it is you who was the artisan
> Of your own fall. Skilled and evildoing,
> You have too often toyed with France

In deceiving its desire, its most noble hopes,
Always under the pretext of serving the country.
How many times, without hesitation, have you betrayed us!
Not long ago, when, transported by our flotillas,
Our surprised soldiers debarked onto your coasts,
Spreading your projects of the darkest designs,
Rather than delivering Saint-Domingue to our hands,
You preferred to set fire to your cities,
To unleash the horrors of civil disputes,
To sow hunger and death far and wide,
But always vanquished, headed off at every pass,
You have paid for your crimes through your defeats;
All these battles were a delight for our soldiers.
Intoxicated by the charms of such a bold design,
You though you could stand up to the men of Lodi,
To the illustrious soldiers of our Republic,
You, the vile beings ripped from Africa!][36]

Channeling Leclerc's rhetorical characterization of Toussaint, Caffarelli accuses Toussaint of seditious perfidy while simultaneously evoking the notion of white French plight during the Haitian Revolution. According to Napoleon's aide-de-camp, France is the real victim of Toussaint's actions and Saint-Domingue is held captive.

What is more, in Caffarelli's figuration, Saint-Domingue and France appear to be separate entities, even separate nations like Toussaint and Mars suggested in the previous two scenes. Caffarelli, in the speech above, creates a tension between the "nous/nos/notre/nôtres [We/ours]" (France and its soldiers) and the "vous/vos/votre [you/yours]" (Saint-Domingue and Toussaint). First, Toussaint, the second person singular/formal "you/vous," is guilty for having betrayed the French, the second person plural "nous/we." While this might seem like an inclusive measure, effectively folding Toussaint and the revolutionary masses into the French Republic, Caffarelli quickly dismisses that possibility by referring to France and Saint-Domingue as separate, potentially autonomous entities. In the following four lines, the French are presented in

opposition to the revolutionaries/Toussaint, suggesting that they are not of the same country or nation: "*Nos* soldats étonnés débarquaient sur *vos* côtes,/ Étalant *vos* projets par les plus noirs desseins,/ Plutôt que de *vous* livrer St-Domingue en *nos* mains,/ *Vous* avez mieux aimé incendier *vos* villes."[37] Even though there is the semantic distinction between the "nous" and "vous" as well as the "nos" and "vos," Ducasse's Caffarelli directly implies that Toussaint is the owner and the sovereign leader of Saint-Domingue. By referring to the island as "vos villes" rather than "nos villes," or French cities d'outre-mer, Caffarelli suggests that Toussaint and Saint-Domingue are, in fact, independent of France.[38] This, of course, fits neatly within the French fears about Toussaint's 1801 constitution because there is no such historical admission by France or French officials in 1801. To do so would have suggested defeat, and the success of the Haitian Revolution two years prior to the coup de grâce at the battle of Vertières.[39] It is true that the French accepted Toussaint as the Governor of Saint-Domingue, for a time, but the final two lines of Caffarelli's accusation create further distance between the idea of Saint-Domingue and the idea of France. France is a republic, with a great history of world conquest – Caffarelli later rhapsodizes about the Napoleonic wars in Italy and Austria – whereas Saint-Domingue is an island of "vile people taken from Africa."

However, Toussaint is quick to counter Caffarelli's glorification of Napoleon and the French by memorializing Haitians and the anticolonial sentiment of the revolution. In order to capture the complexity of Toussaint's summary of history and methodical deconstruction of French colonialism I quote the following passage at length:

> Voilà mes hauts faits et voilà mes trophées !
> Ces lieux ont vu finir les luttes étouffées,
> Car Anglais, Espagnols, tout devant moi.
> J'étais sincère alors, parce que j'avais foi

Dans les droits proclamés en vos moments critiques ;
J'avais foi dans vos preux, vos grands fous héroïques
Qui s'appelaient Marat, Brissot, Vergniaud, Danton,
St-Juste, et Mirabeau, Robespierre et Couthon.
J'avais foi dans vos cris, j'avais foi dans vos larmes.
J'ai vu la liberté surgir de vos alarmes.
Lorsque quatre-vingt-treize eut mangé ses enfants,
Ses enfants les meilleurs et les plus triomphants ;
Lorsque les droits de l'homme étaient l'ignominie
Lorsque la liberté devint la tyrannie ;
Et lorsque la terreur eut perdu la raison.
Pour moi, je vis briller un nouvel horizon.
Mais alors, cette foi s'était donc ébranlée.
J'entendis soupirer l'Afrique mutilée,
J'entendis sangloter ma race et mon pays
Et je revis les fers de mes frères haïs.
Et mon cœur révolté de l'éternel outrage,
Osa rêver pour eux un berceau de feuillage
Si vous ètes [sic] français comme le fier Brissot,
Grégoire, Pétion, Condorcet, et Vergniaud ;
Si les grands sentiments savent hanter votre âme,
Si votre cœur n'est pas d'un égoisme [sic] infame [sic],
Etant donné mes fers, vos préjugés sanglants
Vous comprendrez mon rôle en présence des blancs.

[Here are my doings and here are my trophies!
These places saw the end of suffocating battles,
The English, the Spanish, everything before me.
I was sincere, because I had faith
In the rights proclaimed in your critical moments;
I had faith in your grand, crazy heroes
Those named Marat, Brissot, Verniaud, Danton,
St-Juste, and Mirabeau, Robespierre et Couthon.
I had faith in your cries, I had faith in your tears.
I saw freedom surge from your call to arms.
When ninety-three had eaten its children,
Its best and most triumphant children;
When the Rights of Man were a disgraceful act
When freedom became tyranny;
And when the Terror had lost its Reason.
For me, I saw a new shining horizon.
But even still, my faith had been shaken.
I heard the sighs of mutilated Africa,
I heard the cries of my race and my country
And I saw once again the irons and my hated brothers.
And my heart revolted from eternal outrage,

Dared to dream for them a cradle of foliage
If you are French like the proud Brissot,
Grégoire, Pétion, Condorcet, et Vergniaud
If grandiose sentiments know how to haunt your soul,
If your heart is not infamously self-centered,
Given my irons, and your bloody prejudices
You would understand my role in the presence of Whites.][40]

This impassioned speech ultimately causes Caffarelli to leave Toussaint's cell, visibly moved by his adversary's reasoning. Toussaint juxtaposes the seemingly clear-minded benevolence of French abolitionists with advocates for the slave trade and colonial slavery and the champions of the Enlightenment and Republican Universalism with the most infamous perpetrators of the Reign of Terror to suggest that France, as well, has a troubled relationship with freedom and human rights.

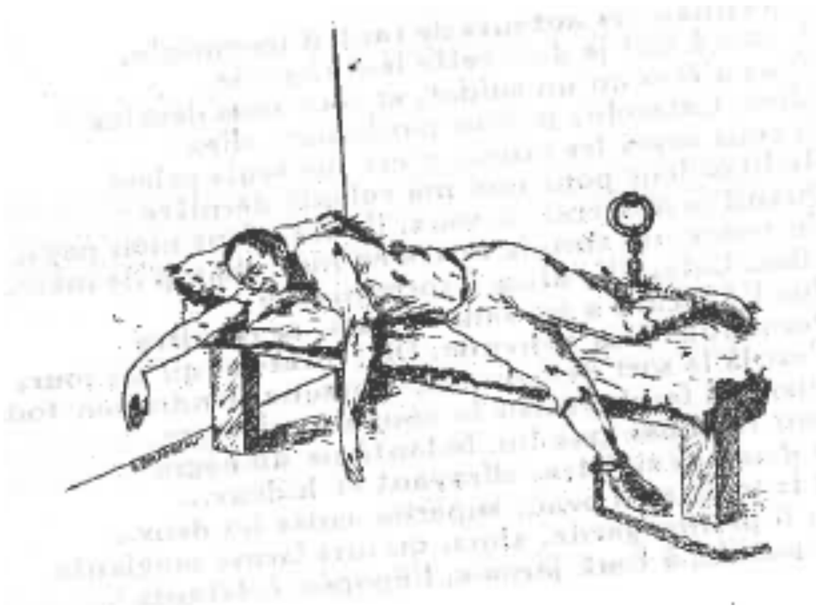


Figure 4.1 Toussaint Louverture on his deathbed printed in *Fort de Joux*, artist unknown.[41]

In a dramatic turn of events, Toussaint ultimately convinces Caffarelli that he and those complicit in the suffering of enslaved Africans and the Haitian masses need to repent for their hypocrisy. In the end, Caffarelli does demand Toussaint's pardon, but in doing so he recognizes that he "serves a master" (Napoleon) and was merely following

orders.[42] It is this admission of defeat that allows Toussaint, when he slips into a delirious state, to predict the fall of French colonialism with the declaration of Haitian independence:

> Ils brandissaient le joug qu'ils venaient de détruire.
> *(haletant)*
> Ils avaient à leurs fronts des joyaux et des fleurs…
> Ils portaient un drapeau flottant, aux deux couleurs…
> C'étaient des pleurs de joie et des cris de vengeance…
> « A bas les égorgeurs, VIVE L'INDEPENDANCE ! »
>
> [Brandishing the yoke they just destroyed
> (breathing)
> They wore jewels and flowers on their heads…
> They carried a flag floating, of two colors…
> There were tears of joy and cries of vengeance…
> "Down with the cut-throats, LONG LIVE INDEPENDENCE!"][43]

It is worth noting that Ducasse employs the past tense when describing the declaration of independence. Although Toussaint never saw the end of the Haitian Revolution, Ducasse uses his final moments to not only memorialize one of the most influential Haitian revolutionaries, but also to commemorate the accomplishments of the *Armée Indigène.* Furthermore, while Toussaint is the undeniable hero of Ducasse's historical drama, the final images are of events brought to fruition under Jean-Jacques Dessalines. In not mentioning Dessalines, Ducasse revises the heroic model of storytelling, attributing the creation of the Haitian flag and the declaration of independence to the Haitian masses instead of a single individual through the use of the third person plural "ils." However, in the reproduction of *Fort de Joux, ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture*, we are left with the image of Toussaint dead in his cell, still chained to this bed (figure 4.1). Ostensibly a product of the reproduction of the play produced by the labors of Antoine

Innocent and Éditions Veteran, *Fort de Joux* also features an illustration on the frontispiece (figure 4.2).

Figure 3.2 Frontispiece to *Fort de Joux, ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture.*

By featuring Toussaint's inanimate body in chains, the play ends with the looming return of French colonial retribution but also ruptures Toussaint's dream-like vision of Haitian independence in 1804 and thrusts the reader back into the chilly cell in the Fort de Joux in April 1803. Whether or not Ducasse meant for the illustrations to figure into his play, the final image perfectly resonates with Toussaint's anticolonial rhetoric and skepticism towards French republicanism throughout the play. Toussaint's dying in chains stands as a reminder of the violence of his kidnapping, torture, and murder under the watchful eye of Napoleon.

Conclusion: Visualizing Haitian Heroes and History at Center Stage

In the final words of the *Fort de Joux,* Vendenesse Ducasse characterizes Haitian independence as a collective effort. However, the text, like the theatrical representation, shifts from Toussaint, to the masses, and finally back to the image of Toussaint Louverture dying in his prison cell at center stage. This movement of Toussaint to the

center stage, is constitutive of the manner in which Haitian history is often represented through one individual. In her work on memory studies and postmemory, Marianne Hirsch contends that images offer a way for those who did not witness a particular event to participate in its memorialization. Furthermore, Hirsch argues that it is the "iconic and symbolic power [of images that] makes it a uniquely powerful medium for the transmission of events that remain *unimaginable*."[44] In the Éditions Veteran printing of *Fort de Joux*, we see this centering of Toussaint visually rendered as a reminder that, despite his body being inanimate, he is at the center of this particular episode in the history of the Haitian Revolution. Ducasse does, in fact, trouble this centering of individuals when he invokes the Haitian masses in the final five lines of the play. One of the most evocative images from these lines is the carrying of the new Haitian flag, which is shown in a collective light rather than being attributed, as the creation of the flag often is, to Jean-Jacques Dessalines. In concluding my discussion of *Fort de Joux*, I argue that Ducasse's representation reflects a nuanced interpretation of the centering of history around individuals present in visual representations of Haitian independence as depicted in portraiture like, *Dessalines Ripping the White from the Flag* (figure 4.3).[45]

Figure 4.3 *Dessalines Ripping the White from the Flag* (oil on canvas 76.2x91.4 cm.) by Madsen Mompremier (1995) held by UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, Los Angeles, California. (http://www.fowler.ucla.edu/collections/objects/x95-22-5)

Ducasse makes the shift from Toussaint, the "Je/I," to the "Ils/masses" in the final lines of *Fort de Joux* and the play, just like one could imagine the action unfolding on stage, features Toussaint dying in the middle of the stage. This movement from Toussaint to the masses and back to Toussaint can also be seen, however, in reverse in Madsen Mompremier's *Dessalines Ripping the White from the Flag* (1995). In the painting, the principle action takes place in the center as Dessalines cuts the white out of the French *tricolore* with the help of the spirits above. This diagonal movement from the bottom left to the upper right hand corner of the painting helps to centralize Dessalines in the same way that the vertical reading of the play, from the top of the page to the bottom, allows for centering Toussaint. However, when the portrait is viewed horizontally, the subjects of the painting widen out from Dessalines and we see the following movement from the masses to Dessalines to the spiritual and living *tricoteuses* responsible for uniting the red and the blue, forming the new Haitian flag. While the stitching is part of the vibrant movement in the painting, the main action is represented in the title *Dessalines Ripping the White from the Flag.* In the final moments of Ducasses's *Fort de Joux* the masses are the ones who are mobile, they are the ones throwing off the yoke of colonialism and slavery, they are the ones crying tears of joy and wearing crowns of laurels as they carry around the newly formed Haitian flag. It is only though the image of Toussaint printed at the bottom of the page where readers are transported back to the holding cell in the Fort de Joux. Finally, in Ducasse's figuration of Haitian independence, it is the cry of the masses, rather than of an individual, that rings out "A bas les égorgeurs, VIVE

L'INDEPENDANCE! [Down with the cut-throats, LONG LIVE INDEPENDENCE!]"

Even though Ducasse, as well as many other writers throughout history, recreates the final moments of Toussaint Louverture's life in the Fort de Joux prison, we can see how the collective nature of Haitian history still filters through the representation of a singular moment and figure.

Chapter 5

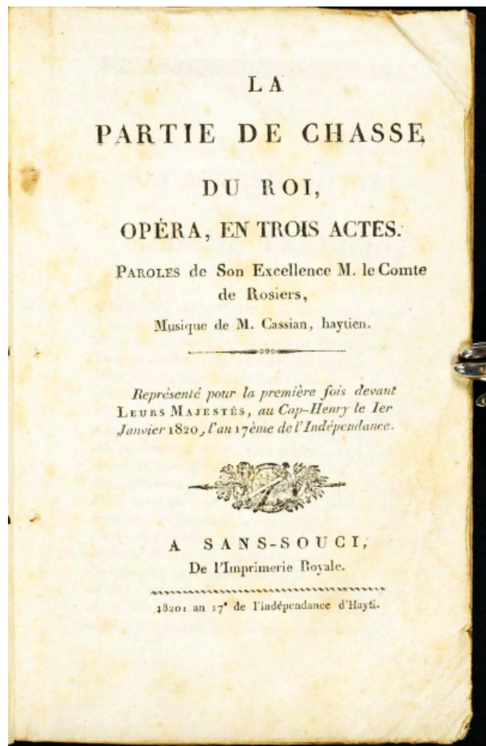
Conclusion: Parchment Pasts, Digital Futures: The Haitian Theatrical Archive

"My motivation to tell a different story came from a moral imperative, driven by sentiment and several points of recognition. The first was intellectual awareness that the Haiti in the public domain was a rhetorically and symbolically incarcerated one, trapped in singular narratives and clichés that, unsurprisingly, hardly moved beyond stereotypes. Second, for that reason, it was necessary that such perceptions be challenged. Third, complex ideas about Haiti circulating in the academy stayed among academics, rarely trickling outward. – Gina Athena Ulysse, *Why Haiti Needs New Narratives: A Post-Quake Chronicle*[1]

I first encountered the theatrical works of Juste Chanlatte thanks to Jean Jonaissant's exploratory article "Toward New Paradigms in Caribbean Studies: The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in Our Literatures" in Doris L. Garraway's volume *The Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World.*[2] Jonaissant plots out future tracks of research into Haitian and Caribbean literary studies, with a particular emphasis on theater and its role as a form of Haitian historiographical intervention. He also tells the story of one of Chanlatte's plays, seemingly lost forever, called *Nerhi*. Jonaissant explains that the title is an anagram of Henri, or Henry Christophe, the first and only king of the Northern Kingdom of Haiti who ruled from 1811 until his suicide brought the monarchy tumbling down amidst widespread insurrection in 1820. Two of Chanlatte's other plays, presumably less intriguing for Jonaissant in terms of a historiographical intervention, *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale* (1818) and *La Partie de chase du roi* (1820), have already been recovered and digitized so that we maybe able to, once again, analyze their contribution a Haitian theatrical corpus. It is through the digital archive of the Caribbean that these plays, so rare that they require special permissions to view in-person, are once again accessible to a readership. It is through the digital that we now know that the play Jonaissant referenced is called *Nerhi ; ou le chef des Haytiens* and its original publishing date of 1819, squarely between Chanlatte's other two plays.[3]

Given the various boundaries and obstacles facing the study of Haitian theater, the time to re-think the archive is upon us. The most effective, democratic, and even cost-effective manner of increasing accessibility to Haitian theater is through the digital turn in humanities research, particularly through the nascent field of Caribbean digital studies. Panning out from the close readings of plays by Juste Chanlatte, Vendenesse Ducasse, and Massillon Coicou, I am suggesting that this field of study demands new ways of interpreting the Haitian theatrical archive through the digital. The research I have done through digital platforms, has led to evaluating new modes of interpretation that the digital provides as well as acknowledging those that, in a post-tactile age of reading, are forever lost. The foundation for new narratives for Haiti can found in those that are lost or have been silenced due to the conditions of the archive and its preservation prior to the era of digitization.

The research that I have conducted for this study is theoretically feasible without embracing the digital archive. I could perhaps have traveled to the various archives in the world, held the objects themselves, and attempted to grasp the spirit of the object as well as the knowledge within. However, this is not the most pragmatic approach and in many ways still is not possible. For instance, in order to get a copy of presumably the only known copy of *La Partie de chasse du roi* from the University of Indiana, Bloomington I had to engage in a series of negotiations with interlibrary loan staff and rare collections liaisons just to have a scanned version of the play. Either one of these options requires more than just a simple Internet connection to access Chanlatte's play. Even in the digital archive, the question of accessibility is marred not only in institutional politics, but on a very basic level, on access to financial resources that only exist inside the academy.



LA

PARTIE DE CHASSE

DU ROI,

OPÉRA, EN TROIS ACTES.

PAROLES de Son Excellence M. le Comte de Rosiers,

Musique de M. Cassian, haytien.

Représenté pour la première fois devant LEURS MAJESTÉS, *au Cap-Henry le Ier Janvier* 1820, *l'an* 17*ème de l'Indépendance.*

A SANS-SOUCI,

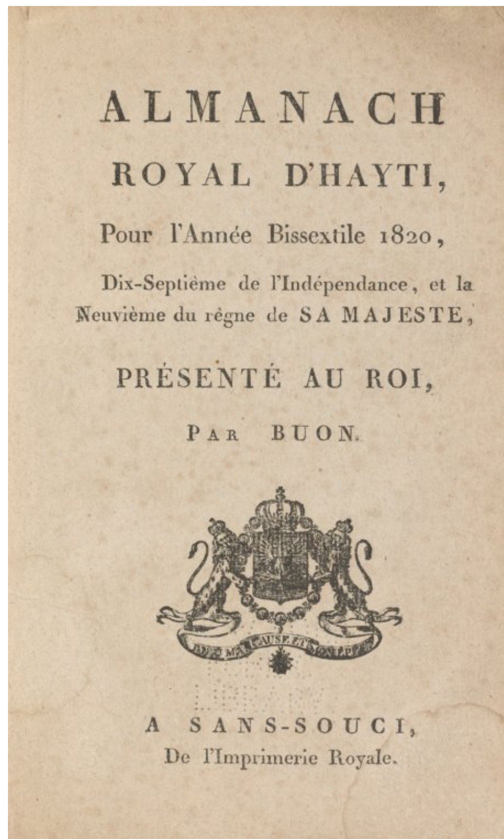
De l'Imprimerie Royale.

1820: an 17e de l'indépendance d'Hayti.

Figure 5.1 Frontispiece to *La Partie de chasse du roi, Opéra en trois actes,* courtesy of The University of Indiana, Bloomington Libraries, Rare Books and Manuscripts collection

The digital archive also radically changes the types of sources to which we have access and the ways in which we read them. For instance, my interaction with *La Partie de chasse du roi* source is indelibly marked, in a digital age, by the metallic hands in the margins of my hi-resolution photocopies (see figure 5.1). The metallic hands serve as a marker of the precious nature of this object, so rare that the cold, steely metal reminds us of the elusive past of this document. The imprint of the *Imprimerie de San-Souci* emblazoned on the frontispiece serves as a relic of Henry Christophe's nine-year reign as the only Haitian monarch. The press itself was the ultimate publicist for the Kingdom of Haiti and its attempts to foster international relations, to create a national body of literature and philosophy that we see in texts by Chanlatte and Pompée Valentin Baron de

Vastey, and to establish a Haitian society of nobles that we find in the *Almanach Royals* printed from 1811-1820 (see figure 5.2).


ALMANACH

ROYAL D'HAYTI,

Pour l'Année Bissextile 1820,

Dix-Septième de l'Indépendance, et la Neuvième du règne de SA MAJESTE,

PRÉSENTÉ AU ROI,

PAR BUON.

A SANS-SOUCI,

De l'Imprimerie Royale.

Figure 5.2 *Almanach royal d'Hayti pour l'année bissextile 1820, Dix-Septième de l'indépendance, et la neuvième du règne de sa majesté, présenté au roi, par Buon.* Sans Souci: Imprimerie Royale, 1820. Held by the Shomburg Center at the New York Public Library Digital Collections: (http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/65693621-680b-d2d1-e040-e00a180646d9).

Through the increased democratization of access to sources and archival material, a Haitian literary-historical corpus has, and continues to, become a profound and complex wealth of writing. After the digital turn in the humanities, texts like Émeric Bergeaud's *Stella* and Pompée Valentin Baron de Vastey's *Le Système colonial dévoilé* have been subsequently translated and made available to an Anglophone readership for the first

time. While theater has not quite reached this stage of scholarship, the digital format offers readers the possibility to study the intricacies of rare manuscripts. For instance, as Marlene Daut points out in *Tropics of Haiti*, the University of Indiana, Bloomington's copy of *La Partie de chasse du roi* features an inscription in the dust jacket, (see figure 5.3) saying: "Very rare – not to be purchased now a days – a curious – dramatic production – printed and performed in Hayti – before King Henry the nigger."[4]

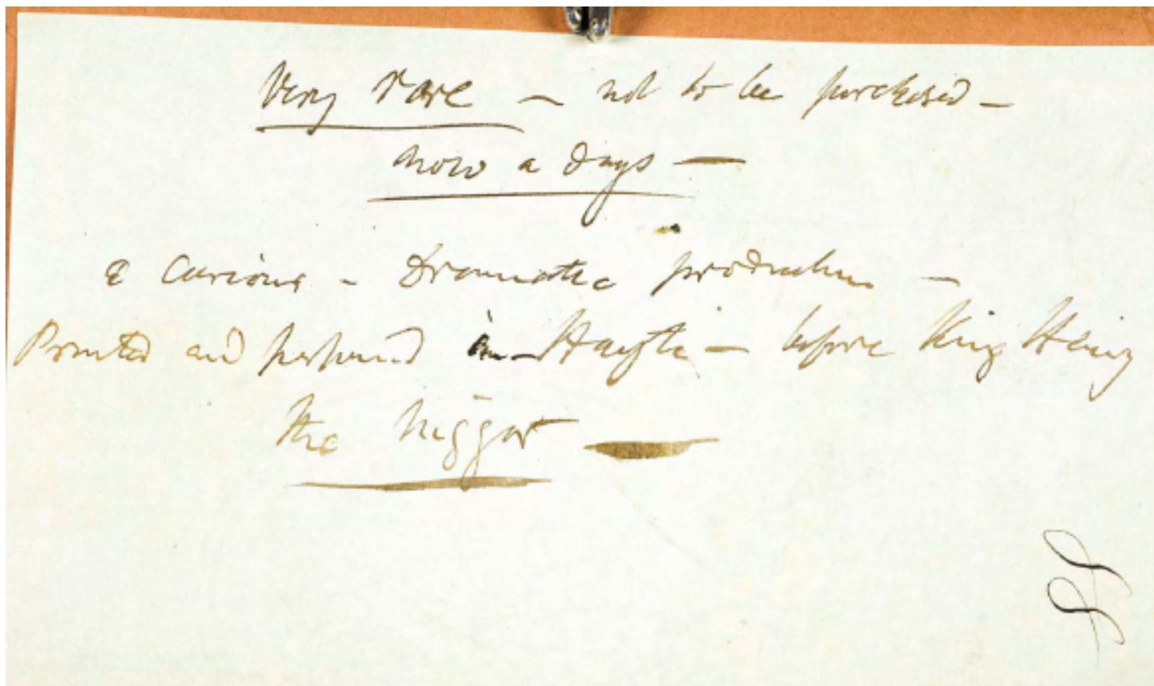

Very rare – not to be purchased –
now a days –
a Curious – dramatic production –
Printed and performed in Hayti – before King Henry
the nigger –

Figure 4.3 Inscription from inside cover of *La Partie de chasse du roi* by Juste Chanlatte, Comte de Rosiers (1820) held by the University of Indiana, Bloomington Lilly Library, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

In this unique inscription, available to us through digitization, we can interpret the particular history of this copy of *La Partie de chasse du roi*, the circumstances that led to its dissemination, and its eventual acquisition by the Rare Books and Manuscripts archive at a major research university thousands of miles from the press that printed it nearly two hundred years ago. This type of research is fruitful not only in the sense that they reveal a

particular discourse, a racist one in the example of Chanlatte's play, but also that rare books research done through the digital humanities can help trace circles of intellectuals, particularly those connected to Haiti and its rich theatrical history. In 1906 Antoine Innocent, a well established Haitian actor and journalist, wrote and published his only novel *Mimola; ou l'histoire d'une cassette* about vodou and the origins of peasant life in Haiti. In the edition of *Mimola* held by Harvard University, Innocent provides a personal inscription for the book's future owner, anthropologist and ethnologist Louis-Joseph Janvier (See figure 5.4).[5] The inscription reads: "Très cher maître M. Louis Joseph Janvier – témoignage de profonde admiration A[ntoine] Innocent [Very dear teacher Mr. Louis Joseph Janvier – in recognition of profound admiration. A[ntoine] Innocent]." As these two examples of rare Haitian books show, there are important literary-historical tracks of research to be conducted in the field of Haitian studies under the umbrella of the digital humanities. The era of digitization affords, at least in these two cases, a relatively democratic means of accessing these intimate narratives, hidden within the physical objects themselves, that provide new ways for us to access and recount Haitian history.

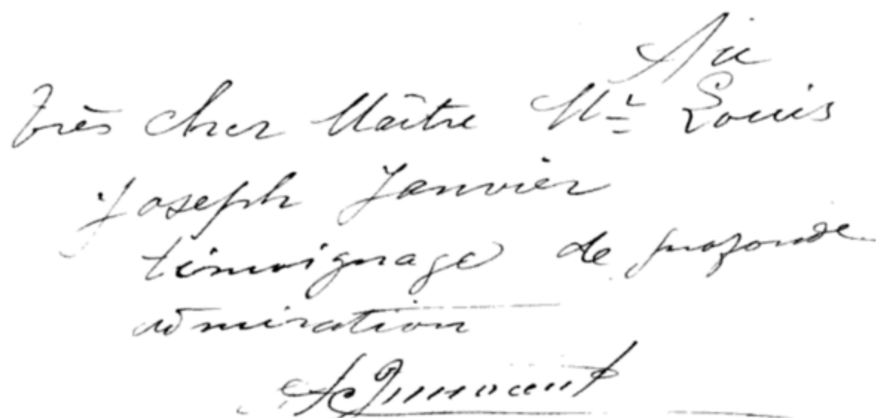

Au
Très cher Maître Mr Louis
Joseph Janvier
témoignage de profonde
admiration
A Innocent

Figure 4.4 Inscription in *Mimola; ou l'histoire d'une cassette* (1906) by Antoine Innocent. Accessed via Google Books.[6]

I now return to the epigraph by Gina Athena Ulysse and what she refers to as a "rhetorically and symbolically incarcerated" intellectual awareness of Haiti. In researching this study it was not rare for me to hear comments by university-educated people, "Haiti, they have theater?" or "There was a revolution in Haiti?" While the urge to ignore these uniformed statements is more than appealing, I take them instead as confirmation of a lack of intellectual rigor that has surrounded Haiti since Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared Haitian independence on January 1, 1804. First, I cite Ulysse because she indicates the need to change the perceptions of Haiti, to intervene into (anti) intellectual debates about Haiti in order to render Haiti and its history in a complex and rigorous manner. Ulysse, like Haitian playwrights, share the same notion of praxis when it comes to history and narrative because the stories we tell about Haiti have a human impact. Vendenesse Ducasse, the author of *Fort de Joux; ou les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture* (1896), had a vision for theater as a means of public education. In a sense, theater could instruct major tenants of Haitian history to the masses, making up for the historically elite nature of schooling in Haiti.

Finally, Ulysse argues that by making history public, taking it out of the realm of the academy, and accessible, more people will be able to engage in and participate in the challenging the public representations of a place and its people. Ulysse completes her reflection on public history and representation by citing Michel-Rolph Trouillot, who writes, "Long before average citizens read historians who set the standards of the day for colleagues and students, they access history through celebrations, site and museum visits, movies, national holidays and primary school books."[7] To be sure, Trouillot's words still ring true more than twenty years later as representations circulate furiously inside and

outside of the academy. However, as I have shown, the Internet and the digital humanities have become one of the most accessible grounds for the contestation of misrepresentations. In fact, Ulysse's book itself was borne out of blog posts published in various different online venues. As the Internet and the digital age rages on, there is an intellectual imperative to digitize, curate and contest singular representations of history and culture through the use of the digital tools and the digital humanities. The future of the Haitian theatrical archive, without a doubt, is intimately entwined in these processes and its future depends on the use of the digital to make Haitian theater, as Ducasse would have it, a tool of public education.

Notes

Chapter 1

[1] Innocent, Antoine. *Mimola, ou L'histoire d'une cassette: Petit tableau de mœurs locales*. (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie E. Malvál, 1906) xi.

[2] Ducasse, Vendenesse. (*Fort de Joux, ou, Les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture: drame historique en un acte*. Port-au-Prince, Haïit: Éditions Vétéran, 1957) iii.

[3] For an analysis of Haitian politics, see: Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Haiti, State against Nation: The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1990.

[4] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* iii.

[5] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995, 82-83.

[6] For further investigation into the "thinkability" of the Haitian Revolution, see: Sepinwall, Alyssa Goldstein. "Still Unthinkable?: The Haitian Revolution and the Reception of Michel-Rolph Trouillot's Silencing the Past." *Journal of Haitian Studies* 19.2 (2013): 75-103.

[7] Daut, Marlene. *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789-1865*. (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2015) 3.

[8] Influential volumes on the Age of Revolutions include: Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolutions.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.; Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823.* Oxford: Oxford Uinversity Press, 1999.; and Armitage, David and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, 1760-1840.* New York: Palgrave, 2010. Also worth note is the digital turn toward academic commentary on the Age of Revolution in a blog post format – see the editorial work of Brian Banks and Cindy Ermus at www.ageofrevolutions.com.

[9] Innocent, *Mimola; ou l'histoire d'une cassette*, xi.

[10] Scott, David. *The Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*. (Durham, Duke University Press, 2004) 9-10.

[11] James, CLR. *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. (New York: Vintage, 1962) 82.

[12] James, *The Black Jacobins,* 393.

[13] Johnson, Sara E. *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas. (*Berkley, University of California Press, 2012) 192.

[14] Hirsch, Marianne. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today*. 29.1 (Spring 2008): 106.

[15] Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," 111.

[16] Dubois, Laurent. *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012.

[17] See Dayan, Colin (Joan). *Haiti, History, and the Gods*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1996.

Chapter 2

[1] "Hayti." *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* Volume VIII. Ser. III, January, 1821: 112-134.

[2] Digitized copy accessed via: Gaffield, Julia. "I Have Avenged America." *Haitidoi.com.* Aug. 2, 2013. Web. December 14, 2015. (http://haitidoi.com/2013/08/02/i-have-avenged-america/) Julia Gaffield was kind enough to direct me to her blog on the Haitian Declaration of Independence through an exchange on Twitter. Her work, as well as that of many others, has been instrumental in amplifying the number of available sources and commentary on Haitian historical documents online.

[3] Jenson, *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution*. (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2012) 89.

[4] Jenson, *Beyond the Slave Narrative,* 90.

[5] Jenson, *Beyond the Slave Narrative,* 81-120.

[6] For examples of this type of literary and cultural analysis, see: Jonaissant, Jean. "Toward New Paradigms in Caribbean Studies: The Impact of the Haitian Revolution on Our Literatures." *Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the*

Atlantic World, ed. Doris L. Garraway. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008. Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2004. Daut, Marlene. *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789-1865*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015.

[7] Pompée Valentin Baron de Vastey (1781-1820) was a poet and statesman under Henry Christophe who was the main scribe for the King. In 1814, Vastey published his scathing indictment of colonial slavery entitled *Le Système colonial dévoilé*, which was immediately reviewed in British, French, German, Spanish and US newspapers. See: Daut, Marlene. "From Classical French Poet to Militant Haitian Statesman: The Early Years and Poetry of the Baron de Vastey." *Research in African Literatures*. 43.1 (Spring 2012): 35-57.

Juste Chanlatte, Comte de Rosiers (1766-1828) was a poet, playwright, newspaper editor, librarian, and secretary in Haiti from the dawn of independence until his death. He served as secretary to Jean-Jacques Dessalines from 1804 until his assassination in October 1806. Later, under Henry Christophe's monarchy, Chanlatte held various positions from librarian to newspaper editor for the *Gazette Royale d'Haïti,* and official playwright to the king. Chanlatte worked as a secretary under Jean-Pierre Boyer's republic where he experienced great poverty.

[8] Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed*, 257. Fischer is attentive to Chanlatte's literary production in the Kingdom of Haiti, but signals that there is much work to be done, critical and archival, to fully understand the role literature played in Christophe's kingdom. Examples of historical and philosophical texts written between under Henry Christophe include: *Le Système colonial dévoilé* by Baron de Vastey (1814) and *Le Cri de la nature* by Juste Chanlatte (1810).

[9] Jenson, *Beyond the Slave Narrative,* 92-93.

[10] In his *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne,* Ghislain Gouraige argues that Chanlatte's poetry is bland and is not representative of an original style. Similarly, Émeric Bergeaud's *Stella*, the first Haitian novel, has historically been deemed unworthy of further study because of its mimesis of French literary conventions. For more on

Bergeaud and the critical reception of *Stella,* see the Lesley S. Curtis and Christen Mucher's introduction to their recent translation Bergeaud, Émeric. *Stella: A Novel of the Haitian Revolution*. Trans. Leslie S. Curtis and Christen Mucher. New York: NYU Press, 2015.

[11] "Hayti," *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* 114.

[12] "Hayti," *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* 119.

[13] "Hayti." *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* 120, my emphasis.

[14] For more on Haitian resistance of French colonialism under Christophe see: Daut, *Tropics of Haiti*. The fear of colonial retribution in the form of genocide originates with the Leclerc expedition in 1802 where General Charles Victoire Emmanuel Leclerc was sent to overthrow Toussaint Louverture's government and re-install slavery on the island. After Leclerc's death General Donatien Rochambeau would take over the expedition, often using genocidal tactics in order to wage war against Haitian forces as well as civilians. For a literary rendering of the Leclerc expedition see: Fignolé, Jean-Claude. *Une heure pour l'éternité.* Paris: Sabine Wespieser, 2008.

[15] "Hayti," *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* 125.

[16] "Hayti," *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* 130. For historical commentary on Henry Christophe and education see: Dubois, Laurent. *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012) 69-73; Trouillot, Hénock. *Le Gouvernement du roi Christophe*. (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Centrale, 1972) 87-91.

[17] Daut, Marlene, *Tropics of Haiti,* 112.

[18] Hayti," *The North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal,* 112.

[19] Daut, Marlene, *Tropics of Haiti,* 112.

[20] The *Almanach royal d'Hayti* from 1816 and 1820 lists Le Comte de Rosiers as having various titles, such as: librarian, accountant, and a member of the nobility as well as an actor and supporter of the royal theater.

[21] This is Chanlatte's official title on the frontispieces of his three plays: *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale, en janvier 1818* (1818), *Nerhi, le chef des Haytiens* (1819), and *La Partie de chasse du roi* (1820).

[22] Clive Cheesman and Marie-Lucie Vendryes, *The Armorial of Haiti: Symbols of Nobility in the Reign of Henry Christophe.* (London: College of Arms, 2007) 90.

[23] Dessalines, "I Have Avenged America"

[24] Dessalines, "I Have Avenged America," emphasis in original.

[25] According to a translated account of Henry Christophe's tour of the Kingdom of Haiti in 1814, he is said to have entered Cap Henry only to pass through "triumphal arches adorned with flowers and garland" as the king greeted his subjects. In this same description of Christophe's travels, the Chester Chronicle (UK) reports that many plays were staged along the way, including Jean Racine's comedy *Les Plaideurs* and André Grétry's comedic-opera *Richard Cœur-de-lion*. "Kingdom of Hayti." *Chester Chronicle*. 2 December, 1814. This account is a translation of the same story from the *Gazette Royal d'Haïti* on January 26, 1814.

[26] Chanlatte, Juste. *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale, en janvier 1818.* (Sans Souci: Imprimerie Royale, 1818) 1.

[27] Dessalines, "I Have Avenged America"

[28] "In overthrowing me, you have cut down in San Domingo only the trunk of the tree of liberty. It will spring up again by the roots for they are numerous and deep" quoted in James, CLR. *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint Louverture and the San Domingo Revolution.* (New York: Vintage, 1962) 334

[29] See: Geggus, David. "The Naming of Haiti" in *Haitian Revolutionary Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

[30] Chanlatte, *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale,* 32.

[31] Chanlatte, *La Partie de chasse du roi*, 1. The footnote is included in the original text.

[32] The former capital of Saint-Domingue, "Le Cap" was one of the largest ports in the country and the center of colonial cultural life. Later renamed Cap Henry under the reign of Henry Christophe and finally changed to its current moniker Cap Haïtien.

[33] Vastey, Pompée Valentin, Baron de. *Essay on the Causes of the Revolution and Civil Wars of Hayti*. (Trans. W.H. M.B. Exeter: Western Luminary Office, 1823) 137.

[34] Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed*, 53.

[35] *Almanach royal d'Hayti pour l'année bissextile 1820, Dix-Septième de l'indépendance, et la neuvième du règne de sa majesté, présenté au roi, par Buon.* Sans Souci: Imprimerie Royale, 1820.

[36] Jenson, *Beyond the Slave Narrative;* see also: Nesbitt, Nick. *Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and the Radical Enlightenment*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008.; James, *The Black Jacobins*; and Scott, David. *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

[37] Chanlatte, *La Partie de chasse du roi*, 4-5.

[38] McIntosh, Tabitha and Grégory Pierrot. "Henry/Nehri: Domestic Theater and International Stagecraft at the Royal Haitian Court." Haitian Studies Association. Université de Montréal, Montréal, CA. 23 October 2015.

[39] Referred to in Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed.* While Fischer's use of Doris Sommer's term is in relation to early Haitian constitutions, I wish to suggest that Chanlatte's plays make use of a similar gesture of "nation building" in a literary realm. Even though theater does not have the same "legal" ramifications of a constitution, both produce particular conceptions of Haiti in the early independence period. Additionally, scholars like Fischer, Doris Garraway, and Julia Gaffield among others have noted that Haitian constitutions, particularly as they relate to citizenship criteria, are rather ambiguous. If we view this ambiguity as a sort of literariness that is free and open to interpretation, constitutions produce a fiction not so dissimilar from the fictitious realm of Chanlatte's theater.

[40] Chanlatte, *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale*, 11.

[41] Chanlatte, *L'Entrée du roi en sa capitale,* 12-13.

[42] In the French historical context, the foundational document of legislative colonialism is the Code Noir see, Ghachem, Malick. *The Old Regime and the Haitian Revolution*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) and Niort, Jean-François. *Le Code noir: Idées recues sur un texte symbolique*. (Paris: Éditions Le Cavalier Bleu, 2015). However, in a hemispheric context colonial legislation like the Treaty of Tordesillas signed by King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabelle of Spain and João II of Portugal in 1494 that divided the Americas between Spain and Portugal.

[43] Christophe, Henry. *Manifeste du roi.* Cap-Henry: P. Roux, Imprimerie du Roi, 1814.

[44] See Dessalines in the "I Avenged America" speech and in the "Declaration of Independence"

[45] Clive Cheesman and Marie-Lucie Vendryes, *The Armorial of Haiti.* At the 2015 Haitian Studies Conference, there were two presentations relating to Chanlatte, see: Bongie, Chris. "Reading Voltaire, Remembering Dessalines: The Role of Alzire in Juste Chanlatte's *Le Cri de la nature*." Haitian Studies Association. Université de Montréal, Montréal, CA. 23 October 2015. and McIntosh, Tabitha and Grégory Pierrot. "Henry/Nehri: Domestic Theater and International Stagecraft at the Royal Haitian Court." They have speculated that Juste Chanlatte was responsible for the innovation of Christophe's royal crest as well as its inscription.

[46] Cheesman and Vendryes, *The Armorial of Haiti,* 18.

[47] Fick, Carol E. *The Making of Haiti: The Saint-Domingue Revolution from Below*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990.

[48] Chanlatte, *La Partie de chasse du roi*, 60-61

[49] Chanlatte, *La Partie de chasse du roi*, 62

[50] Chanlatte, *La Partie de chasse du roi*, p. 62

[51] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing of the Past: Power and Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. 60

[52] Césaire, Aimé. *La Tragédie du roi Christophe*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 2009.

[53] Bongie, Chris. "The Cry of History: Juste Chanlatte and the Unsettling (Presence) of Race in Early Haitian Literature." *MLN* 130.4 (2015): 807–835.

Chapter 3

[1] Coicou, Massillon. *Le génie français et l'âme haïtienne*. (Paris: Librairie de la renaissance latine, 1904) 1.

[2] Aimé Césaire's *Discours sur le colonialisme* is a prime example of the type of rhetorical battle the founders of the *Mouvement Négritude*, where a French, even European cultural knowledge is used as the primary method for deconstructing and revealing the societal impact of colonialism. Césaire, Aimé. *Discours sur le colonialisme*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1954.

[3] Glissant, Édouard. *Monsieur Toussaint*. Paris : Gallimard, 1998.

[4]Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.; Ferrer, Ada. *Freedom's Mirror:*

Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.; Ferrer, Ada. "Talk About Haiti: The Archive and the Atlantic's Haitian Revolution," *Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World.* Ed. Doris L. Garraway. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008. 21–40.; Daut, Marlene. *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789-1865*. Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2015.

[5] See, Hirsch, Marianne. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today*. 29.1 (Spring 2008): 103-128.

[6] For more on the idea of the "presence of the past," see: Rousso, Henry. *Le Syndrome de Vichy, de 1944-à nos jours.* Paris: Seuil, 2014.

[7] Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," 104.

[8] See the following works by literary and historical scholars for a re-assessment of Jean-Jacques Dessalines's legacy as an emperor: Gaffield, Julia. *Haitian Connections in the Atlantic World: Recognition After Revolution.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.; Garraway, Doris L. *Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World.* Ed. Doris L. Garraway. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008.; Jenson, Deborah. *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Sex, Politics and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution*. Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2012.; Kaisary, Philip. *Haitian Revolution in the Literary Imagination: Radical Horizons, Conservative Constraints*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014.

[9] Coicou, Massillon. *L'Empereur dessalines*. *Acte premier: drame en deux actes et en vers*. (Port-au-Prince, Haiti: Fardin, 1988) v.

[10] These exceptions include the work of literary anthologists such as Lherisson, Lélia. *Manuel de la littérature haïtienne et textes expliqués*. *Littérature des Amériques*. Port-au-Prince : Imprimerie du Collège Vertières, 1945.; historian and archivist Hénock Trouillot in *Les Origines sociales de la littérature haïtienne*. Port-au-Prince: Eds. Fardin, 1962.; and most recently Zavitz, Erin. "Encountering Creole Genesis in the Haitian Press: Massillon Coicou's fin-de-siècle feuilleton *La Noire*." *La Española-Isla de Encuentros*, eds. Jessica Barzen, Hanna Lene Geiger, Silke Jansen. Tübingen: Narr, 2015. As well as Zavitz's dissertation – Zavitz, Erin. "Revolutionary Memories: Celebrating and

Commemorating the Haitian Revolution."diss., University of Florida, 2015. – which is a reflection on a century of commemorations of the Haitian Revolution at the center of which was Massillon Coicou. Zavitz's "Encountering Creole Genesis in the Haitian Press: Massillon Coicou's fin-de-siècle feuilleton *La Noire,*" is the first to attempt a (re)reading of Massillon Coicou's *feuilleton* on the Haitian Revolution *La Noire*. Colin (Joan) Dayan, Jana Evans Braziel, and Marie-Agnès Sourieau are also among those who have mentioned Massillon Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines*, in particular in relation to Défilée Bazile in order to contest the exclusion of women from Haiti's heroic past.

[11] Trouillot, *Les Origines sociales de la littérature haïtienne*, 245.

[12] Trouillot, Hénock. *Dessalines: Ou, Le Sang Du Pont-Rouge; Théâtre*. (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie des Antilles, 1967) 3

[13] Trouillot, *Dessalines: Ou, le sang du Pont-Rouge,* 3-6.

[14] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* i.

[15] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* i.

[16] Glissant, Édouard. *Monsieur Toussaint.* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998) 9-10; *Glissant*, Édouard. *Monsieur Toussaint*. Trans. Michael Dash and Édouard Glissant. (Boulder: Lynne Renner, 2005) 15-16. Italics in originals.

[17] Kaisary, Philip. *The Haitian Revolution in the Literary Imaginary: Radical Horizons, Conservative Constraints*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014) 111.

[18] Kaisary, *The Haitian Revolution in the Literary Imaginary*, 119.

[19]In his article "'The Haitian Turn': An Appraisal of Recent Literary and Historiographical Works on the Haitian Revolution," Celucien L. Joseph argues that there has been a shift in scholarship in North America regarding the Haitian Revolution and its legacy. Part of this shift in thinking is recognizing the Haitian Revolution as a key moment in world history, the Age of Revolutions, and a critical moment for evaluating notions of freedom, democracy, anticolonialism, human rights, social justice, and equality in the postcolonial moment.

[20] Dash, Michael J. "The Theater of the Haitian Revolution/ The Haitian Revolution as Theater." *Small Axe* 18, (September 2005): 16.

[21] Le Mémorial ACTE or Centre Caribéen d'Expressions et de Mémoire de la Traite et de l'Esclavage, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.

[22] Frantz Duval. "Dessalines Invente Une Liberté Double: Anticolonialiste et Antiesclavagiste." *Le Nouvelliste*. N.p., 11 May 2015. Web. 22 Mar. 2016.

[23] Jenson, Deborah. *Beyond the Slave Narrative: Politics, Sex and Manuscripts in the Haitian Revolution.* (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2012) 9

[24] For more on Alexandre Pétion see: Dubois, Laurent. *The Aftershocks of History*. New York: Picador, 2013.; Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed.* Liautaud Éthéart's play, *La Fille de l'empereur (*1860). focuses more directly on Célimène and Dessalines's attempts to give her hand away in marriage.

[25] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 52

[26] Sourieau, Marie-Agnès. "Dessalines in Historical Drama and Haitian Contemporary Reality." *Small Axe* 18 (September 2005): 29.

[27] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 1-2.

[28] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines*, 8.

[29] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines*, 15.

[30] Sourieau, "Dessalines in Historical Drama and Haitian Contemporary Reality," 26.

[31]Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 37.

[32] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 38.

[33] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 42-43.

[34] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 48.

[35] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* 53.

[36] Coicou, Massillon. *Poésies nationales*. (Paris : Imprimerie V. Goupy et Jourdan, 1892) 99.

[37] For this section, I rely on the work of performance artist and anthropologist Gina Athena Ulysse, whose work projects a similar feminist re-imagining of Haiti in terms of women in her work Ulysse, Gina Athena. "VooDooDoll: What If Haïti Were a Woman." *Transition: An International Review* 111 (2013): 104–112.

[38]Ghislain, Gouraige. *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne.* (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1973) 74.

[39] Dédée Bazile was born in the area surrounding Cap Français, later named Défilée or "Défilée la folle," was devoted to Dessalines, the fight for Haitian independence from the French and the end of colonial slavery. She is rumored to have gone insane after her children and brothers were massacred during French General Donatien Rochambeau's genocidal campaign in the war for independence between 1802 and late 1803. There is also reasonable speculation by Colin (Joan) Dayan and Jana Evans Braziel that Défilée was the victim of sexual violence and trauma before and during the Haitian Revolution. Claude-Narcisse, Jasmine, and Pierre-Richard Narcisse. "Défilée, Dédée Bazile." Femmes d'Haïti. 2005. Web. 25 Nov. 2015. <http://www.haiticulture.ch/Defilee.html>.

[40] There are two notable contemporary feminist interventions into the historical silencing of Défilée. First, is Colin (Joan) Dayan's *Haiti, History, and the Gods* where she offers a poignant discussion of the dismemberment of Dessalines in historical accounts by Thomas Madiou and Beaubrun Ardouin, highlighting the importance of Défilée's act of resistance against state violence. Dayan also provides a basis for Jana Evans Braziel's work on Défilée as a female *lieu de mémoire* in Haitian history. See: Braziel, Jana Evans. "Re-Membering Defilee: Dedee Bazile as Revolutionary Lieu de Memoire." *Small Axe* 9.2 (2005): 57–85.; Dayan, Joan. *Haiti, History, and the Gods*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

[41] Gouraige, *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne,* 75.

[42] Chancy, Myriam JA. *Framing Silence: Revolutionary Novels by Haitian Women.* New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1997.13.

[43] Dorsainvil, J C. *Manuel d'histoire d'Haïti*. Port-au-Prince: Procure des Frères de l'Instruction Chrétienne, 1925. 188.

[44] *Framing Silence: Revolutionary Novels by Haitian Women,* 20.

[45] Written in 1936, it has been suggested by Raphael Hoermann and Alyssa Goldstien Sepinwall that many of the names of Haitian historical figures have been changed in order to critique the US occupation in Haiti from 1915-1934. Names like Stenio [Vincent] (president of Haiti) and Josef [Stalin] (Russian dictator) would have held

particular importance at the time the play was written. Hughes, Langston. *The Emperor of Haiti.* Alexandria: Alexander Street Press, 2002.

[46] Trouillot, *Dessalines ou le sang du Pont Rouge,* 11.

[47] Sourieau, "Dessalines in Historical Drama and Haitian Contemporary Reality," 34.

[48] Placoly, Vincent. *Dessalines, Ou, La Passion De L'indépendance*. Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba: Casa de las Américas, 1983.; Métellus, Jean. *Le Pont Rouge*. Paris: Nouvelles du Sud, 1991.

[49] Sourieau, "Dessalines in Historical Drama and Haitian Contemporary Reality," 30.

[50] Madness is a literary trope often employed by women writers, in the Caribbean especially, in order to provide a socio-critical perspective on systems of oppression. In Haitian literature, madness has been frequently used to critique state-sponsored violence and patriarchal institutions. For examples of Caribbean texts dealing with the trope of madness, see *Amour, colère, folie* by Marie Vieux-Chauvet and *The Farming of Bones* by Edwidge Danticat (Haiti), *Cereus Blooms at Night* by Shani Mootoo (Trinidad and Tobago), *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys (Saint Lucia), *Juletane* and *Le Quimboiseur l'avait dit* by Myriam Warner-Vieyra (Guadeloupe), and *Te di la vida entera* by Zoé Valdés (Cuba).

[51] Défilée is a figure often reified in Haitian fiction by women such as Edwidge Danticat (*Krik, Krak,* 1996) and Myriam JA Chancy (*Spirit of Haiti*, 2004).

[52] Coicou, *L'Empereur Dessalines,* iv-v.

[53] Ulysse, Gina Athena. *Why Haiti Needs New Narratives: A Post-quake Chronicle.* Middletown: (Wesleyan University Press, 2015) xxii.

[54] Johnson, Sara E. *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012) 190.

Chapter 4

[1] James, Marlon. *A Brief History of Seven Killings*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2014.

[2] For historical accounts, see: James, CLR. *The Black Jacobins*. New York: Vintage, 1989.; Madiou, Thomas. *Histoire d'Haïti, Tome II, 1799-1803.*Port-au-Prince, Editions Henri Deschamps, 1989.; Rainsford, Marcus. *An Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti.* Eds. Paul Youngquist and Grégory Pierrot. Durham: Duke University Press,

2013. For literary representations, see: Cusset, Jean-Michel. *1802 ou Le dernier jour*. Matoury: Editions Ibis Rouge, 2002.; *Glissant, Édouard. Monsieur Toussaint*. Trans. Michael Dash and Édouard Glissant. Boulder: Lynne Renner, 2005.; Hughes, Langston. *Troubled Island. Ebook.* (http://solomon.bldr.alexanderstreet.com/cgi-bin/asp/philo/bldr/documentidx.pl?work_code=PL000791); James, CLR. *Toussaint Louverture: The Story of the Only Successful Slave Revolt in History, A Play in Three Acts*. Ed. Christian Høgsbjerg. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.; Lamartine, Alphonse de. *Toussaint Louverture*. Exeter : University of Exeter Press, 1998.; Seghers, Anna. *Trois femmes d'Haïti*. Trans. Bruno Meur. Paris: Le Temps des Cerises, 2014.; Varin, Victor and Eugène Labiche. *Traversin et Couverture, parodie de Toussaint Louverture en quatre actes mêlés de peu de vers et beaucoup de prose*. Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1850.; Walcott, Derek. *The Haitian Trilogy*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2002.; Hughes, Langston. Wordsworth, William. 'To Toussaint L'Ouverture.' *The Morning Post*. 2 February, 1803.'

[3] Walsh, John Patrick. *Free and French in the Caribbean: Toussaint Louverture, Aimé Césaire, and Narratives of Loyal Opposition*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013) 30.

[4] According to VèVè A. Clark, one other play *La Dernière nuit de Toussaint Louverture* by Alcibiade Pommayrac (1877) was published before Ducasse's *Fort de Joux,* Clark, Vèvè A. "Haiti's Tragic Overture: (Mis)Representations of the Haitian Revolution in World Drama (1796-1975)." *Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography, and Art*. Ed. James A. W Heffernan. Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College : University Press of New England, 1992. 255. However, this claim is misleading because – apart from Pommayrac's play being ostensibly lost or never printed in full – the fragments that exist of *La Dernière nuit* have been referred to as "monologues in verse," suggesting that it might have been more of a long-form poem. Lubin, Maurice Alcibiade. *Jacmel et la poésie haïtienne*. (Port-au-Prince, Haiti: Imprimerie des Antilles, 1967) 44.

[5] Antoine Innocent would later dedicate his only novel *Mimola, ou l'histoire d'une cassette* (1906) to Ducasse who suddenly passed away in 1902 at the age of thirty years old. Innocent was also an actor, interpreting the role of Jean-Jacques Dessalines in both

Massillon Coicou's *L'Empereur Dessalines* and Liautaud Éthéart's *La Fille de l'Empereur* (1860) when it was re-staged at the turn of the century as well as Toussaint Louverture in *Fort de Joux*.

[6] Gouraige, Ghislain. *Histoire de la littérature haïtienne*. (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1973) 98.

[7] Munro, Martin., and Elizabeth. Walcott-Hackshaw. *Echoes of the Haitian Revolution, 1804-2004*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2008.; Munro, Martin., and Elizabeth. Walcott-Hackshaw. *Reinterpreting the Haitian Revolution and Its Cultural Aftershocks*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2006.

[8] As both Deborah Jenson and John Patrick Walsh both emphasize the importance of language when referring to Toussaint Louverture's 1802 arrest and deportation to France in order to not legitimize Napoleon Bonaparte and General Leclerc's actions (Walsh 66) Accordingly, for this reason, I employ a lexicon of abduction, imprisonment, and torture to refer to the manner in which Toussaint Louverture found his way to captivity in the Fort de Joux. For a brief treatment of this episode see Dubois, Laurent. *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. (37-38).

[9] Ardouin, B. *Études sur l'histoire d'Haïti suivies de la vie du Général J.-M. Borgella*. Paris: Dezobry et E. Magdeleine, 1853.

[10] Walsh, *Free and French in the Caribbean,* 66.

[11] Ducasse, Vendenesse. *Fort de Joux, ou, Les derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture: drame historique en un acte*. (Port-au-Prince, Haïit: Éditions Vétéran, 1957) 1.

[12] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 7.

[13] By extensive references to Napoleon, I mean that the play refers to his exploits as the Premier Consul of France as well as numerous battles won under his regime. These references do not, however, present any reverence for Napoleon, nor do they seek to address anything more than the contemporaneous nature between events of world-importance. Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 8.

[14] On the concept of "disavowal" in the context of the Haitian Revolution see: Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

[15] While Ducasse does not mention any dates in his play, it is fair to imagine that if the "derniers moments de Toussaint Louverture" were to take on a temporal aspect, the play would be set in the days, or potentially the hours, leading up to his death on April 7th, 1803. For a cogent and fascinating analysis of these writings see Deborah Jenson's *Beyond the Slave Narrative* (page numbers needed).

[16] For a provocative analysis of the Dominican Republic in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see: Sara E. Johnson *Fear of French Negroes* (pages) and Eller, Anne. "'Awful Pirates' and 'Hordes of Jackals': Santo Domingo/The Dominican Republic in Nineteenth-Century Historiography." *Small Axe* 18.2 (July 2014): 80-94.

[17] By engaging in dialogue with Amyot, Mars is able to force him to confess that the Fort de Joux is, in fact, a prison rather than a Fortress. Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 26-27.

[18] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 36.

[19] Louverture, Toussaint. "Constitution de La Colonie Française de Saint-Domingue." 17 Aug. 1801. Web. 22 Mar. 2016. 1

[20] Many scholars have commented on and interpreted the 1801 constitution as a historical and a literary source, for example: Kaisary, Philip. "Hercules, the Hydra, and the 1801 Constitution of Toussaint Louverture." *Atlantic Studies*. 12.4 (2015): 393-411.; Gaffield, Julia. "Complexities of Imagining Haiti: A Study of National Constitutions, 1801-1807." *Journal of Social History* 41.1 (2007): 81–103.;Walsh, John Patrick. *Free and French in the Caribbean: Toussaint Louverture, Aimé Césaire and Narratives of Loyal Opposition*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2013. ; Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

[21] Gaffield, "Complexities of Imagining Haiti," 86-87.

[22] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 5. My emphasis.

[23] Kaisary "Hercules, the Hydra, and the 1801 Constitution of Toussaint Louverture," 403.

[24] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 6.

[25] In a law promulgated on May 21 2001, the French government via its former Minister of Justice Christiane Taubira recognized France's role in the slave trade and colonial slavery declaring both as crimes against humanity. Taubira-Delannon, Christiane, Georges-Jacques Danton, and Léopold Sédar Senghor. *Lançons la liberté dans les*

colonies : Suivi de La France est un arbre vivant et de La traite et l'esclavage sont un crime contre l'humanité. Points, 2009.

[26] Kaisary "Hercules, the Hydra, and the 1801 Constitution of Toussaint Louverture," 401.

[27] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 8.

[28] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 8.

[29] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 8-9.

[30] See Kaisary, Philip. *Haitian Revolution in the Literary Imagination: Radical Horizons, Conservative Constraints*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014.

[31] Dessalines chose to return to the Taino name *Ayiti* or Haiti. There is little evidence to suggest that Toussaint would have proposed such a hemispheric reprisal given his writings about Saint-Domingue.

[32] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 16.

[33] For an in-depth discussion of manumission in pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue see Garrigus, *Before Haiti* and Ghachem, *The Haitian Revolution and the Old Regime*.

[34] The French, namely Leclerc and Napoleon, by extension, believed that Toussaint had made a forged a trade alliance that granted Saint-Domingue economic independence from France as well as a large sum of gold. However false, Caffarelli would later make this the principle line of questioning during Toussaint's captivity in the Fort de Joux because the gold, if recovered, would help Napoleon further finance his expedition to Saint-Domingue and elsewhere. Rather desperate, Napoleon later abandons plans to retake Saint-Domingue and sells the Louisiana territory to the United States twenty-three days after Toussaint Louverture died on the French/Swiss border. See: (http://www.napoleon.org/fr/salle_lecture/articles/files/traitecessionlouisiane1803.asp)

[35] For a provocative and apt discussion of colonial and postcolonial epithets for Haiti, see Sara E. Johnson, *The Fear of French Negroes: Transcolonial Collaboration in the Revolutionary Americas*

[36] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 17-18. My emphasis.

[37] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 17-18. My emphasis.

[38] I do not mean to suggest that Caffarelli was arguing for the *départementalisation* of Saint-Domingue, rather, he probably was evoking the metropole-colony relationship that existed between the *Vieilles colonies* where France oversaw governmental affairs

remotely. The French Over-Seas Departments were established in the *Loi de départementalisation* of March 19 1946, around fifty years prior to the writing of Ducasse's play.

[39] The Battle of Vertières on 18 November, 1803 was the final stand of Jean-Jacques Dessalines and the *Armée Indigène* before Haitian Independence was declared on January 1, 1804.

[40] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 23-24.
[41] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 36.
[42] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 35.
[43] Ducasse, *Fort de Joux,* 36.
[44] Hirsch, Marianne. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today*. 29.1 (Spring 2008): 108. My emphasis.

[45] Mompremier, Madsen. "Dessalines Ripping the White from the Flag." *Fowler Museum at UCLA*. N.p., 1995. Web. 2 Mar. 2016.

Chapter 5

[1] Ulysse, Gina Athena *Why Haiti Needs New Narratives: A Post-quake Chronicle.* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2015) xxii.

[2] Jonaissant, Jean, and Garraway, Doris L. "Toward New Paradigms in Caribbean Studies: The Impact of the Haitian Revolution on Our Literatures." *Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008. 203–222.

[3] A copy of *Nerhi ; ou le chef des Haytiens* was recently recovered at the British National Archives in London by Tabitha McIntosh this past summer. She and Grégory Pierrot presented a preliminary analysis of the play at the 2015 Haitian Studies Association Meeting in Montéal, CA in October. McIntosh, Tabitha and Grégory Pierrot. "Henry/Nehri: Domestic Theater and International Stagecraft at the Royal Haitian Court." Haitian Studies Association. Université de Montréal, Montréal, CA. 23 October 2015.

[4] Daut, Marlene. *Tropics of Haiti: Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789-1865*. (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2015) 585.

[5] Louis-Joseph Janvier was trained as a medical doctor in Paris, France. He was a significant contributor to late-nineteenth century Haitian thought and intellectual life penning works such as *L'Égalité des races*, a refutation of Arthur de Gobineau's racist anthropological stance, and the historical text *La République d'Haïti et ses visiteurs, (1840-1882)*.

[6]Innocent, Antoine. *Mimola, ou l'histoire d'une cassette*. Google Books. Web. 13 Mar. 2016. <https ;//books.google.com/books ?id=m64CAAAAYAAJ>.

[7] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. "Haiti's Nightmare and the Lessons of History." *Haiti: Dangerous Crossroads.* Ed. Deidre McFadyen. (Boston: South End Press, 1995) 20.

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Bongie, Chris. "The Cry of History: Juste Chanlatte and the Unsettling (Presence) of Race in Early Haitian Literature." *MLN* 130.4 (2015): 807–835. Print.

---. “Reading Voltaire, Remembering Dessalines: The Role of Alzire in Juste Chanlatte’s *Le Cri de la nature*.” Haitian Studies Association. Université de Montréal, Montréal, CA. 23 October 2015.

Bouvet de Cressé, Auguste Jean Baptiste. Juste Chanlatte, and Henri Christophe King of Haiti. *Histoire de la catastrophe de Saint-Domingue, avec la correspondance des généraux Leclerc, (beau-frère de Bonaparte), Henry-Christophe (depuis roi d’Haïti), Hardy, Vilton, etc., certifiée conforme aux originaux déposés aux archives, par le lieutenant général Rouanez jeune, secrétaire d’État,*. Paris,: Librairie de Peytieux, 1824.

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---. *Duvalier’s Ghosts: Race, Diaspora, and U.S. Imperialism in Haitian Literatures*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010. Print.

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